Cape Peninsula University of Technology

An exploration of Novice Teachers' experiences regarding psycho-social support provision as an aspect of their situated professional development at a selected Western Cape Primary School.

By

SHEHAAM DAVIDS

Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

Master of Education

in the Faculty of Education

at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology

Supervisor: **Dr Chiwimbiso Mebie Kwenda**

Co-supervisor: **Dr Brenda Sonn**

Mowbray
February 2021

DECLARATION

I, SHEHAAM DAVIDS, declare that the contents of this thesis represent my own unaided work, and that the thesis has not previously been submitted for academic examination towards any qualification. Furthermore, it represents my own opinions and not necessarily those of the Cape Peninsula University of Technology.

15 February 2021

Signed **Date**

ABSTRACT

The work environment of teachers exposes them to situations known to generate negative work attitudes and occupational stress which can influence their psycho-social well-being. There is also the possibility that positive resources, such as induction, resilience, mentoring, and acculturation, could increase the capacity of teachers to manage the degree to which psycho-social factors influence psychological well-being. Thus, it is assumed that those psycho-social factors could negatively or positive influence the psychological well-being of novice teachers.

Disturbingly, in the last five years, the Department of Higher Education and Training in South Africa has invested liberally in research and training of foundation phase teachers, heeding the call that there are too few teachers in this category and that there is a need to overhaul the pre-service education sector to meet the needs of the twenty-first century. Although a number of professional development programmes have emerged since, the attrition rate of novice teachers remains high in South Africa. Studies have shown new teachers are at high risk of leaving the school or even leaving the career within their first five years of teaching (Haynes, 2014; Phillips, 2014).

The aim of this study is to investigate the experience of the psycho-social support available to novice teachers in a selected Western Cape primary school. Despite transformation in the Department of Basic Education, there has been no concerted effort to investigate whether novice teachers receive psycho-social support and how this support can be implemented or improved. The presence or lack of psycho-social support for novice teachers is related to their well-being.

On this basis, it became clear that the relationship between psycho-social factors and psychological well-being, with psychological capital as a moderator, could be researched. With novice teachers in South Africa at a selected school as participants, the current study used a qualitative case study methodology to attain its purpose. One principal and five novice teachers were interviewed about their experiences regarding the psycho-social support available to them. Questionnaires were used to collect data which was analysed thematically. The study revealed that novice teachers at the school do not get sufficient +psycho-social support from school management and the education department; this results in low morale and burnout, subsequently having an effect on teacher attrition.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world. ***1 John 4:4***

- I should like first to acknowledge my creator, God: “So I come into Your chamber and I dance at your feet, Lord. You are my saviour and I'm at your mercy. All that has been in my life up 'til now, it belongs to you. I belong to you.”

- In remembrance of my late grandmother, Elizabeth Anne Gates, who believed in me and told me even during her last days, “Shehaamie, jy gaan klaar kry met jou studies.”

- I want to thank my two daughters (minions), Laiqa and Elisha, for their unselfishness, endless support, and encouragement throughout my studies. You girls were so brave, it became our goal, not just mine.

- My thanks go to my supervisors, Dr Chiwimbiso Mebie Kwenda and Dr Brenda Sonn, for their continued support from start to finish of this thesis. I was blessed to have an academic father and mother. Their exceptional professional and humble demeanour, including expertise, made my journey lighter.

- A word of thanks goes to all participating teachers, the school principal, and the Western Cape Education Department for granting permission to undertake the research in this selected school in Cape Town.

- Financial assistance from the CPUT University Research Fund is acknowledged.

- Great thanks go to my mom, Kashiefa Davids, friends, family, my students, and church members whose love and encouragement were a source of inspiration.

DEDICATION

To my two daughters who mean the world to me, **Laiqa Davids** and **Elisha Hannah Davids**. ‘Mom’ as I am known to you, wishes to instil the importance of hard work and perseverance in you. I love you both dearly.

Finally, this thesis is dedicated to all the novice teachers out there, trying keep their heads above water without sinking. My best advice to you is this: Follow your heart, speak your truth, find your people, and always question and seek to understand. As Nelson Mandela once said: “Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.” You are right where you are meant to be, doing the most noble work. “Bloom where you are planted” (1 Corinthians 7:20-24). God has chosen you to do an important job in His Kingdom. You are a chosen generation. Be brave, be righteous, and be curious. You can do this; God is the author of your life.

ABBREVIATIONS

DBE:	Department of Basic Education
DHET:	Department of Higher Education and Training
DoE:	Department of Education
EWP:	Employee Wellness Programme
MHPSS:	Mental Health and Psycho-Social Support
NCS:	National Curriculum Statement
NT:	Novice Teacher
PDP:	Professional Development Programme
PSS:	Psycho-Social Support
RNCS:	Revised National Curriculum Statement
SES:	Socio-Economic Status
TPD:	Teacher Professional Development
STPD:	Standardised Teacher Professional Development
WCED:	Western Cape Education Department

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

Teaching can be a difficult challenge for novice teachers. The first year of teaching for novice teachers (NTs) is a delicate if not difficult one, and some researchers have labelled the first-year of teaching as a 'sink or swim' scenario (Lundeen, 2004; Street, 2004; Amoroso, 2005; Hill, 2005; Howe, 2006; Cobbold, 2007; Nahal 2010). Educational equity reforms in post-apartheid South Africa were intended to use education as a tool to bring positive change to society. Research, however, has shown that more than half of teachers entering the teaching profession leave within the first five years (Wolhuter, 2010). During their early years of experience, NTs may face some unfamiliar conditions which might cause tension, insecurity and lack of confidence (Sáenz-López et al., 2011).

In addition, recently published reports on teacher attrition (Laurence, 2015), show that South Africa is in desperate need of qualified teachers and should, therefore, employ strategies to support NTs, and by doing so, possibly retain more teachers for the future. Teachers and their psycho-social well-being should be of importance, given that they contribute to educating the nation. However, some South African schools are highly stressful workplaces due to, among others, the lack of provision for teacher well-being, overcrowded classes, violence, socio-economic problems and substance abuse (Woudstra, 2018). Teachers get curricula training, but not training on how to manage within the work environment. Exacerbating the above, studies show that during the difficult first years of teaching, novice teachers will spend the vast majority of their workdays in isolation from colleagues in what many within the profession characterise as a 'sink or swim' or 'trial by fire' proposition (Ingersoll & Kralik, 2004).

This thesis arises from personal experiences as a novice teacher struggling with the initial years of my teaching career, working in disadvantaged communities where schools often appear dysfunctional. This qualitative study was undertaken to determine the gap in the current professional development programmes and the effectiveness of it for the 21st century, thus the focus of this narrative study of enquiry is to explore novice teacher psycho-social experiences within professional development by collecting data in the form of questionnaires and focus group interviews. The school under examination in this research project and its disadvantaged community demand particular attention because over the last ten years, novice teachers left the school in less than a year, declining permanent positions.

1.2 Rationale for and Purpose of the Study

The teaching profession is considered to be a highly stressful profession (Johnson et al., 2005; Newberry & Allsop, 2017). South African learners are faced with personal, social economic, poverty, abuse, gangsterism and environmental stress that puts them at risk of emotional, behavioral and academic difficulties. The challenge for novice teachers is the fact that this aspect of teaching is not covered during their initial years of teacher training. Reality suddenly kicks in, as these challenges leads to novice teachers feeling emotionally exhuasted, experiencing school culture shock, isolation, burnout and fatigue. These challenges often leads to the high atrition rate of novice teachers (Engelbrecht & Green, cited in Engelbrecht et al. 2003).Research on novice teacher attrition shows that conditions in the work environment affect teachers' job satisfaction (Billingsley 2003; Utah Foundation 2007).Psycho-social factors are likely to be conditioned and modified not only by individual experiences but also by the social structures and contexts in which they exist (Joensuu et al., 2012; Martikainen, Bartley, & Lahelma, 2002; Rugulies, 2012). This means that the effect of psycho-social factors on every individual is not necessarily always the same, emphasizing the need to examine the situatedness. Novice teachers will benefit in a setting where communities of practice under the aspect of teacher professional development programmes, is in place at school. This could possibly enhance positive experiences of psycho-social support received at school.

Despite efforts by the education department to improve teachers' professional development programmes (PDPs), and extensive research on the provision of psycho-social support in schools for learners and teachers (Spaull, 2013; Bruce, 2014; Setlhara et al., 2016; Silbert & Mzozoyana, 2019), there seems to be little or no attention placed on how NTs in South Africa in general and in the Western Cape in particular experience psycho-social support at work and how the psycho-social support relates to their well-being and professional development. Furthermore, in a recent article, SADTU announced, "The department and all of us must become fans of schools where we preach non-violence in our society. We must be the defenders of education and our schools. All schools must have security and psycho-social services to support pupils and teachers" (www.pmg.org.za., 2019). Therefore, there is a need to investigate NTs' experiences of psycho-social support.

1.3 Problem Statement

In recent years, considerable attention has been paid to the psycho-social issues affecting learners (Kourkoutas & Wolhuter, 2013; Silbert & Mzozoyana, 2019).

In the context of South Africa's education landscape, psycho-social issues refer to the intertwining of social characteristics and how this affects the individual's thinking and behaviour (Setlhara et al., 2016; Silbert & Mzozoyana, 2019). While this is seen as a "heavy burden" facing learners in south Africa (Silbert & Mzozoyana, 2019), there has not been a concerted effort to understand how this affects NTs as a specific community in the education landscape.

With a history rooted in a legacy of apartheid and unequal access to economic resources and social amenities (Bruce, 2014; Setlhare et al., 2016), NTs who teach in economically impoverished educational contexts are ultimately exposed to learners under the burden of psycho-social challenges which negatively affect the wellness of both NTs and their learners (Spaull, 2013; Bruce, 2014), thus impacting on the quality of teaching and learning. However, very limited, if any, attention has been paid to novice teachers' psycho-social support needs. This is substantiated by Shelver (2018) in a recent Western Cape Education Department (WCED) media release, where the Minister of Education of the Western Cape, Debbie Schäfer, referred to the period 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018, when 30 group trauma debriefing sessions took place at schools across the province. She noted that incidents reported during group trauma debriefing sessions are: loss of learners, loss of teachers, hijacking, stabbing, violence, armed robbery, and gang violence.

When facing challenges and stress, teachers subjectively perceive the school environment's quality, and the support available to them is vital for dealing with a stressful situation (Montgomery & Rupp, 2005). Developing strategies to cope with stress and adversity is vital to ensure teacher retention (Prilleltensky, Neff & Bessell, 2016). Consequently, although teachers have been expected to adopt and support waves of curriculum reform, very little is known about teachers', and especially NTs', experiences of psycho-social support in schools.

Thus, a need to explore novice teachers' experiences regarding psyco-social support provision as an aspect of their situated professional development arises. This is important for the creation of an environment that ensures quality teaching and learning in the 21st Century. This study is of the view that effective professional development programmes in place can reduce novice teacher attrition rate, as well-being and coping mechanisms will be in place.

1.4 Aim of the Study

This study aims to explore the experiences of NTs regarding psycho-social support provision as an aspect of their situated professional development. In doing this, the study attempts to analyse the effects their experiences have on their teaching careers.

Research has shown that when teachers' psycho-social needs are met, they are able to cope with the demands of the teaching profession. When the physical and psycho-social needs of teachers are unmet, then the quality of teaching declines (Shriberg, 2007; INEE, 2010; IRC, 2011).

Psycho-social support within professional development, is derived from various sources, including individual experiences. Professional development refers to the development of a person in his or her professional role. Grundy and Robison (2004) contend that professional development serves three functions (extension, renewal and growth), and is usually initiated through two drivers: systemic and personal. This study focuses on the psycho-social experiences of NTs, and seeks to determine whether these experiences cause NTs to 'sink or swim' in their first three years of teaching.

1.5 Research Questions

The central question which this research seeks to answer is:

What are NTs' experiences of psycho-social support provided at a selected Western Cape primary school?

In order to adequately answer this question, it is necessary to examine sub-variables emerging from the research question. These are framed in the form of research sub-questions below:

a. What kind of psycho-social support is available for NTs at a selected Western Cape primary school in the first three years of their teaching careers?
b. What are the NTs' experiences of this support?
c. How can psycho-social support for novice teachers at the selected school be improved?

To assist in addressing the above research questions, I relied upon a qualitative research approach. This approach is discussed in Chapter 3 of the thesis.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The focus of this study is to investigate NTs' experiences of psycho-social support provision in a Western Cape primary school. While there is extensive literature available on the provision of psycho-social support for learners and teachers in schools (Day & Hong, 2016), there has only been limited literature on how teachers in general experience this (Ahmed, 2017). Even more lacking are studies that specifically explore NTs' experiences of psycho-social support provided in schools. The study is therefore significant as it can identify factors which affect novice teachers' attrition rate, which may prove to be useful when planning professional development programmes for the twentieth century.

According to reports in recent years, as alluded to above, an alarming number of teachers are leaving the profession within the first three years after graduation from a pre-service programme. Research indicates that novice teachers are leaving at a rapid rate and this is a deep cause for concern (Moir & Gless, 2001; Billingsley, 2004; Dove, 2004; Graziano, 2005; Hayes, 2016). Teachers are leaving the education system, and they are leaving the places where they first become teachers. Many new teachers leave the occupation because they simply do not master it (Fontaine, Kane, Duquette, & Savoie-Zajc, 2012). This phenomenon is becoming common in South Africa, as teachers less than three years into the profession are not receiving adequate psycho-social support as part of professional development, thus contributing to many NTs' decisions to leave teaching.

What makes this study different is that it diverges from previous studies that investigate teacher professional models and whether these models somehow explain the 'sink or swim' phenomenon associated with NTs (Esua, 2017). Critics have long accused teaching as being an occupation that "cannibalises its young" and in which the initiation of new teachers is tantamount to 'lost at sea', 'sinking or swimming', 'trial by fire' or a boot camp' experience (Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). This research can, therefore, contribute to a deeper understanding of novice teacher experiences and aid in addressing related issues such as novice teacher attrition rates and teacher psycho-social well-being.

More so, the study has potential to provide detailed information on experiences of NTs and what support they might need within professional development. As Van den Akker (2009) asserts, it is critical to gain insight into an existing situation in order to find possibilities for improvement and innovation. This study hopes to identify potential and actual problems as experienced and recommend possible solutions to improve school results. Hence it is imperative to investigate NTs' experiences of psycho-social support and address possible problems timeously as psycho-social support is an aspect of the broader TPD. To my

knowledge, this is the first study that has examined novice teachers' experiences of psycho-social support they receive in this manner.

1.7 Clarification of Key Terms and Concepts

There are several terms used in the study that need additional clarification. The definitions listed below are significant in understanding the research study and its implications.

1.7.1 Novice Teacher (NT)

In the introduction to this study, attention was given to the term 'novice teacher'. Novice teachers, beginning teachers, neophytes, and pre-service teachers are depicted in many studies that focus on teachers who have difficulties dealing with teaching in a school in the first three years (Davies, 2008). For the purposes of this study, the term 'novice teachers' is defined as teachers who are professionally qualified, in their first or second year of teaching, who are newly deployed to schools from teacher training institutions, and have never taught at any other school previously. For the purposes of this study, NTs are newly qualified teachers who have recently received a degree in education (in the last three–five years) and are qualified to teach at primary schools.

1.7.2 Psycho-social

The term 'psycho-social' refers to the dynamic relationship between psychological characteristics of our experiences (e.g., our thoughts, emotions, and behaviours) and our wider social experiences (that is, our relationships within our situatedness (Psycho-Social Working Group, 2005; IFRC Reference Centre for Psycho-Social Support, 2014). The term 'psycho-social support' is based on the idea that a combination of factors is responsible for people's psycho-social well-being, and that these biological, emotional, spiritual, cultural, social, mental, and material aspects of experience cannot be separated from one another (Action for the Rights of Children [ARC], 2009). According to the International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC), psycho-social support (PSS) is "a process of facilitating resilience" that helps individuals (Murphy, 2016).

1.7.3 Psycho-social well-being

There are several accepted definitions of well-being in the literature. For example, life satisfaction and flourishing (Diener et al., 2010; White et al., 2017). Consistent with recent developments, Ryan and Deci's (2011) definition considers well-being as "open, engaged, and healthy functioning". Work-related well-being can also be defined with other related constructs such as stress and burnout (Pakarinen et al., 2010). In the literature on teachers, well-being has largely been examined through a focus on stress and burnout (Spilt et al., 2011). According to the framework developed by the Psycho-Social Working Group (2005), the psycho-social

well-being of individuals and communities is best defined in terms of three core domains (IFRC Reference Centre for Psycho-Social Support 2009a):

• **Human capacity:** Refers to physical and mental health and the individual's knowledge, capacity, and skills.

• **Social ecology:** Refers to social connections and support, including relationships, social networks, and support systems of the individual and within the community. Cohesive relationships that encourage social equilibrium are central to mental health and psycho-social well-being.

• **Culture and values**: Refer to the specific context and culture of communities, which influence how people experience, understand, and respond to their surroundings. Because both culture and value systems influence the individual and social aspects of how people function, they play an important role in determining psycho-social well-being.

An individual's psycho-social well-being depends greatly on his or her capacity to draw on resources from these three core domains when responding to the challenges experienced.

1.7.4 Professional Development (PD)

Professional Development is "a comprehensive, sustained, and intensive approach to improving teachers' and principals' effectiveness in raising learner achievement, and may be supported by activities such as courses, workshops, institutes, networks, and conferences" (Wei et al., 2009:9).

1.7.5 Teacher Professional Development (TPD)

According to and classrooms. TPD then combines a range of techniques to promote learning De Van (2011), TPD is the tool by which policymakers convey broad visions, disseminate critical information, and provide guidance to teachers. TPD begins with an understanding of teachers' needs and their work environments, schools; provides teachers with the support they need; engages school leadership; and makes use of evaluation to increase its impact. Essential techniques include mentoring, teamwork, observation, reflection and assessment (Gaible & Burns, 2005). TPD programmes should engage teachers as learners.

While PD highlights the need for educators to grow individually, TPD retools this idea so that teachers learn how to better serve their learners, as each situation at schools is different, specifically the environment, social economics and learner discipline. Professional learning communities may consist of small groups of teachers who might get together and collaborate

to discuss effective teaching strategies for mutual learners, work with technology that is utilised in their classrooms, or share areas of expertise. The emphasis thus is taken off educators and refocused on learners.

1.7.6 Mentoring

According to Roff (2012), mentoring is the collaboration between an experienced teacher and a beginning teacher to assist in a variety of aspects relating to the teaching profession. Smith et al. (2014) asserts that mentoring can have positive effects on teachers, such as increased retention, improved attitudes, increased feelings of efficacy and control, and experience using a wider range of instructional strategies.

1.7.7 Teacher Induction Programme

According to the *Oxford English Reference Dictionary* (2002), the meaning of induction is the act or instance of inducting or inducing. Olebe (2005) notes that induction can be broadly characterised as professional education and a developmental programme tailored to teachers in their first and second years of teaching. Furthermore, Conway et al. (2002) define induction as a programme provided to beginner teachers that includes professional development specific to beginner teachers.

1.7.8 Collaboration

King and Newman (2000:576) define collaboration as “teachers collaborating with professional peers, both within and outside of their schools, and when they gain further expertise through access to external researchers and programme developers”. Further, “Professional development activities that include collective participation – that is, the participation of teachers from the same department, subject, or grade are more likely to afford opportunities for active learning and are more likely to be coherent with teachers’ other experiences” (Birman et al., 2000) .

1.7.9 Perception

According to the *Oxford English Reference Dictionary* (2002), the meaning of perception is an interpretation or impression based on one’s understanding of something.

1.7.10 Communities of Practice (COP)

The main message of *Communities of Practice* (Wenger, 1998), is that even in apparently routine or unskilled work, there is a large amount of interaction and sense making involved in getting the job done (Guevara, 2016). These relationships, division of knowledge, labour or “trans-active memory” (Holingshead et al., 2002) and common understandings through which

people appropriate a task, are a community of practice. Thus, a community of practice is defined as a group that coheres through sustained mutual engagement on an indigenous enterprise and creating a common repertoire. The tight-knit nature of relations is clear from Wenger's indicators (Haji, 2018).

1.8 Delimitations of the Study

It was important to use purposive sampling in order to select quality-rich respondents who experience the problem focused on in the research. Only five teachers from one primary school (the school I am currently teaching at) and the principal were approached to take part in the study. I am aware that this could cause bias in the research. The focus of the study had to be precise and linked to the research question; for that reason, NTs were selected at a certain school within the Western Cape where there is a problem of NTs' leaving more frequently than the norm.

The data were limited to one school only and thus cannot be generalised to all South African schools. While the findings may add to research illuminating preservice teachers' experiences of professionalism and growth, caution should be used when generalising the conclusions from this study due to the small sample size and interpretation of the findings.

1.9 Outline of Chapters

This thesis consists of six chapters.

Chapter 1 offers an introduction to the study. It highlights the background to the study and problem investigated, purpose of the study, research problem, and limitations of the study.

Chapter 2 provides a theoretical and analytical framework. It begins with outlining teacher professional development and the NT in context. The literature reviewed examines the effectiveness of teacher professional development models currently in place. The key concern of this study is to gain insight into NTs' experiences of psycho-social support provision as an aspect of their professional development. It focuses on experiences of novice teachers in one South African school. The chapter also outlines literature on the preparedness of teachers in dealing with psycho-social challenges that form the focus of this study.

Chapter 3 provides the details of the research design and methodology. It details the case study, for example, how data was collected as well as the procedures for analysing the evidence collected. This chapter also motivates for adopting a qualitative methodological approach.

Chapter 4 presents the findings of the empirical research undertaken, using in-depth interviews. It contains a detailed analysis as well as a framework of some evolving themes.

Chapter 5 discusses and interprets the findings, and presents recommendations and conclusions based on the contribution of the respondents and relevant literature discussed on NTs' experiences of psycho-social support provision in a Western Cape primary school. Suggestions for further research as well as a conclusion to the thesis are provided.

1.10 Conclusion

This chapter presented the research problem as well as the research question. It also provided justification of the purpose of the study. Thus, the following were highlighted: the problem statement and research question, aims of the research, research design, and methodology. The next chapter presents a review of literature and discusses the theoretical framework adopted for the study.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

A literature review, according to Creswell and Creswell (2017); Hart (2018); Imel (2011); Babbie (2015); Marshall and Rossman (2014) enables a researcher to discuss the research issues which the study has to develop within the context. In this chapter, literature on communities of practice, and NTs' various experiences of psycho-social support will be viewed. The central question driving this research is: What are NTs' experiences of psycho-social support provided at a selected primary school in the Western Cape? It is therefore hoped that the above variables and a few others not mentioned in this introduction will lay the groundwork towards answering that question.

2.2 Novice Teacher in Context

According to Ünver (2014), NTs armed with a teaching qualification enter the workforce and most likely accept a full-time teaching position. The expectation is clear that they will successfully transition from a theory-orientated preservice teacher to a well-rounded practice-based teacher within the first few years of employment. Reality shock, however, often quickly sets in for most of them as NTs find themselves confronted with the gap between theory and practice. Buñuel (2011) assert that the initial years of experience are crucial to NTs who face and must overcome a variety of difficulties which might cause mental strain, insecurity and lack of confidence. Halford (1998: 33) refers to teaching as ‘‘the profession that eats its young”. Fantilli and McDougall (2009), in support of Halford, contend that the first year of teaching can also be regarded as a challenging and testing time, as teachers may face numerous problems. However, the problems that each NT faces might be different, since individual experiences vary.

Major challenges that NTs face can be summarised as follows: time management; student assessment; negative relationships with teachers and principals; lack of time (to plan, prepare, carry out administrative duties); difficulties in establishing positive relationships with students; the need to establish authority; difficulties in aligning instructional techniques to the subject content; and evaluation (Dias-Lacy & Guirguis, 2017).

Schools and classrooms are complex emotional arenas, and novice teachers are exposed to the emotional demands placed on them. According to the stress and coping theory, the emotional job demands of teaching, which are rooted in the social expectations and professional norms of teaching, may serve as external stimuli that trigger teachers' appraising situations as stressful and adopting subsequent coping strategies (Yin et al., 2016). However,

other environmental and personal factors may influence teachers' adoption of certain types of emotional regulation strategies such as coping strategies. Some tend to reappraise the situation, while others tend to suppress their emotions. The consequence is that teacher identity formation is not only influenced by personal and professional issues, but also by social response.

A study by Hanushek et al. (2004) showed that 20 percent of novice teachers leave the teaching profession after three years of service and 30 percent after five years of service. According Hanushek et al. (2004), these novice teachers leave the profession owing to placements located in rural or remote areas. A different school culture and environment make them feel it is no fun to teach. The study by Johari (2009) suggests that novice teachers should be given the opportunity to teach in a positive environment to enable them to build positive teacher efficacy. In this regard, the novice teacher is able to adapt to the school environment.

2.3 Transitioning from Student Teacher to Professional Teacher

There are different reasons why novice teachers struggle to gain access to and settle in the teaching profession. According to Spaull (2015), some teachers leave simply because they feel they fail the children in the early grades. Novice teachers have to move rapidly from being students who have only just mastered taking responsibility for their own learning, to where they have to carry out full responsibility. Preservice teachers enter their preparation programmes with preconceived notions about teaching that are strongly influenced by their own experiences (Fajet et al., 2005). These preconceptions can enhance or impede learning and ultimately influence preservice teachers' interpretations of their observations and experiences during their initial contact and interaction with students, teachers, and other school personnel (Kagan, 1992).

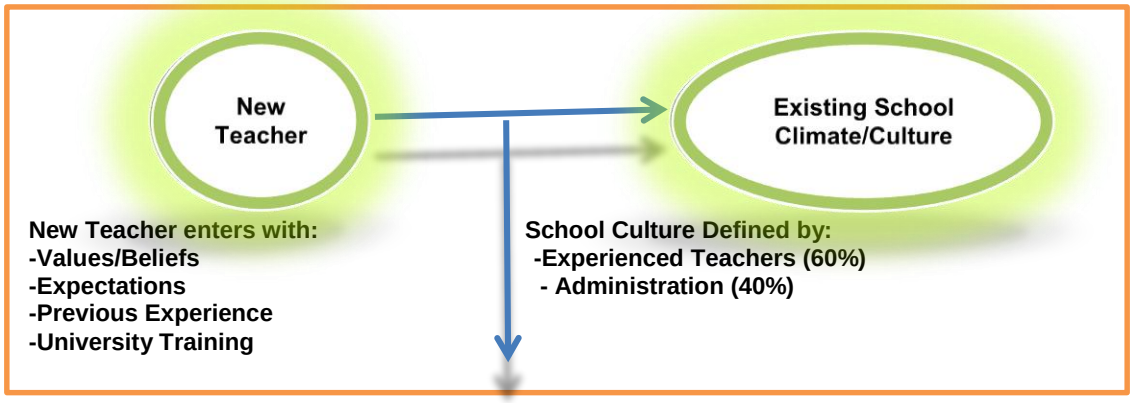
Like any other novice's journey into a profession, it takes time for new teachers to pass through this phase and become acculturated into a school (Harris & Adams, 2007). There is already much research internationally on what new teachers need in order to access the teaching profession: they have to learn about the tasks that characterise teaching as a professional practice (Ball et al., 2009) and they have to traverse the climate and culture of an existing school environment (Gruenert, 2008). New teachers' needs are thus myriad (Goodwin, 2012), and range from setting up a classroom and addressing parents, to the need for instructional support and time management (Fry, 2007), classroom management and discipline (Melnick & Meister, 2008) and how to interact with colleagues (McCormack et al., 2006). There is also a strong argument in the teacher attrition literature that many new teachers struggle with personal and emotional issues and preparedness for the profession (Huberman et al., 1993). What is probably hardest for novices is the struggle for voice, space and 'footing' (Ribeiro, 2006) in the rite of passage (Van Gennep, 1960) into an established school community. It is a

time of "professional vulnerability" (Lasky, 2005:899), where they are impacted by the "interplay of structure, identity and agency". As new teachers, with ambiguous status, they are "neither here nor there, they are on the margins, in an indeterminate state" (Turner, 1969:3).

NTs meet existing teachers at the threshold of entry to the particular school environment and the "old timers" (Lave & Wenger, 1991:33) then have to decide where they can either allow or reject entry. Thus, once the new teachers cross the threshold of everyday school practice for the first time, they become "liminal entities" (Turner, 1969:359), who are considered to possess no status or rank, and who are subject to the rules and obligations of that community and its culture (Lortie, 1975).

According to Turner (1969:359), it is only when they move into the period of "re-aggregation" that they will assume the rights, status and obligations of a professional teacher. Thus, for novice teachers, the transition period is a time of immense adaptation and adjustment (Petersen, 2017). Figure 2.1 illustrates the novice teacher interaction with existing school culture.

