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EXPERIENCES OF NOVICE ART TEACHERS IN HIGH SCHOOLS

by

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Dornehl Kitching

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ABSTRACT

The teaching profession is unique in this sense that in no other employment industry, are beginner employees straight out of university expected to do the work and hold the responsibilities equal to that of a senior or more experienced colleague. This idea is held as one of the main reasons why teachers need support in their first few years of teaching (Darling-Hammond, 2010; Le Maistre & Paré, 2010). From my own experience as well as that of the novice art teacher participants in this research, it was clear that art teachers in their first three years of teaching experience positive encounters as well as several challenges. Challenges varied from the lack of support and orientation from school management to several other factors that contributed to a demanding workload and stress. The theoretical framework that informs this research is grounded in the combination of theoretical perspectives developed by Geert Kelchtermans (1993; 1994; 1999) namely the *narrative-biographical perspective* and the *micro-political perspective*. Participants were interviewed and requested to attend a focus group session where they were asked to create a River of Life representation of their experiences since starting their art education careers. The transcripts were analysed in conjunction with the drawings to forge connections between the participants' feedback to establish themes. The themes of this particular research relate mainly to the common experiences that the participants face as novice art teachers and the support they receive from their school management and education authorities.

GLOSSARY

Art: In this research refers to visual art as subject in schools/art centres.

Attrition: Refers to the decreasing number of qualified teachers currently in our schooling system

CAPS: Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements

DoE: Department of Education

FET: Further Education and Training

Induction: A formal introduction to a new job or position

IPA: Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

Mentoring: Process where an experienced person in a company or educational institution support and guide new employees.

Novice teacher: A newly qualified teacher in their first three years of teaching

Pre-service teacher: Last preparation period of practical teaching before qualifying / graduating

Retain: The process of keeping /maintaining the number of teachers in the system

WCED: Western Cape Education Department

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EXPERIENCES OF NOVICE ART TEACHERS IN HIGH SCHOOLS

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the research problem

I graduated from a South African university with a B Ed degree, along with a set of ideals and expectations about teaching. Never could I, nor the various role players involved in teacher training at my university, have foreseen the individual successes and challenges that I would ultimately face during my first years of teaching visual art in a high school. One would like to believe that you have been given all the necessary tools to not only survive during your first three years of teaching, but excel at it. I soon realized that this was not the case and I had to access various support avenues on my way to becoming a more experienced art teacher. Only after sharing my experiences with colleagues, did I find that my situation was far from unique, and that a lot of my experiences were similar to those of other novice art teachers. After reflecting on these experiences, I was eager to establish to what extent this important phase in a teacher's career has been researched, especially from a visual art perspective in South Africa.

Considering how much art education takes place in the world, the field is remarkably under-theorised (Freedman, 2004:283) and it is puzzling to see how rarely the experiences of novice art teachers have been researched and documented. Art education research has pointed out a high turnover rate of art teachers within the first three years of teaching (Galbraith & Grauer, 2004; Klein, 2008), a general lack of theory and methods application within novice art teacher practice (Cohen-Evron, 2002; Kowalchuck, 1999; Kuster, Bain, Newton & Milbrandt, 2010), and a concern about novice teacher preparation and capability (Bain, 2004; Kalin & Kind, 2006; Korosik 1993), yet studies remain scarce regarding this student teaching link between university education and teaching practice. A concern about the lack of research focusing on pre-service art education is also voiced by Davis (1990), who noted that "practice will continue to be guided for the time being by philosophical position rather than by empirical evidence" (p. 754). Zimmerman (1994:60) echoed this by stating that there is a body of research about general pre-service education, but that there has been much neglect of research and practices related to specialist art teacher

education. Teacher education programs prepare future teachers for successful careers, yet once pre-service students graduate from university preparation programs, little research has examined how these recent graduates, now novice art teachers, navigate their way through their first year of teaching (Kuster, Bain, Newton, and Milbrandt, 2010:44). “Since the pivotal work on beginning teacher concerns by Veenman (1984), little has been done to further investigate what novice teachers are experiencing for the purpose of understanding how their concerns might be met during the first year” (Romano & Gibson, 2006:1). Even less research has been done to investigate novice teacher experiences from a South African perspective within visual arts.

Extensive research has been done into the challenges that novice teachers face during their first three years of teaching, as well as support programmes that education authorities in countries like Switzerland, France, New Zealand, China, and the USA implement for novice teachers. Unlike other countries, South Africa does not currently have an official induction program for novice teachers, nor an exclusive support program that answers to the specific needs of art teachers. Minimal research has been done concerning the experiences of novice teachers in South Africa, nor has the experiences of novice visual art teachers enjoyed any significant research. In addition to these problems, 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 novice teachers, and by doing that, possibly retain more teachers for the future.

The limited research, as well as my own experiences during the first three years of my art teaching career, inspired me to investigate the experiences of novice art teachers. This thesis will, therefore, seek to shed light on the experiences of three novice art teachers in high schools in the Western Cape by investigating their successes, as well as the challenges and support they experienced during their first three years of teaching visual art. This will allow the education department, as well as schools and alternative art education institutions, to provide novice teachers with effective support so that, ultimately, art teachers can be retained and art education can be taught more effectively.

1.2 Research questions

This thesis explored the experiences i.e. something personally encountered, undergone, or lived through, of novice art teachers in the first three years of teaching visual art. To further refine the research, three specific aspects of these experiences were focused on,

namely successes, challenges, and support. The research questions, therefore, were the following:

- a) What are the successes that newly appointed art teachers experience during their first three years of teaching?
- b) What are the challenges that newly appointed art teachers face during their first three years of teaching?
- c) What kind of support do newly appointed art teachers receive during their first three years of teaching?

1.3 Research objectives

The objective of this research is to establish the nature of the successes, challenges, and support that novice teachers experience during the first three years of teaching art at high schools and/or art centres in the Western Cape. This will allow for more insight into the experiences of novice art teachers for the education department and tertiary education institutions to be more effective at preparing pre-service teachers for the first three years of teaching. This research could also aid in the design of an official induction program that all high school and art centres could implement for their first-year art teachers.

1.4 Thesis statement

The theoretical framework that was used to investigate the experiences of novice teachers in this study is grounded in the combination of theoretical perspectives developed by Geert Kelchtermans (1993; 1994; 1999) in his analysis of the professional biographies of teachers and the process of teacher socialisation. These theoretical perspectives are the *narrative-biographical perspective* and the *micro-political perspective*. According to Kelchtermans (1999:183) teachers develop from their career experiences a personal interpretative framework or biographical perspective which refers to a set of cognitions that operate as a lens through which teachers perceive their job situation, give meaning to it and act on it. Within this framework two important and interwoven domains could be identified:

- The professional self: A teacher's conceptions about him/herself as a teacher.
- The subjective educational theory: The personal system of knowledge and beliefs on teaching.

The micro-political perspective focuses on the personal or collectively shared interpretations of political processes by the members of an organisation (i.e. school), and thus also their choices, values, interests, motives as well as their individual career stories, intertwined with the history of the school. In other words, the micro-political and the narrative-biographical perspective share the same core ideas and are complementary (Kelchtermans, 1999:114).

These perspectives were designed and implemented extensively in Kelchtermans's (1999) own research on novice teacher experiences. My approach to investigating novice teacher experiences also takes guidance from Kelchtermans (1993) theoretical perspectives, in that I emphasize the subjective meaning that novice teachers give to their career experiences (Kelchtermans & Ballet, 1999). The narrative-biographical perspective gives a central place to teachers' career experiences and the meaning they derive from it, and the micro-political perspectives shed light on the novice teacher's experiences within the school as an organisation, which makes it a perfect approach for this study. In order to understand the experiences of novice art teachers in their specific schools/art centres, I will reconstruct the meaning of these experiences through an interpretative analysis of the novice teacher participants' narratives through their stories and drawings (Kelchtermans, 1993).

With regards to data analysis, the qualitative analysis approach of this research was based on the work of Jonathan A. Smith (1996) namely the interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA), which can be applied to a study of a particular *phenomenon* which will then undergo an *interpretative analysis* that will position the findings within the wider social, cultural and perhaps even theoretical context. The interpretative analysis process consisted of descriptive and thematic coding upon which I built my findings. IPA is perfectly suited to use in this specific educational research based on investigating a very particular group of people (novice art teachers) teaching in a very particular context (within their first three years at high schools).

1.5 Delineations and limitations

The limited number of art teachers that were willing to participate in this research, that were within their first three years of teaching visual art, and based in the Western Cape central region, had an impact on the number of participants and the specified workplace. Western Cape central was a consideration to ensure proximity for the interviews and group session to take place. These limitations resulted in the engagement of only three

participants, and although the focus remained on the experiences of novice art teachers teaching conventional high school phases, namely the senior phase (Gr. 8 and 9) and FET phase (Gr. 10 – 12), now also included participants teaching at art centres, which enriched the data collected and broadened the scope of the reported experiences.

The data collected consists of art teachers narrative accounts of their experiences during their first three years of teaching. These narratives are subjective in nature and therefore, the focus was not so much on the factual aspects of the experiences, but rather how these experiences were being interpreted by the teachers and the meanings they derive from it.

As mentioned before, the field of art education is remarkably under-theorised (Freedman, 2004:283), as well as the research on novice art teacher experiences. For this reason, more recent literature was not always available to reference in this research.

1.6 Significance of the research

Now more than ever, leadership is needed at all levels of art education to sustain the field. The breadth of art education – in schools, communities, museums and so on – is being threatened by political and economic forces causing the reduction and elimination of art programs (Freedman, 2011:1). In South Africa, the issue of generalist teachers who are made responsible for the teaching of Creative Arts, is still an ongoing problem. Higher education institutions need to focus on training novice art teachers more sufficiently and offer more effective induction programs in high schools and art centres to retain these qualified arts teachers and have them implement effective Creative Arts education for our learners.

Understanding the issues novice teachers face, with a specific focus on art teachers, and how higher education institutions and schools/art centres might support them during the initial years of teaching might be one measure for maintaining those new to the profession. A concern over the high number of teachers that leave the profession in South Africa within the first five years, prompted a study that looked at the various factors that play a role in attrition rates. Several factors were identified, such as poor support from official structures; unattractive remuneration and working conditions; and the 'difficulties faced in the transition from trainee to practicing teachers (*The Mail & Guardian*, 19 May 2009).

To fully understand novice teacher experiences, one has to first take cognisance of the transition from student to qualified teacher i.e. from their preparation and training into the professional workplace. This provides the foundation for effective support structures that can aid novice teachers in delivering effective art education that grows new audiences and consumers; grows local talent; and addresses areas of scarce and critical skills lacking in the industry in South Africa.

My aim is to explore the nature of the experiences of novice art teachers. This research will, therefore, focus on the experiences of newly appointed art teachers during their first three years of teaching in high schools/art centres and establish whether teaching institutions, education department officials and school administrators employ effective support systems that enhanced their initial teaching experience. Critics have long accused teaching as being an occupation that “cannibalizes its young” and in which the initiation of new teachers is akin to being “lost at sea”, “sink or swim”, “trial by fire” or a “boot camp” experience (Ingersoll & Smith, 2004:28). 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, teacher well-being, student success and so forth.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter the work of Geert Kelchtermans (1993; 1994; 1999) will firstly be presented as the theoretical framework (2.2) that gives structure to the data collection, after which an exploration of the literature on novice teacher experiences and related issues, such as the transition from student to qualified teacher (2.3), will be discussed. The sections following this were guided by the research questions outlined in Chapter 1, namely the successes (2.4), challenges (2.5), and support (2.6) that newly appointed art teachers experience during their first three years of teaching. The section on support will also contain a brief exploration of relevant issues, such as teacher retention and attrition which might be possible consequences of support – or lack thereof – that teachers experience, as well as induction. This chapter will end with concluding remarks (2.7).

2.2. Theoretical background: The Biographical- and Micropolitical Perspectives

The theoretical framework that was used to investigate the experiences of novice teachers in this study is grounded in the combination of theoretical perspectives developed by Geert Kelchtermans (1993; 1994; 1999) in his analysis of the professional biographies of teachers and the process of teacher socialisation. The importance of teachers' biographical narratives or professional lives has been acknowledged and used in various studies by a growing number of researchers. We are, by nature, storytelling organisms that make sense of the world and the things that happen to us by constructing narratives to explain and interpret events both to ourselves and to other people. The narrative structures that we use to tell stories of our experiences can provide significant information about our social and cultural positioning (Sikes & Gale, 2006:2). Although narrative inquiry has a long intellectual history both in and out of the social sciences, it is increasingly used in studies of educational experience and the appropriate study to use when dealing with human experiences. To preserve the distinction the well-established device is being used to refer to the phenomenon as the "story" and the inquiry as the "narrative" (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990:2). Thus, we say, that people by nature lead storied lives and tell stories of those lives, whereas narrative researchers describe such lives, collect and tell stories of them, and write narratives of experience (p. 2)

Kelchtermans (1993) argues that narrative-biographical methods are powerful and suitable tools in research aiming at understanding complex educational processes, in which the meaning for those involved is given a central place. In this research, this meaning can be reconstructed through interpretative analysis of teachers' stories, the narratives teachers construct to make sense of their career experiences (p. 443). The term *biographical* refers to the procedure of having teachers look back and reflect on their own career experiences. This procedure forms the basis of the data collection for this research. Kelchtermans (1999) used the narrative-biographical approach in a study to understand how teachers make sense of their experiences and how these experiences influence their daily practice. The teachers' perspective was central in his study and they were asked to reflect on their careers and reconstruct their professional biographies as the stories in which their career experiences were retrospectively organized. According to Kelchtermans (1999:183) teachers develop from their career experiences a personal interpretative framework or biographical perspective which refers to a set of cognitions that operate as a lens through which teachers perceive their job situation, give meaning to it and act on it. "As a theoretical approach, the biographical perspective is characterized by five general features. It is narrative, constructivistic, contextualistic, interactionistic, and dynamic" (Kelchtermans, 1993:443). *Narratives* refer to the autobiographical stories of the participants (teachers), and has its emphasis on the subjective: This, therefore, implies that the focus is not so much on facts, but rather how these experiences are being interpreted by the teachers and the meanings they derive from it (p. 444). "The teacher actively construes his or her career experiences into a story that is meaningful to him or her" and are "always presented in their context" (p. 444). The way teachers interact with this context or their environment can have a direct result on their behaviour and/or subsequent experiences. The focus of this thesis was on the "personal perception" and "subjective meaning" (p. 444) of the successes and challenges that novice art teachers faced, as well as the type of support they received, to better understand their experiences and develop appropriate support structures to answer to these experiences in future.

Within this framework, two important and interwoven domains could be identified:

At first, there are the teacher's conceptions about him/herself as a teacher: *the professional self*. Through analysis of the career stories of teachers (Kelchtermans & Ballet, 1999:24-25), Kelchtermans distinguished five components in this professional self:

- the self-image (descriptive component: who am I as a teacher?),

- the self-esteem (the evaluative component: how well I am doing my job as a teacher?),
- the job motivation (the conative component: what motivates me to become a teacher, to be a teacher and to remain one?),
- the task perception (the normative component: what do I consider to be my task as a teacher? what should I do in order to be a proper teacher?) and
- the future perspective (prospective component: how do I look at the years to come in my career and how do I feel about it?).

(Kelchtermans & Ballet, 1999:25)

The second component is the *subjective educational theory*: the personal system of knowledge and beliefs on teaching. This theory contains the teacher's practical knowledge and provides them with personal answers to questions such as "how should I deal with a specific situation in my job?" and "why do I think this is the most effective way to do so?" (p.25)

Novice teachers' conceptions and beliefs about themselves as teachers and, in particular, their self-esteem and task perception are highly relevant in order to deal with their job situation properly and to develop professionally (Kagan, 1992:131). "In theory, novice teachers may 'know' what to do but their affective abilities in terms of teacher-student interactions, and being able to balance what they value about teaching may pose challenges for them on the job" (Onafowora, 2004:36). There has been a considerable amount of research into teachers' beliefs or conceptions of teaching. Part of the justification is that the conceptions have a strong influence on how teachers teach. Teachers' beliefs in their own personal efficacy to motivate or promote learning to affect the types of learning environments they create and the level of academic progress their students achieve (Bandura, 1993:117).

Kelchtermans identified the initial teaching years as a critical phase in teachers' lives and careers in terms of the professional self and the development of subjective educational theories (Kelchtermans, 1999; Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002). Kelchtermans and Ballet (2002) directed an inquiry into beginner teachers' experience of professional socialisation during their induction phase, making it possible to 'read' and interpret their behaviour as well as their confrontation with the micro-political realities of their schools during their professional induction. The disentanglement of teachers' self-understanding on the one hand and the cultural and structural working conditions on the other constitutes an

important agenda for researchers (Kelchtermans, 2005:1005). The micro-political perspective focuses on the personal or collectively shared interpretations of political processes by the members of an organisation (i.e. school), and thus also their choices, values, interests, motives as well as their individual career stories, intertwined with the history of the school. In other words, the micro-political and the narrative-biographical perspective share the same core ideas and are complementary (Kelchtermans, 1999:114).

“The micro-political perspective considers the power relations within the context of the school and the extent to which novice teachers are required to conform to existing practices” micro-political actions are demarcated as aiming to establish, safeguard and restore the desired working conditions. They enter this context with a developing sense of who they are (professional self) and how they want to teach (subjective educational theory), which may or may not be accommodated by the school.

(Findlay, 2006:516)

Central to the focus of micro-politics are therefore the personal or collectively shared interpretations of political process within an organisation (school) and thus also their choices, values, interests, motives and novice teachers' individual career stories, intertwined with the history of the school (Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002:108). This central idea can be linked to the concept of "working conditions" (Kelchtermans, 1996). All teachers and principals hold beliefs about what entails good teaching and what conditions are necessary or desirable to perform their professional tasks effectively, along with a sense of satisfaction (Kelchtermans & Ballet, 1999:25). Such working conditions operate as *professional interests* to the people involved, and through micro-political actions, teachers and principals will strive to establish, safeguard, and restore these desired working conditions (p. 25).

Over the last decade, the pleas for narrative and biographical approaches in educational research have become ever louder and more numerous (Kelchtermans, 1999:2). I used the narrative-biographical and the micro-political perspectives as theoretical frames to understand the experiences of novice art teachers. The data collected was a result of participants own, subjective interpretations of their experiences and the meaning they derive from it. It was important for me that participants reflect on their experiences on a personal and professional level, as teachers in the organisation in which they find themselves i.e. school they work at. My research questions, relating to novice art teacher successes, challenges and support, were therefore, appropriate questions in the collection of the data because it was open-ended questions that allowed for both narrative-

biographical and the micro-political perspectives to be explored. This theoretical framework, in conjunction with the research questions and research model of IPA, formed the sound structure that supported this research. A more comprehensive discussion on the latter follows in Chapter 3.

2.3 Background: Transition from student to qualified teacher

The confrontation between the professional self and the subjective educational theory, as developed during teacher training on the one hand and the experience of the full responsibility for a group of pupils on the other, often leads to tensions, doubts, and possibly revisions of the personal interpretative framework (Kelchtermans & Ballet, 1999:25). The transition from teacher training into the world of employment is, therefore, an important aspect to consider to fully understand the experiences of novice teachers during their initial teaching years.

The transition from learning about teaching theory to a brief teaching internship (periods of pre-service practical student teaching) prepares individuals to teach, but “mastery” of instructional effectiveness is likely to occur over several years into the teaching practice (Onafowora, 2004:35). The transition from the teacher education institution to life in a real classroom is often a reality shock when beginner teachers realize that the ideals they formed while training may not be appropriate for the situations they are faced with during their first year of teaching (Farell, 2003:95). Kelchtermans and Ballet (2002:105) refer to a beginning teachers’ confrontation with realities and responsibilities as a “praxis shock” that puts their beliefs and ideas about teaching to the test. Critics have long accused teaching as being an occupation that “cannibalizes its young” and in which the initiation of new teachers is akin to being “lost at sea”, “sink or swim”, “trial by fire” or a “boot camp” experience (Ingersoll & Smith, 2004:28). Difficult work assignments, unclear expectations, inadequate resources, isolation, role conflict and reality shock are some reasons for the high attrition statistics (Anhorn, 2008; David, 2000).

The transition from student teacher to newly-qualified teacher is a huge leap for some and coupled with that, these sometimes-daunting experiences affect the personal well-being of newcomers to the teaching profession as well as their work performance. According to research reported by Rivkin, Hanushek and Kain (2005), achievements of learners in the classrooms of first-year teachers tend to show a decline before improving in the same teachers’ second and third years. A beginner teacher is expected, from the first day of their

career to be on par with their veteran colleagues (Andrews & Quinn, 2004:79). The teaching profession is unique in this sense that in no other employment industry, are beginner employees straight out of university expected to do the work and hold the responsibilities equal to that of a senior or more experienced colleague. This idea is held as one of the main reasons why teachers need support in their first few years of teaching (Darling-Hammond, 2010; Le Maistre & Paré, 2010).

All countries rely on initial teacher education to prepare quality teachers to meet the country's educational outcomes. As such, the pedagogy of initial teacher education (ITE) is a key subject of interest, with debates and initiatives being mostly around how to best deliver courses to improve efficiency in the educational system. This has caused tensions between teacher educators and employing authorities who believe that teacher education programmes have in the main failed to seamlessly integrate theory at university and teaching practice in schools (Human Resource Development Council, 2014).

Conventional programs of teacher education and professional development are not designed to promote complex learning by teachers or students. The typical preservice program is a weak intervention compared with the influence of teachers' own schooling and their on-the-job experience.

(Feiman-Nemser, 2001:1014)

Feiman–Nemser (2001:1021) ascribes this poor integration of theory and practice to differences between school and university cultures, where teacher education is located mostly on the university site, which at times is not aware of school realities. Additionally, the university culture, which promotes and rewards research over teaching, limits lecturers' dedication to school-based student teacher work to meet the requirements of the course. For lecturers, investment of time in schools to develop long lasting and beneficial partnerships for producing better teachers does not contribute towards promotion. The general perception is that teaching practice that is tied to a predominantly university-based course is inadequate in teacher preparation (Smith & Lev-Ari, 2005). Berliner (2000) argues against these negative criticisms relating to teacher education. He believes that high-quality teacher education is a profoundly challenging, indispensable, introductory component in the lengthy development needed for the demonstration of accomplished performance by teachers (p. 370). He also states that the developmental aspects of learning to teach, from preservice, through induction, on to in-service education, have not been given enough attention as we contemplate what teachers need in the way of education and training. Berliner does, in fact, agree that remarkable findings, concepts,

principles, technologies, and theories may not be learned in low-quality programs or in the absence of a teacher education program (p. 370).

Grauer (1997) believes making a difference in the education of future teachers is a powerful incentive to understanding the beliefs of pre-service teachers toward art education. Learning to teach is a complex and demanding process, which requires complicated analytical and decision-making skills. Teacher education researchers, Linda Darling-Hammond and Cobb (1996), describe the demands and complexities facing a novice teacher:

Beginning teachers must develop the ability to apply knowledge appropriately in different contexts while handling the dozens of cognitive, psychological, moral and interpersonal demands that simultaneously require attention in the classroom. Learning to manage the different personalities and needs of twenty-five to thirty children while prioritizing and juggling often conflicting goals does not happen quickly, automatically or easily.

(Darling-Hammond & Cobb, 1996:45)

Zimmerman's (1994) study of 20 pre-service art teachers, categorized their subject related challenges as a) theory to practice, b) transformation and/or c) outcomes. Theory to practice challenges included discipline, flexibility, individualizing the curriculum, communicating information, clean-up, using visuals, telling stories, time constraints, and evaluation (p. 62). Transformational experiences focused on the pre-service art teachers' transformation from student to teacher. They reported their mentor art teachers' support and encouragement as valuable in helping them leave their role as a student behind and see themselves as teachers (p. 64). When it came to assessing the outcomes, all the pre-service art teachers focused on the results of their teaching and what effect it had on their students. Most of them were enthusiastic about their field experience (p. 65).

Research done by Kowalchuk (1999) showed that pre-service art teachers planned simplistic instructional experiences that lacked interconnection and relied on published curricular materials. In her research on these pre-service art teachers, Kowalchuk (1999:81) asked participants to reflect on their experiences by means of written tasks. The following table shows the percentage of pre-service art teacher reflections about their challenges and successes.

| Categories | Reflective statements N=37 | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------|
| | Challenges | Successes |
| Student learning and characteristics | 10% | 11% |
| Classroom management | 29% | 6% |
| Instructional strategies | 15% | 14% |
| Art content | 26% | 42% |
| Motivating students | 6% | 13% |
| Planning lessons | 4% | 1% |
| Lesson preparation and clean-up | 4% | 1% |
| Politics of teaching | 3% | 5% |

Table 2.1: Percentage of student teacher reflections about their challenges and successes in most frequent analysis categories, combined reflective writing sessions (Kowalchuk 1999:81)

Only categories with 4% response in one of these two writing tasks are listed. Kowalchuk (1999:80) found that only 6% of participants' responses revealed success with classroom management while 29% found it challenging. The participants' reflections about challenges also contained the similar frequency of references to art content and their report on this category being 42%. Attention to student learning and instructional strategies were relatively balanced in terms of successes and challenges. The other categories only received minor attention in their reflections.

According to the CSIR (2010:177) survey done in South Africa on art teacher preparation, training occurs through district level initiatives and NGO service provision: These are generally short, sharp interventions outside of the accredited framework. More sustained interventions, usually through NGO's, face the problem of formal accreditation and recognition. There are a very small number of specialist arts and culture in-service and pre-service degree programmes offered through tertiary institutions that address specialisation in the arts and culture learning area, or any of the art forms. The closure and merging of teacher training colleges with universities and technikons has exacerbated this situation. There is limited student enrolment for upgrading of qualifications, (such as Postgraduate Certificate in Education) aiming at training art graduates to function as senior phase/FET teachers (CSIR, 2010:177).

Prior experience, novice teachers' beliefs in becoming a teacher, contextual influences as well as the wider cultural context within which they start teaching all contribute to a

beginning teacher's experiences. It is important to understand these experiences to better prepare, equip and support novice art teachers. One way of addressing the specific needs of novice teachers is to understand their achievements and challenges during their first year of teaching. It is recognised worldwide that novice teachers require more support as reasons for high attrition rates (e.g. lack of appreciation from colleagues, unsatisfying working conditions, inadequate teacher preparation) indicate current systems are failing them (Hudson, 2012:50).

Using one-way analysis of variance, Grauer (1997) determined that students were influenced primarily by their "school-enculturated" experiences with art (p. 357). "New teachers bring varying backgrounds, motivations, experiences, and preparation levels to their initial teaching experience" (Bartell, 2004:1). These varying aspects play a big role in the experiences novice teachers face: From the first entrance into teacher education to the transition from student to practising teacher. Bullough (1997) sees it as story composed of "chronologies" (Britzman, 1991:69) that represent turning points in the tale:

Students who enter teacher education bring with them their first chronology negotiated throughout their cumulative classroom lives...Their student experiences in the university and teacher education constitute the second chronology. Student teaching furnishes the third chronology... A fourth chronology begins once the student teacher becomes a newly arrived teacher... Each ...represents different and competing relations to power, knowledge, dependency, and negotiation, and authorizes frames of references that effectuate discursive practices in teaching

(Bullough, 1997:55).

2.4 Novice teacher experiences: Successes

Success, for the purpose of this study, was understood as a general feeling of effectiveness and satisfaction based on the perspectives of the participant. The research on novice teacher success stories was limited in comparison to research on the challenges beginner teachers face, yet it is an important aspect in order to get a more holistic view of novice teacher experiences.

Huberman (1989) found that the first phase in the teaching career is characterised by two central themes, "survival" and "discovery". Beginning teachers discover the joy of teaching. They are enthusiastic, committed and get a lot of satisfaction from working with children and developing a relationship with them, from being able to arrange their

classrooms and take autonomous decisions about their teaching. The importance of relationships was also evident in research done by Schlichte, Yssel and Merbler (2005), who conducted interviews with five novice teachers about their first-year experiences. Their findings focused on the importance of relationships with others in the school context and found that one participant's success was as a result of these supportive relationships (with co-workers, administration staff, students etc.). The participant was reported saying that he "couldn't ask for better relationships than we have in our school" (p. 38) and that "it works because we are a team" (p. 38). One of the conclusions from Schlichte *et al.* (2005) was that novice teachers could be taught to understand the importance of establishing connections and relationships within the school. Bergeron (2008) conducted a study with a single teacher participant and also established the importance of relationships in the life of a novice teacher. He found that principals or supervisors were one of the most important characters in the stories of some teachers about their transition from preservice to teaching. The findings of the research allowed Bergeron (2008) to identify four conditions in total for novice teacher success (specifically related to creating a culturally-responsive classroom):

- 44 multi-layered support system
- a supportive administrator
- a vigorous district-wide system of professional development
- an individual willing to take risks

(Bergeron, 2008:21)

Bandura (1993) found that efficacy added to the success that novice teachers experienced during their initial teaching years. Bandura (1997:14) has identified four sources of personal efficacy to clarify how it is developed in the early years of teaching: repeated mastery experiences, such as planning and executing successful lessons; vicarious experience, such as watching a competent model succeed in a teaching situation; social persuasion, such as encouraging feedback from supervisors, colleagues, and pupils; and the emotional states one experiences while teaching, such as satisfaction with a job well done. Teachers that felt self-empowered to create learning environments, allowed them to motivate and promote student learning (Bandura, 1993:117). Teachers with a strong sense of self-belief in their own abilities to motivate or teach students spend more time on instruction and less time on discipline (Onafowora, 2004:36). The link between self-efficacy and the pedagogy of novice teachers draw attention to how they relate to perceptions of instruction and class management. Novice teacher resilience, bolstered by personal efficacy and emotional competence, may be key to helping beginning teachers

become more capable, more confident, and more committed to teaching over the long term (Tait, 2003:58).

Kuster, Bain, Newton and Milbrandt (2010) found that novice teacher successes also included building trust and a sense of community. Not only did the novice teachers feel strongly about connecting with their students, but they also felt it important to facilitate long-term change in their students' perspectives. Secondly, was the pride that each respondent felt through the dialogue about art that they could facilitate within their classrooms, as well as the wider school community. Thirdly, the respondents reported feeling that they were making a difference in the lives of their students and lastly was the opportunity for these novice art teachers to showcase high-quality artworks by the students (p. 50-51).