Figure 2.1: Novice teacher interaction with existing school culture



Source: (Taylor et al. 2014)

Furthermore, Naidoo and Petersen (2015) focus on the struggles of new teachers as recounted by South African school leaders and managers in their attempts to retain suitably qualified new teachers. Novice teachers struggle to adapt to the new working environment and with professional integration and socialisation, as everyone is unique and has different ways. Moreover, veteran teachers may differ in methods of instruction from the way the novice teacher was trained at university, which can cause conflict and isolation. Novice teachers may feel like outcasts at times because they need to adapt to the school environment. Some other struggles include socio-economic problems, as novice teachers may not understand the type of learner or community, discipline problems, and the sudden workload. All these may affect novice teachers and cause burnout. Naidoo and Petersen (2015) explain the clashes which occur because of the differences in culture which already exist in the school which the NTs are

entering. Evers et al. (2016) contend that professional development is necessary to bridge the gap of novice teachers' transition from university to workplace environment. The next section reviews literature on teacher professional development.

2.4 Teacher Professional Development – Background

Research on teacher professional development has a long tradition. According to Flores (2004), there is growing acknowledgement in the literature that teacher professional development should be associated with learning experiences that interlink teacher social-cultural context. Isaacs (2006) states teacher professional development (TPD) is a systematic, initial and continuous process of educators in accordance with professional ability and standards. In an article in *Psychology, Society, & Education*, 2015. Vol. 7(3), the author articulates that TPD is a complex process which requires cognitive and emotional involvement of teachers individually and collectively, the capacity and willingness to examine where each one stands in terms of convictions and beliefs, and the perusal and enactment of appropriate alternatives for improvement or change (Avalos, 2010).

Lee (2005) postulates professional growth in teachers occurs when a TPD programme acknowledges teachers' personal and professional needs. Rösken (2011:81) articulates that recognising professional development as identity development means integrating "personality as a relevant variable in the classroom". This means that appropriate strategies should be used to determine in which areas a teacher is lacking skills. Needs-based TPD is supported by other researchers who believe that principals could evaluate and monitor teachers, choose what kinds of TPD programmes teachers need, and then guide them to identify programmes that fit their professional needs (Desimone et al., 2006).

Attributes considered characteristic of high-quality TPD include a focus on content, alignment with teachers' instructional goals, active teacher participation, and use of reform-type structures, such as study groups (Garet et al., 2001; Desimone et al., 2002). However, these characteristics do not necessarily lead to improved teacher practices (Kennedy, 1998; Cohen & Hill, 2001; Hill, 2009). Some researchers, looking beyond training-level features, have found that teachers' implementation of innovative strategies was mediated by several teacher-specific factors, including attitudes and beliefs about (Cross & Hong, 2009; Steinert et al., 2010; Emo, 2015), and philosophical alignment with, the TPD (Briscoe, 1991; De Jesus & Lens, 2005; Emo, 2015), as well as teachers' perceptions of and actual support from school leadership (Mathison,1992; Fullan & Hargreaves,1997). Yet, despite the crucial role of emotions in teaching, teachers' psycho-social experiences during TPD have received little attention as a mediator of implementation of what was learned in TPD.

Considering the above, it is clear that TPD is most effective when it is based on teachers' needs and is a continuous process which includes formal, systematic and suitably planned development and follow-up through supportive observation and feedback, staff dialogue and peer coaching (Bernauer, 2002; Bolam, 2003; Lee, 2005). Moreover, it is widely recognised that traditional characteristics of teacher professional development are inadequately structured to fulfil the demands placed on teachers in the twenty-first century (Gamble, 2010; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012; Taylor & Taylor, 2013).

Common from the above literature is the argument that NTs have the pedagogic knowledge and skills for being professional teachers but may not be personally and holistically ready for the professional workplace. Teaching does not consist of pedagogical practices alone; the psycho-(INEE, 2011; IRC, 2011social aspect of teacher development plays a big role in the 'sink or swim' of novice teachers. For this reason, the focus of this study is narrowed down to the psycho-social aspect within professional development of novice teachers as little attention is paid to it.

2.4.1 Overview of Teacher Professional Development (TPD)

According to Isaac (2006), teacher professional development (TPD) is a systematic, initial and continuous process of educators in accordance with professional competencies and standards. Owing to an ever-changing competitive labour market, the importance of pre-service and in-service TPD is increasing day by day and teachers have to prove themselves as competent employees to deal with the knowledge industry (Broad & Evans, 2006).

In the twenty-first century, teachers are expected to play a variety of roles in schools. Fulfilling these roles requires a wide range of professional and personal competencies (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009). Polly et al. (2015) support this notion and state that it is crucial to develop effective means of support in order to retain novice teachers in the teaching profession. Evers et al. (2016) note that professional development is necessary to bridge the gap of novice teachers' transition from university to workplace environment. TPD involves many processes, actions, and mechanisms, which are inevitably mediated by the cultural, social, political, and economic features and conditions of each particular context (Tan & Dimmock, 2014).

Furthermore, the report by Darling-Hammond et al. (2011) is broadly concerned with TPD and includes international studies. However, this thesis focuses on the South African context, specifically the psycho-social support needs of novice teachers at a Western Cape primary school.

2.4.2 International trends of TPD

Globally, education is in a state of constant flux, with international comparisons requiring policy-makers to re-examine their education systems and how to improve learners' performance in schools (Gray, 2010; European Commission, 2015). The focus of such attention is often on the professional development and education of teachers. However, as pointed out by Goodwin et al. (2014:page), Zeichner (1999) concludes that in the USA, little was known about how teachers experience psycho-social support at their situated workplace, until the last decade of the twentieth century. The situation was similar in Europe, and Lunenberg and Willemse (2006) point out that teachers in almost all European Union countries enter the field without any formal preparation, and often with little or no support from more experienced colleagues.

Essua (2017) postulates that China's TDP is an important part of the Chinese socialist education system. In the past 50 years of development, since the founding of the People's Republic of China, the government has given priority and great attention to teacher education at different levels. On the whole, China has established a teacher education system that meets the needs of basic education of different types and at different levels. The system caters to the specific Chinese context and consists of independent teacher training institutions as the principal parts, supplemented by other educational organisations.

It is believed that South Africa with its unique diversity can learn much from such an outlook prioritising teacher education at such a high level. Essua (2017) compares Zimbabwe's and South Africa's education systems, and asserts that despite the political and economic turmoil, UN research has shown that Zimbabwe is one of the most literate countries in Africa. This view is supported by Holik (2013), when he asserts that in order to remain competitive in this new international context, a nation continuously is obliged to take stock of the quality of its national education project. One way to achieve this is to compare the national education system of one country with the national education systems of other countries. Studying the education systems in other countries also assists in obtaining information about international best practice and support programmes for novice teachers used internationally that can be utilised in the South African context. In the same vein, Wolhuter (2014) notes one important factor to acknowledge, as an example, is the fact that South Africa and Namibia are the only two sub-Saharan African countries where the minimum educational level for teaching is a four-year university degree.

At present there are few systemic routes for teacher professional development, and little research documentation of these routes exists (Murray et al., 2011; Berry, 2013). Professional development of educators is crucial. Research conducted by TNTP (2015) states that effective systems in other countries have clearly defined and disciplined approaches to professional development with follow-up in which the impact of the professional development is evaluated

and appropriate adjustments are made (Brenneman, 2016). Korthagen et al. (2014) have mentioned a variety of roles, each of which may require professional development: teaching, coaching, facilitation of collaboration between diverse organisations and stakeholders, assessment, 'gatekeeping', curriculum development, critical enquiry, and research. The lack of induction into these roles experienced by so many teachers is well documented (Murray et al., 2011; Kosnik et al., 2015). The National Center on Education and the Economy indicates that school responsibility needs to be a driving factor in the quality of teacher professional development (Brenneman, 2016).

Moreover, multiple reforms in education systems worldwide are significantly influencing teachers' professional work, especially their workloads. Excessive workload can lead to burnout and stress. In an education staff survey of 2014, 91% of school teachers have experienced stress in the past two years, while a further 74% suffered anxiety and 47% had depression. Ninety-one percent blamed excessive workload as the major cause.

According to Spillane (1999) and Borko et al. (2010), changing this will be challenging without support and management for teacher professional development. Education specialists and policy makers were steered by this to put greater emphasis on teacher professional development programmes as a foundation for the reform (Fullan, 2001; McLaughlin & Talbert, 2006). As a result, despite ensuring the development of teacher work performance and enhancing the professionalism of teachers, nearly half of all teachers in the United States are dissatisfied with their professional development opportunities, asserting that much of what is set forth is ineffective (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009). According to Brenneman (2016), the United States has not cultivated a vision of what high-quality professional development looks in consistent with teaching-practice frameworks that will lead *novice teachers to success. Brenneman contends that investing in teacher learning acknowledges that exemplary teaching demands deep content knowledge and skill, which cannot be learned in isolation.

In light of it all, the Education 2030 Framework for Action calls for a "substantial increase in qualified teachers through the betterment of their training, recruitment, retention, status, working conditions and motivation" (WEF, 2015). The development of professional standards for teachers is considered an important lever in addressing challenges facing education systems within developing countries (Gallie & Keevy, 2014). The psycho-social experiences of teachers, especially NTs, are considered in this thesis as an important component of developing professional standards.

2.4.3 Local trends of TDP

In the South African context, post-apartheid educational reforms in South Africa have been some of the most ambitious and diverse in the world over the past few decades (Crouch, 2004). Literature exists which clearly indicates the influence of teachers in the ultimate success or failure of reforms (Villegas-Reimers & Reimers, 1996; O'Sullivan, 2002; Mohammed & Harlech-Jones, 2008).

TPD during apartheid in South Africa reflected the policy that ruled the country. As far as the general organisation of TPD is concerned, the DBE and the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) had been under pressure since the 2009 Teacher Development Summit to produce a concrete teacher development plan. In 2011, the Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for TPD (2011–2025) was published. It aimed at improving teacher professionalism, in particular teachers' subject knowledge, knowledge of teaching, and computer literacy skills. However, the policies of apartheid had taken their toll on education. (Crouch, 2004; OECD, 2008). There have been courses created by a number of public–private institutions, yet it appears that they have not adequately met the needs of these teachers (DoE, 2005; Robinson & Christie, 2008). Many of the professional development courses do not meet the professional needs of teachers and have little or no impact on their teaching skills as outlined in the report of the Ministerial Committee on Teacher Education (DoE, 2005). Teachers are expected to respect the dignity of others, refrain from harming or undermining others, and exhibit "appropriate behaviour and language" in ways that elicit respect (SACE, 2002).

The SACE Code of Professional Ethics has as a standard that educators have an obligation, in particular, to support the induction of newcomers to the profession. This requirement is not reflected in the competences of NTs. In order to constantly improve and adapt to evolving circumstances, NTs are expected to engage in reflective practice in conjunction with their professional community of practice (DHET, 2015). In addition, they are expected to be able to work with other role players to support the learning and well-being of the learners they teach. Similarly, the IQMS requires that teachers form "appropriate interpersonal relationships" with learners, parents and their colleagues.

Teachers are not prepared to meet the needs of today's learners (Center for Public Education, 2013). Elements related to this problem include ineffective teacher professional development programmes, an overflow of recent reform efforts, and lack of instructional leadership from principals (Wallace Foundation, 2013). Teachers often report that professional development does not address their unique teaching needs, and report low levels of efficacy in meeting the unique needs of different learners in their classrooms (MA TELLS, 2014).

Diaz-Maggiol (2004) is of the view that teachers need differentiated professional development that meets their individual needs to grow as professionals where they are situated. I concur with Diaz-Moggiol's views that different schools display different needs as they serve different communities, social groups, cultural and geographical components. Teachers pose their own unique teacher identity. Toussi and Ghanizadeh, (2012) agree that to improve instructional practices, reform should lead to changes in instructional practice. However, many schools fall short in meeting these needs, leaving teachers feeling less effective in a high-stakes culture of teaching and learning. In a related study, Mutekwe (2014) asserts that teachers lack motivation to attend professional development programmes offered by the Department of Education because of poor quality and presentation skills, and lack of content knowledge by presenters. Mkhwanzi (2014:123-124) further highlights departmental workshops as ineffective, not positively impacting on increasing teacher knowledge and changing practice. Furthermore, another research suggests that effective professional development is school-based, active, collaborative, progressive and focused closely on pupils' learning [NPEAT], 2003). However, for many teachers, their professional development experiences are far removed from that ideal. Borko (2004) supports this view, and suggests that professional development needs to include both cognitive and social aspects of learning.

Taking the above into consideration, one can clearly see that great emphasis on change is placed on TPD, internationally and locally. It is vital that we adapt professional development according to the needs and situation of the variables in context, in this case, the novice teacher. The next section reviews literature on teacher professional development models.

2.4.4 Teacher professional development models

According to Dengerink et al. (2015), two perspectives of teacher professional development can be adopted: the group or the individual. The group perspective emphasises the development of the profession and the professional identity that teacher educators share. The latter focuses on the individual teacher educator who is engaged in activities with a specific attitude, knowledge, and skills, all directed at his/her professional growth. Moreover, Gaible and Burns (2005) contend that TPD can be divided into three broad categories: standardised TPD, site-based TPD and self-directed TPD. Furthermore, they note that TPD engages teachers as learners, and some essential techniques such as mentoring, teamwork, observation, reflection and assessment are revisited as part of a strategic professional growth plan for the teacher. The availability of such programmes in all schools remains a challenge in South Africa. Even more worrying is how such programmes are modelled to support NTs, particularly, tapping from the psycho-social components of such programmes.

This research seeks to explore NTs' experiences of psycho-social support in school. In order to do this, it would be worthwhile to examine two popular models of TPD: The Standardised

Teacher Professional Development (STPD) model, and Site-Based Professional Development (STPD) model. While both models have their distinctive strengths and weaknesses, I engage these two models of TPD in this literature review in order to explore to what extent they highlight the psycho-social support provided to teachers in general, and NTs in particular.

2.4.5 Standardised Teacher Professional Development

Standardised Teacher Professional Development (STPD) refers to the most centralised approach, best used to disseminate information and skills among large teacher populations. This approach involves workshops and training sessions. Standardised, training-based approaches generally focus on the exploration of new concepts and the demonstration and modelling of skills. In transforming the South African education system, it is important that teachers be suitably equipped to address the needs and challenges (DoE, 2007.a).

This system attempts to develop teachers' professional knowledge and skills to successfully complete their responsibilities, to continually develop teachers' performance and competence, empower teachers by improving their professional self-efficacy, subject knowledge, skills, and classroom management, to improve the professional status of teachers, and to help teachers to identify appropriate PD programmes that may assist them in their growth (DoE, 2007: ay).

Standardised models tend to rely on training-based approaches, in which presenters share skills and knowledge with large groups of educators via face-to-face means. Habitually, though, workshops take place at one time and one site, without further workshops, and without helping teachers build the range of skills and capacities needed to use new techniques when they return to their schools (Pylman, 2015). This view is supported by Beyer (2002), who states that the standards-based model of TPD degrades the notion of teaching as a complex, context-specific political and moral endeavour; it rather embodies a desire to create a system of teaching, and teacher education that can create and empirically validate connections between teacher effectiveness and student learning. Smyth (1991) also argues that externally imposed forms of responsibility and inspection, such as standards, designate a lack of respect for teachers' own abilities for reflective, critical enquiry. There are many critics of the standards-based model of TPD. For example, Joyce (2002) asserts that educator improvement projects ought to be about school change and expert development. Beyer (2002:28) criticises the lack of responsiveness given to central and contentious questions regarding the purpose of teaching, claiming that "teacher education must be infused with the kind of critical scrutiny about social purposes, future possibilities, economic realities and moral directions". Teachers are evaluated via the IQMS system, which assesses their professional growth. This has also been explored in prior studies by Pylman (2015). He notes that the IQMS tool is primarily used for promotion rather than for its intended developmental purpose. Furthermore, Bernauer (2002) and Moore (2000) concur that professional development is most effective when it is a

constant, continual process that includes properly planned development and individual follow-up through empathetic observation and feedback, educator dialogue and peer coaching. To effect change will take more than the exchange of information typical of 'make and take' top-down centralised models for professional development programmes (Dede, 1999, cited in Butler & Leahy, 2003). While the STPD is valuable in its attempts to measure TPD, I agree with researchers like Pylman (2015), Beyer (2002) and Joyce (2002), who challenge the bureaucratic, top-down, and uncaring undertones of STPD. The aim of my research is to focus on NTs' experiences of psycho-social support in schools. I believe that this focus will contribute to our understanding of TPD, and particularly the centring of the NTs' affect (experiences in the psychological sense), as an important variable in TPD. Experiences occur in contexts which can be physical, psychological, historical and otherwise. A good TPD programme should foreground awareness of these varied contexts and situate the programme to meet different realities. Site-Based Professional Development (SPD) attempts to do this to some extent.

2.4.6 Site-Based Teacher Professional Development

Site-Based Professional Development (SPD) refers to intensive learning by groups of teachers in a school or region, promoting profound and long-term changes in instructional methods (Yost et al., 2009). It often takes place in schools, resource centres or teacher training institutions, such as universities or colleges (Guskey & Yoon, 2009). SPD often focuses on the specific, situational problems that individual teachers encounter as they try to implement new techniques in their classroom practices.

A number of research studies (Slotta, 2000; Fishman et al., 2003) have focused on what has been called 'site-based' or 'curriculum-linked' professional development. This structure for professional development is conceptualised to prepare teachers more effectively to comprehend and apply the curriculum than do workshops. Mackenzie (1997) asserts that this model promotes empowerment of teachers, which is the central purpose of professional development. This view is supported in my research because I seek to explore NTs' experiences of psycho-social support in schools, just like SPD seeks to understand teachers' working environments, how they struggle with their professional identity and how they can grow as professionals in the current situation.

According to Veenman and Denessen (2001), SPD, for example, assists at school in the context of teachers' performance, using methods such as coaching. Eraut (2007) indicates that because there are different contexts, cultures, organisational frameworks and practices, there are differing individual needs and experiences, and differing institutional demands, and so there should be different strategies and forms of professional development. Also, Tan and Dimmock, (2014) contend that TPD involves many processes, actions, and mechanisms which necessarily arbitrate cultural, social, political, and economic features and conditions of each

situated environment, which is the school the teachers are serving. Cohen and Hill (2001), in a study of professional development conducted in California, found that SPD is far more effective than workshops that focused on general pedagogical strategies in promoting change in teachers' practices. Yost et al. (2009) also confirm the need for SPD and challenge the dominant view that other models of professional development focus mainly on the use of one-off workshops without any planning for measuring the effectiveness of such workshops and follow-ups. In this thesis, while I agree with the notion of SPD, I also extend the argument that such training should disambiguate between NTs and the more experienced ones, as well as bringing to the fore the importance of the effect of how such programmes are rolled out. That is, to what extent does SPD improves NTs' experiences of psycho-social support in schools? There has not yet been a serious attempt to answer this question in the literature. In the next section of the study I discuss psycho-social factors of novice teachers and assess how these affect the experiences of NTs.

2.5 Literature on Psycho-social Factors

There are several factors within professional development, but for the purpose of this study I focus on psycho-social factors. In this thesis, I explore the holistic management of teachers, similar to that in any other workplace that should take care of its employees. For this reason, my focus is on psycho-social factors which could be critical to teacher attrition.

As noted earlier on in the study, Flores (2004) observes that there is growing acknowledgement in the literature that TPD should be associated with learning experiences that interlink teachers' sociocultural context. Grundy and Robison (2004) contend that professional development serves three functions (extension, renewal and growth), and is usually initiated through two drivers: systemic and personal. In this study, by focusing on the psycho-social experiences of novice teachers, I draw on the initiation of the personal driver located within the three functions of professional development. Othman & Senom (2019) articulate that teachers' professional development (TPD) is a complex process, which requires cognitive and emotional involvement of teachers individually and collectively.

Psycho-social factors such as personality, motivation, social interaction skills, family structure, stress, physical health, self-concept, mental health and environmental conditions have been widely acknowledged as being pertinent to the work performance of any teacher. Psycho-social factors are characteristics of our experience, such as our thoughts, emotions, behaviours and our wider social experience (Psycho-Social Working Group, 2005; IFRC Reference Centre for Psycho-Social Support, 2014). Psycho-social factors that occur at work can have a severe effect on the well-being and health of employees, at both the psychological and physical level.

Psycho-social factors, for example, consist of burdens placed on novice teachers by giving them too many tasks to handle, exacerbating feelings of stress and tension. Little job control, low morale, burnout, lack of motivation, little work fulfilment, and repetitive work are further contributing factors.

2.5.1 Psycho-social work environment

The term 'psycho-social work environment' covers aspects concerning both our work and working conditions. In the literature, the terms 'psychological' and 'social factors' are common in the work arena (Knardah, 2017). Psychological factors are perceptions and interpretations of work-related matters, while social factors involve the influence of the social context and interpersonal elements. These concepts have merged into the term 'psycho-social'.

The term 'psycho-social work environment' can be divided into three components: organisational culture, social interaction, and individual perception. These are discussed below.

2.5.2 Organisational culture

Knapp (2006) define the organisational culture as an adaptation of the anthropological concept. Other researchers refer to it as a building of a shared school culture, aiming for a shared school vision, a culture of collaboration, a professional learning climate and collective decision-making (Jurasaite-Harbison & Rex, 2010; Little, 2012, Admiraal et al., 2015). Organisational contexts that encourage such exchanges within the collective see several positive effects, both for the individuals and the organisation. For the individuals, the sharing of experiences and emotions develops a feeling of communal belonging wherein one contributes and shares knowledge and know-how. In an overview of current research, Miller (2016:) concludes that "an organisation with well-being at its core will reap productivity gains".

In the school organisational context, the concern is with specific characteristics of working conditions and the school structure. Leadership roles are important to teachers (Mihans, 2008). A leader who lacks good leadership skills can make a workplace totally unbearable. Good management is essential to a good working environment. In studies related to well-being, autonomy at work, decision latitude, and work control are the most frequently cited factors that impact employees' well-being (Nielsen et al., 2017).

Furthermore, Gruenert and Whitaker (2015) note that culture is not a problem that needs to be solved, but rather a framework that a group can use to solve problems; it is how we learn to survive, one generation passing down what it has learned to the next. In this situation, it implies veteran teachers passing the school organisational culture to novice teachers. Culture is essentially a social indoctrination of unwritten rules that people learn as they try to fit in a

particular group (Schein, 1992). The novice seeks to fit into the new environment, coming fresh from university, finding his or her way around the school setting. It also has been referred to at different times as any of the following: Culture is a social narcotic to which practically all of us are addicted – we feel good when we belong to a group. Members of an organisational culture will help to shape one another, and the culture in turn will evolve into a unique group of individuals who share certain characteristics and take some pride in being set apart from those outside the group.

It has already been noted that the school environment is an organisation with a complex structure, comprising teachers, support staff, and learners and their parents/guardians. If novice teachers work in a school where the organisational culture is not explicitly stated and positively affirmed, they may struggle to affirm themselves as part of that organisation; this may affect them psychologically and compromise their output (hence the 'sink or swim' phase of the NT's.

2.5.2.1 Social interaction

Social interaction among teachers is one of the most effective ways for teachers to learn creative methods to solve complex problems (Darling Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995). Positive psychology identifies relationships as one of the major pathways for human flourishing (Seligman, 2011). Human beings are naturally social creatures and our interactions with others are just as vital as food and water (Lieberman, 2013). As most adults spend a significant amount of time interacting with other individuals at work, the workplace is an important contributor to individual well-being, in particular because it offers the potential for positive relationships (Diener & Seligman, 2002). In fact, research shows that relationships and work are among the major contributors to individual well-being (Diener & Biswas-Diener, 2008).

Teachers want to feel empowered, and they want to feel as though their ideas matter and that they are making a difference (Wong, 2004; Wong et al., 2005). If teachers feel they are part of a professional learning community and regarded as members of a team, it increases their sense of efficacy, they feel empowered to make decisions in their classrooms, and assist even the most challenging of students in difficult situations (Wong et al., 2005; Kukla, 2009; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Jamil et al., 2012; Lambert et al., 2012; Simos, 2013).

The desire to feel connected to others has long been identified by psychologists as a basic human need (Maslow, 1943; Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Sheldon & Gunz, 2009). Within the workplace, social relationships are important for various attitudinal, well-being, and performance-related outcomes (Chiaburu & Harrison, 2008; Basford & Offermann, 2012). Psycho-social working conditions are also determined by the interaction between environmental factors, other workers and the individual. Several constructs are conceptually

related to the proposed measure of informal workplace social interactions. These constructs include: social connectedness (Lee & Robbins, 1995), workplace friendship (Methot et al., 2016), and social support from peers in the workplace (Chiaburu & Harrison, 2008). Well-being is important not only for the workers themselves, but also for organisations; workers with positive well-being perform better and have better relationships (Diener & Seligman, 2004). Positive psychology research shows that work occupies a central place in the human quest for meaning as a primary source of purpose, identity, and belongingness (Michaelson et al., 2014).

Collegial relationships are paramount to a novice teacher. As a novice teacher seeks to find his or her identity as a professional educator, and as a member of the professional organisation of teaching, he or she will need the assistance and guidance of administrators and veteran teachers (Baker, 2007; Carlson, 2012; Fry, 2010; Prather-Jones, 2011; Pogodzinski, et al. 2012). Collaboration and cooperation (or the lack thereof) are the consequences of how these interactions work. For example, if there are many conflicts in the place of work, this may reduce the overall productivity, and people will try to avoid working in such a place. Conflicts may also cause health problems among workers. Insomnia and muscle pain (tension) are common consequences of problems in the workplace.

Millennials (born 1981–1996, however, variously defined as born 1980–2000) will become the largest generation in the South African workforce. A recent survey shows that their skills and interests are very different from those of previous generations (Elanceodesk, 2014). For example, millennials are more agile and creative, and three out of four (79%) would consider working for themselves to have flexibility, the ability to choose what to work on, and control of their own destiny (Elanceodesk, 2014). A different survey showed that 61 percent of millennials consider soft skills (attitude/personality) more important than hard skills (IQ) (Gen Y, 2013). Another key finding is that millennials care more about the people they work with, exciting work, and good mentorship, and less about money than hiring managers realise. In other words, the drivers that used to work for baby boomers (born 1946–1964), such as money, status, and power, are not necessarily applicable to millennials (Elanceodesk, 2015). Are schools as organisational structures ready to meet these new expectations? This can be very serious in a school environment, where NTs are noted to be experiencing often hostile relations with learners. The need to understand how colleagues can support one another through social interaction is therefore important as it will contribute to the holistic well-being of NTs, learners, and the school as a whole.

2.5.2.2 Individual perception

According to Fullan (2010), individual perception and collective strategies are compound resources; change requires a combination of the two approaches. A few studies have demonstrated how mediating psychological factors on the part of the individual may impact the relation between structural and cultural dimensions of the school organisation and teachers' professional learning (Kwakman, 2003; Geijsel et al., 2009; Thoonen et al., 2011). Differences stem from cognitive and emotional processes, as well as characteristics of the individual employee. An individual approach to learning is equally important (Opfer & Pedder, 2011). Teachers' individual and collective learning processes are interrelated. From the existing literature, it is evident that the progress of educational reform depends on both teachers' individual and collective capacity (Stoll et al., 2006). By supplementing each other, collaborative and individual learning experiences can provide high-quality learning for teachers. Thus, it is of interest how teachers' perceptions of the workplace environment can be understood. These perceptions of the workplace are a consequence of sense-making processes in which the teacher interprets messages from the institutional environment and integrates these messages into his or her existing framework (Coburn, 2001).The individual and the environment should be seen as mutually influencing each other through the interaction of workplace affordances and individual agency (Billett, 2004; Imants et al., 2013). Pianta et al. (2014) note that every policymaker thinks of professional learning as individual learning.

This component of the psycho-social work environment emphasises the worker's individual interpretation; how external influences are perceived, processed and disseminated. This is substantiated by literature on teachers' work, which identifies emotional work as a central component of effective educational practice (Ball, 2003; Connell et al., 2009; Hebson et al., 2007) and is understandably linked to the concept of teaching as a caring profession. Individual perception, in the school environment, therefore comprises how the (novice) teacher perceives internal stakeholders (other teachers, administrators, learners) and external stakeholders (parents of learners and the larger community, including regulatory bodies). These perceptions can play a pivotal role in novice teachers' psycho-social well-being.

2.5.3 Psycho-social adjustment of teacher educators

The term 'adjustment' has been borrowed from a biological concept 'adaptation' to emphasise the individual's struggle to get along or survive in his or her social and physical environment. It signifies making oneself fit the demands of the external world; however, adjustment consists of two kinds of processes: fitting oneself into given circumstances and allowing the circumstances to fit one's needs. Adjustment is a continuous process in human life. In fact, adjustment is the real essence of education and the most essential quality of an educated individual. In any education system, the teacher is considered the main instrument in accomplishing the aims of education, but the present-day teacher is confounded by several

problems of adjustment. A teacher can work properly and will exhibit his or her teaching competence only when he/she is able to maintain a balance between the two processes of adjustment mentioned earlier.