2.5 Novice teacher experiences: Challenges

Contrary to Huberman's (1989) this positively experienced 'discovery' stands the concern about "surviving" the multitude of demands and challenges. Rust (1994:208) observed an alternation of euphoria and panic in beginning teachers' struggle with the job demands. Teachers experience self-concerns, feelings of uncertainty and self-doubt and are very preoccupied with themselves (Fuller, 1969). They are concerned with questions like "What will others (principal, parents, colleagues, pupils) think of me?". They feel vulnerable to external criticism and feelings of personal failure (Bullough, Knowles & Crow, 1992; Borich, 1995; Kelchtermans, 1996, 1999b).

According to Kelchtermans and Ballet (1999), a *praxis shock* refers to teachers' confrontation with the realities and responsibilities of being a classroom teacher that puts their beliefs and ideas about teaching to the test, challenges some of them and confirms others. The praxis shock for novice teachers has to do with pedagogical or didactical issues at the classroom level but also with teacher socialisation in the school as an organisation (Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002:105). Teachers learn that being a teacher entails much more than teaching a group of pupils (which is quite a challenge in itself already), but also implies dealing with the demands of a principal and colleagues, of parents and a school board; taking up a whole series of administrative tasks, and so on (Rust, 1994:214; Schempp, Sparkes & Templin, 1993). It is important to understand this interaction (novice teacher and context) to better understand how this affects novice teacher experiences.

Most research on the experiences of beginning teachers has focused on problems directly related to classroom teaching (Gold, 1996). The emphasis has been on issues of perceived didactical competence, problems with authority and effective class management (Veenman, 1984). Even the most well-prepared teachers need assistance in applying what they have learned and in moving from a student-teaching situation to their own classroom where they are now fully in charge (Bartell, 2004:3). Surveys and case studies offer compelling insights into the areas in which new teachers commonly struggle. Goodwin (2012) identified three common challenges that the novice teacher faces: classroom management, the burden of curricular freedom and unsupportive environments. This concludes why the turnover statistics, although high for the whole of the teaching profession, affects beginner teachers more than others.

Novice art teachers face challenges that are subject specific, which makes their experiences unique. Some of the many issues relating to art education that novice teachers have to deal with are: Resources and the impact of technology on art; 'information obesity' changeable and subjective student outcomes; inclusive education; and defending the status of art (Brabazon, 2013). Other major challenges emerging from art teachers' tales through research done in Israel by Cohen-Evron (2002:79) include a feeling of isolation, having to negotiate the status of art, and conflicts with the educational system. According to Anhorn (2008:15), difficult work assignments, unclear expectations, inadequate resources, isolation, role conflict and reality shock are also some of the challenges that novice teachers face.

La Porte, Spiers, and Young (2008) collected data from a survey instrument from 437 art teachers in their first to seventh years of teaching to better understand the factors that influenced the implementation of the curriculum content. The results of the study showed that these novice art teachers were most influenced by their own knowledge and comfort levels in what they were teaching (p. 367).

Bain, Newton, Kuster, and Milbrandt (2010) found that there were numerous challenges and successes for novice art teachers in terms of developing and implementing the art curriculum. One of the most common problems in developing curriculum was the lack of time (p. 240). How novice teachers utilized their time prior to the beginning of the school year was significant. Scheduling presented challenges for several novice art teachers (p. 240). Short class periods presented limitations for both the content to be taught and the

way it was presented. Grading and hanging exhibits were also areas of concern. The apparent lowest problematic areas the novice teachers perceived were in building a sequential art curriculum and aligning the curriculum to state standards (p. 241). Not only did novice art teachers feel strongly about connecting with their students, but they felt that it was important that they facilitate a long-term change in their students' perspectives (p. 241).

Kuster, Bain, Newton and Milbrandt (2010) collaborated on a case study that examined 11 novice art teachers negotiating their way through their first year of teaching. These novice teachers were teaching art at various public schools across three states in the United States. One of the most common challenges that novice art teachers reported was balancing time and energy. Not only is it difficult and time-consuming to plan meaningful lessons, the respondents in the study by Kuster *et al.* also commented on all the extra tasks they were required to do that made them feel overwhelmed and exhausted (p. 48). Another major concern was motivating students. Feelings of frustration seemed to accompany comments relating to students' disinterest in classroom activities. Some respondents noted that this improved as they made personal connections with the students, but this took continual attention, energy and a building of trust throughout the year (p. 48). Classroom management was another concern reported by the respondents. The novice teachers were disturbed by various interruptions, like students talking during instruction; tardiness; attendance monitors; announcements and phone calls (p. 48). Finally, the study conducted by Kuster, *et al.* (2010) included the novice teachers' challenge of assimilating themselves with the school culture (pp. 48-49). This particular concern from a micro-political perspective ranged from the respondents finding it difficult to work with a colleague to finding it hard to meet expectations of administrators. Not only did being the new teacher mean extra work, it also meant that their voice was typically not as valued as senior teachers' opinions. Counsellors also assigned the least desired classes or courses to new teachers and novice art teachers also didn't have any control or input regarding their schedules (p. 49).

Even though the novice teachers in the study of Kuster *et al.* (2010) felt mostly overwhelmed by the challenges they experienced, there were some reports of successes during their first year of teaching art.

Much less attention has been given to the fact that beginning teachers also become members of an organisation. "Nevertheless, this organisational socialisation constitutes

an essential task for teachers as much as their classroom teaching” (p. 106). Kelchtermans turns the focus to the *socialisation process*, which constitutes the meaningful interaction between the novice teacher and the school as an organisation (with its different actors). It is important to understand the character of these interactions and how they affect beginning teachers’ actions and beliefs (p. 106).

Novice teachers are under pressure to function as “organisational persons” (Gavish & Friedman, 2010:142) and assume the same sort of responsibilities as their colleagues. From their first days of teaching, novice teachers are expected to have a thorough knowledge of the organisation, its bureaucracy, and the role holders in the school (Lortie, 1975). However, novice teachers lack sufficient knowledge of school organisational issues, and their limited organisational knowledge prevents them from integrating effectively into schools (Cheng & Tam, 1997). Even though it is expected that the many difficulties novice teachers face significantly contribute to their burnout (Friedman, 2000) and that the organisational situation and its functioning may be an important contributing factor, this has never been demonstrated empirically.

A study involving 492 beginner teachers by Gavish and Friedman (2010) addressed the question of the perception of novice teachers of their work environment and the impact thereof on their teaching experience. The study revealed that novice teachers experienced high levels of fatigue at the beginning of their first year of teaching and that novices’ perceptions of their work at the beginning and at the end of their first year significantly and meaningfully explained their sense of burnout. The study identified three predictors of teacher burnout, namely: a lack of appreciation and professional recognition from learners, a lack of appreciation and professional recognition from the public and a lack of collaboration and support. The challenges early career teachers face as they adjust to a profession are not uniform, and may even be further exacerbated by personal and professional isolation from their new colleagues (Fry & Anderson, 2011:1).

Doh-Nubia (2014) did a study to investigate novice teacher challenges from a South African perspective and also confirmed that low salaries, high workload, professional incapacity to cope with curriculum change, stress, poor working conditions, student discipline problems and lack of development support were the leading reasons why teachers were leaving the profession. He also states that student teachers are not prepared for the realities of the teaching profession and that this issue must be raised at

universities in the module, Teaching Practice in Education, where students get an opportunity to experience the realities of their work.

A study by Cohen-Evron (2002) on the challenges faced by novice art teachers in high schools focus on art teachers' identity and how it is shaped by themselves, as well as the broader school environment:

Art teachers' beliefs are constructed by themselves as well as by others within discourses they encounter throughout their lives. Their ideals and expectations from art and art teaching are also partially constructed by the art communities during their studies of art and art education. In these art communities, art and artists are highly regarded. But art teachers' roles in the schools are defined mainly by an educational system that has discourses and agendas in which art and art teachers are marginalized. The art teacher's ideals make accepting the formal expectations of their role difficult where there is a conflict between them.

(Cohen-Evron, 2002:82).

A conflict between ideals and formal expectations can mean subject specific challenges for novice art teachers, which include a feeling of isolation, having to negotiate the status of art, and conflicts with the educational system (p. 79). While isolation affects the novice teacher's 'self' and personal well-being, the latter refers to challenges from a micro-political perspective. The low status of art within the educational system was a major theme in Cohen-Evron's study. This is echoed by Garvis and Pendergast's (2010) study of 201 novice teachers who perceived a general lack of support (financial, assistance as well as professional development) for the arts in their classroom, compared to literacy and mathematics. Cohen-Evron continues by stating that although the descriptions varied, the marginal place of art was a strong contradiction to their expectations and beliefs. This affected the way the school principals defined the art teachers' role and did not provide the minimum necessary teaching conditions, such as art supplies, an art classroom, and reasonable size classes (p. 85). The low status of art within the school system also caused difficulties for art teachers such as the lack of budget, misleading expectations of the art class ('free and fun lessons'), and parents' rejection of art as an irrelevant subject.

Teaching has, unfortunately, become the "profession that eats its young" (Halford, 1998:33). Because of this and due to particular circumstances of our time, the annual influx of newcomers to the teaching profession will rise dramatically in the coming decade (Stansbury and Zimmerman, 2000:1). Bartell (2004:3) echoes this and defines the first year of teaching as a "sobering experience for most teachers" and that teachers

experience a decrease in strength of belief in their own efficacy and in the learning potential of their students. By effectively addressing these areas of concern, schools can help new teachers improve their skills sooner, thereby keeping them in the profession and raising the achievements of learners. The next section will focus on the experiences of novice teachers from a more personal perspective.

Apart from discussing the importance of novice teacher's professional identity and their efficacy beliefs as a teacher, one should also focus on a novice teacher's self-belief in a personal context. Novice teachers often struggle in their first year. Some succumb to illness, depression, or burnout, and some even decide to abandon teaching as a career option (Tait, 2008:57). The classic stressors identified by new teachers have been remarkably consistent over the years, and their challenges have been well chronicled. Less has been written, however, about the "human strengths" (Aspinwall & Staudinger, 2003:13) that novice teachers demonstrate when they confront and overcome the stress of first-year teaching.

Tait (2008) has investigated the relationship between novice teacher's resilience and two related human strengths, personal efficacy, and emotional competence. A number of studies on different aspects of teacher efficacy provide the broader lens through which one might understand issues faced by novice teachers regarding their level of self-confidence as they strive to be effective teachers. Fuller (1969) identified a stage-related and concerns-based model of teacher development. In this model, she sequenced concerns of novice teachers as related to themselves, their tasks, and the impact they were having on their students. While Fuller's model has been critiqued over the years, Conway and Clark (2003:465) suggested that within teacher development, teachers not only experience a "journey outward" as determined by Fuller, but they also have a "journey inward" when considering the self during the period of student teaching. In the risk and resilience literature (Benard, 2004; Constantine, Benard, & Diaz, 1999; Masten, 2001; Tusaie & Dyer, 2004), it is agreed that risk factors contribute to psychological distress while protective factors moderate the effects of adversity. Risk factors for novice teachers might include the typical stressors encountered in the first year of teaching, such as the expectations and scope of the job, disparity between teacher preparation and expectations, isolation and lack of support, and an emerging gap between novice teachers' vision of teaching and the realities of the job (Tait, 2008:59).

Although the concept of teacher efficacy is evolving, Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001:784) describe it as the extent to which teachers believe they can control the reinforcement of their own initiated actions; that is whether reinforcement of self-motivated actions lay within an individual or external to the individual. Efficacy of teachers are most malleable early in learning; thus, the first years of teaching could be critical to the long-term development of teacher efficacy (Bandura, 1977 in Hoy, 2000). While it is possible to profile an efficacious “novice” teacher, it should be noted that the efficacy attribute is linked to “self” confidence or an innate ability to reinforce self-initiated actions (Onafowora, 2004:35).

Resilience is also linked to emotional intelligence, which is a set of social and personal competencies that assist people in managing their internal states and their interactions with others (Tait, 2008:60). Teaching is an emotional practice. Teachers with high levels of emotional competence, including the ability to manage feelings, handle stress, confront failure with success, and persist in the face of difficulty, are therefore more likely to have success in the workplace (p. 60).

Art teachers’ identities are constructed through an ongoing process of becoming and making sense of who they are, who they are not, and who they wish to become (Britzman, 1992; Cohen-Evron, 2002). This process involves teachers’ knowledge and ideals about art and art teaching, all of which are negotiated within specific discourses. These elements of the art teacher’s identity are constructed and reconstructed throughout their work and lives. Kowalchuk (1999) followed student art teachers through their field placement experience and found that when pre-service art teachers felt prepared, they displayed more flexibility in their thinking. One specific challenge experienced by novice art teachers in a study by Cohen-Evron (2002:83-84) that affect a novice teacher’s personal well-being was a feeling of isolation. Teaching is noted for its professional isolation, but art teachers find themselves even lonelier. Most of the art teachers in the study worked as the only art teacher in the building and they felt like they had “no one to talk to” (p. 83). Even teachers who admitted to enjoying their autonomy behind the closed classroom door portrayed their isolation as a problem (p. 84).

2.6 Novice teacher experiences: Support

An array of research has been done to investigate the reasons for beginner teacher attrition (Struyven & Vanthournout, 2014; Karsenti, & Collin, , 2013; Sass, Flores, Claeys,

& Pérez, 2012; Fantilli & McDougall, 2009). The challenges novice teachers face, in particular, can play a very big role in the attrition rates of novice teachers. Research done in America by Smith & Ingersoll (2003) to estimate the cumulative attrition of novice teachers in their first years of teaching, suggests that between 40% and 50% of all beginner teachers leave their first employment post: 15% leave the profession entirely and another 14% change schools after their first year, often as a result of feeling overwhelmed, ineffective, and unsupported (p. 693). In Australia, an estimated 25 percent of beginner teachers leave the teaching profession within five years of graduating (Hartsuyker, 2007). In South Africa, if 38 pupils were taught by one teacher, 20 000 new teachers are needed annually to meet its demand. Only 6 000 teachers are being produced annually and shortages could be between 15 000 and 22 000 teachers by 2015 (Doh-Nubia, 2014). A study, entitled *Beginner Teachers in South African Schools: Readiness, Knowledge, and Skills*, was conducted by the South African Human Sciences Research Council at 340 schools in five provinces in 2006 (Arendse & Phurutse, 2009). The five provinces, Western Cape, Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, Mpumalanga and Free State were selected as previous research indicated that more teachers were hired in these provinces. The study was prompted by concern that a high number of teachers leave the profession in South Africa within the first five years, while the number of teachers who resign before they are 30 is significantly higher than the number who resign after reaching this age (*The Mail & Guardian*, 19 May 2009). This can be attributed to several factors, including poor support from official structures, unattractive remuneration and working conditions and the 'difficulties faced in the transition from trainee to practicing teachers.

Even in countries where sufficient numbers of teachers are trained, it appears as if many of the newly graduated choose to leave after just a few years (Cooper & Alvarado, 2006). This observation has been developed in the scholarly literature, notably in the works of Ingersoll (2003, 2007, 2011) and suggests that an efficient strategy be put in place to retain and support active teachers. Teacher attrition is a global problem and Doh-Nubia argues that with the introduction of resilience into the teacher development programmes, teachers would be better prepared for the teaching environment. It is also his opinion that the South African government's plan to address teacher shortages in the country is to double new graduates, but fails to equip these student teachers with the content knowledge so essential in the field.

Novice teachers seek validation within the teaching profession and are searching for ways to accomplish positive achievements. They also have high expectations for themselves,

as well as for their students. Too often, these expected results don't take place (Esch, 2010:308). "How school administrators fulfil purported guidelines will have a huge impact on the teacher's perceptions, particularly their sense of well-being, confidence, dedication and determination" (p. 308). To insulate teachers from the effect of challenges or "risk factors" (Tait, 2003:59) they face during their first year of teaching, Benard (2004) suggests that novice teachers need resources, time, professional development opportunities, materials, caring collegial relationships, high expectations on the part of school leaders, and opportunities for shared decision-making and planning. "New teachers may enhance their resilience by fostering productive relationships with people who understand the trials and tribulations of teaching, who reinforce the value of what teachers do, and who offer insight into various options available for dealing with a variety of situations" (Bobek, 2002:203).

Recommendations from studies that show beginning teachers are exiting the profession at a high rate include the implementation of induction programs and the allocation of mentors (Ingersoll & Smith, 2004; Wong, 2004; Cahill & Skamp, 2003; Hope, 1999;). Induction can help retain teachers, improve their instruction and their students' achievement. In order to achieve this one has to be meticulous in determining and implementing the specific kinds and amounts of support that will answer to the specific needs of the novice teacher (Ingersoll, 2012).

Induction for beginning teachers has become a major topic in education policy and reform. The theory behind such programs holds that teaching is complex work, that pre-employment teacher preparation is rarely sufficient to provide all the knowledge and skill necessary to successful teaching, and that a significant portion of this knowledge can be acquired only on the job. This view holds that schools must provide an environment where novices can learn how to teach, survive, and succeed as teachers. These programs aim to improve the performance and retention of new hires and to enhance the skills and prevent the loss of new teachers with the ultimate goal of improving student growth and learning.

(Ingersoll, 2012:47).

It is therefore of utmost importance that novice teacher experiences be investigated so that the best possible support can be provided to these teachers in order to retain them and to ensure that effective teaching takes place in the classroom.

2.7 Conclusion

Teaching art as a subject in a high school requires specialised knowledge gained from years of study and practical experience as a teacher. Most teachers have generic knowledge e.g. discipline, classroom control, effective teaching methods etc., but not everyone has the specific knowledge that is essential to impart the creative art skills and content knowledge on their learners. The issue of generalist teachers who are not sufficiently trained, yet teaching Creative Arts, is still an ongoing problem. Higher education institutions, along with education authorities, thus need to focus on training novice art teachers more sufficiently and offer more effective induction programs in high schools in order to retain these qualified arts teachers and have them implement effective Creative Arts education for our learners.

Among the frequently discussed concerns or challenges novice art teachers mention, is their surprise at the demands of their teaching on their energy levels and time (Kuster, 2010:51). Zimmerman's (1994) study of pre-service art teachers, reported challenges that included discipline, flexibility, individualizing the curriculum, communicating information, clean-up, using visuals, telling stories, time constraints, and evaluation (p. 62). One other challenge experienced by novice art teachers in a study by Cohen-Evron (2002) was a feeling of isolation. Teaching is noted for its professional isolation, but art teachers find themselves even lonelier.

Understanding the issues novice (art) teachers face in the light of Kelchtermans' (1993; 1994; 1999) theoretical perspectives, and how one might support them during the initial years of teaching might be a proactive measure for maintaining those new to the profession (Ingersoll & Smith, 2003). South Africa, in my opinion, will do well to investigate novice teacher experiences in depth and to design effective induction programs that will answer to the challenges commonly experienced by novice teachers in their specific learning areas, such as visual art, to ensure effective teaching takes place in our classrooms in the future. This thesis can serve as a point of departure towards the implementation of such support, for it aims to construct a holistic view of novice art teachers' experiences by not only looking at classroom struggles and successes but also reflecting how the participants were influenced by context and socialisation within the organisational structures of their schools.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

In the following chapter the work of Jonathan A. Smith (1996), namely the interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA), will be discussed as the research design (3.2) for this qualitative research. I will elaborate on the novice art teachers who acted as participants in this research; the instruments used for data collection (3.3); the analysis thereof which included descriptive and thematic coding (3.4) and I will then end this chapter with a discussion on the ethical issues (3.5) related to this research.

3.2 Research design

The theoretical underpinnings of the interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) approach stem from the phenomenology which originated with Husserl's (1999) attempts to construct a philosophical science of consciousness, with hermeneutics (the theory of interpretation also explored by Martin Heidegger in 1985), and with symbolic interactionism, which posits that the meanings an individual ascribes to events are of central concern but are only accessible through an interpretative process (Biggerstaff & Thompson, 2008:215; Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009). IPA can be applied to a study of a particular *phenomenon* which will then undergo an *interpretative analysis* that will position the findings within the wider social, cultural and perhaps even theoretical context. IPA is thus perfectly suited to use in this specific educational research based on investigating a very particular group of people (novice art teachers) teaching in a very particular context (within their first three years at high schools and/or art centres).

IPA is generally pitched at the idiographic level. It thus concentrates on specific individuals as they deal with specific situations or events in their lives (Larkin, Watts and Clifton, 2006:103). Its emphasis is on the experiential claims and concerns of the persons taking part in the study. IPA offers an "insider's perspective" and is accessible, flexible and applicable, thus attracting students and researchers alike in the use of it in qualitative research (p. 103). Flexibility, though, can easily be mistaken for lack of rigour and the subtlety and complexity of phenomenology's aims and origins are often overlooked. On a methodological level, the ideographic nature of IPA means that an IPA study typically involves a highly intensive and detailed analysis of the accounts produced by a

comparatively small number of participants (p. 106), making it appropriate for this study which only involved three novice teacher participants.

Within IPA, and the qualitative paradigm in general, the focus is on the possible transferability of findings from group to group rather than generalisation (Smith *et al.*, 2009:51). The primary aim of this approach is to examine in detail the perceptions and understandings of the specific group studied rather than make more general claims. Heidegger (1985) stated that “the view of (a) human is (an) inclusive part of reality” (in Larkin *et al.*, 2006:105). This research, based on the theory of narrative-biographical perspective and the micro-political perspective designed by Kelchtermans and Ballet (2002) will employ interpretative phenomenological analysis proposed by Smith (1996) for situating autobiographical reflections of novice art teachers within the broader context of the school in which these experiences have become meaningful to their professional thinking. It is thus in line with the principles of the abovementioned approach and the main aim of this research that beginner art teachers are given a voice - a voice that will serve as an initial description to be interpreted in a wider context. These first-person accounts allow an insider’s perspective on a phenomenon, namely the experiences of novice art teachers during their first three years of teaching. These verbatim accounts are generally captured via semi-structured interviews, focus groups, or diaries, and in this case, ROL. This should be proceeded with an analysis based on patterns (eg. repetition, similarities etc.) and then reported on using themes that emerged from the data (Larkin *et al.*, 2006:104).

IPA is more than just collecting the data and representing the voices of the participants. It has the potential to properly explore, understand and communicate the experiences and viewpoints offered by its participants (Larkin *et al.*, 2006:103). There are two aims that need to be kept in mind during the analysis of the data, namely to try and understand the participants’ world, and describe “what it is like” (p. 104). “Typically, this aim leads to a focus on the participants’ experiences of a specific event, process or relationship” (p. 104). The most important objective of the analytic process would then be to represent the participants’ voices as coherently and accurately as possible to relate a fair perspective from the participants’ point of view. The second aim of the IPA perspective is to develop a more overtly interpretative analysis, which positions the initial ‘description’ in relation to a wider, social cultural and perhaps even theoretical context.

Yardley (2000; 2008) and Elliott, Fisher and Rennie (1999) represented useful frameworks within which to evaluate and demonstrate validity in IPA research. This involves attention to four broad principles:

- Sensitivity to context
- Commitment and rigour
- Transparency and coherence
- Impact and importance

(Yardley, 2000:215)

In this research, IPA will be used to exemplify the experiences of novice art teachers. It will give each teacher a voice to narrate the authentic experiences of his/her first three years of teaching art at high schools in the Western Cape. IPA's commitment to ideography suggests a small, purposive sampling for a more in-depth quality research. A small sample was, therefore, appropriate for this research (Smith *et al.*, 2009:3). Sources on IPA suggest that between three and six participants are a suitable sample (Hefferon & Gill-Roderigues, 2011). Participants were purposefully recruited to represent a homogeneous sample in terms of the research topic, namely novice art teachers in high schools in the Western Cape. As a result of delineations (discussed in Chapter 1), a modification of this recruitment was necessary to include novice art teachers from FET art centres, to achieve a sample of three participants.

In consultation with the WCED visual art subject advisor, names and email addresses of novice art teachers in the Western Cape were obtained. The geographical allocation was determined to enable frequent contact with the participants. Letters requesting their participation were sent to them in December / January 2015. The schools and art centres where these novice art teachers were currently teaching, also received letters to inform the principals of their participation. The ideal sample size would have consisted of at least four novice art teachers as participants, but there were factors that limited the current number to only three participants, namely the amount of novice art teachers in the Western Cape teaching at high schools or alternatively, at art centres; the amount of novice art teachers willing to participate in the research (with the accompanied permission of their school management); and representation of diverse socio-economic backgrounds

3.3 Data collection

In this section, the instruments that were used to collect the data, namely individual interviews (3.4.1) and River of Life (ROL) drawing session (3.4.2), will be discussed in detail.

3.3.1 Individual interviews

Interviews – in its many guises – is very much an accepted methodology within educational research. A great deal of qualitative material comes from talking to people whether it be through formal interviews or casual conversation. A semi-structured interview was conducted with each participant towards the end of the first term. The three main questions, led by the research of Kelchtermans (1993; 1994; 1999) and his biographical- and micropolitical perspectives, were the following:

- a) Describe the personal and professional (school related) successes that you experienced during your first three years of teaching.
- b) Describe the personal and professional (school related) challenges that you experienced during your first three years teaching.
- c) Describe the personal and professional (school related) support that you received during your first three years of teaching.

The interview schedule was flexible. In contrast to a structured interview, this allowed the participants to elaborate on key issues and produce a more detailed and natural narrative. The researcher, in turn, got the opportunity to establish a deeper understanding of the phenomena under discussion.

Apart from the element of reciprocity, the purpose of the interviews is more than a pure cognitive exchange of objective descriptive answers to informative questions. Interviews allow both parties in the meeting to observe and listen to each other and build a personal image of the other. This image is also evaluative. Non- or part verbal signs are also very important in this respect and can only be obtained through one-on-one interviews. Eye contact, smiling, concerned or surprised wrinkling of the eyebrows, etc. are highly relevant, because respondents want affirmation and reassurance (Measor, 1985:62). After all, they are sharing rather personal experiences and thoughts with a stranger. Moreover, the character of trust and the implied familiarity with each other are necessary conditions for successful biographical research. This familiarity and relationship of trust were established by pre-interview correspondence and introductory communication on the day of the interview. In this research, the interviews were recorded to enable the interviewer to listen

to all the interviewees without any distractions and the digital format enabled sending the data to each participant to ascertain transparency and accuracy.

Gathering good quality data for IPA required a more open-ended interview which maintained a careful balance between guiding and being led. Trustfulness is enhanced by the reciprocity in the relation. Collecting biographical data should not be a "one-way-traffic", but rather a process of "mutual storytelling" (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990:4). In this process of mutual storytelling, it was important to gain credibility in the eyes of the respondent. It was thus essential for the researcher to develop empathy with the participants and win their confidence, as well as being unobtrusive in order not to impose one's own influence on the participant (Woods, 2006). To avoid any guidance, the interview sessions were kept short; starting with broad, general questions that allowed the participant to set the parameters of the topic. This is so that the researcher does not impose her understanding of the phenomenon on the participant's narrative (Smith *et al.*, 2009). The interview questions focused on the participant's experiences as novice art teachers in a high school or art centre, the support from their school management, the support from education authorities and their personal well-being.

If rapport has been established, an interview can easily produce rich data. The problem, sometimes, is that participants talk too inconsequentially; off the subject or too vaguely. To aid in the clarity, depth, and validity of the interview, the techniques of Woods (2006) were followed during the interview: The researcher checked on apparent contradictions, imbalance, implausibility, exaggerations and inconsistencies. The researcher also searched for opinions, sought comparisons, often asked for clarifications and further explanations, and aimed for comprehensiveness. At times where it was of value, the researcher also expressed incredulity, astonishment and posed hypothetical questions. Respect for the respondent and integrity was of utmost importance during the interviews. Thirst for sensation and other dubious curiosity were avoided. Questions about the private sphere of the participant - directly or explicitly – were also avoided. When the participant happened to bring about these themes, the utterances were explored until I clearly understood what was meant and how these private experiences were linked to the biographical narrative.

The IPA model is based on the principles of fewer participants in the sample; fewer questions in the interview schedule and fewer superordinate and subordinate themes in the analysis. Following these guidelines, I was hoping to obtain depth in the data for my research.

What follows now is a discussion on the River of Life (ROL) session (3.3.2).

3.3.2 River of Life narrative

A longstanding issue in qualitative studies in education is the question of how to best represent research participants and their experiences in the write-ups and presentations of study findings as well as in the other stages of the inquiry process (Galman, 2009:198). Visual methods can be a way to address representational concerns in qualitative research by balancing the dual researcher roles as artist and messenger – often presenting multiple voices and ideologies instead of a researcher monologue (Galman, 2009:199). The concept of a draw and write technique is a relatively recent addition to the repertoire of research methods. The task of drawing for the purpose of carrying out qualitative research is derived from a number of disciplines and subject areas such as psychology, anthropology, geography and art therapy (Backett-Milburn & McKiel, 1999:388).

While some researchers in education have used children's drawing processes as curricular aids, these have been instructional explorations rather than research strategies. One such visual method that has been studied by Sally Galman (2009) is the graphic novel. The graphic novel consists of works with multi-media; pen-and-ink; or otherwise constructed images to tell a story. It can be a unique, highly flexible tool for the examination, understanding, and representation of cultural phenomena, including participant data in educational research (p. 199). While general acceptance has legitimated graphic representations in the realm of popular culture, it is important to understand that this does not necessarily translate to academic legitimacy. Indeed, as Fischman (2001) writes:

The educational research community has tended to avoid the examination of visual culture and the necessary debates about the epistemological value of images in educational research, because, in part, images and visual culture are not accepted forms of scholarly transmission (p. 28).

Fischman goes on to suggest that this "blind spot" in educational research suggests that resistance to images is part of the "deeper grammar" of the discipline, and one that keeps researchers from accessing a new way to problematize the work of inquiry while also advancing understanding across the field (p. 28). Mason (2002:3) notes that it is possible to identify key characteristics of this approach that makes it suitable for qualitative research: It is grounded in a philosophical position which is broadly interpretive in the sense that it is

concerned with how the social world is interpreted, understood, experienced or produced. Methods of data generation are flexible and sensitive to the social context in which data is produced. Methods of analysis and explanation building involve understandings of complexity, detail and context (Backett-Millburn & McKiel, 1999; Mason, 2002).