Roy and Halder (2018) covered extensive literature of teacher adjustment in their research. Hota (2000) explored a highly significant positive relationship of organisational health with home adjustment, health adjustment, social adjustment, emotional adjustment and occupational adjustment. Sonia (2008) found that male rural teachers are more adjusted than male urban teachers; however, female rural teachers and female urban teachers are equally adjusted. Sunita (2008) concluded that teacher adjustment is correlated with the age of the teacher, sex, and locality. Kumari (2010) found that secondary school headmasters differ in levels of adjustment: age, experience and language medium make a significant difference, whereas sex, academic qualifications, locality, and type of management do not make a significant difference. Kaur and Shikha (2015) note a gender difference in the adjustment of teachers. Ahmad and Khan (2016) show there is no significant difference in the adjustment of school teachers in relation to their educational qualifications, experience and locality. In the light of the above theoretical framework, the adjustment may be conceived as a process of bringing balance between normative expectations and personal dispositions between NTs' and the work environment needs taking into consideration circumstances that influence the satisfaction of these needs. In order to understand the teacher adjustment of a particular teacher, it is necessary to know his or her role expectations, individual disposition, needs and environment.

2.5.3.1 Dimensions of psycho-social adjustment

For the purpose of this study, psycho-social adjustment is defined as a satisfactory relationship between the individual teacher and his/her environment in respect of two dimensions of adjustment: psychological adjustment and social adjustment. Emotions play an important part in one's psychological adjustment to self and environment. An individual is said to be emotionally adjusted if able to express emotions in a proper way at a proper time. Social adjustment of teachers refers to the choice of occupation; working conditions; relationship with colleagues and head of the institution; financial satisfaction; and opportunities for promotion. These factors decide one's adjustment to one's occupation and contribute significantly towards one's overall adjustment. Social adjustment can be ascertained by one's social development and adaptability to the social environment.

2.5.3.2 Psycho-social caring support

According to Legg (2011), psycho-social caring support involves the culturally sensitivity provision of psychological social care. Psycho-social support facilitates resilience within individuals and communities. "It promotes the restoration of social cohesion and infrastructure

by respecting the dignity, independence and coping mechanisms of individual communities" (Inter-Agency Network of Education in Emergencies, 2016). Education and psycho-social support are purported to have a dynamic and mutually reinforcing relationship.

(UNESCO, 2011) focused on education in conflict settings and recognised the importance of psycho-social interventions in addressing the negative effects of conflict, including depression, trauma, shame and withdrawal, which can have significant consequences for individual learning. Ahmad and Khan (2016) concur that psycho-social caring can provide hope and psychological well-being.

2.6 Teacher Well-Being

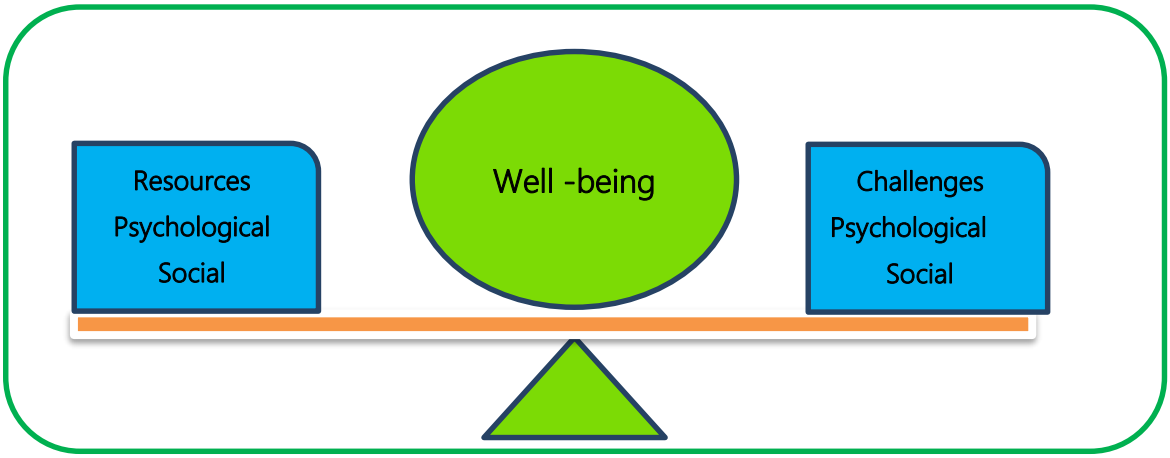
This research uses situated learning as a theoretical framework to understand novice teachers' experiences of psycho-social support. Situated learning, as already mentioned, explores the basis of understanding the social, historical and contextual nature of the learning, thinking and practice that emerge from human activity (Wenger, 1998). The teacher is an important variable in teaching and learning as a human activity, but to what extent does the well-being of the teacher affect the effectiveness of this activity? This section of the review focuses on some of the attributes which affect teacher well-being.

A literature search reveals that few definitions of well-being are specific to teachers. For example, Aelterman et al. (2007) define teacher well-being as a positive emotional state which is the result of harmony between the sum of specific environmental factors on the one hand, and the personal needs and expectations of teachers on the other hand. This definition has been used by others in their studies, such as Bricheno et al. (2009). Acton and Glasgow (2015:101) define teachers' well-being as "an individual sense of personal professional fulfilment, satisfaction, purposefulness and happiness, constructed in a collaborative process with colleagues and students". Motivated and enthusiastic teachers are vital to the provision of quality education (Keller et al., 2016), and this requires that they have a sense of well-being. Seligman (2011) identifies five pillars of well-being: positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning, and achievement. Well-being enables humans to flourish, or reach their optimal potential, and is characterised by positive affective states, psychological health and happiness (Seligman, 2011). Enhancing the positive attributes and strengths of teachers has twofold benefits. Firstly, it leads to a positive impact on teacher performance, commitment and satisfaction (Luthans et al., 2008; Rothmann & Rothmann, 2010). Secondly, it influences learner satisfaction, which tends to improve academic results (Hansen et al., 2015). Yet, teachers in socio-economically challenging contexts work in difficult circumstances that negatively affect their well-being (Dehaloo, 2011; Nel et al., 2016).

The majority of classrooms are overcrowded and under resourced (Marais, 2016). Although policy suggests a teacher-to-learner ratio of 1:40, in reality, teachers, especially in rural areas, deal with ratios of more than 1:50 (DoE, 1998; Venktess, 2011). Classrooms also lack basic resources, such as sufficient tables and chairs for learners to use comfortably (Muthusamy, 2015). Furthermore, in such classrooms, teachers have to accommodate a range of learners with diverse psycho-social needs, stemming from multiple adversities attributable to their socio-economic circumstances (Morgan, 2009). Rather than receiving extra support to cope with these difficult circumstances, teachers are often blamed in the media when learners perform poorly in the national assessment tests (Heard, 2016). Policy (DHET, 2015) stipulates that teachers should perform a supportive role for learners, yet this is a difficult role to carry out when their own sense of well-being is compromised (Hammett & Staeheli, 2009). If teachers could enhance their well-being, they would be better prepared to fulfil their role as supportive, caring teachers as well as to address the challenges that arise from the circumstances in which they teach (Fredrickson, 2013). Despite teacher well-being comprising a vital component of quality education (DBE, 2010), in reality, teachers tend to be demotivated, stressed and unable to perform the various roles expected of them to ensure quality education (Simbula et al., 2012).

Wong (2012) described psycho-social well-being as not only healthy functioning and happiness, but also concerned with the assessment of wellness, the determination of a person's satisfaction with life with regard to mental, emotional, social and economic aspects. Dodge et al. (2012:230) propose a new definition of well-being as "the balance point between an individual's resource pool and the challenges faced", as illustrated in Figure 2.3.

Figure 2.2: Model of wellbeing



Source: Dodge *et al*., 2012

As illustrated in figure 2.2, the model of well-being is important because if novice teachers does not obtain psycho-social resources such as teacher well-being programmes, stress

management workshops, and other required support provided to them based on their situatedness, they will not be able to handle the psycho-social challenges they are faced with at school. This often led to the swim or sink scenario which is mentioned in chapter one. It will make them crumble, and lose confidence in their teaching career. Researchers are beginning to pay increasing attention to the well-being of teachers. Teaching is a highly emotional profession associated with high levels of stress that may be the cause of job dissatisfaction, psychological disorders, and reduced well-being (Chang, 2009; Brackett et al., 2010; Keller et al., 2014). In addition, given the pivotal role of teachers in student issues and life learning, the emotional well-being of teachers is essential not only for themselves, but for their students (Frenzel et al., 2009; Jiang et al., 2016; Lee et al., 2016).

Zhu et al. (2011) measured teacher organisational commitment to well-being outcomes of school culture, and a more recent study by Yin et al. (2016) examined the emotional nature of teachers' work and how detrimental this is to one's well-being. Yin et al. (2016) note that trust in colleagues was identified to be beneficial to well-being, and teachers who used more reappraisal were more likely to be psychologically healthier compared with those who adopted suppression. In this study, reappraisal is defined as "an antecedent-focused emotion regulation" that "involves construing a potentially emotional-eliciting situation in non-emotional terms", The phenomenon of reappraisal encompasses a range of different behaviors that amount to intentional changes to appraisal aimed at changing emotion. These changes are intentional in the sense that they are directed at a goal to alter the emotion trajectory. For instance, reappraisal can be triggered by a goal to reduce negative emotions as well as to increase positive emotions, and vice versa (Tamir, 2015).

In South Africa, Daniels and Strauss (2010) mirror the sentiments of writers from other countries that teaching is a challenging profession and further state that certain factors (such as work environment, unreasonable expectations of school communities, socio-economic challenges of society) have the potential to influence emotional illness among teachers. Daniels and Strauss (2010) assert that work-linked stressors can influence the well-being of teachers and organisations. Their study looked at the personal construction of teachers' emotional well-being in the Western Cape province of South Africa, and the teachers in the study reported that the students, school administrators, parents and the department all influenced their feelings of emotional vulnerability. As a result, if teachers' self-worth is eroded in the workplace, their mental state will impact negatively on the quality of their work. Teachers reported a decrease in their productivity, work ethic, and overwhelming negative emotions. Daniels and Strauss (2010:1385) suggest that schools as workplaces are "in need of transformation if teachers are to do their work effectively". Similarly, a study conducted in the Eastern Cape of South Africa with primary and high school teachers by Vazi et al. (2013) identified stress among teachers and that psychological factors contributed to this, specifically

negative affect and role problems. Interestingly they also found that psychological well-being had a strong inverse relationship with stress; thus, intervention should focus on improving psychological well-being and reducing negative effects that contribute to stress.

Therefore, teacher well-being is impacted by a myriad of factors, both positive and negative; some are within teachers' control while others are not. Building on situated leaning as a theoretical framework, one asks the question: To what extent can TDP explore teachers' experiences in order to develop programmes that can better prepare NTs for the new world of work they are embarking on? It is evident that TPD programmes need to highlight issues in respect of teacher well-being in the sense that teachers, especially NTs, have to be able to learn how to cope with different kinds of stress in the workplace, as quickly as possible. Some of the significant factors that affect teacher well-being are discussed in greater depth in this review: resilience and self-efficacy; social emotional competence; and burnout and stress.

2.7 Resilience and self-efficacy

Teacher resilience provides a way of understanding what enables teachers to persevere in the face of challenges (Beltman et al., 2011). Stanford (2001) summarises the multidimensional approach as resilient teachers deriving deep personal satisfaction from their work and relying on an extensive network of support involving their colleagues. Gu and Day (2007) also highlight the notion that good teaching is charged with positive emotions. It is not just a matter of knowing one's subject, being efficient, having the correct competences, or learning all the right techniques. Good teachers are emotional, passionate beings who connect with their students and fill their work and their classes with pleasure, creativity, challenge and joy. The nature of resilience is determined by the interaction between the internal assets of the teacher and the external environments in which the teacher lives and works (Gu & Day, 2007). Internal assets refer to teachers' confidence that they are able to implement efficient classroom management strategies, employ instructional strategies, and engage learners effectively. External aspects pertain to a school environment which includes support from colleagues and school management. Self-efficacy is an interactive process and a key component of resilience. While high self-efficacy is important to teacher resilience, self-efficacy could be enhanced as teachers encounter and overcome the challenges of the learning environment in their unique educational contexts (Beltman et al., 2011). Jabe (2012), contends, "Workplace well-being means having joy of life and a feeling of significance."

2.7.1 Social emotional competence

Zembylas (2005) explores the emotional tension between cognitive and emotional perspectives in the lives of teachers by identifying particular emotional regimes within school cultures. Some teachers are able to constitute their own spaces for emotional freedom in order

to make their situation tolerable or meaningful; others are not, their emotional suffering often resulting in teacher burnout. Ng et al. (2019) note in their study of Malaysian primary school teachers that the incidence of musculoskeletal disorders in teachers was 80.1%, with 80.5% of female and 77.5% of male teachers reporting symptomatic pain during that period. There were significant relationships between psycho-social factors, depression, and MSD. In addition, depression was positively related to musculoskeletal disorders. Furthermore, depression seems to have a partially mediating effect on the relationship between psycho-social factors and musculoskeletal disorders.

Hargreaves (2001) also examined the emotional aspects of teachers' interactions and relationships with their colleagues. The strongest source of negative emotion among these teachers was conflict, seen as a problem, not an opportunity. When teachers work together, "they value appreciation and acknowledgement as well as personal support and acceptance, but tend to avoid disagreement and conflict, whether they regard themselves as close friends or as more distant colleagues" (Hargreaves, 2001:517). This, the author argues, significantly impedes opportunities for improvement. The author suggests that teachers should address their uncertainties by forming relationships through collaboration and reflective practice. This concurs with Pickering et al. (2007), who propose three key themes which, in combination, reflect a broader shift towards co-constructed teacher knowledge:

1. Shared practice (authentic exchanges about practice that lead to changes in practice).
2. Collaborative learning networks (co-operatively grounded; teachers draw on their own and others' practice-based evidence to change their and others' practice).
3. Scholarly reflection on practice (fusion of the theory and practice of teaching; teaching as an intellectual activity, consuming and generating professional knowledge through co-constructivist approaches).

Therefore, vulnerability is not only a condition to be endured, but also to be acknowledged, cherished, and embraced (Kelchtermans, 2005).

According to Kelchtermans (2005), emotions reflect the fact that deeply held beliefs on good education are part of teachers' self-understanding, mediated by the professional context which encompasses dimensions of time (age, generation, biography) and of space (the structural and working conditions). In teacher education there is a need to heighten the awareness of what it means to be a teacher, with both the personal 'being' and the professional 'becoming' as essential and interrelated dimensions of career development. Emotional isolation is characterised by feeling unaccepted or experiencing non-recognition by veteran teachers.

According to Dube (2008), induction provides opportunities for novices not only to analyse their own practices, but also to network with other teachers. Socialisation with others creates a sense of belonging for novices and opportunities to interact with their experienced colleagues. When novices interact frequently and purposefully with master teachers, it will enable them to strengthen their knowledge by spotting positive aspects of good teachers in themselves, and to expand their teaching skills and teaching repertoire (Luft 2009; Uugwanga 2010). The expansion is made possible through close interacting, networking and collaborating with veteran teachers and other novices. It is only when they interact, that novice teachers come to learn.

Too little attention has been paid to the importance of personal development for professional learning. Teacher professional development should focus much more on the personal processes involved in becoming a professional teacher; that is, teacher professional development programmes should comprise a well-grounded balance between the cognitive and emotional dimensions of learning to teach. As Kelchtermans (2006:995) writes, we need teachers who, "with courage and the will to be substantial in their constitution as essential beings, can fill the indefinable responsibility it entails to be human, and from which all teacher actions emanate".

Kristjansson (2000) contends, "the sad fact is that most teacher-training programmes fail to prepare teachers for work on moral and interpersonal issues; as a consequence of which teachers frequently express insecurity about how to address such issues in the classroom".

In view of what has been discussed here, dimensions in teacher education that I believe need to be accentuated more are those which relate to:

- heightening teachers' philosophical and pedagogical awareness;
- emphasising the cognitive as well as emotional aspects of teaching;
- training teachers' capacities for empathy and interpersonal collaboration;
- developing a personal understanding of the implications of teaching perceived as a moral and ethical profession.

Pedagogical encounters are relational encounters and the fundamental significance of emotions cannot be ignored. Teacher professional development programmes need to recognise this importance and incorporate relevant aspects into their courses, for the future benefit of all concerned. Nurturing meaningful relationships and maintaining a positive and stimulating classroom climate are some of a teacher's most important obligations.

2.7.2 Stress and burnout

The teaching profession is considered a highly stressful profession (Johnson et al., 2005; Newberry & Allsop, 2017). Teachers from many countries report high levels of stress (Kyriacou, 2001; Johnson & Birkeland, 2003; Chaplain, 2008; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2015). There is considerable evidence that stress experienced by teachers puts considerable strain on their professional performance and indeed on their personal lives, including their family relationships. Teachers are confronted with a set of changes which lead to contradictory demands on them from society. Behavioural symptoms of teacher stress include poor time management; inability to concentrate; irritation and aggression; withdrawal from supportive relationships; abuse of alcohol, caffeine or tobacco; and, if not managed properly, absenteeism; resignation; conflict with students; and turnover intentions (Stevenson & Harper, 2006).

Previous studies have shown the link between teacher stress and student perceptions of teaching behaviour (Hanif et al., 2011) as well as the link between stress and perceived personal accomplishment (Kokkinos, 2007; Betoret, 2009). The present study extends the body of knowledge by showing that negative emotions are related to actual teaching behaviour. This concurs with a recent qualitative study showing that negative emotions stemming from a strained relationship with a mentor and a poor school climate can be so overwhelming that they influence NT's teaching practice (Yuan & Lee, 2016).

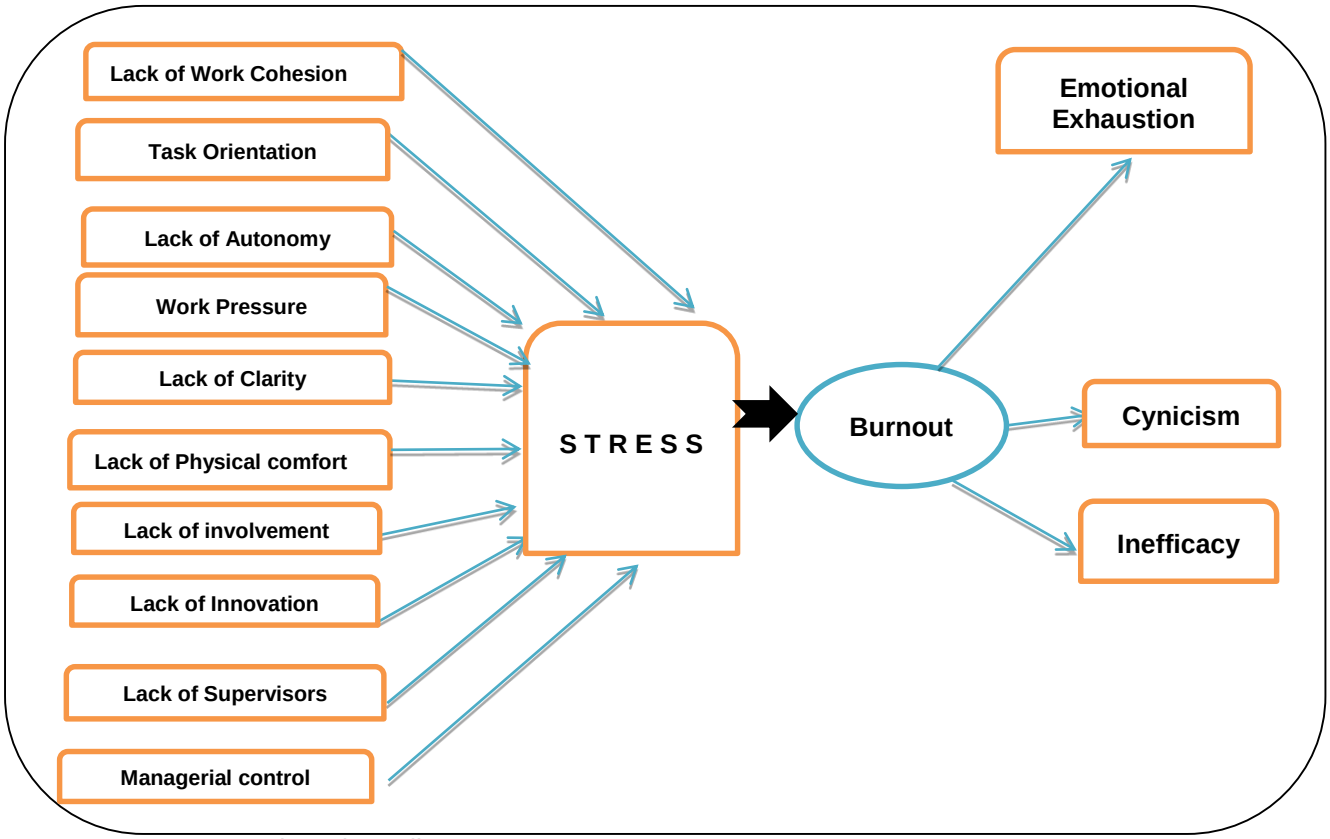
The importance of social interrelations to teachers' wellbeing has been emphasized (Hakanen et al. 2006; Richards et al. 2018). Teachers also reported higher workloads compared with other professionals (Hooftman et al., 2015). Novice teachers (NTs) seem to be more vulnerable to the pressures of the profession compared with experienced teachers (Gold & Roth, 1993). A recent study in the US showed that one-quarter of NTs are at risk of stress in their first year (Fitchett et al., 2018). Harmsen et al. (2018) contend that experiencing high levels of stress is detrimental to teachers' well-being and may indirectly harm students' achievement. Stress also seems to contribute to teachers' intention to leave the profession (attrition) (Jones & Youngs, 2011), their decision to leave teaching (Newberry & Allsop, 2017) and their teaching quality (Hanif, 2004).

Recent research also highlights the importance of social-professional support and its relationship with staying or leaving the teaching profession. Newberry and Allsop (2017) showed that the timing and intensity of challenges like high workloads and pupil misbehaviour matter for teachers' decisions to stay or leave, but the effects are mitigated by the strength of personal and professional relationships. The researchers argue that it is not necessarily the

challenge of the job nor the characteristics of the individual, but the structure of the social-professional support that determines whether teachers stay or leave the professio

Similarly, Kelchtermans (2017:961) argues that professional core relationships (e.g., relationships with students, colleagues, principal) operate as “double-edged swords” as they are the most important sources of positive job outcomes (e.g., satisfaction and motivation) as well as negative job outcomes (e.g., stress, burnout).

Figure 2.3: Teacher stress and burnout



Source: Karasek & Theorell, 1990

Psycho-social work factors causing stress have been theorised to be low job control, high demands and low social support (demand–control–social support model, also known as the ISO-strain model in Figure 2.3 (Karasek & Theorell, 1990). Supporting this theory, Dworkin et al. (1990) showed that teacher ill-health was associated with high levels of stress and that stress-related illnesses. Hakanen etl. (2006) found in their cross-sectional study that burnout mediated the effect of high demands on teacher ill-health.

South African teachers are not sufficiently equipped to address psycho-social challenges that they encounter in under-resourced contexts among learners at school.

2.8 Experiences of Novice Teachers: Social-Economic Aspects of Situatedness

According to Oswald (2010), cited in Theron and Engelbrecht (2012), some teachers work in schools in poverty-stricken areas characterised by a lack of education, parents who are

unemployed, minimal support, increased teacher–learner ratios, as well as societal problems. According to Theron and Engelbrecht (2012), South African teachers also face poor conditions of service, including lack of support from DoE officials and the constant implementation of new policy documents which increase their responsibilities. These factors have a negative influence on the teaching profession.

Furthermore, increasing novice teacher's' professionalism has a positive impact on the school directly or indirectly, as well as adding value to the novice teachers themselves. In education, the role and function of novice teachers are important reflections on the teaching profession. Reilly et al. (2014) state that the role conflict and role ambiguity in the first year of novice teachers working in schools are worrying, and show the low level of professionalism. Moreover, if the novice teacher is not doing work that coexists with professionalism in teaching, this will reduce the level of job satisfaction, especially in teaching and learning (Hunter & Thatcher, 2007). Woods and Weasmer (2009) also state that the experience of a novice teacher in the first year of service can affect the effectiveness of teaching and the attitude adopted during tenure. The experience will also influence the decision to remain in the profession or not.
In a recent newspaper article, Manyana (2017) in News 24, reported a widely publicised UK incident:

A newly qualified primary school teacher attracted worldwide attention for quitting the profession after just one term.
In an emotional video post, Eddie Ledsham from Wallasey in the UK said he would sometimes find himself crying because of the "impossible hours" he was expected to work, reports Metro UK.
Eddie (22) started teaching a class of eight-year-olds in Wirral in England shortly after graduating. He jumped at the opportunity, he said.
"Looking back, I probably rushed into it but I was worried the start of the school year would come around and I'd be left without a job," he told Birmingham Mail.
According to Liverpool Echo, while Eddie was warned by his tutors that his first year would be difficult, he was ecstatic when he landed his a job straight out of university.
But he soon realised his tutors were right about the profession.
"I love working with children but the problem with teaching is that there are so many expectations. I felt that what was expected of us was astronomical," he said in the video posted on various news websites.
Eddie says he had to do lesson plans all by himself rather than sharing ideas with other teachers in the same year.
Most days he got up at 5.30 am so that he could mark and do lesson plans but he would not get home until 6.30 in the evening. He was often last person to leave school.
He says university did not prepare him for the reality of the job.
"At uni, we were told that each lesson would require three A4 page plan. But, when you consider the fact that I was planning seven lessons a day, five days a week, that is an awful lot of planning to do."
Rather than socialising with other teachers at lunch, he found himself in the classroom "catching up on work".

"Most of the teachers at the school would only speak to me to inform me I'd done something wrong and, if I did something right, it usually went unnoticed," Eddie says in the video.
He was ready to quit after three weeks on the job, but he stayed after a pep talk from his mother.
"I felt like I was stuck between a rock and a hard place." I think we should have been given more on-the-job experience during the course of the degree, as it didn't at all prepare me for it.

In today's society, NTs face various challenges in the teaching profession. Therefore, this requires them to play a more progressive role. NTs need to find opportunities to express themselves and take the initiative to promote the teaching profession. Since the abolishment of corporal punishment by the DoE in 1995, novice teachers have been reluctant to discipline learners with behavioural problems. Disciplining learners has therefore become risky and even more challenging for novice teachers because most of them are not well equipped with alternative methods of dealing with learner discipline other than corporal punishment (Moodley, 2009). From the above, it is clear that novice teachers' initial years of teaching are challenging. In the next section, I discuss challenges faced by novice teachers.

2.9 Experiences of Novice Teachers: Challenges

Novice teachers face an array of challenges when entering the teaching profession. These are specific to them as individuals, which makes their experiences unique. Cohen-Evron (2002) states challenges emerging from art teachers' tales through research in Israel include a feeling of isolation and conflict with the educational system. Similarly, Anhorn (2008) states that difficult work assignments, unclear expectations, inadequate resources, isolation, role conflict and reality shock are also some of the challenges that novice teachers face. The study of Darling-Hammond et al. (2009:10) found that "professional development is most effective when it addresses the concrete, everyday challenges involved in teaching and learning specific academic subject matter". Coming to terms with the realities of their new role and school culture can be a shock (Blasé 1985; Staton & Hunt, 2009; Caspersen & Raaen, 2013).

Challenges faced by NTs with regard to teacher professional development are identified in Figure 2.4. Internationally, some challenges that appear consistent over the last three decades include classroom management (such as behaviour management and organising resources), planning for teaching, and communicating with parents. In addition, these challenges can be exacerbated in schools located within lower socio-economic areas, where retaining teachers can be more difficult (Ingersoll, 2004).