The River of Life (ROL) drawing method (Fisher & White, 2014) has been used in this particular research. It refers to a visual narrative that helps people tell stories of the past, present, and future. It is an enjoyable, innovative and metaphorical way of introducing unknown aspects about oneself to others through the act of drawing rather than text, making it especially useful in groups that do not share a language. Through visualisation, the ROL can become a guide that captures milestones, failures, and successes over a certain time. Even though it is originally used as an exercise for personal reflection, it can also be adapted as a data collection instrument and it initiates insightful focus group discussions. This aided in capturing a rich account of lived experiences from each novice art teacher (individual), which supports the objective of IPA.

The participants were requested to attend a ROL group session at a convenient location during the second term. Circumstances prohibited one participant from joining the session, but the same activities were performed at a different, more suitable time, for that individual. Two participants, therefore, formed the group for the first ROL session. The participants were asked to create a ROL representation of their experiences since starting their art education careers.

Proper preparation was vital to the success of this ROL activity. The venue was prepared for the optimum function of this session by making sure it was quiet, with no distractions, and a spacious seating area and tables. Enough markers, papers, and board/surfaces were set out for the participants to use and a camera was on hand to document the process.

The ROL method was then introduced to the participants. The 'river' metaphor was explained to the participants as a symbol for their current and future experiences as visual art teachers. This river sometimes flows slower or faster, depending on the nature of their experiences. The participants were encouraged to think about visual obstacles to represent the most significant elements that have contributed to shaping their ROL experience: a boat; a beach; fisherman; rocks; a landscape etc. The following examples (Moussa, 2009:185) were presented to the group to guide them in creating a data-rich ROL:

Tributaries are drawn to indicate key influences (e.g. people, education, books, experiences, events etc.) that have contributed directly to or indirectly to their lives and work. Rough waters in the river illustrate times when one has encountered difficult challenges in life that have potentially been the source of valuable learning. The river can also run straight or it can twist (e.g. on turning point moments in one's life). It can also become narrow or widen, depending on the horizon perspective at a particular moment in time

(Moussa, 2009:185).

The first objective was to illustrate their first year(s) of teaching, by drawing various symbols that represented the a) successes, b) challenges, and c) support they experienced. After the initial part of the activity was completed on two-thirds of the paper, the participants were asked to complete the last third of the page by designing the rest of the ROL on the factors that will contribute to their success as art teachers in the future. They had to make use of visual symbols that represent their hopes and expectations for the upcoming years i.e. a "wish list" for their future experiences.

The participants shared the meaning of the symbols they chose to use in their narratives with me (as the researcher) while they were busy drawing. The session where the two participants were present allowed for the sharing of experiences and often, this brought forth further discussions, elaborations, and comparisons of their individual experiences.

The aim of this ROL method is to create a permissive, non-threatening environment in which participants feel comfortable, respected and free to share their opinions and perceptions without judgment (Krueger & Casey, 2009). The data collected from these discussions rendered additional insight into the initial interview transcripts. The participants' ROL drawings were photographed for documenting and the voice recorder was stored away. Participants were reminded that the transcripts will be available for them to listen to within due time. More on the analysis of the data follows in the next section.

3.4 Data analysis

The analysis of the data was rooted firmly in the work of Löfgren (2013), Ryan and Bernard (2003), Saldaña (2009; 2013) on thematic analysis and coding, while keeping with the principles of IPA. This involved a detailed case-by-case scrutiny of individual interview transcripts (3.5.1) and River of Life drawings and discussions (3.5.2).

3.4.1 Individual interviews

The interview transcripts were analysed by using the steps proposed by Löfgren (2013):

- Reading the transcripts carefully.
- Labelling the relevant pieces (sentences, phrases, sections etc.) i.e. coding. The initial codes were based on the research questions, namely a) successes, b) challenges and c) support. Data with relevance to these codes were highlighted accordingly. A second cycle of descriptive coding (Saldana, 2009; 2013) took place which identified the participants' specific successes, challenges, and support.
- The next step was categorising the descriptive codes by grouping them together according to themes identified through, e.g. repetition, use of metaphors and analogies, and similarities and differences (Ryan & Bernard, 2003:89-92).
- Writing up the findings by describing the themes and how they are connected.
- Interpreting the findings in view of results from similar studies in the field.

Non- or part verbal signs were also very important in the analysis of the interview transcripts. Eye contact, smiling, concerned or surprised wrinkling of the eyebrows, etc. are highly relevant, because respondents want affirmation and reassurance (Measor, 1985:62). After all, they were sharing rather personal experiences and thoughts with a stranger. The private and personal worlds were very relevant for this research. The dilemma thus was: How can the researcher collect sufficient information for a reconstruction of the teachers' stories, the roots of the professional self and the subjective educational theory, without penetrating the private sphere in an improper way? There are simple solutions to this dilemma. As the researcher, I had to rely on my social sensitivity and tact (Kelchtermans, 1999:13). Respect for the respondents and integrity was the most important aspect of my behaviour. Thirst for sensation and other dubious curiosity were absolutely avoided. questions about the private sphere did not form part of the interview. When the respondent happened to bring about such themes, the utterances were explored until I clearly understood what was meant and how these private experiences were linked to the professional biography.

3.4.2 River of Life narrative

The ROL drawings, commentary, and interaction between participants were of utmost importance to get rich data from the group. In analysing the River of Life drawings, my data comprised of both the visual images and the participants' verbal descriptions of the images.

The following questions, established by Rose (2001) about the data, were considered as guidelines to accurately analyse the images:

- a) The context of the images that were produced.
- b) What exactly had been drawn?
- c) What do the different components of the drawing signify/represent?
- d) Is more than one interpretation of the drawing possible?

Having recorded the participants' own verbal descriptions and explanations of their drawings, aided in accurately answering to the above guidelines. The issue of validity is a common charge aimed at visual methodologies (and qualitative research more generally) (Guilleman, 2004:286). It is claimed that interpretation of images is subjective and riddled with ambiguity. As we know, two people can look at the same image and produce very different interpretations from it. I do not view this ambiguity as problematic. Keeping in line with Rose's (2001) guidance on the analysis of images, each participant offered context, explained what they were drawing and what it represented, as well as additional interpretations for some of the symbols drawn, so there was no ambiguity when it came to the analyses and coding of these visual narratives. Afterwards, as a means of eliciting themes from the images produced, thematic analysis was applied (Strauss, 1987; Strauss & Corbin, 1990) and presented in a table in Chapter 4.

The use of the ROL drawings as a research method also expands my interpretations as a researcher of the many and diverse ways in which the experiences of novice art teachers can be experienced and understood. A trial application of the ROL method was conducted with Gr. 11 visual art learners to determine their experiences of art during the first term in 2014. This aided a better understanding of the learners' challenges, successes and needs within the subject and specifically, the classroom environment. A trial analysis was also done on these ROL representations by using the principles of IPA, coding, thematic analysis, and complementary visual narrative analysis guidelines. This prepared me, as the researcher, in the facilitation of a ROL process.

The interview data was finally analysed in conjunction with the drawings to forge connections between the participants' feedback and to establish themes. To establish themes from the collective data, I again referred to Ryan & Bernard (2003) who suggest ways of identifying themes by looking at: Repetition; indigenous typologies (in vivo); metaphors and analogies; transitions; similarities and differences; linguistic connectors; and

missing data (pp. 89 - 92). The themes of this research related mainly to the common experiences (i.e. successes, challenges, and support) of the novice art teachers.

3.5 Ethics

Ethical issues that were considered in the research include informed consent and confidentiality. To secure the consent of the selected participants, I explained the aim and purpose of the research. The importance of their role in the completion of the research was also made clear. The respondents were advised that their participation would be voluntary and that they could withdraw from the study at any time if they felt uncomfortable'.

The anonymity of the participants was ascertained by not disclosing their names or personal information in the research. Only relevant details that aided in answering the research questions were included and information treated confidentially. The participants could review their River of Life drawings and subsequent discussion transcripts, as well as their interview transcripts. They could also listen to the recordings afterward to ensure that they felt comfortable with the information communicated and thus secure in the conveying thereof in the research. All the transcripts and recordings were stored safely on my PC for my scrutiny only.

Permission to conduct the study was obtained from the CPUT ethics committee, educational authorities (WCED) and the school- / art centre management.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA

4.1 Introduction

In the following section, the findings from the interviews and the ROL drawings will be discussed. The interview data (4.2) has been processed and categorized according to the interview questions on novice teacher a) successes, b) challenges and c) support, with sub-categories emerging after descriptive coding and comparisons between the three participants' data. The ROL data (4.3) was processed and categorized by looking at each individual ROL and accompanying recordings, and allocating descriptive codes to the symbols used in the drawing. Afterwards, a comparison was done and presented as a summary of the three participants' visual narratives. According to Kelchtermans (1999) teachers develop from their career experiences a personal interpretative framework or biographical perspective which refers to a set of cognitions that operate as a lens through which teachers perceive their job situation, give meaning to it and act on it. Within this framework, two important and interwoven domains could be identified namely the professional self and the subjective educational theory, together with the micro-political perspective as a third and vital perspective that influences novice teachers' experiences. These perspectives were used later in this section to interpret the data and link it to existing research from Kelchtermans (1993; 1994; 1999) in terms of beginner teacher experiences.

4.2 Interview data

The three participants that were interviewed produced rich data stemming from the fact that they had vastly different experiences, backgrounds, and training. Their experience ranged from 2 months to 2 years and two months at the time of the interview, to having taught at public schools, private schools, and/or art centres. They comprised of different demographics and gender, as well as age and previous experience. To keep the participants' anonymity, I will identify them as participant 1F, participant 2F, and participant 3M (in the order that their first interviews took place). The letters F and M indicate their genders (female and male), therefore, two female and one male participants

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 i.e. the descriptive codes allocated to the participants reported experiences relating to successes, challenges and support.

4.2.1 Novice art teacher experiences: Successes

The data collected from the interviews, highlighted by the descriptive coding, revealed that the following factors contributed to the successes of the novice art teachers:

a) Drawing skills

Drawing skills were an aspect that was considered to have aided in the success of two of the novice art teachers during their first year, both at a public school. The transference of skills (*“how to draw quickly and realistically”*) to the students helped them build a good relationship with the students. Participant 1F noted how vital this was, especially when your predecessor had a more conceptual approach. The participant could help the students improve their drawing skills as well as using this skill as *“a big tool”* in getting respect from the students and so managing disciplinary issues. Participant 2F faced the challenge of a learner who had difficulty with composition and refused to work with anything else but a pencil. The learner had no real work ethic and she was not motivated. One day the participant took out an A1 paper, gave the learner a paintbrush, took the learner’s hand and started drawing a simple picture of a woman, onto the page by guiding her in terms of composition and encouraging her to draw bigger. The participant made the learner look and focus on lighter and darker areas and the learner’s artwork improved remarkably after that.

b) Making connections

The abovementioned intervention promoted participant 2F’s relationship with an individual learner and unveiled a passion for art. Participant 1F also described a particularly memorable connection that was made with a grade 8 learner during her first year of teaching. The learner’s mother was suffering from cancer and depression. The participant’s support, as an art teacher, helped to build a strong relationship with the pupil, who loved the subject. The participant also elaborated on the good relationship she had with her grade 12 class, who would *“often helped [her] with the grade 8 class who were still new and hooligans.”*

Individual connections were made with learners as well as colleagues. One of the more positive aspects of participant 1F’s first year of teaching was a relationship with an older, more experienced music teacher that made herself available to the participant to *“vent”*

and sometimes help with disciplinary issues. *“She was absolutely wonderful and I really did appreciate her a lot”*.

c) Motivating the learners

Making individual connections with learners can be vital in managing an art class. When a teacher manages a single connection with a whole class at once, it is experienced in an extremely positive way. The most inexperienced participant, 3M, elaborated on such an experience that he had in his short time of teaching: Finding that the learners enjoyed the projects that have been given to them. *“Highlights would be, every time I give the learners a project and they end up enjoying it”*. The participant also experienced success as an art teacher when projects challenged and stimulated learners to excel. The participant referred to it as a *“sharing of joy”*.

d) Confidence

A healthy confidence boost or a moment of pride is welcomed by any teacher, even more so by novice teachers. Participant 1F admits to the first year of teaching as being *“difficult”*, but a colleague that was teaching Design at the same school, would ask the participant a lot of questions, which was *“daunting”*, but it also made the participant feel like she *“wasn’t alone in the confusion”*. Having *“survived”* at the particular school, she was recorded saying: *“I feel quite proud about this...having survived for that amount of time, I know that I can teach anywhere.”*

e) Self-reliance and pride

Participant 1F, who taught under relatively difficult circumstances, said that she became *“more independent and less self-reliant”* since her first year of teaching, which was a positive experience. The participant also felt very proud of having felt so alone at times, yet *“eventually dealing with it”* and *“surviving anything”*, as well as getting respect from friends when they heard all the stories she had to tell them about her first year of teaching at a public school. Participant 2F also experienced a sense of pride after completing her B Ed Honours degree while teaching full-time and dealing with resistance from their employer.

f) Job satisfaction

Participant 3M finds the fact that he still enjoys his job as a positive aspect. After further questioning, the participant admitted to being the kind of person that usually starts hating a job soon after onset, which is not the case with teaching. *“Usually, after three months at a job, I start hating it, but I still like teaching. I feel like I can bond and make connections with individual learners on a different level”*.

g) Resources

In the 21st century, the need to incorporate technology in the art classroom has become evident and holds the attention of curriculum planners, teachers, principals, parents and education authorities alike. Participant 1F, teaching at a private school at the time, had access to a projector, a computer for their own use as well as *“a row of computers with Photoshop and all of that, so that’s been really nice”*. The participant did say that she liked having a storeroom of consumables at the public school, whereas at the private school, *“because of higher school fees, learners are expected to buy their own supplies 100%”*. The participant therefore, had very few consumables in her class and found it difficult, because *“you have to rely on them [learners] to bring the right stuff and that sometimes is tough”*, but the quality and quantity of the technological resources available is still a huge advantage. Participant 3M also had a well-equipped classroom and had no problems with the budget or lack of any art materials that was needed, which makes effective teaching and learning possible. These participants’ comments regarding the availability of resources were in direct contrast to the experiences of participant 2F, who struggled to get the necessary art materials for projects.

4.2.2 Novice teacher experiences: Challenges

The data collected from the interviews revealed that the following challenges were experienced by the novice art teachers:

a) Taking over from someone else

Taking over from someone in a teaching position is never easy. Participant 2F was challenged by the fact that learners took visual art because the previous art teacher allowed the learners to watch a lot of movies instead of putting pen to paper. The participant thus found that learners were only taking art because of a pre-conceived idea

that they weren't going to work hard because they were only going to watch movies. This meant that the participant had difficulty changing their mindsets and getting them to start working.

Participant 1F was challenged by the transition from one workplace to another. In her case: From a public school to an art centre and then to a private school. The participant found it difficult to get used to students' different work ethic. In comparison to the public school and art centre, the participant found the learners at the private school to work more independently (at home), which didn't seem to be the best *modus operandi*. The challenge for the participant was to break some of the established routines and change the learners' mindsets to work more in class. The participant also found the students to be more conceptual thinkers in comparison to the learners at her first school, and that they found it difficult to master practical skills, like *"basic cutting with a blade on hardboard"*. The participant expected the learners to have certain basic skills, only to realize that she had to change their pre-conceived ideas and expectations.

b) Assessments

Marking was another challenge experienced by some of the participants for various reasons. Participant 3M couldn't get his *"head around how the marks worked"* in terms of weights allocated for each term for each specific grade. Participant 2F found it challenging because her experience of what quality art looked like at school level was rather limited. This participant's pre-conceived idea of what was considered decent art was challenged at the school and she had to adapt those pre-set standards. The difficulty was in deciding on a mark for a artwork. Participant 2F shared her concern with the subject advisor, however, and was assured that her assessments were on par. The amount of marking that Participant 2F was expected to do in general at her school, was also overwhelming. Besides the assessments for Creative Arts and Visual Art, the participant also had to teach a language, which is notoriously time-consuming in terms of marking papers. This causes the participant to feel overwhelmed and under a lot of pressure. *"I have got a lot of marking beside all the other stuff and I feel like I am neglecting my work and I am not one to do that. I am a perfectionist, not at home, but with my work."*

c) Knowing your learners

Challenges reported by Participant 3M was *“what to teach to whom”* and what *“the kids understand and how little they understand”*. This can be difficult for a novice art teacher starting out with a particular age group in the FET phase and not knowing what their basic content knowledge is or which practical skills they have mastered. As a novice teacher, the participant also admitted to sometimes underestimating the skill and effort it took from learners to create an artwork, as supposed to natural *“artistic ability”*. Participant 1F elaborated on the status of wealth at the private school and how this impacted her teaching. Learners generally travelled abroad and often seemed to be *“very visually literate”*. This, sometimes, resulted in the learners challenging participant 1F’s knowledge in class and therefore made the participant question her command of the subject. The participant, therefore, felt compelled to work a lot more in her free time to master the content, even though she *“probably know[s] it better than what I [she] think[s].”*

d) Parents

Parent involvement can be a blessing or a burden. Out of the three participants, one found it particularly challenging, especially when comparing her experiences teaching at a public school to a private school where she was teaching at the time of the interview. Participant 1F found the parents’ involvement at the private school more pro-learner and anti-teacher. The support the participant was used to getting from parents at the public school seemed to be quite the opposite at the private school. The participant explained it by using the word *“fear”*: The constant fear that parents’ might be dissatisfied with her, as a teacher, and come to the school to complain, which would put her *“in trouble”*. This *“fear”* influenced the participant’s identity as a teacher and *“not necessarily in a good way.”*

e) Planning

All three participants found planning to be one of the challenges that they would have wanted more support in. Participant 3M explained that the more experienced art teacher at the centre *“doesn’t really like organization and planning, so I felt like I had to try and find a way to do that by myself as well and it was difficult. Particularly difficult, ‘cause I didn’t know the curriculum well, [nor] the school and their processes.”* The participant was reported saying that he would have liked someone’s support with regards to planning the curriculum for the year. The participant also expressed the need for guidance when it comes to setting up a brief, which he had no idea how to do.

Participant 2F's challenge was an administrative matter. Firstly, consistent planning. She admitted that sometimes, because of time constraints, she did not always get to plan for the next day. The participant then worked from a checklist, which made it easier. It has happened before that she has stood in front of a class, teaching a lesson that she could not find time to prepare for – purely out of survival – knowing it is not the way she wants to teach. Secondly, the participant also found it difficult to set up tests and found the transition to CAPS very confusing, which complicated the planning of the curriculum even more. Participant 1F also admitted to planning as being one area where he would have liked more support and guidance because it is such a vital part of success in the classroom.

f) Isolation

Participant 1F found communication to be a problem. She was teaching the practical pathway of visual art and expressed the lack of communication from her colleague that taught the theory part. This, apparently, made any parallel symbiosis between theory and practical almost impossible. This participant had *“nervousness about feeling incompetent”* and thinks *“art teachers are always alone”*. The fact that she was the only visual art FET teacher was also the reason for her loneliness. She compared this loneliness to other subjects, where for instance *“when you're a maths teacher, every school has at least four or five maths teachers who all come together”*. Forming a network with other art teachers is difficult because according to the participant, you don't really get the time and even if you do, you *“don't want to spend it with teachers either”*.

g) Discipline

Discipline is a topic that all the participants touched on in the interviews, finding it challenging in one way or another. Being young and female, seemed to be a disadvantage for participant 1F. She *“had a lot of problems from them [kids] and at that school, I had everything from, like bitch fights in a class where girls were biting each other's faces and this was like my third day”*. The participant found these kinds of fights *“extremely traumatic”* because she was not used to that type of behaviour. The participant also found kids who had cards with penises on the table *“which was very, very graphic”*, during her first couple of months teaching. The younger years – grades 8 and 9 – were the grades that participant 1F had the most difficulty with, especially because of their energy levels. She found it difficult to make them sit quietly and draw.

Participant 3M found the grade 7's particularly challenging. When they don't like the projects they receive, they *"get out of hand"*. The participant says that he then puts his foot down, but that the learners just carry on to an even worse extent. Participant 3M admits to learners testing his patience but also learned very quickly that if you only show a little more patience and you approach the learners correctly or in a different way, then you can break through. Besides grade 7's, when it comes to motivating learners, the participant finds the grade 12's especially challenging. *"Matric pupils,, I would say, are my biggest problem. There are two girls that don't seem to care at all. They both failed the first term, but they aren't even bothered. They are absent more often than not and they don't finish their work, nor did they hand in their sourcebooks"* [translation]. In situations like the latter, participant 3M admits to feeling responsible for getting them to pass, which puts him under pressure and adds to his stress. The participant also feels that the grade 12's do not trust him and that they tend to take advantage. *"I am very nervous about that class because some of them want to study fine arts at university and I am scared of doing something wrong. They find it difficult to trust me, so trust is a big thing to win them over on. I try to be nice, but then they just take advantage of me"* [translation].

Participant 2F found it very time-consuming to reprimand and punish the learners. Like most schools, punishment is allocated on a computerized demerit system. Teachers have to record every student violation by entering it into the school's computer under the learner's name. *"Learners who don't hand in their work must be reprimanded on the system. I must look up their numbers, then it's difficult to get hold of them for the punishment to be processed."* The participant explained with much hopelessness that there are always learners who don't stick to deadlines and the procedure one must follow to then punish them on the system is very frustrating and takes a lot of time away from teaching.

h) Inclusive teaching

Inclusive teaching was also a challenge that participant 2F experienced since her first year of teaching art, which affects her quite a lot. In theory, inclusive teaching is ambitious and idealistic. In practice, it is sometimes a complete impossibility. The participant finds it difficult maintaining a balance between focussing on disciplinary issues and weaker learners, while also focusing on improving the learners who are excelling and show a real passion for the subject. *"I feel like I am an incompetent art teacher, I think that I am weak...I have got one or two learners that are interested, but they are not improving because all*

my focus is directed on discipline” [translation]. Participant 2F admits to making a daily promise to herself to spend more quality time with the learners who are already excelling in the subject, rather than spending all her time on those who do not value art, but then finds herself in the same position yet again: Focusing on the bottom group and managing discipline instead.

i) Insecurity

Participant 3M elaborated on the grade 12 learners and the fact that he feels nervous teaching them because some of them want to apply to study art at university and he is scared of doing something wrong. The participant also referred to the challenge of stimulating and motivating the grade 12's, saying if they are not stimulated enough by the projects, he immediately feels like there's something wrong with him. *“I'm looking for ways to stimulate them because I remember when I was in high school my attention wasn't always there, but I'm just struggling to get them to be present and interested”* [translation].

j) Stress

Stress was the most common experience that all three participants faced - almost daily and still in their second and third years of teaching art. It is the one aspect of their well-being that affected them the most and which has an impact on their professional identities as well as their personal lives.

Participant 1F expressed how it helps if a peer or a spouse can relate or understand what you are going through as a novice teacher at a difficult school. The participant also communicated the importance of a partner understanding *“the level of stress”* that you sometimes experience. Participant 1F then elaborated on the busy schedule she had at the public school *“only one free period a week and often it was taken up by substitution and stuff”* and further explained that dealing with that and disciplinary issues, *“even if you come [get] home at three or four”* is still stressful. According to this participant, her stress level has *“gotten worse”* since starting at a private school. She elaborated on this statement by comparing the public school to the private school, especially in terms of pressure being put on teachers for learners to perform well. At the public school, it wasn't frowned upon if a learner underperformed because they had *“so many of them slipping through the cracks”*. At the private school, *“the parents are way more involved and you can't leave a kid behind and that to me is extremely stressful”*. The participant hesitated

when asked if the parents' involvement at the private school was beneficial or experienced in a good way. The participant eventually answered *"sometimes in a good way"*, then explained how the supportive parents at the public school would visit the school to *"apologize for their kid"*. This is not what happens at the private school, where *"parents come in and...that's when you have a problem"*. Thankfully, the participant has not had any incidents like that, yet expressed the fear that it could happen. This fear also influenced her teaching and it was mostly felt because she does not *"know the content well"*. Participant 1F admits to maybe being paranoid and probably having a much stronger competency in the theory than what she gives herself credit for, but it's just a personal concern that she had that she was not good enough. The participant still works a lot in her free time to study the content for Design, which she has never taught before this year because her field of expertise is visual art. Her stress levels are therefore still an issue in the third year of teaching, saying *"now still, I struggle with stress. Even my hair falls out"*.

Participant 2F commented on the fact that since she started teaching, she has been working most evenings just to get through all the school work. This makes the participant *"very stressed and irritable the whole time"* [translation]. Participant 2F further explained how the workload has affected, not only her well-being but her personal relationships. *"I am engaged now, but my fiancé and I broke off our relationship about a year ago for a while because I just didn't have time for him, my friends or anything else anymore"* [translation]. After having the participant's relationship fail because of time constraints, she later got back together and started planning their wedding which was to take place three months after the time of the interview. This added a new dimension to the participant's already busy schedule, which she admitted also added to the stress.

Participant 3M had quite a big disagreement with his principal at the time over Saturday art classes that he was to teach, that made him feel very stressed. *"It's very stressful. I feel wronged and there is a lot of anger inside of me"* [translation.] This affected the participant's well-being to the extent that he became very unsocial and introverted among his friends and family. Participant 3M's elaboration on the issue with the principal follows under the micro-political perspective part of this chapter. Furthermore, the participant referred to himself as very social, yet finds teaching very tiring and something that takes a lot of energy from you. The participant is therefore very tired and stressed in the evenings. One way that participant 3M tries to release some of this stress is by going to the gym. He admits that this does not always do the trick, though.

k) No time for own creations

One area where some art teachers seem to neglect their well-being is sacrificing their own time for making art. Participant 1F made a promise to himself to make time this year to make art. It rarely ever works out, but the participant does at least *“get very practical in class”* as a way of keeping in touch with the process of art-making. Participant 1F tries to do projects with the kids, which is a bit of an outlet, even though that still does not quite satisfy the urge to make her own art. Participant 3M raised the same issue of a practising artist versus teaching art and even admitted to probably not wanting to teach forever, because of other passions and dreams that he would like to pursue, like making his own art someday.

l) Class sizes

Besides the daily challenges that come with teaching at a high school, one of the participants previously had to deal with all of it while faced with 65 learners in one Creative Arts class. CAPS regulations state that grade 8 and 9 learners must take two of the four possible Creative Arts pathways. Drama learners at participant 1F’s school, where she first taught, were thus forced to also attend the participant’s art classes as their second pathway subject. *“They [grade 8 and 9 drama learners] absolutely hated it and they hated me, cause I was taking away their drama time”*. The participant only had 15 learners in a class at the school she taught at, at the time of the interview. She admitted that *“you can’t compare the quality of education in classes of 65 to classes of 15”*.

m) Resources

There’s no getting around it: Effective visual art education calls for certain resources. The participants that had experience teaching at public schools have both raised the issue of the lack of financial support from the schools.

Participant 1F said that the public school she first taught at did in fact, get financial support from the government, seeing that it was an arts focus school, but that it was *“notably spent outside of”* the subject. The participant was not told in her first year of teaching at the school, that there was even a budget. In her second year, the school told her it was very small, so she made an effort to get a sponsorship from a contact’s company to buy art materials for the school. This wasn’t an easy transaction, because *“they paid it in the bank*

account and it was an extreme, like stress to get the money out, actually getting it so even if I got it donated, the school just consumes it, cause school fees aren't being paid". Only after participant 1F spoke to the subject advisor, in her second year, did she realize how big the art budget from the government actually was. Nobody at the school ever told her. This participant also shared stories of other subjects' HOD's spending money on "way more luxurious stuff"; how the art budget was "four times bigger" than what she was lead to believe it was; and when the current teacher took over at the school, "they spent the budget before she even got to it". Participant 1F concluded by saying that "the finances are [were] there, it's just not allocated". She elaborated further on the challenges she experienced with regards to media and explained when she arrived at the school, "there wasn't a single piece of paper or a pencil...there was a bit of paint, but no paint brushes and no paper and no photocopy paper, so you can't print notes or anything". The participant, therefore, found it disturbing at her current school that "every time when the learners leave the classes, there's always papers and staplers and pencils and scissors left behind". Even though the learners at the private school buy their own art materials, the participant still has a budget for art which is "relatively small and they [school] encourage you to spend it on, like getting someone in to teach them Photoshop or taking them on a tour".

Participant 2F said that their school only gave permission to buy paint for the learners' practical assessment tasks (PAT) for the second term two weeks prior to the interview, which is quite late considering the amount of time spent on a PAT. Even then they limited the participant to the bare minimum: *"My kids are busy doing practical now. I only got permission to order paint two weeks ago, and I was only allowed one litre of red; one litre of blue and one litre of yellow and they expect me to use it for Gr. 10, 11 and 12"* [translation]. The budget is apparently very small. The school does not really want participant 2F to buy art materials at all, so she has to fight for it when it is needed. According to her, the school expects the learners to buy everything on their own, even though most learners are not able to afford it.

n) Communication

Participant 1F, that has taught at a public school, art centre and private school, mentioned that they only taught the practical side of visual art at the centre. The participant *"did find many challenges within that as well because the teacher that was teaching the theory at that time. [By the] last term, I didn't have a single meeting with her"*. The participant had

no idea what their colleague was teaching in theory and found it challenging to find any correlation between what she was teaching the learners in practice, while not knowing the learners' knowledge content in terms of the theory. The participant also explained, referring to their first teaching experience at the public school, that they would have liked to *"be debriefed on basically what the school function is and the processes and stuff"*. When participant 1F arrived at the school, there was no guidance and she did not even know the school building until two months after when she walked around for the first time.

o) Workload

Besides the actual interview, there were two minor incidents before and during one of the interviews that were rather insightful. Firstly, it was very difficult arranging an appropriate date and time to interview participant 2F. She had a very busy schedule at the school and after one postponement and one change of venue, we finally decided on a day that was supposedly suitable and the venue to be the school because it saved travelling time for her. Upon arrival for the interview, I waited for quite a while before the participant tended to me. The participant was notified of my arrival and she asked me to please wait at the reception area. For the next 15 minutes, I just saw glimpses of the participant 2F, clearly trying to juggle her extra-mural activities in the hall, while conversing urgently with several colleagues in the passage. The participant looked flustered and overwhelmed and it was clear that even the date and time that we agreed upon, seemed to pose some difficulty. During the interview, we were interrupted by an intercom announcement in search of the participant 2F's whereabouts. The participant was at this point very apologetic and embarrassed that our interview was interrupted. After trying to indicate where we were via the intercom, I told the participant to step out of the interview venue if a situation needed to be tended to. The participant could be heard conversing in the passage with the principal. She was explaining that the activities in the hall were under control and that a staff member was assigned to oversee it. Participant 2F also explained her brief absence due to a meeting that is currently underway, not wanting to elaborate on the nature of our interview and I could hear frustration from the participant at being disturbed and questioned by the principal regarding invigilation for an activity underway in the hall, while everything seemed to be taken care of. On further elaboration on the extra-mural activities, the participant said that the school compensates her for some activities that she's involved in after school, but not everything and that it is a very small reward, which does not equal the effort put in at all.