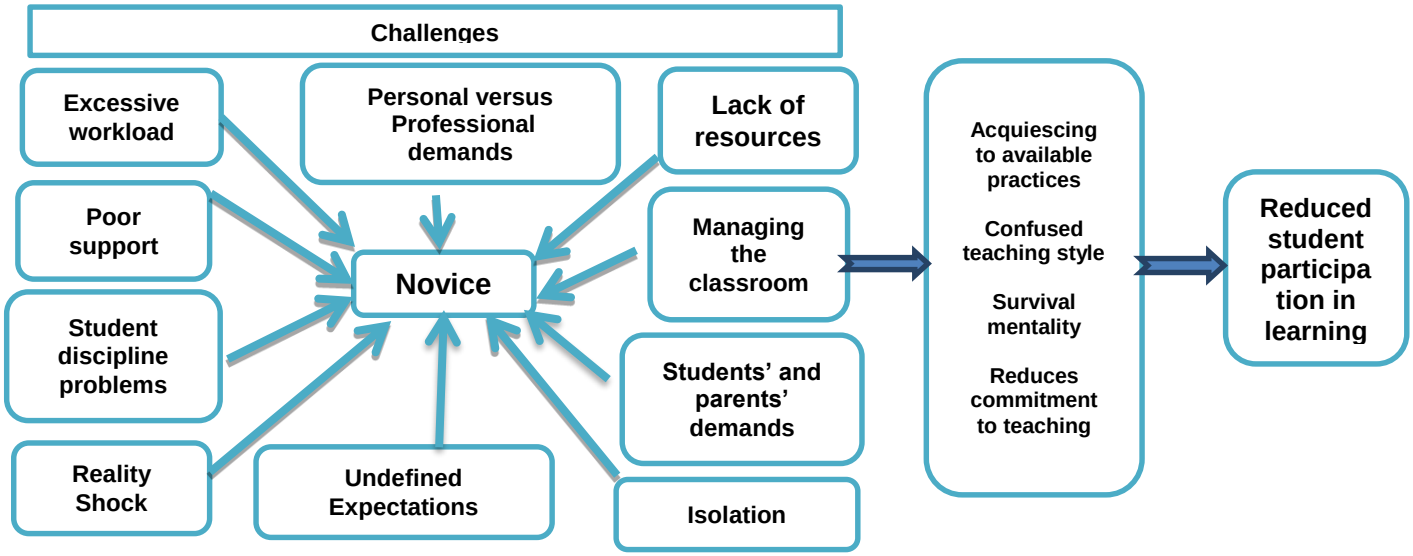


Figure 2.4: Wanzare's diagram of challenges faced by beginning teachers, and their impact on teaching and students' learning (2007)

Novice teachers commonly report feeling particularly overwhelmed by the most difficult students. One Australian first-year teacher interviewed for a case study observed that having a "disruptive student in my classroom is having a significant impact on my interaction with the remainder of the class. As a first-year teacher, I don't have the professional skills to deal with this extreme behaviour" (McCormack et al., 2006). Often, classroom management difficulties can prompt new teachers to abandon many of the research-based instructional practices they learned in college (such as cooperative learning and project-based learning) in favour of a steady diet of lectures and textbooks (van Hover & Yeager, 2004). Thus, situated learning theory would be prominent for novice teachers, as they would be able to continue professional development based on situations which directly pertain to them at the current moment in time. Mkhwanazi (2013) notes limited access to professional development opportunities, lack of support from school leadership, and no support to supplement initial training are all challenges teachers experience which deter professional growth.

2.10 Experiences of Novice Teachers: Support Received

My review of educational literature now turns to the notion of effective support mechanisms for beginning teachers. The importance of induction, mentorship, and school culture are explored. Hudson (2013) recognised that novice teachers globally require more support, as reasons for high attrition rates such as lack of appreciation from colleagues, unsatisfying working conditions and inadequate teacher preparation indicate current systems are failing them. Supporting teachers at the start of their career can help them to develop their pedagogical practice, and to understand the educational, political, and school systems within which they teach. Similarly, effective support can enhance the professional development and learning of novice teachers, and contribute towards their overall path towards greater effectiveness, ensuring quality teaching.

One such form of assistance is mentoring, a more experienced person helping a less experienced one. This is not a new phenomenon. “The term comes from the ancient Greek *Odyssey*, attributed to Homer, dating from the seventh or eighth century BC. In the *Odyssey*, Mentor was the son of Alcimus. In his old age, Mentor was a friend of Odysseus. When Odysseus left for the Trojan War, he placed Mentor and Eumaeus in charge of his son Telemachus, and of Odysseus' palace” (Wikipedia).

In the context of life-long learning, ‘mentoring’ acquired a new meaning, such as different functions performed by a mentor, but above all, it denotes a caring relationship, and cooperation with a young colleague. A mentoring relationship is a relationship between two or more people, (whether formalised or not) where the relationship has a specific purpose. The relationship is reciprocal and both parties benefit, albeit in different ways. The mentor-mentee relationship is dynamic with different stages or phases. Each mentor-mentee relationship is unique although there may be certain general characteristics in all mentor-mentee relationships. This relationship transcends duty and obligation and often involves coaching, networking, sponsoring and career counselling”. (Meyer, M 2006).

Some researchers have investigated the influence that a lack of support from the school management team, colleagues or even the DoE may have on novice teachers’ initial years of teaching. In a study exploring the support that novice teachers have, Menon (2014) noted that respondents indicated the necessity for head teachers to improve their support via enhanced and frequent open communication in the organisational environment. Novice teachers, in their relationships with their head teachers, also stated the lack of proper and consistent orientation and support as a major concern in their formative years of teaching.

According to Greiner and Smith (2009), important factors influencing teacher attrition include sufficient teacher training, positive peer-service practices, and primary school residency. According to Putman & Borko (2000), teachers' experiences of professional development may be influenced by their beliefs. According to Opfer and Pedder (2010:413), 'teacher belief' in relation to professional development involves "those general understandings related to learning that a teacher holds to be true". This reinforces Fives and Buehl's (2008) statement that in learning contexts, pre-service and practising teachers may be guided by their beliefs about teaching knowledge and ability.

2.11 Theoretical Framework: Situated Learning Theory

The research model in this study is based on the theory of situated learning- Legitimate Peripheral Participation and its complementary concept of CoPs (Brown & Duguid, 1991; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998).In the preceding sections of this literature review, I have explored two models of professional development: STPD and SPD. In discussing these models, I have summarised their strengths and also identified some of the gaps in the models. I am biased towards SPD because I strongly believe that it offers a more contextual approach to TPD compared with STPD, which is more generic. It is also partly because of the importance of understanding the context in which TPD happens that I opted to use situated learning theory (Lave & Wenger, 1991) as my theoretical frame for the study. NTs' experiences of psycho-social support fall within the realm of TPD; but my focus on how these NTs experience this support clearly suggests the need to understand literature on situated learning theory and related communities of practice.

Scholarly definitions of situated learning

- **Besar (2018, p. 49)** argues that SLT "holds that effective education requires learning that is embedded in authentic contexts of practice, wherein students engage in increasingly more complex tasks within social communities."

- **Farmer & Hughes (2005, p. 4)** argue that, in SLT, learning is seen as a "process or function of activity within a community of practice." The later argue that SLT believes in: "the primacy of participation in authentic social interaction in order for learning to occur.

- **Handley et al. (2006, p. 3)** explain that SLT holds learning to be "integral to everyday practice in workplace, family and other social settings. The focus shifts from decontextualised 'objective' knowledge to the accomplishment of knowing in action and in practice."

Wenger (1998:3) initially based his ‘social theory of learning’ on the assumption that “learning is an individual process, [in] that it has a beginning and an end, that it is best separated from the rest of our activities, and that it is the result of teaching”. Everyone has different professional development needs; one may be good with pedagogy but may struggle to adapt to school culture and may develop a low self-esteem at the workplace. Wenger (1998) further elaborates on the various mediators that impact this ‘individual learning theory’. Challenging the traditional view of learning as “an isolated activity in which an individual acquires knowledge from a decontextualized body of knowledge” (Buysse, Sparkman, & Wesley, 2003, p. 267), situated learning holds that learning develops from experience and social interaction and is the function of the activity, context, and culture in which it occurs; that is, it is situated (Lave, 1996). Situated learning therefore focuses on the basis of understanding the social, historical and contextual nature of the learning, thinking and practice that emerges from human activity (Wenger, 1998). Little is known about how a school setting can help or hinder an NT’s attainment of work-related development.

According to Smith et al. (2017), cited in Lave and Wenger (1991:49), situated learning has also been distinguished from the conventional notion of apprenticeships by claiming that it is more than "learning by doing". They postulate that learning is an "integral and inseparable" aspect of social practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991:215). They theorise that situated learning emphasises the relationship between knowledge and learning because it concerns itself with the "negotiated" character of meaning and the "concerned" nature of learning activity among all participants. Traditional professional development focuses mainly on pedagogical curriculum-based activities, neglecting the well-being of the main resource, the teacher. Smith (2020) quotes Noddings (2003); she adds that teacher happiness should be part of the aim of education, because a happy teacher equals a happy learner, which in turn gives us a constructive school as a whole. The implications of this theory are that situated learning allows for the understanding of the whole person as more than just a receiver of knowledge; and that activity, agent, and social world "mutually constitute each other".

Situated learning theory positions the ‘community of practice’ as the context in which an individual develops the practices (including values, norms and relationships) and identities appropriate to that community. However, in contrast to theories of socialization (e.g. Vygotsky, 1978) which predict the smooth reproduction of communities over time, situated learning theory calls attention to the possibilities for variation and even intra- community conflict. Individuals bring to a community a personal history of involvement with workplace, social and familial groups whose norms may complement or conflict with one other.

2.12 Legitimate peripheral participation

To define "situated learning—legitimate peripheral participation", Lave and Wenger (1991) stated: "Learning viewed as situated activity has as its central defining characteristic a process that we call *legitimate peripheral participation*." (p. 29). Lave and Wenger (1991) further explained:

By this I mean to draw attention to the point that novice teachers unavoidably participate in communities of practitioners and that the command of knowledge and skill requires them to move toward full participation in the sociocultural practices of a community. 'Legitimate peripheral participation' provides a way to speak about the relations between newcomers and old-timers, and about activities, identities, artifacts, and communities of knowledge and practice. It concerns the process by which newcomers become part of a community of practice. A person's willingness to learn and the meaning of learning is organised through the process of becoming a full participant in a sociocultural practice. This social process includes; indeed it colligate, the learning of knowledgeable skills. (p. 29)

2.13 Communities of Practice

According to Lave and Wenger (1991), new knowledge and learning involve a process of engagement in a CoP. According to Brown (2013), a 'community of practice' implies a group of people willing to work together and prepared to support one another's journey towards professional growth. In recent literature, communities of practice (CoP) represent a promising theme in the professional development of teacher educators (Hadar & Brody, 2010; Swennen & Bates, 2010; Brody & Hadar, 2011). While different interpretations of CoP make it challenging to apply the concept in meaningful ways (Boylan, 2010), it nonetheless provides a framework for examining TPD. For example, Boylan (2010) emphasises that CoP allows people in an organisation to learn and grow professionally through participation.

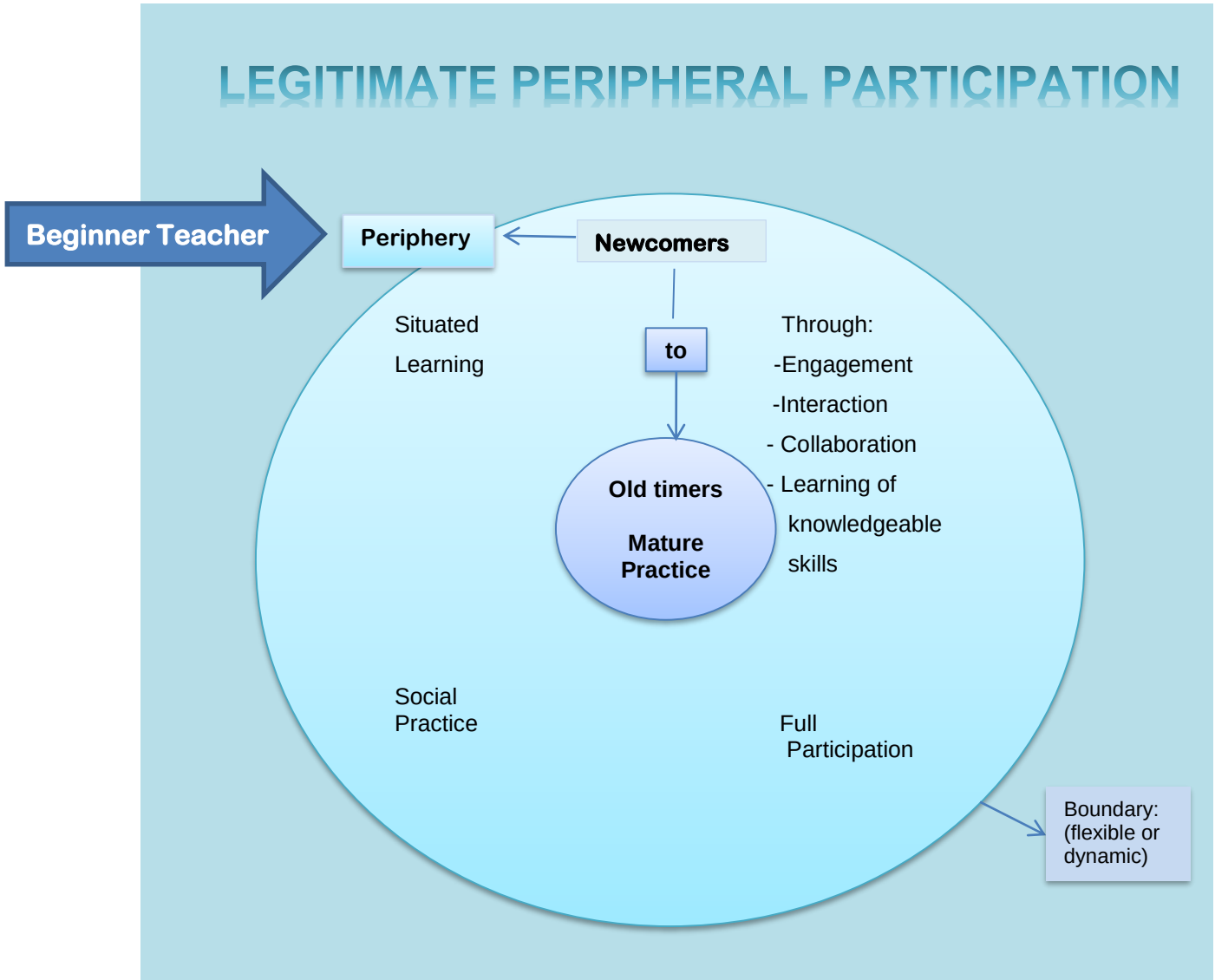
Wenger-Trayner & Wenger-Trayner, 2015) identifies three important elements that differentiate a CoP from other communities or groups:

The first element in CoP is **the domain.** For Wenger-Trayner & Wenger-Trayner, 2015, a community of practice is more than a group of friends or network of connections. It contains a specific domain of shared interest, members share a commitment to the domain, and competence in the domain separates members from other people. The second element is **the communities** Wenger-Trayner & Wenger-Trayner, 2015). Members in a domain pursue their interest through joint conversations, activities, and shared information. Together they build relationships that allow and help them to learn from each other. The third element is **the practice** (Wenger-Trayner & Wenger-Trayner, 2015). Members of a CoP develop shared

stories, resources, experiences, and ways of looking at and handling issues and problems. All members are practitioners in the community. A shared practice is built through time and interaction with other members of the community of practice.

Learning in CoP is highly social, and members are integrated into the community through what Lave and Wenger (1991:14) term “legitimate peripheral participation”. This refers to the actual integration process for novice members of the community. In this beginning stage, new members usually serve an apprenticeship and learn at the periphery of the community. As members increase competence through interactions, collaborations and engagement, they move from peripheral participation into full participation. This is illustrated in Figure 2.5.

Figure 2.5: Legitimate Peripheral Participation



Source (peripheral participation)

https://za.pinterest.com/pin/149604018849270186/)

Figure 2.5 illustrates that a newcomer's participation in a CoP often starts at the periphery – "a region that is neither fully inside nor fully outside" (Wenger, 1998, p. 117) and leads towards the centre through increased involvement. This process of moving from the periphery to centre is characterised by the concept of legitimate peripheral participation. In Wenger's writings, the notion of legitimate peripheral participation is referred to but it does not take centre stage. In their study, Pyrko et al. (2017) cited Wenger, McDermott and Snyder's (2002) definition of CoPs as: groups of people who share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by interacting on an ongoing basis. In this study, the group of people constitutes novice teachers seeking to make sense of their psycho-social support needs. It is clear that teacher professional development is both curriculum and person driven. This notion works hand in hand; for the purpose of the study I am concentrating on personal professional development, focusing more on the psycho-social well-being of the teacher than curriculum development, as teachers have attained content knowledge during their four-year university programme, but have not yet dealt with the actual situation at the school as their workplace.

Deriving from the theoretical framework comprising situated learning theory, Legitimate Peripheral Participation and communities of practice, it is clear that professional development regarding novice teachers specifically, is not a 'one shoe fits all' situation.

This thesis seeks to understand how NTs experience psycho-social support in their place of work. Lave and Wenger's (1991:34) proposition that situated learning exists as a "transitory bridge" that connects the view that cognitive processes are primary in learning on the one hand, with social practice as the primary vehicle for learning on the other hand, is relevant. Lave and Wenger embrace issues of curriculum, instruction, assessment, management, school culture, and the larger community. Situated learning go well beyond maintaining order, which most perceive as the primary concern of NTs. NTs are in the transitioning phase as they seek to understand the school culture, the community they are serving, and adapt to colleagues and student behaviour. One needs to be reminded that the NTs are coming from a university context and are taking a big leap to the professional work environment. NTs have to find themselves and grow professionally within the working environment among their colleagues and school situation as every school is unique and has its own culture. This is what Lave and Wenger (1991) refers to as situated learning. Therefore, in exploring NTs' experiences of psycho-social support, I am interested in extending our understanding of how context impacts on situated learning. That is, who are the people who make up the school community, and how can our understanding of this community assist in understanding NTs' experiences of psycho-social support? This has been theoretically described as learning in a community of practice (Brown, 2013).

2.14 Conclusion

TPD involves many processes, actions, and mechanisms which are inevitably mediated by the cultural, social, political, and economic features and conditions of each particular context (Tan & Dimmock, 2014). To address the unique working conditions and expectations of teachers, TPD must be "purposefully conceptualised, thoughtfully implemented and meaningfully employed" (Loughran, 2014) to support growth and change (Hadar & Brody, 2010). Smith (2003:202) identified a myriad of professional competencies required of teachers, including, but not limited to, "content, pedagogical, organisational, group dynamic and communicative, and developmental and personal growth". While the number of professional development opportunities has increased in recent years, this increase does not meet current teacher needs. Reeves (2011) notes the drive for educational reform has led to an increase in the number of professional development opportunities; however, the quality of these programmes has remained static. In summary, the experiences novice teachers encounter upon their transition often result in creative and talented teachers finding their work frustrating, unrewarding and intolerably difficult, ultimately increasing their risk of becoming a casualty of the profession.

In this chapter, I have reviewed literature with both theoretical and practical implications. Keeping in mind the purpose of this study, to explore NTs' experiences of psycho-social support provided in schools, I have reviewed selected literature on TPD and being an NT, as well as theoretical literature on situated learning and CoP. While there is a significant amount of literature focusing on TPD, teacher well-being and the psychological factors influencing how teachers experience the profession, what is not very evident is research focusing on how NTs experience psycho-social support. The theories of situated learning and CoP therefore provide a framework to interrogate this gap in the literature, and to guide me towards engaging with the research methodology and data analysis.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

Chapter 2 of this thesis presented the literature review and the theoretical framework that inform and support the research. In this chapter, I present the methodological framework, the research design used in the study and the process of obtaining the relevant data. According to Babbie and Mouton (2001), the quality of research findings largely depends on the methodological procedures of the study, while its validity largely depends on the manner in which data has been collected. I discuss the selected research design and methods used to gather, investigate and interpret data for the study. Sampling is outlined and the data- collection and interview process discussed. A qualitative research approach was used to collect data. An in-depth account of how this study was conducted is given in the discussion that follows.

3.2 Main Research Question

The research was conducted in order to answer the following research question:

What are novice teachers' experiences of psycho-social support provided at a selected Western Cape primary school?

Sub-questions are needed in order to engage adequately with the variables of the research. Therefore, in an attempt to answer the main research question, the following sub-questions apply:

- What kind of psycho-social support has been provided to novice teachers at a selected Western Cape primary school in the first three years of their teaching careers?
- What are the teachers' experiences of this support?
- How can psycho-social support for novice teachers at the selected school be improved?

In order to conduct the research, the following research approach and methodology were employed.

3.3 Research Paradigm

There are several definitions and descriptions of a research paradigm. According to Bogdan and Biklen 1998:22), a paradigm is “a loose collection of logically related assumptions, concepts or propositions that orient thinking and research”. Denzin and Lincoln (2005) believe that the notion of a paradigm encompasses epistemology (how we view the world), and ontology (questions about the nature of reality).

Different ontological and epistemological assumptions underpin different research paradigms. The paradigm in which I chose to locate this study is the interpretive/constructivist paradigm, which predominantly uses a qualitative methodology. In contrast to the positivist paradigm, which assumes that reality can be observed and measured empirically, the interpretive orientation supports the notion that there is no single, observable reality (Merriam, 2009). According to Christensen et al. (2011), qualitative research may be conducted in an interpretive way that relies on multiple types of subjective data and investigates people in particular situations in their natural environments. Interpretive methodology requires that social phenomena be understood “through the eyes of the participants rather than the researcher” (Cohen et al., 2007). The goal of interpretive methodology is to understand social phenomena in their context. Interpretivists collect mostly qualitative data from participants over an extended period of time, as in ethnography and case studies (Tuffour, 2017). In investigating the research question guiding this study, which focuses on NTs’ experiences of psycho-social support provided in a primary school, there is a strong link with qualitative research, given the research’s focus on exploring individual experiences (Christensen et al., 2011). This study is therefore located within an interpretative paradigm because it explores the experiences of NTs in terms of the psycho-social support provided within their professional practice.

The ontological position of the interpretivist paradigm is relativist, which assumes that reality is a subjective “mental construction” (Guba & Lincoln, 2005:191), constructed socially through individuals’ experiences of an event. Therefore, multiple realities or interpretations of events exist (Merriam, 2009). These social constructions are sometimes conflicting, but they can be altered as individuals become more informed and sophisticated (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). The epistemological position is transactional and subjective, which implies that we cannot separate ourselves from what we know (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Cohen & Crabtree, 2006). The researcher and participant are linked, so that the findings or knowledge claims are created as the research process unfolds. The reality cannot be separated from our knowledge of it, and in this paradigm the conventional dividing line between ontology and epistemology fades (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

In this paradigm, I relied heavily on the “participants’ views of the situation being studied” (Creswell, 2003:8). If there are conflicting interpretations of experiences or events, knowledge

claims are negotiated in order to reach a relative consensus (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006). This implies that I was not in a position to discover or assign the 'meaning' that NTs attached to their experiences of psycho-social support, but that these meanings or interpretations were constructed in and out of the interactions between us through dialogue, that is, our interviews and conversations. Therefore, given its ontological and epistemological assumptions, the interpretivist paradigm was the most suitable paradigm with which to align my research topic, as I was deeply interested in teachers' experiences and specifically concerned with how they subjectively constructed the worlds in which they live and work through narrative. Because I assumed that varied and multiple meanings would emerge from different participants' views on their world, I was looking for a complexity of viewpoints which would sufficiently represent the participating teachers' understanding of their school contexts.

3.3.1 Justification for the use of an interpretive paradigm as a methodological framework

The interpretive researcher sees each experience and situation as unique, with its meaning being an outcome of the circumstances as well as the individuals involved. The justification for interpretivism as a method of enquiry is that it allows opportunity to describe phenomena as they appear to the person experiencing the phenomena (Tuohy et al., 2013). Mouton and Marais (1990) expand on the subject of qualitative research methodology in educational research by stating that the interpretive approach is not strictly formalised, and as such, a qualitative method of research seeks to understand social reality through strategies such as observations and interviews which yield descriptive data by exploring and understanding the meaning each participant assigns to a social problem (Creswell, 2009). Experiences are sufficiently understood only if they are seen in context. Therefore, as a qualitative researcher I immersed myself in the setting.

Common qualities identified under the interpretative paradigm are:

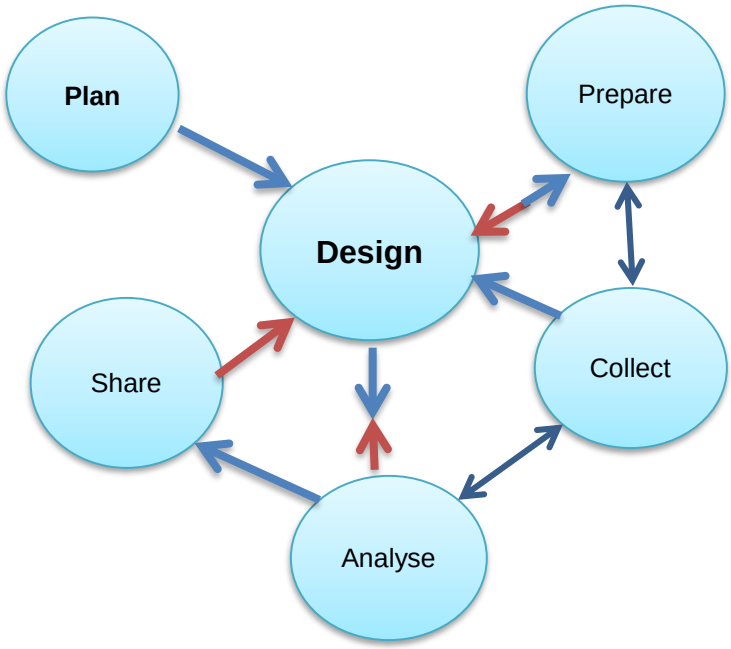
1. Focusing on the wholeness of an experience rather than on its objects or parts.
2. Formulating questions and problems that reflect the interest, involvement, interpersonal and personal commitment of the researcher.
3. Obtaining first-person accounts of experiences through (in)formal discussions and interviews.
4. Putting value on qualitative designs and methodologies as approaches to human experiences.
5. Searching for underlying meanings of experiences rather than simple measurements or explanations.
6. Experience is integrated, and there is an inseparable relationship between subjects and objects, either in part or whole (Moustakas, 1994:21).

Therefore, in this study, a first-person account of the wholeness experience and the underlying meanings of the experiences of NTs at a Western Cape school are considered. Documenting and attempting to make sense of novice teachers' psycho-social needs, not only for NTs but all parties involved in the Western Cape Education Department and in education as a whole, were paramount. I am considering twenty-first century teachers in terms of how they can hone and protect one of the most valuable resources in South Africa.

3.4 Research Design

Since the study was interpretive in nature, an appropriate research design for gathering data to answer the research question was a case study. Gummeson (2000) makes it clear that a case study is regarded as a method for the individuality of each case to emerge as a persuasive voice. Aligned with the above statement, Cohen et al. (2007) concur that a case study is conducted when an in-depth investigation of one or more examples of a specific social phenomenon is proposed. Therefore, case studies combine data-collection methods such as archives, interviews, questionnaires and observations (Huberman & Miles, 2002). In this study, the case study was a group of five NTs at one selected school. The research investigated the experiences of NTs regarding the psycho-social support needed at this unique school. A visual model of this study's research design is presented below in Figure 3.1:

Figure 3.1: The Case Study Process



Source:Yin, 2009, p. 1

The choice of the research method is determined by several factors, including the type of research question, the control an investigator has over actual behavioural events, and the focus on contemporary as opposed to historical phenomena (Yin, 2009).

3.4.1 Justification for the use of a narrative case-study design

In qualitative research, unlike quantitative, the design or strategy is determined by the researcher's choice and actions (Fouche, 2007). The qualitative approach, therefore, is selected because of its effective and in-depth description of social problems. A major attribute of the qualitative case-study approach is that it requires the researcher to go into the field and move close to the people and circumstances there to capture what is happening (Patton, 2002).

The main task of the narrative case-study approach is to "explicate the ways people in particular settings come to understand, account for, take action, and otherwise manage their day-to-day situations" (Miles & Huberman, 1994:7). In the context of this study, "people in particular settings" refer to the NTs at the selected primary school in the Western Cape. The word 'case' means 'an instance of', and the central feature of case study research design is the investigation of one or more specific 'instances of' something that comprise the cases in the study (Heale & Twycross, 2017). A case can be something relatively concrete such as an organisation, a group or an individual, or something more abstract such as an event, a management decision or a change programme. Other common features of case study include (Gomm et al., 2000, Yin, 2009):

- In-depth study of a small number of cases, often longitudinally (prospectively or retrospectively).
- Data are collected and analysed about a large number of features of each case.
- Cases are studied in their real-life context; understanding how the case influences and is influenced by its context is often of central interest to case researchers.
- Cases are naturally occurring, in the sense that they are not manipulated as in an experiment.
- The use of multiple sources of data, including interviews, observation, archival documents and even physical artefacts, allows for triangulation of findings.

Case studies are most commonly associated with qualitative research. The case study method in research demands a high degree of depth, breadth and rigour, with careful attention to showing the way in which evidence supports the conclusions reached.

3.4.2 Why a qualitative approach was adopted for this study?

The research approach used in this research is qualitative in nature. Qualitative research methodology and an interpretive paradigm are used for studies in areas where little information is available about a particular phenomenon, and participants are then recruited who have either lived or are living the phenomenon in question, with the aim of describing their experiences

(Donalek, 2004). Strauss and Corbin (1990) explain that qualitative research is any kind of research that produces findings that are not obtained by statistical procedures. Thus, qualitative research refers to the study of life stories, behaviours, organisational functioning, social movements or education by assisting the researcher in formulating new questions, guiding the researcher to assumptions, and by instilling in the researcher an appreciation of complexity (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Marshall & Rossman, 2006). The object of my study was to investigate the experiences of NTs with regard to psycho-social support provided for them.

3.5 Sampling

Participants in this study came from one school. According to Ajjwi and Higgs (2007), purposive sampling is used to hand-pick data which is rich in content that will irradiate the phenomenon to effectively answer the main research question. Cohen et al. (2002:103) describe purposive sampling as follows: I hand-picked the cases to be included in the sample on the basis of my judgment and typicality. Furthermore, sampling consists of the selection of a feasible total of participants from the research inhabitants under investigation (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Blanche et al., 2006).

Purposive sampling was used as a basis for selection of participants in this research. For purposive sampling, I depended on my understanding and inventiveness to attain elements of analysis in such a way that the sample I obtain may be regarded as being representative of the relevant population. Welman et al. (2005) further note that in purposive sampling, the researcher hand-picks the cases to be incorporated in the sample on the foundation of judgement and particular characteristics. In this way, the researcher builds up a sample that is adequate for his or her specific needs. In numerous cases, purposive sampling is used to choose people with knowledge or experience of the actual issues at hand (Cohen et al., 2007). Purposive sampling also describes the process of selecting research participants.

In this study, purposive sampling was selected since I considered it to be appropriate for the current study. It permitted the me to select distinctive aims and objectives that were particularly informative to the research question and to recognise these particular types of aims and objectives for in-depth investigation. The group of participants in this study were selected because they were NTs, and the study researched experiences of NTs. Their consent was obtained before the study commenced and an explanation of why they were chosen to participate was provided to them. The other participant chosen was the principal. This was because based on her experience, she could provide insights into NTs' experiences and suggest possible long-term psycho-social support that NTs might need while working in complex communities.

3.6 Engaging with Biographical Background of Teachers

Central to this research is the exploration of NTs' experiences of psycho-social support in a primary school. In order to understand such experiences, it was necessary to map the NTs' backgrounds. To do this, a questionnaire was used. The questionnaires (see Appendix H) distributed to all teachers at the start of the research examined the educators' years of teaching at the participating school. Additional biographical data was obtained during the focus-group interview with the participating teachers. During the focus-group interview, all five teachers were able to introduce themselves formally, which included their first name, surname and also the respective grades which they taught.[1] Although they are all situated at one school, many of them do not interact and make small talk with each other. I ensured they were comfortable by doing an ice-breaker. This also created a platform of trust and unequivocalness, making them feel free to be themselves and express themselves without being criticised.

3.7 Description of Participants

Table 3.1 provides the biographical details of the respondents obtained from the questionnaire distributed to all participating teachers. The five NTs who voluntarily opted to be part of this research comprised two men and three women. It is also evident from Table 3.1 that all these teachers were new in the education system, and four were under the age of 26 years. The principal had been working at the school for 35 years and had been acting principal for four years. It should be noted that all participants in this study were given pseudonyms.

Table 3.1: Biographical details of participants in the focus-group interview

Name	Gender	Age	Geographic area	Started teaching	Years of teaching experience	Teaching Grade?	Qualifications
Michael	Male	26	Northern suburbs	2017	1 year	Grade 4	Sports Management and Science PGCE
Sandra	Female	25	Northern Cape	2016	2 years and 6 months	Grade 1	BEd: Foundation Phase
Tamia	Female	23	Northern Suburbs	2018	6 months	Grade 5	BEd: Intermediate Phase
Paula	Female	26	Port Elizabeth	2016	2 years	Grade 2	BEd: Foundation Phase
Clarke	Male	45	Northern suburbs	2015	3 years	Grade 6	College certificate Trade certificate PGCE

3.8 Setting: Description of School and its Community

With an enrolment of 1 100 learners, and a staff of 30 teachers employed by the WCED, the school is situated in the Western Cape, on the outskirts of Hout Bay, which is one of Cape Town's most famous tourist destinations. The school is dual-medium, English and Afrikaans.

[1] Note that for ethical considerations, the names and any other information which could identify participants in this study have been withheld.

However, 30% of learners are isiXhosa speaking, mainly from the Eastern Cape, with 5% who are foreigners, mainly from Malawi and Zimbabwe. Working with learners with language problems is problematic, as language barriers are a hindrance and need special intervention, which makes the work of the educators much more complex. Class sizes range from 32 to 42 learners per class, with no assistant teacher, as it is a non-fee-paying school.

Hout Bay is clearly demarcated as upper class and middle class. Class can be defined using fixed percentages of income distribution. In two papers (Easterly 2001; Burger et al., 2014) the bottom 20% are defined as lower class and the top 20% as upper class, thus categorising the remaining 60% as the middle class.

Table 3.2: Characteristics of classes when categorised based on vulnerability approach, 2008

Class	Share of total population	Share of black population	Share of white population	Black share of each class	Mean income	Mean age	Mean educational attainment
Lower class	22.6	28.3	-	98.1	R323	38.1	6.4
Vulnerable class	37.5	45.5	0.2	95.2	R639	38.2	7.5
Middle class	26.8	23.8	22.6	69.7	R1925	36.5	9.9
Upper class	13.1	2.4	77.3	14.6	R7308	43.0	12.7

Source: NIDS, 2008 and 2010. Based on the predicted probability of a household to be non-poor in 2010, households are classified as lower class (probability<10%); vulnerable (10%–50%); middle class (50–90%); upper class (>90%). The mean age and education attainment relate to the household member with the highest occupational skill level.

According to the 2006 WVS, those who identify themselves as lower class appear to be a distinct group with lower education and income levels.

The main source of employment is in the fish industry. Most of the men are fishermen, while the women work at the fish factory or at fish cafés. Even this has contributed to bitterness in the community, as many fishermen who are school children's' fathers, brothers and bread winners, are away at sea for weeks sometimes, or are prone to accidents, including death, leaving destitute dependents. This is one of the traumas evident in Hout Bay. There is also the fact of families expanding, with insufficient dwellings in the community. In some families, learners do not have their own bedroom; they often have to sleep with mom and dad in a room or share with four to five family members. This situation means that some of these learners are exposed to behaviour that is not suitable for their age. Some other learners have lost their homes to fire, and this too has caused trauma. Furthermore, riots are common in Hout Bay. Learners who experience riots frequently, with some very violent, live in trauma.

The school is located in a one-way street. The town does not have decent streets, and many of the learners have to walk up the steep mountain to reach home. It is cluttered with dirt. The community is virtually isolated from the Cape Flats, and there are no trains to connect them to the southern suburbs. There are no shopping malls or facilities like cinemas or swimming pools for children. Not all people have cars to travel to the nearest shopping mall, so they mainly make use of small shops and spaza shops. People struggle to survive under challenging conditions. The drop-out rate of learners at this primary school is high. Learners come to school mainly because daily meals are provided by the government. Standing (2003) states that even though people are no longer legitimately constrained by racial restrictions, most of them remain in and are still bound to the Cape Flats poverty-stricken areas due to financial limitations.

There are two qualified teachers from the area who teach at the school, which means that the other 28 teachers come from different geographical areas and backgrounds. The community is similar in many ways to other lower working-class communities in the Western Cape, with a high incidence of violence, alcohol abuse, and high rates of illiteracy. These factors make it a complex community and school to teach at. Parents who are alcoholics are often abusive to their children and can be absent for long periods of time; this contributes to their children's poor intellectual, academic and socio-emotional development (Eloff & Ebersohn, 2004). The educational level of parents also impacts the social behaviour of the child. In a more recent article by Ali et al. (2019), it was shown that the socio-economic status, educational qualifications and academic outcomes of parents have a significant predictive impact on children's development and even on their educational attachment as adults. Ali et al. contend that the harsh living conditions of lower- income parents, the powerlessness they feel, the lack of confidence they have in their jobs, the authoritarian model presented by employers, and the lack of higher education that could reform values onto abstract ideas, may result in such parents using authoritarian methods to enforce external characteristics in their children such as obedience, neatness and cleanliness. Children who grow up in such situations are likely to be troublesome at school and add to learner discipline problems. Tungata (2006) claims that because of a variety of family and economic difficulties, children who are disruptive at school sometimes behave in this manner because they have been subjected to distorted or inadequate care throughout their childhood. It is because of this neglect that they demand attention in the classroom.

The teacher component of the school consists mainly of veteran teachers who are close to retirement age. The result is that a new group of teachers is constantly needed to replace the retirees. NTs, however, do not stay for a long period, which results in a high staff turnover and the appointment of more NTs. The high staff turnover results in an unstable and constantly changing learning and teaching environment. These are factors that are considered to have contributed to disaffection in the community. People live to survive. There are therefore anger

and bitterness in sections of the community. This is evident in the classrooms, when learners use foul language towards teachers. Teachers are abused by learners, and this abuse sometimes culminates in physical attacks. Teachers complain that they are emotionally burned out as they do not understand the type of learners or community they are working with.

Donald et al. (2005) affirm that poverty and disrupted homes lead to anti-social behaviour of children. These socio-economic conditions disrupt the way the child handles himself at school, with a negative impact on discipline. Learner behaviour problems affect a wide variety of people at school, especially NTs. The behaviour of such learners threatens the security and attainment of other learners and is a source of stress for the entire staff, sometimes leading to a confidence crisis or even depression in NTs (Amin & Ramrathan, 2009). Moyo et al. (2014) further argue that children from homes with no tradition of valuing education often develop learning problems. Tungata (2006) states that such children mostly fail to see the value or importance of education, which thus negatively influences the child's interest in education. Therefore, instilling discipline in schools becomes a problematic experience, especially for novice teachers.

In conducting this study, I made efforts to minimise intrusion or cause further stress to the teachers. I therefore planned my schedule with the teachers very early, thus allowing them space to plan accordingly. The school starts at 07:45, with a staff meeting fifteen minutes prior to the start of day, and ends at 14:40 from Mondays to Thursdays. However, school ends at 12:30 on Fridays. The reason for ending earlier on a Friday is for Muslim learners and teachers to attend Friday noon prayers at 13:00 on their holy day. A culture of praying in the morning before lessons commence is evident within the school. The school was once well maintained and had a number of interconnecting smartboards, chalkboards and textbooks in the various classrooms. However, these were vandalised by learners and others from the community. The overall atmosphere at the school, while completing my research, was challenging, as I often had to reschedule my interviews although my interviews were prescheduled.

3.10. Access granted to research site

Consent was requested from the WCED to conduct research at one selected school on 10 July 2017. The response came within two days of the application. I immediately arranged meetings via email and personally with the principal of the school to confer on the nature of the research (Appendix A). Ethics clearance from the WCED (Appendix B) was presented to the school principal prior to our first formal meeting, stating the terms and conditions. I assured the principal that my interview schedule would not interfere with or affect teacher– learner contact time.

Table 3.3: Outline of the data-collection schedule with time frames

Schedule	Time frame (2017)
Approach the principal to conduct research at the school	15 June
Field notes (ongoing until end of term 3)	19 and 20 July
Handing out questionnaires to participants	21 July
Collecting questionnaires	7 August
Semi-structured, one-on-one interview with principal	22 August
Focus-group interview with novice teachers	28 August

3.9.1 Questionnaires

I collected data in the form of an open-ended questionnaire (see Appendices D, E, and F) for a copy. Questionnaires are doubtless one of the primary sources of obtaining data in any research endeavour, and according to Richards (2002), a critical point in designing a questionnaire is that the researcher should ensure that the questionnaire is valid, reliable and unambiguous. In addition, the questionnaire deals with some topics or related groups of topics given to a group of individuals for the purpose of gathering data on the problem under consideration. The questionnaire was simple and straightforward. The questions were formulated in English. The aim of the questionnaire was to obtain information regarding NTs' experiences of psycho-social support provision in a Western Cape primary school. The questionnaire was prepared and submitted to the participants to obtain information.

The open-ended questions also aligned with some of the gaps found in the literature, thus adding to the relevance of this study. Interviews provided an additional opportunity for respondents to share information in a comfortable and familiar manner (Creswell, 2003). I used an open-ended questionnaire, as it allowed me to understand NTs' experiences regarding psycho-social support at school. The study was cross-sectional; the data was collected at specific points in time at the school, as I had requested permission from the principal and participating teachers. They agreed to meet me once every second week while I conducted my research. We had some discussions about their challenges at school and their daily work lives. I used a questionnaire because it was a suitable and convenient instrument that measured relevant issues in the study. After receiving the completed questionnaires from the participants, I thematically analysed the data from the questionnaires, and themes emerged.

3.9.2 Interviews

McMillan and Schumacher (2010:page) consider interviews to be open-response questions to obtain data from participants about how they "conceive of and give meaning to their world and how they explain events in their lives". According to De Vos (2001), in-depth interviews with individuals are one or more face-to-face interactions between an interviewer and interviewee, where the purpose is to understand the interviewee's life experiences or situations as

expressed in his/her own words. In-depth interviews are one of the most efficient methods of collecting primary data. Unlike a simple questionnaire or rating scale, in-depth interviews are conducted with the intention of uncovering in-depth details of interviewees' experiences and perspectives on a subject. Being more effective and less structured, one of the most important benefits of an in-depth interview is that it helps to uncover more detailed and in-depth information than other data-collection methods like surveys. Unlike other kinds of interviews, these intensive interviews of individuals are mostly conducted with a small number of respondents (Showkat & Parveen, 2017). The interviewer needs to create a comfortable space. Ultimately, an interview is a two-way conversation in which the interviewer makes enquiries to collect data on the thoughts, views and opinion of the participants (Maree, 2007).

3.9.3 Semi-structured interviews

According to Mack et al. (2005), semi-structured interviews allow a researcher to deviate slightly from the pre-arranged structure of the questionnaire in order to probe evolving concerns during the interview. Denscombe (cited in Bailey, 2011), states that the choice of semi-structured interviews gives some structure to an interview where pre-identified issues can be interrogated and discussed.

Part of the data for this study comprises the experiences of NTs' psycho-social support provision within professional development. These experiences were collected by means of semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured interviews are not standardised and offer flexibility during the interview process (Gray 2011; Ecklund 2013). Gray (2011) further concurs that the order in which the questions are asked can change, depending on what direction the interview takes.

The interviews were recorded and then transcribed. The in-depth, semi-structured interview allows for probing when there is need for more information and when the interviewer thinks that participants need to elaborate on their answers (Gray, 2011).

The questions used in the interviews were open ended. The objective of open-ended questions is to offer participants the opportunity to describe their experiences freely. A follow-up question is asked when participants have reached the point where they can no longer say anything spontaneous about the question. Broomé (2011) echoes that follow-up questions are purposely leading to retrieve as much information as possible from participants. The aim was to get a voiced description of the participants' experiences so that they could express themselves emotionally, which a written questionnaire could not reflect.

3.9.4 Semi-structured individual interview procedure

As described in Chapters 1 and 3, semi-structured individual interviews were used to gain valuable information from the participants. I used an interview schedule comprising open-

ended questions (Appendix D, E and F) as a guideline during the interview sessions. This ensured that the information obtained would relate to the initial enquiry.

3.9.5 Focus-group interviews

A focus group entails interviewing a number of participants at the same time, in the same venue on a set issue or topic (Gray, 2009:233; Bell & Waters, 2014:182). It is used "to determine the attitudes, behaviour, preferences and dislikes of participants… [as well as] experiences" (Strydom & Bezuidenhout, 2014:183). One of the advantages of using a focus group interview is that in-depth information can be obtained "about how people think about an issue – their reasoning about why things are as they are, why they hold the views they do" (Laws, 2013:205, cited in Bell & Waters, 2014:183). Focus group interviews are usually small groups that consist of between 6 and 12 participants (Strydom & Bezuidenhout, 2014:185; Gray, 2009:389). According to Smithson (2008) a focus group should consist of six to twelve participants, in contrast to Babbie's (2014) five to fifteen participants.

Liamputtong (2011) says a focus-group interview has several important features:

- It enables in-depth discussions and involves a relatively small number of people.
- It focuses on a particular area of interest that allows participants to discuss the topic in detail.
- Interaction is a unique feature of the focus-group interview.
- It is based on the idea that group processes assist people to explore and clarify their points of view.
- The members habitually have shared social and cultural experiences (such as age, social class, gender, educational background) or shared particular areas of concern (they are all NTs facing daily challenges at school)

The rationale for the selection of this group was simply because they were the variable being studied and they had first-hand experience. For this study, I used focus-group interviews as these can be more interactive, thus providing richer and more focused data for the researcher than individual interviews (Cousins, 2009). The focus-group interviews consisted of a group of five novice teachers. In these sessions, the interviewees shared their experiences and empathised with each other.A focus-group interview guide (Appendix F) was developed after the individual interviews were transcribed. The focus-group interview guide contributed towards validating the data received both from the individual interviews and observation sessions. The guide ensured that discussions during the sessions remained pertinent and that all the latent information about certain aspects could be obtained. All the teachers seemed to enjoy the focus-group discussion and were eager to take part. They seemed to give honest accounts of their experiences, opinions and views. A sense of unity among the participants

also emerged. The focus-group discussions also seemed to enhance the confidence of all participants, since they realised that their concerns were shared among the group. They indicated that not only had they learned from one another about managing challenging learner behaviour and maintaining discipline in their classrooms, but that the sessions also had therapeutic value, since they had been able to share their concerns and disappointments within a safe and supportive space. Even though the sessions were audio-recorded, I still made field notes and transcribed the data verbatim immediately after the sessions. When using direct quotations to present data and findings, I translated these into English to enhance readability.

3.10 Data-Collection Method

The methods used in collecting data for the research were semi-structured interviews, open-ended questionnaires, a focus-group interview and observations. With regard to gathering data on teacher professional development (TPD), the focus-group interview was integrated teachers' experiences of psycho-social support.

3.11 My Position as Researcher

In qualitative research, the main research tool for data collection and analysis is the researcher herself (Merriam, 2009). I am aware of my own worldviews, sets of beliefs and experiences which informed the way the study was conducted, because all research is subject to the influence of the researcher (Crang & Cook, 2007, cited in Bold, 2012). Creswell (2007:36) states that in qualitative research, "the researchers' interpretations cannot be separated from their own background, history, context, and prior understandings".

Merriam (2009) advises that rather than to try to eliminate any biases, the researcher needs to identify and monitor them in terms of how they are impacting the collection and analysis of data. Therefore, throughout the research process, I was actively reflective and examined my own biases, attitudes, values and assumptions. I thought critically about the process of and motivation for my actions as researcher, and confronted the challenges of how my own experience of and thoughts about care, violence, and the school environment could influence my research. I examined my understanding of what it means to be a teacher and a psychologist. To the best of my ability, I remained aware of my position as a colleague and researcher, and how perspective influenced what I chose to see and played a role in the way I heard the respective stories of the participants. My hope was that I would not be afraid to confront my assumptions, and that I would be motivated enough to consider and solve problems in the research process creatively and ethically.

3.12 Trustworthiness

Qualitative validity is also known as trustworthiness (Creswell, 2003). Creswell (2003) describes it as a strength of qualitative research. It is used to determine whether the research

findings are accurate from the standpoint of the researcher, the participants, or the readers of an account. In addition to some standards that may be thought of as universal across disciplines and paradigms, the 'goodness' of qualitative enquiry is assessed on the basis of the paradigmatic underpinnings of the research and the standards of the discipline (Morrow & Smith, 2000).

In order to guarantee the validity of the responses from participants, I ensured that the questions were easy to read and comprehend, did not create any confusion, and were free from ambiguity. Merriam (1998) states that in order to ensure validity, a full explanation of when and where, and in what context, the collection of data occurred, must be given to participants. I asked the participants to consider each question carefully and to be honest and frank when responding to the questions. I also spent extensive time in the field with the participants and observed them first hand. Although the participants all signed consent forms, there were some things they asked me not disclose in my report owing to their sensitivity.

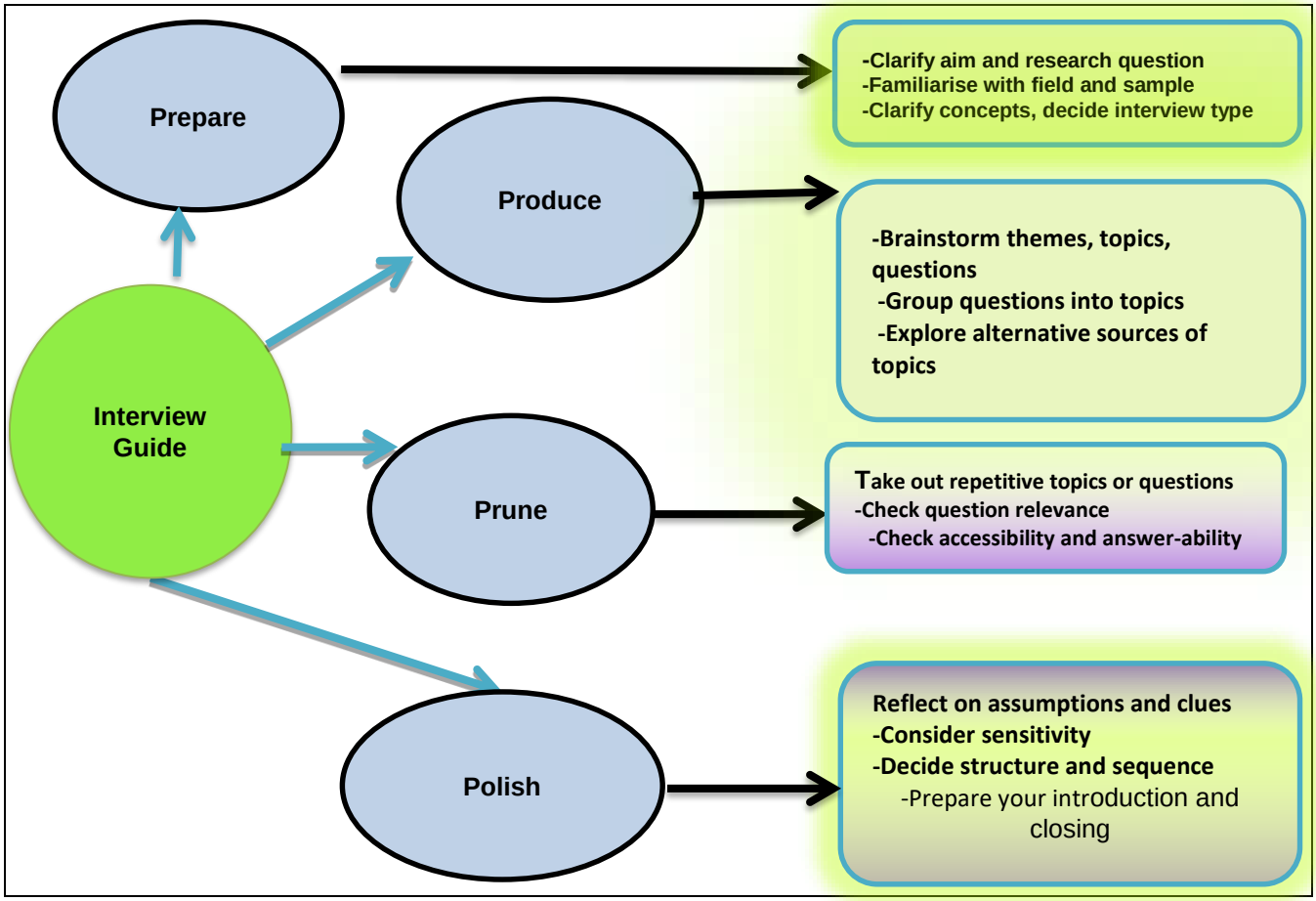
3.13 Data analysis

The 'unit of analysis' is the bounded case, which in this study are the selected novice teachers. After individual discussions with potential participants, five teachers volunteered for the study. Each participant was then sent a consent form (Appendix C) and details of the form were explained to them. Each of the five participants signed the consent form. The next section gives a detailed account of the data-collection phase.

The five participants interviewed produced rich data stemming from the fact that they had immensely different experiences, backgrounds, and training. Their teaching experience ranged from six months to three years. They comprised different demographics, gender and age. Each category in the next section refers to the research (and interview) questions. The sub-sections are based on the coding of the interview transcripts, that is, the descriptive codes allocated to the participants' reported experiences related to challenges, current TPD at school, TPD support needed at school, and psycho-social well-being.

According to Punch and Oancea (2014), it is important that the researcher, before proceeding with the interview process, properly prepare and plan how and what she would like to achieve during the interview. stages. Therefore, I used the structure designed by Punch and Oancea (2014) as a guide to assist me during the interview process. This structure is indicated in Figure 3.2.

Figure 3.2: Steps to generate a semi-structured interview guide



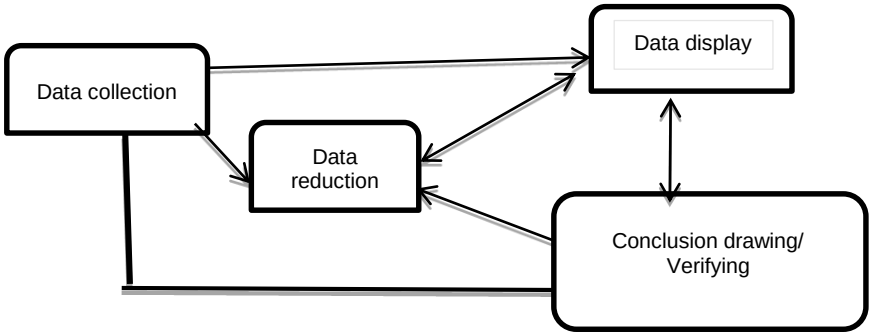
Source: Punch & Oancea, 2014:189

Once informed consent was obtained, I arranged both the dates and the venue where the interviews would take place. All the participants gave a time which suited them, and all agreed to have their interviews at their homes. Each individual session lasted between 60 and 90 minutes, and all participants seemed to enjoy the experience. They told me after the sessions that the questions had really made them think and re-evaluate the way they addressed certain issues in their workplace. All the interviews were audio-recorded with the informed consent of the participants. During the interviews, I noticed that some were a little hesitant to answer some questions, knowing that they were being recorded. However, after reassuring them that all interviews would be kept confidential and that their anonymity would be protected, they opened up. I transcribed all the interviews myself in order to stay engaged with the data. This also helped me make meaning of the participants' responses.

Thematic qualitative interviews provide fresh perspectives of a social phenomenon, as they allow the respondents to reflect and reason on a range of themes in a different way (Folkestad, 2008). Thematic analysis provided the most effective means to establish how participants made meaning of their experiences regarding psycho-social support. Since the interviews were the primary modus operandi of the data collection, it was important to be attentive to the kind of data analysis in the early phases. The principal's and teachers' experiences were analysed to approximate their reality.

A thematic analysis model consists of three connective stages or streams. These are data reduction, data display, and data conclusion-drawing/verifying as illustrated by Figure 3.3.

Figure 3.3: Components of data analysis: interactive model



Source:Miles & Huberman, 1994:12)

Thematic analysis was deemed to be an appropriate analytical tool for the qualitative data of this study for the following reasons:

- With some examples, a better understanding of participants' attitudes and reflections on issues which could be mostly measured is best gained through their diverse statements.
- It provides rich, detailed, and complex data.
- The process analyses the data without engaging pre-existing themes.
- Presenting similarities and differences between the participants' perspectives will assist readers to obtain a cross-sectional view (Joffe & Yardley 2003; Blacker 2009).

Wenger's conceptual tools of situated learning produce codes that consequentially converge to represent themes that emerged from shared experiences among participants. Each participant's data set was explored and positioned in relation to the experiences gained within this new school. New themes and sub-themes that emerged were acknowledged and reported on. The qualitative data included one-on-one interviews with the school principal and novice

teachers, as well as one focus-group interview. In preparation for the data- reduction process, the first step entailed transcribing interviews and providing pseudonyms to all participants.

Stage One

While reading the data for a second time, I started recording general thoughts about the data, made brief notes in the margins, and underlined passages that were of interest to me. I took careful note of the tone used by participants to enable me to make connections between the participants' thoughts and ideas. This allowed me to value the complete picture of the data collected.

Stage Two

The data reduction involved highlighting sentences relevant to the research from each participant's transcript. While going through the transcript, I was continuously cognisant of the research questions and conceptual framework. By keeping this in mind, I continued highlighting excerpts from the respondents' full texts that could contribute to the study.

Stage Three

This phase involved my reviewing all the highlighted sentences and paragraphs, and breaking them down into smaller segments. These segments became my first set of themes from the data. Again, I read through the full text of each participant to compare, contrast and search for information that appeared missing in the first level of themes. While doing this, I kept the following questions in mind: How is the text different from the next? Was there a deeper meaning in one response to the question compared with another? By doing this, the data under the first level of themes started developing. Before moving onto coding, I had to ensure that the first set of themes represented the whole text. Thus, validity of the themes was the next crucial step in my data analysis.