In terms of workload, the same participant found her administrative work to be even more than the norm. The school assigned her as subject head for one of the language subjects, which placed additional stress on her shoulders. Participant 2F explained her frustration when a new colleague started at the school and was part of the language department: It was basically up to the participant as subject head to train the new teachers, which put pressure on her when she ends up, initially, doing most of the work. *“I am subject head and every year I have had a new colleague in the subject department. I, therefore, have to basically do all the work myself, because they are still learning. By the time we reach the fourth term and they start getting the hang of things, then the year is at its end. So, yes, I just have a lot of work”* [translation].

p) Physical space

According to participant 2F, there is also an apparent lack of support towards the visual arts at their school. Firstly, the participant found it very difficult to find a venue in which to host the annual grade 12 art exhibition. *“Last year, for example, things got so bad that by the time my Gr. 12’s did their final practical assessment task for the exhibition, there still wasn’t a classroom available for them to put the artworks up”* [translation]. Secondly, the participant’s classroom was in desperate need of renovation. When participant 2F started at the school, the whole class was full of rubbish. She had to get a couple of learners to help her clean it all up. *“When I first walked into my classroom, there was rubbish all over the floor, the walls were covered with disgusting graffiti and I couldn’t even enter the storeroom because of all the rubbish. Birds have started nesting in there! So, I got a group of learners together, bought them each a Gatsby and a Coke, to help me clean out the storeroom. We cleared out about 25 big black bins from the storeroom. My class is in desperate need of a coat of paint but that hasn’t happened, even though I have been asking since I started working here. I even offered to do it myself”*. Since the participant asked permission to paint the classroom, the whole school has been repainted, except the art class. *“The passage where my class is located has been painted, but not my class. I have only two basins in my class, the other two are broken and clogged. I try to keep it clean, but every day is just a battle right from the start. The small cupboards under the basins are useless because nothing fits in there”* [translation]. Participant 2F had a good idea when the school put lockers in the passage: She suggested they put a couple of lockers in the art class that would give the learners space to put their materials and artworks in, but it was never considered. According to the participant, this would have solved a lot of problems, because some of the learners steal each other’s materials and

she cannot allow her storeroom to be used as their storage space because some learners have been found smoking and doing other kinds of mischief in there.

q) Relationships with principals

Participant 2F's turned to the topic of her principal. She has had numerous challenges working under the principal at the school. The participant elaborated on two specific incidents, among many. *"The learners finish school at half-past two in the afternoon. We are only allowed to leave at four o'clock, which I understand because we always have work to do. One day I asked if I could leave at half past three (with a valid reason) and he [principal] shouted at me and chased me out of his office"* [translation]. Communication was thus very difficult for this participant and her principal. Which aggravated the situation, was the fact that apparently, the principal advertised the participant's job at the school because she was studying part-time towards her B Ed Honours degree. The principal apparently informed the participant of this advertisement, as well as the postgraduate administrator of the university where she was registered as a B Ed honours student. After much deliberation, *"he retracted the advertisement for the post and the topic was never addressed again after that"* [translation]. The latter change in heart was apparent because the principal got word from colleagues that the participant was reliable and a hard worker.

Participant 3M's situation, which was discussed earlier on in this chapter with regards to an issue over Saturday art classes, had a relationship with the principal that also leaves a lot to be desired. The participant has been recorded saying it was the greatest challenge so far in his short education career. *"There was a big issue. The principal was never clear about the Saturday classes or what it entails. I was only notified four days before school opened in the beginning of the year"* [translation]. Firstly, the participant felt wronged in that this information was not communicated to him early enough or during his interview. Secondly, the fact that it was on a Saturday, for only one governing body member's child, and with no choice in the matter, made him even angrier. According to the participant, these classes have always been there and that is one of the reasons that the previous teacher quit her job. Participant 3M recalled an incident where the principal also shouted at him in front of his learners, which just added fuel to the fire. The participant also experienced the principal, who teaches the theory part of the visual art, going around and asking learners questions about his classes. Needless to say, the participant and the principal also never worked together to make any correlation between practical and theory possible, which affects the learning experience in his classes.

r) Subject

Participant 2F ended the interview off by saying that it was very difficult for her to adapt to new circumstances and even if she got the opportunity to work at another school, she would not because she became accustomed to the circumstances at her school. *“I am used to it now, it was difficult and it takes a long time to adapt, but I am used to it now. I also think Visual Art is one of the most difficult subjects to teach”*

4.2.3 Novice teacher experiences: Support

The data collected from the interviews revealed various issues relating to support, as well as pre-service support i.e. training. The following support and training topics were raised by the novice art teachers:

a) Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE)

Two of the participants followed the PGCE course after graduating with a degree in Fine Arts. Participant 1F discussed the course in depth and explained how they found it very problematic. From lecturers going through things *“extremely quickly”* if she knew far more than what she actually did, to lecturers who did not recommend parrot-style studying in education, yet expected students to parrot-style study for exams by discussing the exam papers prior to the actual exam date and setting papers that only tests exact recalling of theory, instead of application or true insight.

b) Subject advisor

The most consistent feedback from all the participants was the unanimous gratitude they all expressed for the WCED visual art subject advisor. All the participants commented on the subject advisor’s efficiency; her contact sessions (school visits) boosting their confidence; and general appreciation for her support, helpfulness, and invaluable advice. From subject-specific classroom tips to inspiring **Power-Point** presentations during standard setting meetings. The participants all felt that the subject advisor played a big role in their success during their first year(s) of teaching.

c) Colleagues

What helped a lot, was the support participant 2F received from a colleague, in terms of “venting” and having someone that she was “able to sit there and talk to”. The participant also found comfort in the fact that she was one of three other novice teachers who started at the same time at the school and this seemed to aid as support, because they could all serve as soundboards for one another and, again, just vent and “know it’s OK to feel this overwhelmed”. This seemed to have been a great support for the participant.

d) Lack of support

Lack of support from the school in terms of disciplining violators seemed to be a common thread. According to participant 1F, whose first teaching position was at a public school, the disciplinary action procedures were not really effective. The participant recounted one day where she took a learner to the principal’s office after an incident of theft that she witnessed and found “that the principal was very lenient on them”. The principal just responded that “the kid just wanted to buy the paint”, while the participant knew that was not the case after seeing the learner go into her storeroom and taking paint without permission. The learner did not even get a detention, so the participant found that “there’s a very big problem with discipline” and this made it very challenging. That same night, participant 2F had a parents’ evening where a teacher stood on stage with a loudspeaker and parents were standing in a hall and “the teacher just shouted at the parents and the parents just shouted back”. Afterward, she left to go home, only to find the battery stolen out of her car. This was after an already challenging 13-hour day. Participant 1F did not find the principal, nor the two deputy principals supportive. This specific participant was very candid about the school being a “very difficult school and very difficult classes”. She experienced numerous fights in the class and drew it back to the kids having very “difficult backgrounds”. On top of challenging disciplinary issues that she had to deal with, the participant was faced with one class of 65 learners and found it difficult to do anything with them so sometimes it just ended up being “disaster control management”.

Participant 2F found support in terms of managing disciplinary issues at her school to be a big problem. “The 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” [translation]. The participant elaborated on this, saying that there is no proper structure in place and that everything is pretty chaotic at the school. She was quoted comparing it to a “circus”.

Participant 3M also experienced theft in his classroom, but he seems to see it considering the realities of the “*society*”. According to him, there was no official structure in place that helps teachers with disciplinary issues. Each teacher had to handle issues on their own, without support from the principal.

4.3 Discussion

I transcribed the interview recordings and allocated descriptive codes to the participants’ reported successes, challenges, and support. Afterward, I compared the data from all three participants’ individual interviews and categorised the data according to similar descriptive codes. The interview data had been summarized and presented in the following diagram, showing the data collected for each research question i.e. novice art teacher experiences in terms of successes, challenges, and support.

| Novice teacher’s experiences: Successes | Novice teacher’s experiences: Challenges | Novice teacher’s experiences: Support |
|--|--|--|
| Drawing skills Making connections Motivating the learners Confidence Self-reliance and pride Job satisfaction Technology | Taking over from someone else Assessments Knowing your learners Parents Levels of visual literacy Planning Isolation Discipline Inclusive teaching Insecurity Stress No time for own creations Subject Class sizes Resources Communication Workload Physical space Relationship: Principal | PGCE Subject advisor Colleagues Lack of support |

Table 4.1 Summary of interview data

4.4 River of Life data

In the following section, the findings from the River of Life (ROL) narratives will be discussed. The data had been processed and analysed using the guidelines set out in the Chapter Three of this thesis, namely the context of each drawing was considered, symbols were identified, and what these symbols represent was established.

The challenges for this research method were to find a suitable time and place for all three participants to attend a focus group session and to record the participant interaction as a group. In the end, because of busy schedules, participant 2F asked to be exempted from the focus group and she therefore, had to undergo an individual River of Life session at a time and place that suited her. This did not influence the data that was captured, nor did it significantly diminish the opportunity to capture a rich group dynamic. The two participants that attended the focus group session preferred to discuss their River of Life narratives in a very individualistic manner and did not interact with each other to the extent that it created and added a co-constructing meaning to their experiences. The exchanges that happened was purely based on sympathetic acknowledgment of each other's experiences, but no real interaction that yielded additional data over and above what was drawn and explained.

4.4.1 ROL session: Experiences of participant 2F

The first objective was for participant 2F to illustrate her current experiences as an art teacher by drawing the first part of her ROL and using symbols that represent various challenges and successes.

The ROL of participant 2F is depicted with her permission and the discussion follows under the headings:



Fig. 4a River of Life: Participant 2F

- River mouth

Participant 2F started on the left side of the page, by drawing the mouth of the river very large and then it narrowed slightly towards the middle, only to enlarge at the end. The description from the participant was that it resembled a very challenging beginning in her career as a novice art teacher and it felt like being thrown into the deep end. Where she finds herself now, after two years of teaching experience, would be more in the middle of the river – still with its many challenges, but in shallower water. The widening of the river towards the end has an opposite meaning to the larger river mouth at the start: Here, the participant drew it wider to resemble abundance and growth.

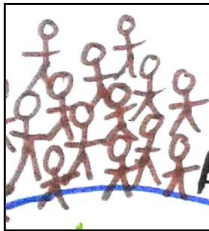
- Whirlpool with fish



The large river mouth, which resembled the deep waters the participant was figuratively thrown into, is depicted by a whirlpool. This shows the complete confusion that the participant felt during her first year of teaching. Interestingly, the participant only added the fish later on in the drawing process, almost towards the end. From the discussion, her

confusion was originally seen as solitary: An experience that belonged herself as the individual being challenged. After much elaboration and afterthought, the participant added the fish to symbolize all the learners that were negatively affected by her confusion. The fish were drawn in a way that made it look like they were being sucked into the whirlpool by a strong current, only to vanish once they reached the bottom.

- Crowds



The crowds of people on either side of the river resembles all the people who looked on during the participant's first year of teaching and who judged her. When asked if it was any specific individual or specific groups, the participant answered that she felt like it was literally everyone in her life. According to the participant, these people were all witnessing the confusion and challenges that she faced, yet nobody did anything to help or stop it.

- Green grass



The green grass at the bottom of the drawing represents other, more appealing, job opportunities. The participant knows that there is 'greener grass on the other side' and it is something that is always there and something that the participant thinks about. While drawing it, though, the participant commented on the fact that it is very far away and not something that she is willing to pursue immediately, if ever. The participant echoed what she stated in the original interview, by explaining that she got used to the way things were at the school and that moving would only mean adapting to new circumstances and experiencing that initial confusion all over again, was a challenging thought.

- Fence



The fence in this picture relates to the 'greener grass' that was discussed before and serves as a barrier between the situation that the participant currently finds herself in as opposed to the idea of a better, more attractive job somewhere else. The geographical location of a school would be the only real drawing factor if the participant was ever to be serious about working somewhere else. She admitted to finding the Boland region of the

Western Cape an ideal place to teach because she grew up there and prefers it to the city. Another reason for the participant's reluctance to apply at other schools was the fear of the interviewing process. At first, the severity of this issue was not clear to me, but after some discussion, it became evident that the reality of an interview was a very real fear that the participant found difficult to overcome. The participant elaborated on it by saying that she cannot find her words in an interview, she struggles to put proper sentences together (especially in a language other than her mother tongue), she sometimes draws a complete blank, and she is scared of coming across as incompetent.

- Log



At first glance, it seems like a tree that has been cut off. It symbolizes the negative aspects of the participant's initial teaching experience. At first, this was briefly mentioned as the reason behind this particular symbol. A stronger case was then made by the participant that decided it was more of the support structure. According to her, a log in the water is something you can catch and hold onto if the current is too strong for you, keeping you from being helplessly dragged away.

- Glass of red wine



A glass with red wine pouring out of it was drawn in humour, even though the participant was very honest in admitting to the benefits of alcohol when one is stressed. It symbolizes the participant's social life as a way of de-stressing and trying to ease the pressures of a heavy workload. The participant also referred to her first two years as "*sweating blood*", which the red liquid also resembles.

- Lifebuoys and little boat



The participant was represented by a small boat, surrounded by four orange- and red coloured lifebuoys. This was a reference to the support that the participant did, in fact, receive during her initial teaching years. This support came in the form of her friends, some of whom she studied with and currently teach with. The participant remarked that it is just such

a relief and comfort to share your experiences with peers that are also faced with the same challenges you are.

- Shark



The shark was drawn with sharp teeth and meant to look like he's aiming at the lifebuoys. This represents the participant's principal. The participant's relationship with the principal was one of her main challenges, as previously discussed in the interview. The participant says the principal "*barks*" at everyone and does not seem to hold the respect of the staff. The participant mentioned that, since the first interview, the principal had been a lot more civil and even friendly at times. The participant thinks it's a result of an improved social life, but this was, of course, said with humour and very little evidence to support such a statement.

- STOP signs



The stop sign was drawn while the participant elaborated on new teachers joining her department. This was also one of the main challenges that the participant mentioned in the interview and it seems to have escalated even more since then. A new teacher – in her first year of teaching – joined the Creative Arts department. The participant gave the new teacher all the necessary resources and old test papers from the previous year to give the teacher a head start. According to the participant, the new teacher does not adhere well to instructions or protocol, does not take responsibility for work assignments, and has an "*attitude*". All of which often results in the participant having to do double the amount of work already assigned to her, just to make sure the new teacher's share of work for Creative Arts is done properly.

- Multi-headed figure



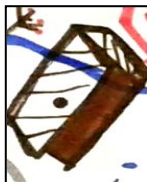
The participant admitted that multi-tasking is not one of her strong suits. Therefore it is particularly frustrating when the principal assigns certain responsibilities to the participant that asks of her to literally be in two places at once.