Stage Four

Validating themes in the early stage of data analysis is essential (Miles & Huberman, 1994). I deemed it fit to have a post-interview with the participants to validate Chapter 5: Discussion and Analysis of Results. I interrogated what the participants meant in their interviews. I also asked other colleagues and experts in the field to evaluate and confirm that the first set of themes was compatible with the entire text. The main purpose for doing this was to ensure reliability in the thematic analysis coding, thus providing accurate and reliable themes.

Stage Five

The final phase of this process involved extracting relevant data and further verification of the data. The data-eliciting and conclusion step included identifying relevance of similar or contrasting statements; emergent patterns; interrelations among factors and variables; and

finally, exploring the validity of the findings by building conceptual coherence and consistency (Alhojailan, 2012). This was done so that the data fitted the conceptual framework of the study. Qualitative thematic data analysis aids the researcher in analysing the data.

Qualitative thematic data analysis assisted me in interpreting participants' lived experiences of psycho-social support needs within professional development during the one-on-one and focus-group interviews. There was also a detailed discussion of the data's correlation with the literature review (Chapter 2).

3.14 Data-Analysis Procedures

The data were transcribed and kept in a computer file. The transcriptions were then given to a colleague who checked for errors. The data from the questionnaire audio-recordings which I transcribed were thematically analysed. Emerging themes resulted from this data gathering. I used the six-step procedure prescribed by Braun and Clarke (2006) to carry out a thematic analysis in relation to the research question and available data.

The six steps are as follows:

1. Familiarising yourself with your data

   This step requires the researcher to be fully immersed in and actively engaged with the data by first transcribing the interactions and then reading (and re-reading) the transcripts and/or listening to the recordings. Initial ideas should be noted down. It is important that the researcher has a comprehensive understanding of the content of the interaction and has familiarised him or herself with all aspects of the data. This step provides the foundation for the subsequent analysis.

2. Generating initial codes

   Once familiar with the data, the researcher must then start identifying preliminary codes, which are the features of the data that appear interesting and meaningful. These codes are more numerous and specific than themes, but provide an indication of the context of the conversation.

3. Searching for themes

The third step in the process is the start of the interpretive analysis of the collated codes. Relevant data extracts are sorted (combined or split) according to overarching themes. The researcher's thought process should allude to the relationship between codes, sub-themes and themes

4. Reviewing themes

A deeper review of identified themes follows where the researcher needs to question whether to combine, refine, separate, or discard initial themes. Data within themes should cohere meaningfully, while there should be clear and identifiable distinctions between themes. This is usually done over two phases, where the themes need to be checked in relation to the coded extracts (Phase 1), and then for the overall data set (Phase 2). A thematic 'map' can be generated from this step.

5. Defining and naming themes

This step involves 'refining and defining' the themes and potential subthemes within the data. Ongoing analysis is required to further enhance the identified themes. The researcher needs to provide theme names and clear working definitions that capture the essence of each theme in a concise and 'punchy' manner. At this point, a unified story of the data needs to emerge from the themes.

6. Producing the report

Finally, the researcher needs to transform his/her analysis into an interpretable piece of writing by using vivid and compelling extract examples that relate to the themes, research question, and literature. The report must relay the results of the analysis in a way that convinces the reader of the merit and validity of the analysis. It must go beyond a mere description of the themes and portray an analysis supported by empirical evidence that addresses the research question.

3.15 Ethical Considerations

It was essential that this research be conducted in an ethical manner. Lee and Renzetti (1990) cited in Fontes (2004), note four criteria they believe make some studies on sensitive topics more threatening than others:

- Where research intrudes into the private sphere or delves into some deeply personal experience.
- Where the study is concerned with deviance and social control.
- Where it impinges on the vested interests of powerful persons or the exercise of coercion and domination.
- Where it deals with things sacred to those being studied which they do not wish profaned.

Ethics is defined as: “Moral principles that govern a person’s behaviour or the conducting of an activity” and “the branch of knowledge that deals with moral principles” (Bacchini, S. (2012),Oxford Dictionaries). Rule and John (2011) contend that ethical relationships and practices contribute to the quality of research. Welman et al. (2005) are of the opinion that ethical considerations should be a critical part of the research process from initiation of the research to the analysis and publication of the findings.

The research should be conducted in a way that pursues the truth but not at the expense of the rights of individuals in society (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). For this study, a research proposal was submitted to the Faculty of Education Research Ethics Committee of the Cape Peninsula University of Technology. This was reviewed against an ethics checklist. In order to uphold the ethics of the research from the researcher’s perspective and to safeguard the participants’ interests and well-being, an ‘informed consent form’ (Appendix A) was drawn up. An informed consent form is a document that stipulates the purpose, benefits, risks, and all information necessary to allow participants to make an informed and voluntary decision to participate in a study (Babbie & Mouton, 2001).

As the proposed study took place in a public school, I obtained approval from the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) as well as from the Faculty of Education Research Ethics Committee of CPUT to do the research. I also sought consent from participants. The school principal and prospective participants were informed of the research by letter before I accessed the site. Oral explanations were provided when accessing the site. In order to maintain the integrity of the study, I disclosed all methods of research, as well as the research objectives, to the participants and the WCED. Participants were under no obligation to participate and confidentiality was maintained. Consent letters were signed by all participants.

3.16 Conclusion

This chapter described the research design, data-collection process and data-analysis procedures, sample size, sample site, and participants. Data was collected via questionnaires, one-on-one interviews and focus-group interviews at a selected primary school in the Western Cape. The participants consisted of five NTs and the school principal. Concepts such as ethics and trustworthiness were explained in the context of this research. In this study, qualitative methods with an exploratory research design were used. Chapter 4 discusses the results of the collected data. The findings of the research are presented. Elements elicited from the data explain the knowledge and understanding of NTs’ experiences of psycho-social provision within teacher professional development. The chapter also includes the presentation, discussion and analysis of the data. Data obtained from both the first phase of the study (the questionnaire), and from the second phase (the interviews) are discussed together, under identified themes

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

> *A scientist's curiosity is active, leading to discoveries, not through luck, but because the prepared mind of the scientist recognised the significance of a curious observation. It is a disciplined curiosity, sharpened by labour, frustrations, and long hours of research (Graziano & Raulin, 2010:4).*

4.1 Introduction

In Chapter 3, I provided the rationale for a qualitative research framework. The two interviews regimes and questionnaire were discussed in relation to the aims of the research problem and the procedures used for the data collection. Qualitative, descriptive research studies are those that seek to discover and understand a phenomenon, a process, or the perspectives and worldviews of the people involved (Merriam, 1998; Caelli et al., 2003).

This chapter presents the findings of data. The aim of this study was to investigate experiences of NTs regarding psycho-social support provision as an aspect of their situated professional development. Psycho-social refers to the dynamic relationship between psychological characteristics of our experience, for example, our thoughts, emotions, behaviours and our wider social experience such as our relationships within our situatedness (Psycho-social Working Group, 2005). In addition, this chapter further aims to analyse the effects these experiences have on the NTs' careers. The central question of this research is: What are NTs' experiences of psycho-social support provided at a selected Western Cape primary school? In order to achieve this, the following sub-research questions are revisited:

a) What kind of psycho-social support is provided to NTs at a selected Western Cape primary school in the first three years of their teaching careers?
b) What are the NTs' perspectives of the support?
c). How can psycho-social support for NTs at the selected school be improved?

The identified focus group of NTs and the principal participated in the study through a series of interviews.

4.2 Research Findings

Presented below are the findings from the various data sources discussed under separate themes. I made use of a stylistic convention during data analysis and discussion: 'dash for incomplete utterances' and 'three dots for pause'. Furthermore, verbatim quotations are written in italics. The overall aim of the data presentation was to describe how participants' responses aided me in answering the guiding research questions in Chapter 1. As explained in the Methodology section, I used a thematic approach to code the data.

4.3 Data Presentation

During the data-collection process, three themes emerged from the participants' views.
These three themes are:

1. Novice teachers' experience: challenges.
2. Novice teachers' experience: support.
3. Novice teachers' experience: physio-social influence

I present the findings of this study according to these three themes and quote verbatim from the various participants' own words. To prevent confusion, for the remainder of the thesis, I indicate the source of the data from the data analysis process as in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: The three themes and their associated categories, obtained from the analysis process

Note: Direct quotations from participants during the individual interviews are cited in the text as Participant (A, Ii.).

Themes	**Pseudonym of participant**	**School sector**	**Individual interview**	**Observation**	**Focus group**
Novice Teachers' experiences: Support Novice Teachers' experiences: Psycho-social influences Novice Teachers' experiences: Challenges	Teacher 1 Teacher 2 Teacher 3 Teacher 4 Teacher 5 Principal	A = ACADEMIC	Ii	Ob	Fg

4.4.1 Theme 1: Novice teachers' experiences: Challenges

4.4.1.1 Challenges at school

Question 1: List the challenges (if any) experienced at school on a daily basis and briefly describe them. Table 4.2 provides a summary of the answers to the experiences the interviewed novice teachers identified as challenges.

Table 4.2: Social problems identified as challenges by novice teachers

Social problems	Participant 1	Participant 2	Participant 3	Participant 4	Participant 5
Social economic problems	√	√	√	√	√
Lack of parental involvement	√	√	√		√
Learner discipline	√	√	√	√	√
Death				√	
Substance abuse					
Trauma Riots					√
Eviction		√			
Fire victims					√

As noted above, there are several observations emanating from this table. I discuss the most prominent categories ticked by the participants.

4.4.1.2 Socio-economic problems

When asked about challenges experienced at school, all five respondents indicated that socio-economic problems were a major concern.

Participant 1 observed:

> *It is very challenging on every level. I come to school prepared and ready to teach. That gets disturbed in the morning already; my learners come to school unprepared. No pencil, actually no stationery at all. Following the curriculum makes it difficult, as we have a schedule to follow. A lot of time gets wasted in petty issues like stationery because parents are not financially stable. With that said, the learners come to school restless; often they did not get a good night's sleep because of the conditions at home and the uproar in the community.*

Participant 2 observed:

> *The main challenge for me at this school is the socio-economic conditions of the school and its community. We are serving a poor community, but also a community that thrives on handouts. My learners often come to school on an empty stomach. I have small learners crying, and when asked what is wrong,*

they find it difficult to communicate. I can just see hurt and pain in their eyes, but yet a brave little face wanting to make me proud. At first, I found it really difficult, as I am young and ambitious, ready to set forth all the interesting teaching methodologies and acing the expectations of administration work, but unfortunately it turned into reality shock for me. University did not prepare me for this part of teaching. I have come to learn that I am not just needed as a teacher, but as a social worker and a comforter.

Participant 3 observed:

It is very challenging on every level. Parents come to school dressed in pyjamas. They often roam around at school, not to be helpful in rendering a service or assisting in any way possible, but to criticise the teachers who are already experiencing daily challenges at school. They set no example to their children. Their morale is low, and it rubs off on the learners. The same parents force their way into the classrooms and report the teachers to the Education Department for not doing a good job.

Respondent 4 further corroborated the findings of the other two respondents:

Many of our problems are related to poverty. I think most of our parents are poor. Parents also claim that they need programmes to help them but yet they do not attend programmes like Wordworks to help their children do better in school which will in turn help the learner as teaching and learning should take place both at school and at home. Learners are mostly uncultured, as there is no routine at home. There are cases where some learners come to school in poor hygiene conditions. Parents just don't care. There is substance abuse in most of the households and grandparents are left to provide and fend for these learners.

Respondent 5 said:

I sadly recall one incident where my lunch box was stolen from my table. That day I felt that was one of my lowest days at school. I was deeply hurt and disappointed. The learners will go to any extreme.

Another sub-theme under challenges was learner discipline.

4.4.1.3 Learner discipline

All five participants pointed out that learners with social problems displayed a change in their behavioural patterns and became aggressive in the classroom. They showed total disrespect to teachers and peers.

One of the interviewees commented:

> *I take it from my Afrikaans class; some of the learners are so out of hand, loose, they have no respect for education because of the problems they are coming with. Their attitude changes. They become very aggressive sometimes. Learners will argue, then all of a sudden, a violent fight will break out and the majority of the peers will jump in to stop it but end up in the fight as well. I have learnt well that basic self-defence, exercise, holistic development and first-aid workshops are needed when teaching the twenty-first century kids, more particularly the learners at this school and community.* (Participant 4)

Participant 3 found that learners who came from houses where most of the parents are absent and grandmothers raise them are very troublesome.

> *They often fight as they get teased by their peers that their parents are alcoholics or "tik-koppe"* [crystal meth addicts]*. I could not comprehend this type of behaviour at first. As time passes by and as I have started to build up a behaviour profile of the learners, I came to learn that most of the violently behaved boys' fathers are in prison or died when they were a few months old. Most of the time single parents are raising them, or the mom has a different abusive partner. Therefore, this made me dwell deeper, reflect on the situation and come up with solutions on how to deal with it.*

Participant 2 stated:

> *There's no father figure for boys and girls in their household. It comes through in the classroom where they don't want to adhere to or submit to authority. At home there's no authority figure and they will display their anger in behaviour in the classroom. There's no one who loves them at home, so the learners come to school with that darkness inside of them, no support for them at home. I have learnt through all the havoc; they are still only just children looking for love and affection*.

Participant 5 had a different experience. She stated:

> *We struggle with learner discipline problems mainly because parents encourage their children's unruly behaviour. For example, if learners are disobedient and break the school rules or code of conduct, and the teacher reprimands them by taking disciplinary measures, then the teachers get attacked by the parents. I have personally been verbally assaulted in front of the principal by one of the fathers. My role as a teacher was disregarded and I was disrespected by the parent in front of the school principal and the learner. That was an embarrassing and painful experience. I went home sobbing. Asking myself, "Lord why am I in the teaching profession?" The next day I called in sick. I really hate this school*.

Participant 1 was overwhelmed. She commented:

> O*ur learners know that they have rights. They also request a range of rights not formerly accorded them, including the right to be heard or the right to freedom of speech, whether written or oral. When these demands are not met, learners become more blatant and restless in their approach. The Deputy Principal also saw the balance between learner rights and responsibilities as a major cause of indiscipline of learners. It was commented: The child has more rights than a teacher. Learners are not only aware of their rights but very sensitive to them. You only need to teach and whether these learners listen or do assigned work it's not our concern, for any attempt to deal with them is putting your future at risk.*

Participants reported that gambling on school grounds during class time, noise, fighting and swearing were often common behavioural problems among learners, regardless of the grade. They never allow opportunities for teaching. If teaching were to be constructive, they would have to employ an assistant teacher and pay for him or her themselves, or go ahead and teach through the noise, quieting them down every minute as these learners like to shout and talk over the educator, disrupting the teaching process. In this case, the results are the teachers either lose their voices for few days, or the doctor eventually puts them on sick leave. The fact is, most learners are noisy, fight each other, and swear at each other. Given the large number of learners in the school surveyed, the problem of dealing with these offences could be overwhelming.

Participants also reported a lack of parent cooperation with the school in disciplining their children. Four said that this was often the case. Parents are expected to cooperate with the school in disciplining children. However, only one of the participants reported that in their

experience, this was the case. The implication is that cooperation from parents in matters of discipline is inconsistent and inadequate.

A significant interpretation from these findings is that these social ills have serious negative effects on teachers in general, and especially NTs. Some teachers struggle with making a paradigm shift in their thinking about their professional roles (Faber, 1991; Engelbrecht et al., 1999; Jepson & Forrest, 2006). They are unprepared for the challenges that a diverse learner population presents, as seen in the narratives from Participants 3 and 5. Steyn et al. (2003) explain that an unruly class could be emotionally very challenging for teachers. Other studies on the well-being of teachers (Engelbrecht et al., 1999) have focused on the influence of societal problems on the school environment. More and more, issues around poverty, gang violence and drug abuse are linked to classroom stressors. These societal issues create school challenges that educators, especially NTs, are often not prepared for, nor trained to handle.

4.4.1.4 Summary of Theme 1

The socio-economic status of learners' parents forms a significant part of NTs' experiences, as it contributes to the environment of the NTs' workplace. It is the space where they practise their profession. Learners raised in poverty rarely choose to behave well as they are faced daily with overwhelming challenges that learners from affluent schools seldom have to confront (Jensen, 2013). Learners from backgrounds of poverty adapt to sub-optimal conditions in ways that undermine good school performance (Jensen, 2009). A learner's home activities, preferences and mannerisms should align with the immediate social world. According to Ali (2013), socio-economic considerations such as poverty have a negative influence on the holistic development of learners, something which has a detrimental impact on a learner's gross motor development. This study was located in a low-income community where the main source of income is child welfare money (which is equivalent to R400 per month) received from government, within a context (low SES) where poverty is rife. The school is a non-fee-paying school with a feeding scheme on which learners and parents depend for a daily meal. Despite assistance from the government, the social challenges cause behavioural problems, and participants listed learner discipline as one of the other major challenges.

4. 4.2Theme 2: Novice teachers' experiences: Support

The data collected from the interviews revealed various issues relating to support. Participants discussed the course in depth. The following support and training topics were raised by the novice art teachers:

4.4.2.1.Teacher Professional Development

As in Theme 1 above, I used a questionnaire to obtain an early view of the kinds of support the NTs need in order to work optimally. The question I asked in the questionnaire was: What type of support do you personally need at school?

The teachers interviewed identified the following, tabulated below.

Table 4.3: Support received at school by novice teachers

Support needed at school	Participant 1	Participant 2	Participant 3	Participant 4	Participant 5
Induction	√				
Mentoring			√		
Support from WCED		√	√		√
Subject advisors	√		√	√	√
Discipline committee		√			
Personal support					

As noted above, there are several observations arising from this table. I discuss the most prominent categories ticked by the respondents.

With teachers expected to meet the demands of state and local standards, they need to come to the classroom prepared to teach. Teacher preparation programmes are meant to ensure that teachers are ready to enter the workforce (Darling-Hammond & Oakes, 2019). However, during the interviews, several participants stated they were not adequately prepared to teach their students and meet the high standards of the demanding curriculum.

Participant 1 shared:

My undergraduate degree did not fully prepare me to teach children under these circumstances. Many of them didn't attend crèche. I am fresh from university, early 20s. I do not have kids of my own. I was trained to be a professional teacher, but now I have to deal with learners who suffer from domestic violence and who also happen to be alcohol syndrome babies. I really don't know how to deal with this; it becomes overwhelming and puts strain on me to the effect that I get muscle spasms from stress and pressure. There is no one to guide or mentor me. I feel like I am in the wrong profession. I really feel like quitting, but I have bursary obligation.

She stated that some answers pointed directly at mentoring and school-based professional development. She agreed that she needed help and feedback from the management team and veteran teachers, but veteran teachers do not have time and hate the responsibility.

Participant 2 conveyed her experience of support, emphasising the formal workshop prescribed by the DoE. She deemed it ineffective because of the following reasons:

It's time consuming, we always have to travel more than one hour to the location. Everything they do at the workshop is pedagogically inclined; we already received that training at university. The workshops do not address the situations which we really struggle with. For example, administration and classroom management. Workshops need to be realistic and address challenges which we face. It should be situational problems. Maybe creating communities of practice within our area.

Participant 3 expressed her experience of support as a mellow experience:

> *Some days it was good, then there were others when I just felt I can't do this. Whenever the curriculum adviser came, I would stress. I was under the impression that the curriculum adviser and subject adviser are in place to assist and guide me on the pathway, but it always ended up being critiqued. In our phase, I have learned that everyone is for him or herself. I deem Professional Development ineffective because the workshops which we attend do not address the problems I experience at school. I am expected to give a shared reading lesson, for example, when the curriculum adviser comes, but yet there is no material at school. The HOD and management do not have prior discussions and support in place, but when the report comes back, they only look at the negatives and neglect the effort I have put in.*

Participant 4 found support in terms of managing disciplinary issues at her school to be a major problem:

> *Discipline is a big problem here at the school, yet we don't get any support in terms of discipline. The school expects all the teachers to try and sort disciplinary issues out themselves, but I don't really know what to do. Learners often get physical. Just yesterday I got injured as a learner threw half a brick at me because I reprimanded him. Last month my car's window screen was thrown in. I had to fork out almost 30% of my salary to fix it. As teachers our hands are cut off, we can't speak too loud[ly] or firm[ly], no time out is permitted for unruly*

learners and every angle just seems to backfire. Yet, we go to formal workshops, these things do not get addressed. This is the help and support we as new teachers need. How does one deal with such mediocrity?

The participant elaborated on this, saying that there is no proper structure in place from the school management team and that everything is chaotic at the school. In the interview, she compared the situation at the school with a "zoo".

Most participants indicated the desire to learn as an important aspect. They don't want Professional Development (PD) for the purpose of "window dressing", but to actually achieve professional growth personally and intellectually. Wilson and Berne (1999:197) support this notion when they state that because there is no single infrastructure for professional development, it often represents a "patchwork of opportunities, formal and informal, mandatory and voluntary, serendipitous and planned". Other researchers have explained that professional development is most effective when it is a constant, continual process that includes properly planned development and individual follow-up through supportive observation and feedback, educator dialogue and peer coaching (Bernauer, 2002; Bolam, 2003; Moore 2000). All 5 NTs in my study made it clear that they need effective professional development programmes which are designed to suit their needs.

4.4.2.2 Personal Support

Personal support was another prominent theme which emerged under the question, "What type of support do you need at school?" Personal support was paramount, as most participants were immediately emotional and assertive about the issues they faced. When I conducted the focus-group and individual interviews, this sub-theme was particularly prominent and became narrative. The participants gave longer responses and told stories of their experiences.

Lack of support from the school in terms of disciplining violators seemed to be a common thread.

Participant 3 commented:

The disciplinary action procedures are not really effective. Learners do as they please. Parents sit and chitter chat with the principal in her office over a cup of tea. Parents and learners do not adhere to the code of conduct. What is more, they believe it's their territory, so no one can tell them. Learners come late to school, although they live a stone's throw away from school. No proper uniform, the parents even come in pyjamas to school to drop them. No homework policy in place, as they don't even know the meaning of homework and assessment rules. I feel victimised every day in this community, where one has to teach, but more violence and swearing are taking place. So many riots take place. Often the teachers are stuck in school

while the community burn tyres in front of the school, throw the school with bricks and fire flares. The teachers get stuck in the middle between the community uproar and the police gunshots.

Participant 2 stated:

> *I need someone who can encourage me and show me the ropes, a colleague whom I can trust and rely on to support me. There are too many 'stoep' talks, a person doesn't know who you can trust.*

Participant 4 maintained that she wished she could get personal support from colleagues and stated the following:

> *Many days I come to school prepared in every way, but when I hit the class then chaos just strikes. I have experienced that no matter how well I am prepared pedagogically, presenting the lesson itself is challenging as the type of learner and environment is unchangeable. One day I lost my voice just because I had to ask more than 20 times for learners to be quiet in order for me to present my lesson. I wish a colleague would walk into my class now and then and show that we work together as a team, that he or she is taking note of my struggles. That gesture will make me feel like I am not alone in this and that I have the support of my colleagues.*

Participant 5 recounted one day where she took a learner to the principal's office after an incident.

> *A learner falsely accused me, and the principal called me in and confronted me in front of the learner and five other learners. I felt so much shame and insulted, I immediately burst into tears for being falsely accused of swearing. The next day only, the principal investigated and found out each witness told a different story, yet the damage was done, as the learners all made fun of how they made the teacher cry. That was humiliating. I feel that the principal is too lenient on learners and disregards teachers. The principal definitively displayed a lack of support for teachers.*

Participant 1 was delighted to share her experience of personal support. She mentioned that the most effective support she received was from a colleague and could "vent" and had someone that she could "sit there and talk to". The participant also found solace in the fact that she was one of three other novice teachers (NTs) who started at the same time at the school. She saw this as support, because all three NTs could serve as pillars and "go-to person" as they could just vent, blow off some steam and know it's okay to feel overwhelmed sometimes. This seemed to have been a great support for Participant 1. What was most helpful, was that

the three participants came from the same university. Participant 1 bravely muttered that the experience was bitter-sweet, but they had each other's backs.

> *Yes, I feel accomplished and I feel I can do much better if I can get the support system I need at school, as every school is different. I collaborated with my friends at other schools, but I found the support which I get at my own school to be more effective as it is based directly on the type of learner and school climate where I am situated*. (Participant 1)

The data aligns with how Wenger (1998:142) defines learning as "forms of participation and rectification which continually converge and diverge", arguing that through learning new information, the adult learner feels a sense of meaning rather than feeling isolated in learning. In this instance, learning through a socially organised activity, NTs note internal factors as well as external factors as reasons for making them more motivated or confident to participate.

Research indicates that dialogue opens up strategies for support and is needed for the socialisation process in a specific learning community (Sharplin et al., 2010). According to Futernick (2007), cited in Scherff (2008:1329), "to understand the problems teachers face, the teachers themselves must be asked and must be asked often". The importance of learning "from talk and to talk as a legitimate member of the community" is stressed (Maynard, 2000).

4.4.2.3. Acculturation: Transitioning Phase

Based on the data collected, it is clear that participants struggle with acculturation. They are not comfortable in the domain in which they practise their profession. Evers et al. (2016) contend that PD is necessary to bridge the gap of NTs' transition from university to the workplace environment. Acculturation was one of the sub-themes emerging from the collected data. Most of the participants found adjustment to the school culture or environment a challenge. Although university prepared them for what to expect and which theories according to didactics they should use, the reality was shocking.

Participants spoke of the rigidity of the veterans who were anti-change and how this resulted in their being unable to put into practice strategies and methodologies taught at university.

As Participant 2 noted:

> *Everything we studied at university became a mere memory. These people do not give us a chance to apply theory to practice. The domain feels like a place where I cannot practise my skills and theories as a professional teacher. I understand that I am the newbie, but I feel that everyone should be respected*

in their work capacity. Veteran teachers often disregard what I bring to the table and are fixed on the ways they did it for the last 20 plus years.

Another teacher had a similar experience.

Participant 3 noted the following:

It's hard to apply the stuff we've learned because when you get to a school, they're like, "What's been implemented has been done for years."

This teacher was displeased that he was circumscribed by strategies and methodologies contrary to what he had learned and was eager to put into practice.

Participant 4 expressed her unhappiness adjusting to the school because of "stoep talk". She exclaimed how difficult it was to trust people.

I recall, teachers would walk into my class and pretend as if they want to help and mentor me; the next thing I hear is rumours and stoep talk. That is the thing that got to me the most. I often feel isolated and looked down on because I am new and still adjusting to the school. I purely hate the environment, the school, the community and the type of people I am working with. The only reason I am at this particular school is because of my bursary obligation.

Participant 5:

There's a permanent post opening up at the school next year and I have to really consider if I want to teach in that kind of environment, because I don't; emotionally I don't enjoy it! The money is not worth all the trouble and experience of job dissatisfaction. I would rather go study further and change my career path.

The process of integration into the new environment requires NTs to adjust to school settings. As noted in Chapter 3 where the setting is discussed, one needs to consider the situatedness of the school as challenging. Most of the NTs do not have cars which makes it a challenge in getting to school as the community is isolated and there is only one access road in and one exit out. Participant 1 summed up the constraints encountered in settling in at the new school as follows:

It's only that one is desperate, otherwise I would not have come to this school. The new teachers felt that such conditions were demotivating. In their own words: it can be demoralising. Hence this highlights the possible

consequences of working in poor school environments, one of which could be loss of touch with what normal teaching ought to be.

4.4.2.4 Summary of Theme 2

Hudson (2013) recognised that novice teachers (NTs) globally require more support. High attrition rates due to lack of appreciation from colleagues, unsatisfying working conditions and inadequate teacher preparation, indicate current systems are failing them. Participants felt strongly that they needed help and feedback from colleagues and mentors. Previous studies indicates that learning among early career teachers is enabled by a supportive school culture, because their learning is so much predicated on meeting the challenges they encounter as they make the transition from student to novice teacher (see McCormack, Gore and Thomas 2006, 96). A supportive school culture enables the new teacher to better meet these challenges as they learn to 'find a professional place within the school' (McCormack, Gore and Thomas 2006, 96).

Through participants' shared experiences, both positive and negative factors influenced their acculturation into teaching and the school culture. While the climate refers to the morale or attitude of the organisation, the culture refers to the expectations or unwritten rules that the organisation establishes as norm behaviours (Gruenert, 2008). In addition to being NTs, they are also newcomers to a particular school community which has its own beliefs and ways of doing things. This often leads to their feeling isolated and unwanted. The school culture already exists, and many teachers take their place knowing exactly what their field of responsibility is. Often cliques among colleagues are formed at schools, which exclude NTs. This can lead to NTs not feeling a sense of belonging and struggling to adapt and acculturate to the school.

Flores (2001) supports the notion that culture provides a space for learning and emphasises that school culture has a direct influence on NTs' professional learning and development. According to Avalos (2011), some school cultures are more appropriate and conducive to learning than others. Taking the stance that NTs are an entry point in a new school environment, how they are accepted, treated and developed as a professional resource of the school is dependent on the type of professional support culture in the school. Hence, a professional learning culture is linked to the broader school culture. A professional learning culture requires investment in developing teachers as professional support resources in specific working environments (Harfitt & Tavares, 2004). As professional support resources, all teachers become supports to other teachers. Thus, understanding the different formal and informal professional support practices within various school cultures can provide a lens through which to view the experiences of first-year NTs.

4.4.3 Theme 3: Novice teachers' experiences: Psycho-social influences

Flores (2004) asserts that there is growing acknowledgement in the literature that teacher professional development should be associated with learning experiences that interlink teachers' socio-cultural contexts. Themes and sub-themes emerged from the most glaring responses and patterns from participants. Derived from Instrument 2: Questionnaire for teachers, under Question 4, "Indicate your views regarding each of the statements by ticking the box that best reflects your opinion", participants all had different views. In the graph below, I have recorded their views. Figure 4.3 provides a summary of psycho-social influences impacting novice teachers' experiences.

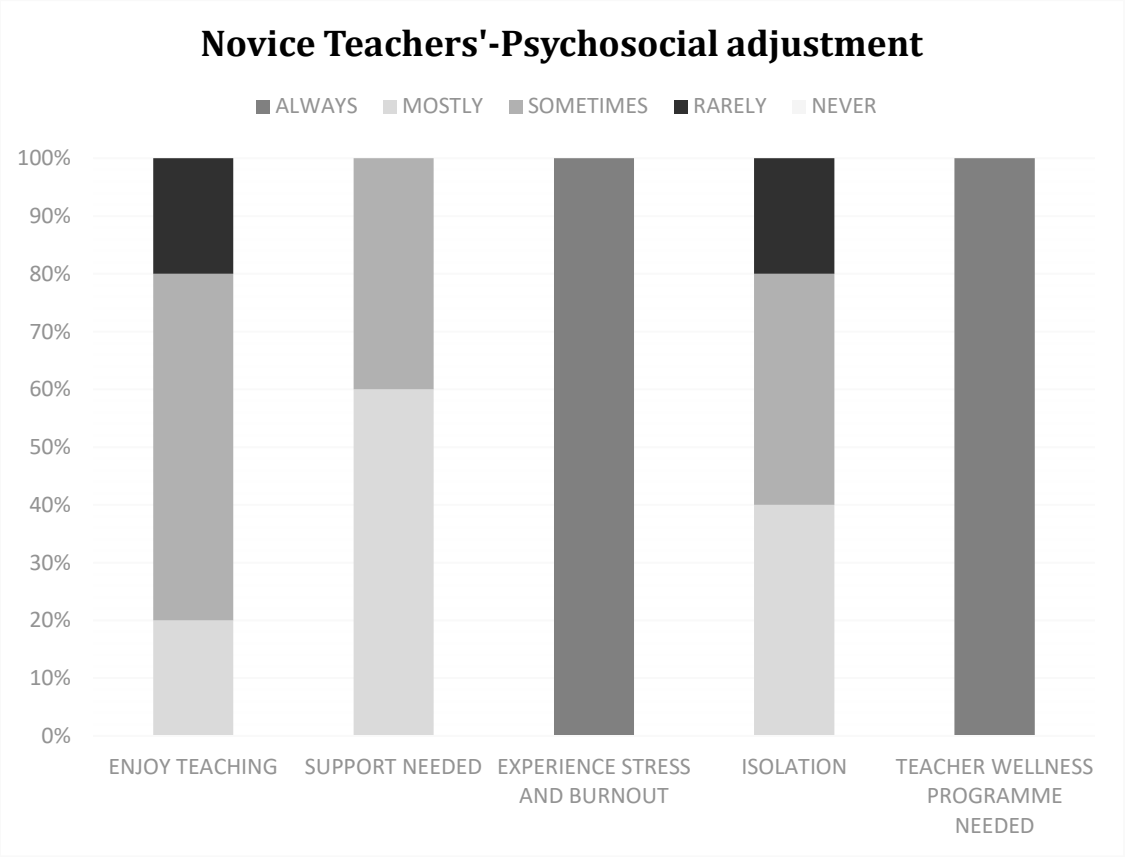


Figure 4.3: Psycho-social influences impacting novice teachers' experiences

4.4.3.1 Stress and Burnout

Most answers reflected the lack of resources at school which leads to heavier workloads and stress, resulting in burnout. Therefore, stress and burnout became another predominant sub-theme. Stress was the most common experience that all three participants faced almost daily. It was the one aspect of their well-being that affected them the most, and which had an impact on their professional identities as well as their personal lives. This continued into their second and third year of teaching.

Participant 1 exclaimed:

> *I have no life. I get up at 5 am, finish off at school at 5 pm, but I go to bed at 2 am almost every night as I am packed with demanding administrative work. Teaching is not for me; I have a life too. If the students wanted to act up and not pay attention, I ignored them and only paid attention to the one or two who acted interested.*

Participant 1 and 2 expressed their feelings about the lack of resources available in school and Participant 2 stated:

> *This is too stressful, I can't teach my subject like this. I often run behind with my schedule because of the lack of resources and when I do ask for help or things that I need, no one has answers for me.*

Participant 3 said:

> *I can't cope, it's too much marking, too many assessments, too much administrative work and on top of it all, too many learners with learning disabilities, and the Department of Education expects me to give extra classes for the weaker learners. I'm done, I am exhausted, this is too much.*

Participant 5 had a lack of motivation to teach. He felt that his personal life and family life suffered. As a result, he felt frustrated. He further explained:

> *These learners come to school with no desire to learn. Parents do not assist with homework. I have to raise my voice all day every day to get them to listen. Approximately 90% of my day in class I deal with discipline and social issues. That makes me sick and even more tired to the point where I have to take pain killers most nights. I get home and fall asleep before I can even have dinner with my family. This teaching job puts strain on me caused by stress; this community is just something else. I recall how a father of one of my learners walked into my class and grabbed me by the chest in front of my learners just because I reported his child to the principal for fighting with another learner.*

Participant 4 admitted she knew her burnout negatively impacted her health, thus supporting the reoccurring theme. She further stated that she did not care anymore whether or not her students learned, and that she had checked out mentally. She knew the quality of their classroom learning was inconsistent, but she just wanted to get through the day. She further explained that she spent so much time correcting disruptive behaviour that she had very little time to teach and no support was provided from the principal or school management team.

> *I began to lose interest. I felt my hands were tied. I literally felt like swimming in an ocean struggling to keep my head above water, so I stopped caring. I*

am planning to leave the teaching profession next year. I have already applied to study in a different field.

Research suggests that it is our overall appraisal that makes the difference: Teachers who *chronically* find themselves on the losing end of the demand/resource equation are the most vulnerable to stress and most at risk for lowered job satisfaction, greater burnout, and lowered occupational commitment (Lambert et al., 2015).

4.4.3.2 Teacher Well-Being

One of the questions was, “In your opinion, how can professional development suit your needs as a novice teacher?” Most participants emphasised the need for a teacher wellness programme. They felt that the programme could make a big difference in teacher stress management and provide a work–life balance. The concern for well-being in the school was particularly manifested in low levels of support for staff from the school management team and the DoE. Participants commented that they felt insecure to communicate when they felt unwell or experienced meltdown at any point. One participant stated that if one should mention feeling ill or ask permission to go home or book off sick, you get mocked about it in front of the entire staff the next day, being called babies and looked down upon as someone who is not coping at this particular school.

Participant 3 echoed this:

I would have that thought going to the principal and being open to her about personal issues and coping strategies could be helpful, but I recall once when I returned from sick leave, people were teasing me for getting sick so easily. I cannot teach and be accountable for a class if I myself do not feel fit.

It is clear that the participants reflected on the philosophy, “You’ve got to keep your own life in order to be able to perform at your best.”

Participants 1 and 2 found the level of work expected of them beyond the classroom exhausting. This added pressure and used up all their energy, reduced informal planning time and gave staff no time to stop and have conversations with each other. One particular concern was the number and length of compulsory meetings held every morning. Also, three days a week after school, there were meetings which many considered “very planned, no-one’s allowed to escape, the net closes in”.

Participant 5 shared his perception on teacher well-being:

Unfortunately, I feel that the Education Department is failing its employees. We are regarded as nothing at our workplace. We have no rights, though we

get abused by learners on a daily basis. My most recent experience is when I was writing notes on the blackboard, as I turned around to face the class continuing my lesson, one of the boys had a gun pointed point blank in my face. I went into immediate shock and wet myself instantly. The class of course had a laugh, as it was a pellet gun. But I was traumatised. For a month long, I had nightmares; currently seeing a shrink now.

Participants 3 and 4 particularly emphasised the need for a teacher wellness programme. They felt it could make a big difference in teacher stress management and a balance between one's life and career. Sullivan (2002) supports this notion and states that on-site wellness programmes have the potential to attract qualified employees and to affect productivity and efficiency positively. Participation in employee health promotion programmes reduces absenteeism related to health issues such as stress, obesity, and cardiovascular disease (Aldana & Pronk, 2001). Besides the health benefits, wellness programmes can have a positive effect on teamwork, morale, and teacher effectiveness.

Other suggestions for improving the well-being of NTs were better facilities, improved communication, access to counselling, and more opportunities for relaxation and informal staff social interaction, which would enable teachers to get to know each other better. Counselling was one of the main concerns, as teachers experienced high levels of anxiety and stress at the workplace. The wellness number was displayed in the staffroom, but participants complained that speaking on the phone while trauma is experienced at that moment, is not always effective. Three participants expressed the view that staff well-being issues in the school were not easily addressed, particularly the issue of how teachers were verbally and physically abused by learners and parents.

4.4.3.3 Summary Theme 3

Connell (2009) note that literature on teachers' work which identifies emotional work as a central component of effective educational practice is understandably linked to the concept of teaching as a caring profession. This recognition and successfully managing the emotional work of teaching is an essential component of supporting professional flourishing. Figure 4.4 presents a summary of the main themes and sub-themes.

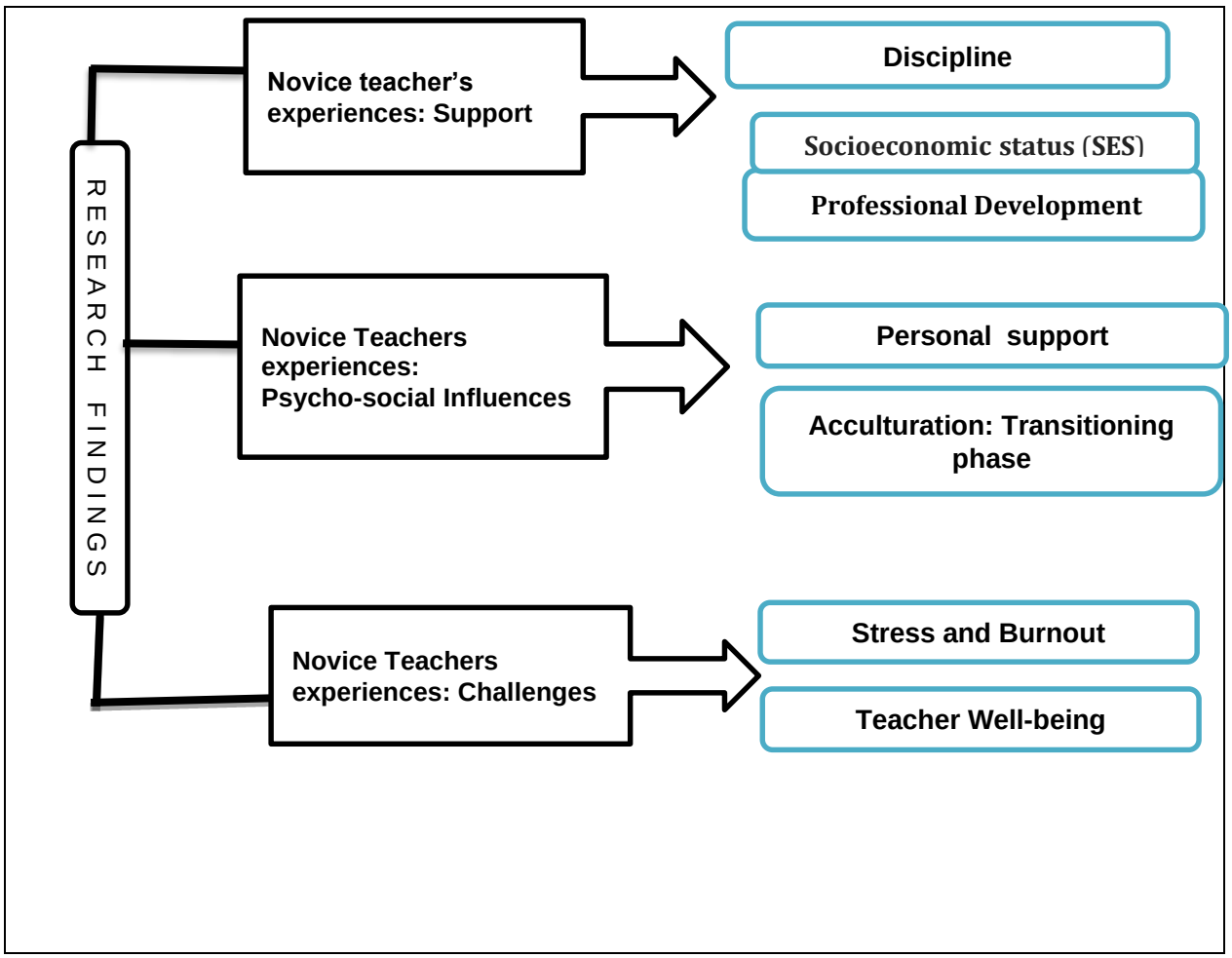


Figure 4.4: Summary of the main themes and sub-themes

The main findings of the data can be summarised as follows: NTs' Experiences: Challenges. The research revealed that learner discipline and behavioural issues as well as the school surroundings, climate and socio-economic status of the school are major challenges experienced by NTs.

Although the teachers tried to make sense of the learners and the community they serve, it was very difficult. Their morale was low, as some mentioned that they wanted to leave the teaching profession or find new teaching positions in another community. The teachers revealed that learners with social problems negatively affected other learners in the class. Other learners found it hard to concentrate on their work; they complained about not getting

attention from the teachers, as more attention was demanded by learners with social problems. As a result, some learners who were not usually problematic imitated the behaviour of learners with social problems in order to attract attention from the teacher. This just resulted in a chaotic classroom. Classroom management was also challenging. Teachers reported the overall school culture throughout the grades displayed this type of behaviour. This they experienced when they were on ground duty and also when other colleagues shared their daily experiences during lunch time.

Teachers felt that even though a Code of Conduct existed at their schools, it was largely ineffective in dealing with problems as it was not implemented or monitored by those appointed to control disciplinary and other problems. Participants went as far as saying that teaching at the school was a nightmare at some point. Novice teachers felt that the training they received in their pre-service training did not equip them to deal with learners' social problems. Because of this lack of training, they felt overwhelmed.

Novice Teachers' experiences: Support

The NTs who participated in this study sometimes gave contradictory responses regarding support received from the school leadership. Some of the participants indicated that they were supported to some extent by their school principal and deputy, while other teachers felt that very little or no support was being given to them. Participants also felt that the support through formal TPD workshops was ineffective as they did not suit the needs of the NTs. They described the professional development provided as window dressing as it did not help them at all. Novice teachers felt they needed informal workshops to grow in their teaching careers. They also felt that informal workshops, and workshops for behavioural problems, learners' social problems, and classroom management could help them cope with problems at school. They voiced their desire for communities of practice, where teachers at school work together and share their ideas with other staff. Some participants also felt that model teaching lessons on site would be helpful, as they teach different types of learners.

Personal support

The need for personal support was one of the other forms of support voiced by the novice teachers. Some of the participants felt isolated and as if they did not belong. Others found it difficult to adapt to the school culture and climate. Transitioning from university to working professional was challenging. They found veteran teachers had their set ways, and they were not always treated as staff, but as freshmen. Some shared that they felt bullied to some extent as other teachers often criticised them, underestimated their teaching abilities and classroom management, called them out or insulted them in front of learners. Novice teachers also felt uneasy because some teachers felt intimated by the novice teachers. 'Stoep talks', were one

of the factors they recalled clearly. This made the novice teachers unhappy at their workplace, and some dreaded coming to work.

Novice Teachers' experiences: Psycho-social influences

All the challenges and lack of support resulted in psycho-social influences on novice teachers' careers. Novice teachers' psycho-social influences affecting their careers surfaced during the data-collection process. While teachers were willing to assist learners, the newly qualified teachers felt overwhelmed in dealing with learners' social problems. They were exposed to teenage pregnancy, drug abuse, domestic violence at learners' homes. This extended to the school grounds as parents would often enter the school ground and approach the teacher by walking into the classroom in a harsh manner to a point where the situation got out of hand and school security was requested. These NTs' often have to deal with neglected children, and much more. All this was new, as each teacher comes from a different biographical and demographic background and belief system. Teachers shared that they came with the goal to teach, but ended up teaching only 30% of the day, as most of the time was wasted on social and disciplinary problems of learners and the school community. Teachers found it difficult to manage the demands of the curriculum and the number of assessment tasks, while learners could hardly cope with the academic work with little or no parental support at home. All this resulted in teacher burnout and stress.

The data revealed that NTs experienced high levels of stress due to various factors. Novice teachers felt teaching was a draining job; it is not easy working with 40 different personalities under one roof. Children fight in class, and NTs often go home stressed, worried about failing one learner by not paying attention to his or her personal problems. one teacher noted, "I wish the university could include an entire module of psychology in education, as one needs to know how to deal with and understand these little humans and maintain collegial relations." It is clear that the transitioning phase for these novice teachers was not easy at times.

Teacher well-being

Novice teachers expressed their need for teacher wellness programmes, as they often felt ill, not just psychically but mentally, with low morale. One was prescribed anti-depressant medication. Some felt lost in the teaching profession. Interviewees thought, moving forward, staff well-being would involve management's reducing the number of pedagogical formal workshops which teachers had to attend on a regular basis, as they did not always suit their needs and were ineffective. This would give teachers more control over their time and communities of practice, where staff could support and engage with one another in practical ways instead of having to work within an obligatory structure. NTs also needed more affirmation of their work, and more knowledge of and instruction in teacher stress and stress management. They recommended partnering with well-being programmes presenting

unwinding methodologies such as yoga, meditation and team building, as well as more informal social functions. Suggestions to improve well-being included maintaining and further developing unity, openness, communication, and support in the schools. Interviewees mentioned encouraging staff to speak up about issues they had concerns about, continuing to have regular social events, so staff "get to know each other a little bit more", and reducing the length of meetings.

4.5 Results of semi-structured interview with principal

A semi-structured interview with the principal was analysed according to reductive analysis and presented in detail according to the categories allocated by me. The emerging themes which emanated from the interview with the principal are:

- Socio-economic status
- Novice teacher attrition
- Support offered for novice teachers at school
- Overview of one-on-one interview with the principal

4.5.1 Socio-economic status

According to the principal, crime, poverty, alcohol abuse, drugs and domestic violence are rife within this low-class community. Being a non-fee-paying school also contributes to the various problems at school which NTs face. Learners do not always have the required stationery, the government supplies only a certain amount of stationery, and there are sanitation problems as the number of learners is greater than the capacity of the facilities. In the past it used to be a dual-medium school, from grade R to Grade 9. One of the main problems is that there are no playground facilities on the school grounds, and this leads to disciplinary problems. She said she found it an ongoing battle to obtain resources and support staff, as the community does not want to assist because of the learners' ill-mannered behaviour. They are exposed to domestic violence on a daily basis, then come to school and display the same behaviour.

> *It is sad that one of the same learners I teach every day, retaliated and picked up a bin and hit me in front of the entire class. I could do nothing; the learners always have right of way according to the DBE. The same learner threw my windscreen in. When I called the mom in to discuss the damage, she bluntly said, "I don't even have money for bread." This is a sad reality and issues we're faced with every day. Luckily, I've been teaching at this school for 22 years now, so I am used to the community and its challenges. I understand and love this community.*

4.5.2 Novice teacher attrition

Principal's experience regarding NTs' leaving the school

I posed my second question to the principal: "How many NTs have left this school over the last three years?" and "Reflect on and give possible reasons for your previous answer." Unequivocally, she responded with an unwavering, clear-cut answer: "It's definitely one of the biggest challenges our school is facing. NTs are excited when they come for the interview and start out, but sadly there were some of them who did not even return after their first day."

She expressed the following sentiments:

New teachers experience culture shock. It is a unique community. Our school is based in a community where parents assault the teachers; the community vandalise the school, stealing new resources like the interactive whiteboard, laptops and projectors; they swear and verbally abuse the teachers. Teachers often have emotional meltdowns; the younger teachers aren't coping well as this is all new to them. One has to take 30 minutes to quiet the class down before teaching, leaving teachers with only 15 minutes to teach really. Parents and community members roam around the school grounds, which makes teaching even more difficult. As a teacher you constantly have to raise your voice, you have to be in full control and be bold, amidst all the curriculum challenges. This makes it very difficult for new teachers to adjust to the school environment. They come from university, fresh and full of life to enter their teaching career, but soon find it challenging. My concern is, the DBE made it compulsory for schools to employ bursary holders. Veteran teachers are retiring at my school; what can I do in such a dilemma? It is stressful and affects the school in a negative way. Many classes sit without teachers. NTs refuse to teach in this community. The principal at one of my neighbouring schools threatened to close down, as there are not enough teachers, hence posts being available. The area is also remote and, on the outskirts, [of town], thereby contributing to this dilemma.

4.5.3 Support offered for novice teachers at school

Under Questions 6 and 7: What type of support is offered for novice teachers at school?

The WCED provides workshops and mentoring by another young teacher who happens to experience similar challenges. The school management team try to render support based on novice teachers' personal–professional development needs, making use of the IQMS and school development team; however, it's not enough. I would honestly say, the school needs help from the DBE. We do not get time for team building and wellness programmes, which I think will be a great help for novice teachers to cope and adjust.

4.5.4 Overview of one-on-one interview with the principal

The principal gave a detailed description of her teaching career which started in 1984 at this specific school, including the positions she has filled until now. She has worked at the school for 36 years and has been in her current position as principal for five years. The experiences and knowledge gained in her position are definitely admirable and her passion for the school and community was clear when she relayed the following:

This is a unique school in a unique community; one has to love the learners and the community to be able to teach here. Teaching at this current school is not about the salary but about the heart; we as teachers are social workers, nurses, counsellors and victims of the little humans who do not understand their own situation. Circumstances do not make it easy, but humanity is key. If we don't get up every morning with new hope, what will happen to this community, what will happen to our learners? We have to be strong for them and put our own psycho-social challenges to one side. I hope that something good will come out of this community with the provided education. Like Mr Nelson Mandela once quoted: "Education is the key to success".

4.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, the findings were presented and discussed in relation to the research problem: "What are novice teachers' experiences of psycho-social support provided at a selected Western Cape primary school?" The findings of the empirical research were presented in this chapter. A description of the demographic profile of the participants was followed by a discussion of the findings from the semi-structured interviews. In this chapter I presented the main themes and sub-themes that I identified during the thematic experience-centred narrative analysis. I also presented each of the participants' narratives on their experiences of concrete narratives, known as representative constructions, to retain the richness of detail and the sequence of events and topics. The next chapter presents the conclusions, recommendations and limitations of this study. It provides an interpretation of these findings and also makes some recommendations that include psycho-social support within PD for the training of NTs. Some general conclusions are drawn from the whole study. In Chapter 5, I discuss the findings and offer my reflections on my research journey.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, theoretical underpinnings, methodology and findings are synthesised. The objective of this study was to explore novice teachers' (NTs') experiences of psycho-social support provided at a selected Western Cape primary school and assess how this psycho-social support affects the well-being of NTs. In addition, an assessment of whether the psycho-social support contributed to teachers' professional development (TPD) was carried out. These findings are presented in Chapter 4. This chapter focuses on an overview of the research findings, followed by an analytical discussion of the results.

5.2 Discussion and Analysis

The three themes identified by means of qualitative analysis were: NTs' experiences of support; NTs' experiences of psycho-social influences; and NTs' experiences of challenges. These are evaluated in Section 4.4.

The results obtained from this study revealed that NTs experience an array of challenges on a daily basis, therefore support is needed for NTs to maintain an environment that not only ensures high-quality teaching and learning, but also keeps South African teacher attrition low. Many NTs go abroad for better teaching opportunities which offer PD opportunities and high salaries, or opt to leave the teaching profession. NTs also feel that there is a dissociation between what they need for their PD and the TDP that the Department of Education (DoE) offers. This illustrates a gap that exists between NTs' needs and the TDP currently provided by the DoE. NTs also feel there is a lack of support from both the DoE and the principal. This results in low teacher morale. NTs did not appear to be sufficiently equipped to deal with the challenges presented by the twenty-first century education system.

5.3 Overview of the Research

5.3.1 What are novice teachers' experiences of psycho-social support provided at a Western Cape primary school?

NTs reported that they received little or no support from the school principal, the school management team or the Western Cape Education Department (WCED). They added that they received psycho-social support mainly from close colleagues and wellness programmes via telephone. However, NTs said that talking to someone on the phone was not effective, as they felt there was no personal connection. Therefore, NTs experience isolation, feel that they are thrown in the deep end and have to find their own way around school when it comes to teaching and interaction with other colleagues and students. NTs noted that while their

teaching degrees have enabled them to become professional teachers, they were not fully equipped to handle internal and external challenges at the school, which are linked to the socio-economic circumstances of the school. Internal challenges include learner violence, teacher gossip, and veteran teachers set in their ways and not open to change. External issues include parents who are often rude to teachers. Access to the school is also a challenge for teachers who do not own cars. Therefore, discipline problems, domestic violence experienced by learners at home, socio-economic issues, and relationships among teachers are all factors to be considered as reasons for psycho-social support for NTs.

NTs reported experiencing psychological meltdown to a point where they needed to see a psychologist or book themselves into a mental institution. Despite this, NTs reported little or no school support. NTs agreed that being a teacher at the Western Cape primary school was highly demanding and everyone had to fend for themselves. The literature describes this as 'sink or swim'. The reality shock often quickly sets in for most NTs as they find themselves directly confronted with the gap between theory and practice. Almagro and Ibanez (2011) assert that initial years of experience are crucial to NTs who face and must overcome a variety of difficulties which might cause mental strain, insecurity and lack of confidence. This is alarming. NTs also explained that one thing that helped them psychologically was that they met one another during briefings, as each teacher had a chance to share a positive quote in the morning. They pointed out that this practice provides unity and team building. This is important, as teachers often experience physical violence and abuse from the learners as they are alone in the classroom and are faced to deal with it alone with no proper training or on-site trauma counselling. Teachers are also scared to take sick leave when teaching two classes.

Recent research highlights the importance of social-professional support and its relationship with staying or leaving the teaching profession. Newberry and Allsop (2017) note that the timing and intensity of challenges such as high workloads and learner misbehaviour matter for teachers' decisions to stay or leave, but the effects are mitigated by the strength of personal and professional relationships. It is neither the challenge of the job nor the characteristics of the individual, but the structure of the social-professional support that determines whether teachers stay or leave the profession. Similarly, Kelchtermans (2017) argues that professional core relationships such as relationships with learners, colleagues and the principal operate as 'double-edged swords' as they are the most important sources of positive job outcomes such as satisfaction and motivation, as well as negative job outcomes such as stress and burnout. Teachers with less risk of stress were three times more likely to have a reduced schedule (workload reduction); they were also more likely to attend seminars, receive supportive communication from administrators, receive planning time, and were more often provided with extra help compared with teachers at more risk of stress (Fitchett et al., 2018). The possible

mediating influences of induction arrangements in the relationship between teacher's stress, performance and attrition remain unclear, and therefore more research is needed.

5.3.2 What is the importance of psycho-social support needs within teacher professional development?

Evidence through narratives from this study suggests that more attention needs to be given to NTs' professional development (PD) programmes, pedagogies and policies that are relevant and suit the needs of twenty-first century teachers and learners. As stated in the literature review, support in the initial years of teaching in order to provide NTs with meaningful opportunities for their professional learning and development is very important. Participants explained that they come fresh from a university programme, bursting with teaching styles and ideas, but are shocked when confronted with reality. They soon discovered that teaching is not only about knowledge but is also a skill, and that collaboration is needed.

They entered an environment which they knew nothing or little about, and often walked on egg shells, dreading to return to school the next day. Some reported that the reason they were still teaching at the school was due to their bursary obligations. NTs reported that they often call friends from other schools for advice, but that does not always help, as each school is different. NTs seek to make sense of their environment and where they fit in. Lave and Wenger (1991) and Fields (2015) explain that situated learning can exist as a 'transitory bridge' that connects the view that cognitive processes are primary in learning, with social practices as the primary vehicle for learning. Similarly, Ebersöhn (2012) posits that teachers' adaptation was supported by their flocking together in partnerships with peers. Wenger (2007) identifies three important elements that differentiate a community of practice from other communities or groups. These are: the domain, the communities, and the practice (explained in detail in the Literature Review chapter). From the data, it is evident that NTs experience challenges in all three elements. The learners, who constitute a major part of the schooling community, lack interest (the domain) in the learning project which the NTs are most interested in. This often comes as a shock to the teachers, and, as has been reported in the findings, is a major contributor to NTs' psycho-social well-being. Therefore, the next logical space to find support for NTs should be from more experienced colleagues and senior teachers (community). Unfortunately, despite the well-meaning intentions of other colleagues and people like the principal, this kind of support is often not structured or well construed, and is often reported in the data as not meeting the desired effect of motivating NTs. Perhaps the most critical aspect of the data which speaks to NTs' psycho-social experience is the contradictory teaching experience (the practice). NTs are reported to come from training where the classroom is sacrosanct, with few disruptions, and with collegial support and parental approval. Unfortunately, what NTs experience at school is different from what they experienced during training. Excerpts from the principal's narrative puts this in perspective:

> New teachers experience culture shock. It is a unique community. Our school is based in a community where parents assault the teachers; the community vandalise the school, stealing new resources like the interactive whiteboard, laptops and projectors; they swear and verbally abuse the teachers. Teachers often have emotional meltdowns: the younger teachers aren't coping well as this is all new to them. One has to take 30 minutes to quiet the class down before teaching, leaving teachers with only 15 minutes to teach, really. Parents and community members roam around the school grounds, which makes teaching even more difficult. As a teacher you constantly have to raise your voice, you have to be in full control and be bold, amidst all the curriculum challenges. ***This makes it very difficult for new teachers to adjust to the school environment*** [my emphasis in bold italics].

It is therefore my contention that, above the two other elements suggested by Wenger (2007), it is perhaps the practice (used in Wenger's understanding) of teaching as experienced by NTs which accounts for the most significant of their psycho-social experiences at work. I also note that for those NTs who persist and persevere through it all, it is perhaps a combination of attributes emerging from the three elements expressed by Wenger (2007). That is, they manage to find learning curves from the domain, the community, and the practice, and these serve as silver linings in what is generally described as a bleak experience.

The domain:

The domain, in this regard, is the NTs forming communities as they are a group of people who engage in a process of collective learning in a shared domain of human endeavour. They are a tribe learning to survive their first three years of teaching. These NTs are seeking to define their identity in the school. In this community of practice, they help each other cope. They share a concern and passion for education and teaching because they want to do it better and adapt to its situatedness. NTs in this specific domain of shared interest share a commitment to the domain, and competence in the domain separates members from other people such as the veteran teachers. I wish to further expand upon how teacher identity exists in relation to the complex socio-cultural contexts that shape both the work and the people doing that work (Lavadenz & Hollins, 2015). In referencing these socio-cultural contexts, Gomez et al. (2007:2133) state, "in such communities of prospective teachers … zones of contact in which the ideological positions that preservice teachers bring to teacher education are made visible and prominent".

The communities:

These NTs pursue their interest through joint conversations, activities, and shared information. Together they build relationships that allow and help them to learn from one another. During the observation period, I noticed that NTs were most comfortable in each other's company

when compared with the entire staff. They also felt better when they vented their feelings with other NTs. Trust and connection were easily practised among them.

The practice:
This platform allowed the NTs to feel free to share the good and the bad of the school situation. It often led to shared experience, specifically with discipline and teacher bullying. NTs' forming communities of practice was helpful in terms of curriculum development, as they were all in the same boat. The veteran teachers believed in their own way of doing things, while the NTs were millennials trained to do things differently. Also, e-learning was a big part of their practice and training. It was not always easy for them (if done as an individual) to incorporate e-learning, as veteran teachers had their set ways. On a positive note all members are practitioners in the community. A shared practice is built through time and interaction with other members of the community of practice.

Scholars who have explored how communities of practice can be harnessed in the context of teaching have illustrated such communities as professional development for veteran teachers (Hollins et al., 2004; Lotter et al., 2014); as support for retention of novice teachers (Cuddapah & Clayton, 2011); as bridges between disciplines (Spalding & Wilson, 2006); as means for connecting research and practice (Wesley, 2003; Friedrichsen et al., 2006); and as frames for understanding educational leadership (Margolin, 2012). In TPD, Kaschak and Letwinsky (2015) discuss how the emergence of a community of practice within their methods course, a result of a collaborative service-learning project, encouraged prospective teacher confidence and self-efficacy. Likewise, Daniel et al. (2013) found that Warner and Hallman's development of a community of practice for teacher candidates in their first professional semester helped participants develop the confidence to engage in productive critique. Collectively, these studies generally concur that there are positive impacts of both deliberate and serendipitous communities of practice within prospective teacher preparation coursework. Yet, less has been written about the function of communities of practice within teacher education field experiences.

The need for psycho-social support within the aspect of PD has been reported to have a dynamic and mutually reinforcing relationship. The Education for All (EFA) Global Monitoring Report for 2011 (UNESCO, 2011) focused on education in conflict settings and recognised the importance of psycho-social interventions in addressing the negative effects of conflict, including depression, trauma, shame and withdrawal, which can have significant consequences for teaching and learning.

5.3.3 What are teachers' experiences of this support?

NTs' experience of psycho-social support provided was mostly negative. The little or no support they received was viewed as ineffective and described as 'one shoe fits all'. No school induction or mentorship programme was in place. There was a general lack of on-site TDP which exacerbated the challenges they faced. NTs reported being overwhelmed. Participants noted they are aware that Rome was not built in one day, but they would appreciate some effort at psycho-social support. They felt that nothing was being done and found themselves in a 'sink or swim' situation. Teachers often noted that PD did not address their unique needs and reported low levels of efficacy in meeting the unique needs of diverse learners in their classrooms (Darling Hammond et al., 2020). Previous research suggests that effective PD is school based, active, collaborative, progressive and focused closely on pupils' learning (National Partnership for Excellence and Accountability in Teaching [NPEAT], 1998). However, for many teachers, their PD experiences are far removed from that ideal. Borko (2004) supports this notion and adds that PD needs to include both cognitive and social aspects of learning

Support for teachers such as counsellors can be effective when provided through the community, under community-led mechanisms such as PTAs and school improvement plans (Thompson et al., 2014). Evidence suggests that in conflict and post-conflict settings, communities play an importance role, and within that, are prepared to provide a number of inputs designed to support and enable local schooling – including holistic and material support to teaching staff (Gladwell & Tanner 2014; Burde et al., 2015). Mkhwanzi (2014) highlights department workshops as ineffective, not positively impacting on increasing teacher knowledge and changing practice.

5.4 Recommendations

Teacher wellbeing is found to be impacted by myriad factors, both positive and negative, some of which are within teachers' control while others are not. In discussing the recommendations from this study, I start by summarising key recommendations which emerged from the participants, namely, the principal and the NTs. I later build on this to make concrete my own recommendations in the latter part of the section.

5.4.1 Recommendations from the principal

During the interview with the principal, she made some suggestions and remarks which I think are significant. She noted:

- NTs should be active role-players in PD
- NTs should join teachers' unions
- NTs should communicate their needs and experience, whether good or bad
- NTs should learn from veteran teachers

- NTs must be open minded
- WCED should put measures in place focusing specifically on teacher wellness programmes

Situated learning theory encourages teachers to make good their experiences in the field as learning opportunities. This therefore gives context to the above remarks from the principal. Teachers are often blamed in the media when learners perform poorly in the national assessment tests (Heard, 2016). The Policy on the Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications, as revised in 2014 by the DHET (2015) stipulates that teachers should perform a supportive role for learners, yet this is a difficult role to sustain when their own sense of well-being is compromised (Hammett & Staeheli, 2009). Psycho-social caring can provide hope and psychological well-being (Nabi et al., 2016). Motivated and enthusiastic teachers are vital to the provision of quality education (Keller, et al., 2016).

5.4.2 Recommendations made by the novice teachers within the focus group

NTs made several recommendations in order to help other novice teachers, as well as the principal, management team and DoE. I consider these to be important remarks which will later account for how I present my recommendations. Comments included:

- Sustainable on-site wellness programmes
- Collaboration among staff
- Unity among staff
- Teacher counsellors
- A safe space for teachers' voices to be heard

From the above remarks by the principal and the NTs, I now present in detail my recommendations.

1. Make teacher professional development specific to the school situation

Every teacher faces unique classroom challenges, and each day requires a different set of skills. However, in terms of time, cost and efficiency, many PD opportunities for teachers are 'one size fits all' and not relevant to most, or even many, of the teachers attending. For TPD be relevant, teachers should be consulted and asked to participate.

2. Professional development must be ongoing

A PD committee can convene formal and informal sessions that can help NTs with stress management. Veteran teachers acting as mentors can play an important role. This should be an ongoing process and not a one-off situation.

3. Embed it into the teaching process

Effective learning doesn't take place in an afternoon, and often teachers and administrators struggle to fit teacher professional development opportunities around teaching. Therefore, the TDP should be embedded into the teaching process.

4. Personalised teacher learning with a professional development plan

A personalised professional development plan sets individual learning goals for educators on a short- or long-term basis, and gives clear steps for achieving them. At the same time, classroom management and behavioural problems can be modelled, aiding support to the NT. The following measures could be implemented after meeting with educators in a specific school to determine what factors should influence their individual plans:

- What subject do they teach?
- What age range?
- Are they happy in their current position? Where do they want to move in the future?
- What do they need to learn to make that happen?

5. Get teachers on board

Let the teachers be part of the process and allow them to share their expertise during the course of development. Teachers can also learn from each other.

In view of above recommendations, participative training activities that relate to intrapersonal and interpersonal communication such as emotional awareness and coping, empathy and avoiding stereotyping, can help with healing as well as providing the foundation for skills needed for conflict resolution. UNICEF (2009) asserts that maximum results from teacher development and training of other education staff are achieved when the approach to psychosocial support by teachers is mainstreamed into the school curriculum and extra-curricular activities.

5.5 Limitations, Challenges, and Suggestions for Further Studies

Although this research was limited to one principal and five novice teachers from this school, and included four sets of parents from the community, questions have arisen that may lead to further research. However, some limitations arose in the study and are mentioned below.

5.6 Limitations and Scope for Further Research

Many important findings were disclosed in this limited study, suggesting new fields for research in psycho-social support needs within teacher professional development in South Africa.

5.6.1 Participant discomfort

Although some participants were very eager to contribute to new knowledge regarding their experiences, in the one-on-one interviews they became very sceptical as I was also their colleague. They were worried that the principal would find out what they had said to me in the sessions. Therefore, I had to reassure all participants involved that pseudonyms would be used within the study and I would be the only one with access to the given information. The suspicion might also have influenced these participants' responses.

5.6.2 Sample size

Naturally, a larger, more inclusive sample group would benefit future research. A further study might need to separate findings into different school climates and economic status of communities as the specific needs and findings of these two economic factors might well be very different.

5.6.3 Scope

The researcher recommends that this research contributes to further research on situated learning theory and communities of practice. Every school is different in terms of the context in which it operates, the culture of the school and the challenges it faces. Although the sample size was small and there was only one research site, it highlights the significance of the psycho-social support needed to improve NTs' experiences in schools.

5.7 Implications of the Research

The study highlighted an important aspect of TPD. This will be beneficial to both learners and teachers. It may also be beneficial to qualified teachers to reflect on their personal and professional development. The study can also be beneficial to educational research and teacher PD programmes on how to improve psycho-social challenges experienced by novice teachers and psycho-social support needs of novice teachers. This can lead to NTs remaining in their profession and not leaving for greener pastures.

5.8 Reflexive Analysis

Reflexivity pertains to the "analytic attention to the researcher's role in qualitative research" (Gouldner, 1971, p. 16, as cited in Dowling, 2006). The key to reflexivity is "to make the relationship between and the influence of the researcher and the participants explicit" (Jootun, McGhee, & Marland, 2009, p. 45). This process determines the filters through which researchers are working (Lather, 2004) including the "specific ways in which our own agenda affect the research at all points in the research process" (Hesse-Biber, 2007, p. 17).

In relation to this current research, I was aware of myself as not only the researcher and interviewer, but also as an experienced teacher with a personal interest in the participants' experiences. I chose this area of research as I realised that most of the NTs in the school tend to leave the school. I noted that some teachers would begin teaching at the school and leave within months or even a week. This practice had been happening for a few years and alarmed me. Teacher professional development became of interest to me in the field of situated learning theory and communities of practice. I also felt that this area could be beneficial to my own career in the future if I should become HOD or principal. This also may have meant that my questions were biased towards my own personal gain rather than for the purpose of the research. However, I still believe that the interviews achieved what they aimed to do in terms of the research. Before this research I was a novice with interviews, having previously only conducted a couple in previous years of my degree. Because of this, I feel I may have missed some questions that could have been beneficial to the research, and perhaps did not prompt the participants sufficiently to solicit information. Despite this, I believe enough information was produced from the interviews to be able to conduct an in-depth analysis.

5.9 Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to assess the experiences of novice teacher's psycho-social support needs within the aspect of professional development at a selected primary school in the Western Cape. To do this, qualitative case study methodology was used. Purposeful sampling was used to select NTs as they served as the variables for this study. The study investigated the psycho-social support experience of one principal and five NTs through interviews and focus groups. Semi-structured interviews, observation and document analysis were triangulated to collect and enrich the data. This ensured the reliability, validity and trustworthiness of the study findings. The collected data was qualitatively analysed through inductive techniques. The study revealed that NTs' experiences of psycho-social support were lacking and did not meet the expectations of the NTs. The NTs reported poor support from stakeholders. NTs felt drained by the education system, with no effective measurement in place to meet the needs of their TPD. This often led to stress and burnout.

This research successfully identified key themes and sub-themes that contribute to psycho-social support needs of NTs, all of which relate to teacher personal professional development, and often interlinking in this area. This research concurs with previous research in this field while filling a gap in the literature by highlighting the psycho-social challenges faced by NTs when transitioning from the university classroom to the school. The current study neither aims to replace existing research on professional development of novice teachers' psycho-social support at schools, nor circumvent all the existing problems at these schools. However, the findings agree with the literature and shed some light on issues that potentially could be

addressed when schools, education departments and governments formulate future professional development programmes.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH: WCED

Directorate: Research

Audrey.wyngaard@westerncape.gov.za

tel: +27 021 467 9272

Fax: 0865902282

Private Bag x9114, Cape Town, 8000

wced.wcape.gov.za

APPLICATION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS WITHIN THE WESTERN CAPE

Note

- This application has been designed with students in mind.
- If a question does not apply to you indicate with a N/A
- The information is stored in our database to keep track of all studies that have been conducted on the WCED. It is therefore important to provide as much information as is possible

1 APPLICANT INFORMATION

1.1 Personal Details		
1.1.1	Title (Prof / Dr / Mr/ Mrs/Ms)	**Ms.**
1.1.2	Surname	**Davids**
1.1.3	Name (s)	**Shehaam**
1.1.4	Student Number (If applicable)	**204519934**

1.2 Contact Details		
1.2.1	Postal Address	**32 Carol crescent Montrose Park Mitchell's Plain 7785**
1.2.2	Telephone number	**0217901560**
1.2.3	Cell number	**079827798**
1.2.4	Fax number	
1.2.5	E-mail Address	**Shehaamdavids2@gmail.com**
1.2.6	Year of registration	**2016**
1.2.7	Year of completion	**2018**

2 DETAILS OF THE STUDY

2.1 Details of the degree or project		
2.1.1	Name of the institution	Cape Peninsula University of Technology
2.1.2	Degree / Qualification registered for	M ed.
2.1.3	Faculty and Discipline / Area of study	Education
2.1.4	Name of Supervisor / Promoter / Project leader	Dr. Chiwimbiso Kwenda
2.1.5	Telephone number of Supervisor / Promoter	021 680 1572
2.1.6	E-mail address of Supervisor / Promoter	kwendac@cput.ac.za

2.1.7	**Title of the study**
Novice teachers' experiences of psychosocial support provision in a Western Cape primary school	

2.1.8	**What is the research question, aim and objectives of the study**

Research Question:
What are novice teachers' experiences of psychosocial support provided at a selected Western Cape primary school?

Aim:
To establish what are novice teachers' experiences of psychosocial support provided at a selected primary school.

The sub-aims are to establish -

- what kind of psychosocial support has been provided to novice teachers at a selected Western Cape primary school in the first three years of their teaching careers
- the teachers' perspectives of this support
- how psychosocial support for novice teachers at the selected school can be improved

2.1.9	**Name (s) of education institutions (schools)**
Sentinel Primary School	

2.1.10	**Research period in education institutions (Schools)**	
2.1.11	Start date	24 Jul 2017
2.1.12	End date	18 August 2017

Cape Peninsula University of Technology

Faculty of Education

Chiwimbiso M. Kwenda (PhD).
Room 0.29 Main Building
Mowbray Campus
Highbury Road
Mowbray 7705

Phone: +27 21 680 1572
Fax: +27 21 680 1504
E-mail: kwendac@cput.ac.za

19 April 2017

Dr A. Wyngaard
Directorate: Research
Western Cape Education Department
Private Bag X9114
CAPE TOWN
8000

APPLICATION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT SCHOOLS

I hereby confirm that Ms. Shehaam Davids is registered as a Masters' student at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT). Her research is supervised by Mrs. Brenda Sonn and me, Dr Chiwimbiso Kwenda. We confirm that her research proposal has been presented to and approved by the Education Faculty Research Committee at CPUT and granted ethical clearance by the Education Faculty Ethics Committee. Any queries may be directed to me or Mrs. Sonn.

Yours Sincerely,

.....
Dr Chiwimbiso M. Kwenda

APPENDIX B:
CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE FROM CPUT FACULTY OF EDUCATION RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

Cape Peninsula University of Technology

***For office use only	
Date submitted	**12 Nov 2016**
Meeting date	**n/a**
Approval	**P/Y/N**
Ethical Clearance number	**EFEC 2-11/2016**

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

RESEARCH ETHICS CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

This certificate is issued by the Education Faculty Ethics Committee (EFEC) at Cape Peninsula University of Technology to the applicant/s whose details appear below.

1. **Applicant and project details (Applicant to complete this section of the certificate and submit with application as a Word document)**

Name(s) of applicant(s):	**Shehaam Davids**		
Project/study Title:	**Novice teachers' experiences of psychosocial support provision in a Western Cape primary school.**		
Is this a staff research project, i.e. not for degree purposes?	No		
If for degree purposes the degree is indicated:	Degree: Masters in Education Supervisor(s): Dr C. Kwenda, Ms. B. Sonn		
If for degree purposes, the proposal has been approved by the FRC	Provisionally approved		
Funding sources:	Applying for URF		

2. **Remarks by Education Faculty Ethics Committee:**

This Master's research project is granted ethical clearance valid until 14 November 2018.		
Approved: √	**Referred back:**	**Approved subject to adaptations:**
Chairperson Name: Chiwimbiso Kwenda **Chairperson Signature:**		**Date: 15 November 2016**
Approval Certificate/Reference: EFEC 2-11/2016		

EFEC Form V3_updated 2016

APPENDIX C: ACCEPTANCE LETTER TO CONDUCT RESEARCH WCED

Western Cape Government
Education

Directorate: Research

Audrey.wyngaard@westerncape.gov.za
tel: +27 021 467 9272
Fax: 0865902282
Private Bag x9114, Cape Town, 8000
wced.wcape.gov.za

REFERENCE: 20170713 –2927
ENQUIRIES: Dr A T Wyngaard

Ms Shehaam Davids
32 Carol Crescent
Montrose Park
Mitchell's Plain
7785

Dear Ms Shehaam Davids

RESEARCH PROPOSAL: NOVICE TEACHERS' EXPERIENCES OF PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT PROVISION IN A WESTERN CAPE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Your application to conduct the above-mentioned research in schools in the Western Cape has been approved subject to the following conditions:

1. Principals, educators and learners are under no obligation to assist you in your investigation.
2. Principals, educators, learners and schools should not be identifiable in any way from the results of the investigation.
3. You make all the arrangements concerning your investigation.
4. Educators' programmes are not to be interrupted.
5. The Study is to be conducted from **24 July 2017 till 18 August 2017**
6. No research can be conducted during the fourth term as schools are preparing and finalizing syllabi for examinations (October to December).
7. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey, please contact Dr A.T Wyngaard at the contact numbers above quoting the reference number?
8. A photocopy of this letter is submitted to the principal where the intended research is to be conducted.
9. Your research will be limited to the list of schools as forwarded to the Western Cape Education Department.
10. A brief summary of the content, findings and recommendations is provided to the Director: Research Services.
11. The Department receives a copy of the completed report/dissertation/thesis addressed to:

    The Director: Research Services
    Western Cape Education Department
    Private Bag X9114
    CAPE TOWN
    8000

We wish you success in your research.

Kind regards.
Signed: Dr Audrey T Wyngaard
Directorate: Research
DATE: 13 July 2017

APPENDIX D:

LETTER TO PRINCIPAL REQUESTING ONE-ON-ONE SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

32 Carol crescent
Montrose Park
Mitchell's Plain
7785
021 376 5275
E-mail:
shehaamdavids2@gmail.com

Dear Sir/Madam

REQUEST FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION IN ONE -ON -ONE SEMI STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

Teaching can be a difficult challenge for novice teachers. The first year of teaching for novice teachers is a delicate if not difficult one, and some researchers have labelled the first-year of teaching as a 'sink or swim' scenario.The work environment of teachers exposes them to situations known to generate negative work attitudes and occupational stress which can influence their psycho-social well-being.

I am in the process of researching novice teachers' experiences of psycho-social support provision at school.

It would be greatly appreciated and valued if you volunteered to be part of this research by completing a questionnaire and possibly participating in a focus group interview.

Please note that all information gathered will be treated as highly confidential. Should you be willing to participate, kindly sign the informed consent slip attached.

Your contribution would be greatly appreciated.

Yours in Education

S. Davids

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

I, _____ give my consent, without reservation to participate in this research. I have no objection to the information that may be published. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I can decide to withdraw it at any time during the course of the research should I feel so inclined, without having to give reasons or being prejudiced in any way.

_____ _____

Signed Witness Date

APPENDIX E:
LETTER TO PRINCIPAL REQUESTING COMPLETION OF QUESTIONNAIRE AND POSSIBLE FOCUS-GROUP INTERVIEW

32 Carol crescent
Montrose Park
Mitchell's Plain
7785
021 376 5275
E-mail:
shehaamdavids2@gmail.com

Dear Sir/Madam

REQUEST FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION IN ONE -ON -ONE SEMI STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

Teaching can be a difficult challenge for novice teachers. The first year of teaching for novice teachers is a delicate if not difficult one, and some researchers have labelled the first-year of teaching as a 'sink or swim' scenario.The work environment of teachers exposes them to situations known to generate negative work attitudes and occupational stress which can influence their psycho-social well-being.

I am in the process of researching novice teachers' experiences of psycho-social support provision at school.

It would be greatly appreciated and valued if you volunteered to be part of this research by completing a questionnaire and possibly participating in a focus group interview.

Please note that all information gathered will be treated as highly confidential. Should you be willing to participate, kindly sign the informed consent slip attached.

Your contribution would be greatly appreciated.

Yours in Education
S.Davids

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

I, _____ give my consent, without reservation to participate in this research. I have no objection to the information that may be published. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I can decide to withdraw it at any time during the course of the research should I feel so inclined, without having to give reasons or being prejudiced in any way.

_____ _____

Signed Witness Date:

APPENDIX F:
ONE-ON-ONE INTERVIEW SCHEDULE WITH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

Instrument 1: Principal's Semi-structured questionnaire

PLEASE NOTE: Respondents' identities will remain anonymous. Please fill in relevant information below:		
School code:	**School quintile:**	
Education district:	**Municipal area:**	
Learner-teacher ratio:	**No of boys enrolled:**	**No of girls enrolled**
1. Give a short historical background of the school, eg. When it started; describe any changes in the school and community; the position of the school in the community.		
2. Briefly describe the social –economic status of the community where the school is located. Please give any positive and/or negative aspects of this link.		
3. Briefly describe the links between the community and the school.		
4. This study focusses on novice teachers. How many novice teachers left the school over the last three years?		
5. Reflect on and give possible reasons for your previous answer.		
6. How would you describe novice teachers' morale regarding school and their teaching career? Please elaborate on your answer.		
7. What is your perception on novice teachers' adaption to your school culture? Please elaborate on your answer.		
8. What type of support is offered for novice teachers at your school?		
9. What challenges is novice teachers faced with at this school?		
10. What kind of support based on novice teachers' personal professional development needs is offered at this school? (Emotional and moral support)		
11. There is a mentoring program available at this school for novice teachers		
12. There is an induction program available at this school for novice teachers. If so describe it-if not, why not?		
13. Team building and wellness programs are in place to boost novice teachers' moral.		
14. As the principal, what support novice teachers need to survive the first years of their teaching career, also known as the "swim or sink years"?		

APPENDIX G: ONE-ON-ONE INTERVIEW SCHEDULE: NOVICE TEACHERS

INSTRUMENT 2: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

PLEASE NOTE: Respondents' identities will remain anonymous. Please fill in relevant information below:									
Age:		**Gender (√):**	Male	Female	**Number of years teaching experience**				
Qualifications:						**Post level**			
Demographic group :(√)	Black	Coloured	Indian	White	Other *(specify):*				
1. List the challenges (if any) experienced at school on a daily basis and briefly describe each:									
Challenge	Brief description								
2. List the professional development programmes provided since you started your teaching career at the current school and provide a brief description of each: (By whom was it provided and where)									
Professional development received	Brief description								
3. What type of support do you personally need at school?									
4. Indicate your views regarding each of the statements by ticking **(√)**) against the box that best reflects your opinion									
Question:	Always	Mostly	Sometimes	Rarely	Never				
I enjoy my teaching career and feel happy at my work place.									
Question:	Always	Mostly	Sometimes	Rarely	Never				
I experience emotional meltdowns, stress and anxiety									
Question:	Always	Mostly	Sometimes	Rarely	Never				
Personal and emotional support is provided at school.									
Question:	Always	Mostly	Sometimes	Rarely	Never				
I feel part of the school culture and clearly know my role at school.									
Question:	Always	Mostly	Sometimes	Rarely	Never				
I engage with other staff and embrace the school culture.									
THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!									

APPENDIX H: FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW: NOVICE TEACHERS

INSTRUMENT 3: FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW

Title: Novice teachers' experiences of psycho-social support provision in a Western Cape primary school

Interview Guide (Focus group discussions and in-depth Interviews)

Research Question (RQ)

What are novice teachers' experiences of psycho-social support provided at a selected Western Cape primary school?

Sub questions (SQ)

The sub-problems flowing from this main problem statement are:

- What kind of psycho-social support has been provided to novice teachers at a selected Western Cape primary school in the first three years of their teaching careers?
- What are the teachers' experiences of this support?
- How can psycho-social support for novice teachers at the selected school be improved?

Will answer SQ	Focus group questions
SQ1	1. You mentioned your love for learners as a motivation to teach. What kind of support has been provided thus far and what kind of would you need to remain motivated?
SQ2	2. Think back when you were at University and doing your teaching practice. Is your view on teacher support the same as what it was back then? Elaborate.
SQ1	3. Describe a typical 'good' day at school. What support has been contributed to make this day good?
SQ3	4. Describe a typical 'bad' day at school. What support could have been offered by colleagues and the SMT to deal with this bad day?
SQ2	5. Reflect on your professional and personal relationship with your colleagues. Describe what feelings arise and what could be the possible contributions to these feelings?
SQ2 SQ3	6. Describe experiences working in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) at school and the benefits of collaborating with colleagues. How can this be improved?
SQ2	7. Explain whether the support you receive from school is adequate to your needs and helps you survive your first three years of teaching.
SQ2	8. What was your perception of the work environment when you started at school? Based on the former, what experiences makes you feel different now.
SQ2	9. Have you experience feelings contributing to lack of appreciation and professional recognition from the parents, lack of collaborative and supportive feelings from colleagues, principal and the SMT. Please elaborate.
SQ3	10. Suppose that you were in charge and could make changes that would make the experience of novice teachers better. What would you do?

SRQ= SUB RESEARCH QUESTIONS

APPENDIX F: DECLARATION OF EDITING

ELIZABETH S VAN ASWEGEN
BA (Bibl), BA Hons (English language & literature), MA (English), DLitt (English), FSAILIS

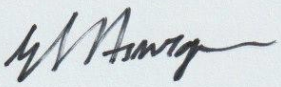
Language and technical editing | bibliographic citation

DECLARATION OF EDITING

11 Rosebank Place
Oranjezicht
Cape Town
8001

021 461 2650
082 883 5763
lizvanas@mweb.co.za

The master's thesis by candidate **Shehaam Davids,** titled 'Novice Teachers' Experiences of Psycho-Social Support Provided at a Selected Western Cape Primary School' has been edited. All references have been checked for correctness and conformance with the CPUT Harvard bibliographic style guide. As the appendices were not submitted with the thesis, these have not been checked. The candidate has been advised to make the recommended changes.



Dr ES van Aswegen
20 February 2021