- Drowning figure yelling “HELP!”



The drowning figure is the heavy workload that makes the participant feel as if she is drowning. The amount of invigilation that was expected from the staff during exam time was one area where the participant felt really challenged, especially when a high absentee rate among the staff meant that others had to constantly step in and do more work. The participant was also angered by the complaints received every year when the visual art learners have to do their practical during exam time. According to the participant, staff members find it unnecessary and regard the hours spent on practical work as a waste of time.

- Door closing



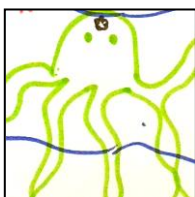
A door (or window) is generally seen as a symbol of opportunity. It was interesting to see the participant drawing a door, yet did not elaborate on its purpose. When the participant finished, she said that she wanted to draw the door closed and not open. She did not correct it but just made a point of drawing the ‘inside’ very dark.

- Figure with parachute



The figure with a parachute was also an interesting symbol that the participant did not elaborate much on. She did say that clearly there was not sufficient space for the figure to land (among all the other objects and figures) which implied the idea of apparently impossible ways out or escape routes. A parachute is used to safely land someone on the ground, yet the participant cannot visualize a safe landing anywhere among the many challenges.

- Octopus with small brain



Again, the participant drew herself with multiple body parts. This represents all the subject departments that the participant is part of. The fact that the participant is teaching three subjects, is proving to be very challenging and time-consuming. One example is her school’s policy that teachers only get two days after a language test had been written, to mark all their

papers, have it moderated and capture all the results electronically. This is a challenge for the participant, especially when it is essays that she must mark together with senior visual art exam papers which also consist mainly of essay question and answers, which takes a long time to assess. The participant drew a small brain for the octopus, saying that this is how she feels when the workload starts getting the better of her. It feels like her brain is *“too small to handle all of it”*.

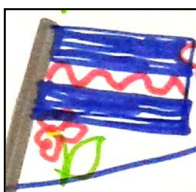
The second objective was for participant 2F to illustrate elements that will have a positive impact on her career and well-being as an art teacher by completing her ROL with the use of symbols that represent the ideal experiences that would contribute to a more successful future.

- Red heart



The heart was the start of the participant’s hope for the future as a visual art teacher. She drew elements that would make her teaching career easier, more effective and more satisfying. While the participant was drawing, she recalled an incident at school where the principal refused to give permission for the participant to take Gr. 12 learners to the annual Design Indaba. The learners have never been to an event like this, yet the principal denied them the opportunity because he thinks a day in the classroom is more valuable. Now, the participant does not even want to make an effort to take learners on any excursions, because it is too difficult to get permission. There is a sense of loss that was witnessed as the participant told this story: A loss of passion and the will to promote the subject, all because of the resistance she gets from a principal who does not value art. The participant’s ideal work environment would be one where her love of art would be shared by the school’s management.

- Hoisted flag on flagpole



The participant also mentioned that she would like more opportunities. She elaborated on this statement by saying that the chance of her ever getting a permanent WCED position is next to impossible. In the way that the management at the school clearly undervalues visual art, there is no doubt in her mind that she will never be promoted beyond the governing body position that she currently holds. This brings about the symbol of the hoisted flag: The participant would

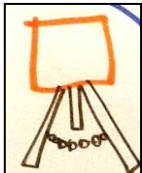
love to hold a more prominent position within the school, to put her stamp down and mark her importance.

- Money



Being paid a better salary was drawn as an element that would improve the participant's experience of teaching and this was represented by all the green dollar bills. This was not the most important aspect of the participant's ideal future and was not drawn first either, yet it would improve the level of satisfaction that the participant gets out of the job.

- Easel and paint



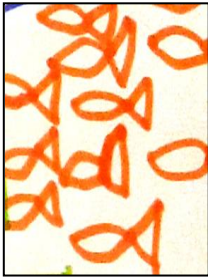
This seemed to be one of the most important aspects that would improve the participant's future as a visual art teacher: Resources. This was also mentioned as being one of her biggest challenges in the individual interview. On the topic of money, the participant started drawing an easel and paint right after that, saying that the school will never have enough money or make the effort to budget enough for materials needed for visual art. The participant went as far as to say that if the principal had his way, he would have phased out visual art in the school a long time ago, but she just does not think he is able to.

- Head (smiley face)



Again, one discussion led to another and we were back on the topic of the principal. The participant drew the principal with a smiley face, indicating that a more pleasant and trustworthy principal would make all the difference in her experience as a teacher at the school. The participant recalled an incident where she found two learners cheating in an exam and so she reported this to the principal. A disciplinary hearing was called, but to the participant's dismay, the hearing was primarily based on questioning the learners on the participant's adherence to protocol during the incident! The learners were asked whether the participant clearly stated 'no cell phones'; whether the participant went through the rules of the exams again; whether the participant did a thorough invigilation etc. The participant felt like the one under investigation and this left her very angry. The learners apparently walked out of the hearing looking like they just won the lottery, with no punishment at all.

- School of fish



The fish at the end of the river represents all the learners working together in unison and showing their cooperation to achieve a common goal. The participant said that teaching learners that want to do art and working with her to achieve success in the subject would be ideal. Whether it was intentional or not, the school of fish was not facing forward in relation to the flow of the river. This indicated that the fish were swimming together and against all the negativity. The participant feels that cooperative learners can relieve most of the strenuous challenges altogether.

- Fruit trees, flowers, and the sun



The last thing the participant drew that represented the ideal future as a visual art teacher was almost a summary of what would ensure more satisfying career experiences: An area on the riverbed with flowers and fruit trees growing in abundance, while the sun is shining brightly on the entire scene. “*Growth*” was the keyword used here. The participant wants to experience growth and opportunities in her job; she wants to experience growth within her learners and the visual art subject; the participant also wants to experience more happiness and positivity within her school and her relationship with the principal and other staff members.

4.3.2 ROL session: Experiences of participants 1F and 3M

The last two participants attended the focus group session together. The participants preferred to discuss their use of symbolism in their visual narrative while they were busy drawing it. Significant discussions flowed from the ROL activity that were not anticipated and some discussion points were elaborated on after completion of the ROL, which enrich the data and provided additional insight.

The ROL of participants 1F and 3M are depicted with their permission and the discussion follows under the headings:

The first objective for the participants was to illustrate their current experiences as art teachers by drawing the first part of their ROL and using symbols that represent various challenges and successes. Participant 3M was first to talk about and finish his ROL and that is why this section commences with his drawing.



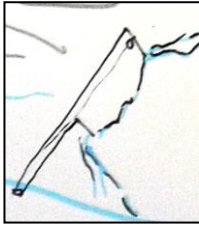
Fig. 4b River of Life: Participant 3M

- Log



Participant 3M offered to start elaborating on his ROL while he was in the process of creating it. He started by drawing a tree in the water. This, according to the participant, was seen as a natural thing, but it prohibits the flow of the river. This natural thing is the participant's inclination to be very technical when it comes to art. This is apparently not what the curriculum asks for. This should be a good thing, but the participant experiences it as a challenge in his teaching. That is why it is a natural tree but it creates an obstacle at the moment.

- Axe



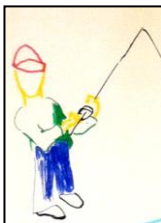
The axe that has been drawn to look like it is cutting through a solid base, almost like ice, represents the language barrier that participant 3M experiences with some of his learners. Most of the learners speak Xhosa, except for a small group of “*coloured*” learners, so even speaking English, would be teaching in most learners’ second language. The participant also found it challenging when the learners communicate with one another in Xhosa, especially when he gets the feeling that the conversation is about him. One learner has admitted to the participant that their classmates sometimes gossip about him and that it is to his benefit that he does not understand Xhosa in the context they speak. Participant 1F reacted to this by saying that it is very wrong. Apparently, the learners did the same thing to the learner and would gossip openly in front of her in another language. Participant 3M, although he finds the language barrier challenging, still thinks that in general, the learners respect and like him.

- Fish



Participant 3M said that since the individual interview, things have improved and have been going very well. The participant’s biggest challenge was the relationship with his principal (who was portrayed as the fish with sharp teeth in the drawing). The principal has since resigned and this came as a big relief to the participant. He is more relaxed and is experiencing a renewed enjoyment of teaching.

- Fisherman

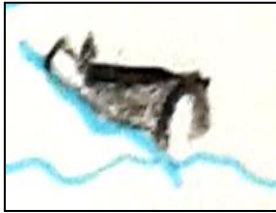


Participant 3M feels like he can really mean something to his colleagues and learners. The participant drew himself as a fisherman, pointing out his purpose and the fact that he felt like he stood his ground well with the principal, which made him feel like he was right and therefore a boost in confidence and a feeling of worth.

Participant 3M made a comment about people maybe using research interviews like these to vent. Participant 1F reacted to this saying that it is sometimes needed: To vent to someone and just go through it. The discussion turned to the Visual Art subject advisor. I

shared with the participants that their feedback is valuable and that the subject advisor was aware of this study and showed interest in the results, once published. Not all new teachers share their challenges with the subject advisor during her visits to the schools/art centres/private schools. Participant 1F admitted to this saying it is "hard because you don't want to come across as incompetent or stupid".

- Floating rubbish



The objects floating in the water represents several challenges that participant 3M is facing. Besides the language barrier mentioned earlier, the participant also referred to one of the objects in the water as a cultural barrier. The participant is trying to teach the learners things that they do not necessarily "get" right away because it is not part of their knowledge base or within their frame of reference.



Another object in the water represents the participant's sensitivity and unease regarding his future as a teacher. The governing body decided to have interviews again, even though the participant has been at the school for almost six months. He finds it unfair that they must go through the whole process again, just because the old principal apparently insisted on a six-month probation period after which new teachers should be interviewed again.

Participant 1F, who previously taught at the same institution, commented on this saying that she got a contract post, not a permanent post. They both agreed that it is unfair because at most other schools they will automatically give the permanent post to someone who has been working there on contract.

Participant 3M continued by saying that the governing body advertised his position already and he had to re-apply. His anger was also rooted in the fact that, if they decided to hire someone else, it would be the seventh educator in this particular position in the last two and a half years. According to participant 3M, teachers do not stay long, because of the previous principal. Parents do not complain because of general disinterest.

Participant 1F commented on how difficult it would be taking over learners who have had seven teachers in two years.



The third object in the water refers to the new school governing body and the politics at the institution. Participant 3M shares a practical Gr. 10 class with another teacher. The participant achieved more success with the class and now senses some jealousy from his colleague. Apparently, the other teacher has more experience in the intermediate/senior phase and participant 3M is more equipped to teach FET phase. The participant feels as if the other teacher dislikes the fact that he is not as successful with his class and therefore shows animosity towards the participant. Another challenge that the participant feels grounded in politics, is the fact that they denied him the introduction of 3D projects with Gr. 10's. Participant 3M likes doing things his way and wanted to introduce sculpture to the learners. The other teacher told him that the curriculum stated that they could only do 2D and mixed media projects. This is after the subject advisor suggested that the participant introduce woodcarving to his learners. Participant 3M feels as if the teacher that showed resistance to his ideas does not know what she is talking about.

- Bridge



The next symbol in participant 3M's ROL was a bridge. This represents the balance between the participant's social and professional life. It is something that the participant has to constantly work at: To achieve a balance between the two, instead of becoming completely consumed with one and sacrifice the other. The participant also remarked that it can sometimes "*catch up to you*". What usually happens is that he neglects his social life. The participant loves his job, saying "*it's not a monkey job, cause you're working with people and it's never the same*". Participant 3M wants to give everything to it but is scared that too much of it would tire them out completely.

The second objective was for the participant to illustrate elements that will have a positive impact on his career and well-being as an art teacher by completing his ROL and using symbols that represent the ideal experiences that he would like in the future to be more successful.

- Flower / water lily



The lily in the water signifies the ideals that participant 3M has for his career as a teacher. In the drawing, it shows the start of the positive elements that the participant would like to experience to enhance his teaching career.

- Bird



Participant 3M drew a bird to represent a sense of freedom he feels to create more, which he does a lot in class with the learners. This is wonderful and exciting, but the stakes are always so high. The participant compares it to any creative process: There is always a chance that something (idea or technique) might not work and then you feel bad. The participant would like to have more time to create art and get into the world where he can express himself more freely, but patience is key and he believes that it will happen eventually.

- Hand



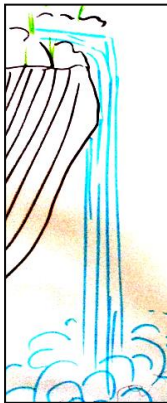
The hand is a symbol of everything going well for the participant, as a future prospect. There are things that would improve and add value to his experiences, like creating more of his own art, breaking down cultural barriers with learners, being employed permanently and overcoming internal politics, but generally, the participant is much happier now that the principal has resigned.

The following section represents the ROL drawing and discussion of participant 1F.



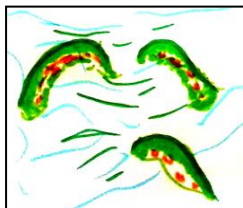
Fig. 4c River of Life: Participant 1F

- Waterfall



The cliff with the waterfall in participant 1F's ROL symbolizes the initial ideas she had about teaching art and the different realization afterward. The participant admits to these initial ideas about teaching as being very idealistic and therefore sees the start of her teaching career as being on top of a cliff, way up high where you dream of all the ideals you would like to achieve as an art teacher. The realities of teaching are in fact very different and made the participant feel as if she was falling and hitting rock bottom after she started teaching. Participant 1F felt that all her time, energy and patience went down with it. She compared her experiences at the first school she taught with the feeling of being underwater and drowning.

- a) Creature



This idea of drowning was further explored by the participant in the drawing of an octopus-like creature that is mainly hidden under water. Only three limbs/tentacles are showing above the water.

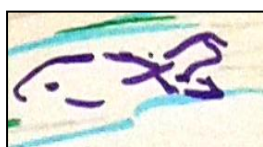
The assumption was that this represented participant 1F's versatile experiences at a public school, art centre and a private school – all in a matter of only two years and 6 months. The participant admits to it being odd and that she has always been on the move and constantly “*looking*”. Now she thinks that she must keep on moving and finds the idea of “*long term*” discomfoting. The participant does not know if she sees herself as a Design teacher. The fact that participant 1F is teaching it for the first time and because the school where she is teaching just implemented the International Bureau of Education (IBE) curriculum for the first time, are some of the reasons why the participant is questioning her future in this position. According to the participant, IBE is extremely difficult and more conceptual than the previous curriculum.

b) Fish and rocks



Participant 1F drew a fish and two rocks on the river bed that symbolized how things stabilized a little bit during the participant's second year of teaching. She described it as the water eventually calming down a bit. The fish is alive, swimming head above water and the rock also refers to stability.

c) Dead fish



In the same breath, the participant also explained that even though things calmed down a bit, she still felt suffocated. She, therefore, drew a dead fish in the water. It still was not what the participant wanted nor did it meet the ideals that she held about art teaching.

d) Floating soil



The ideals that the participant had about teaching art was represented by a piece of floating soil: The search for a more satisfying and fulfilling experience than what the current school offered.

An opportunity presented itself to initiate a new discussion topic and identify common experiences between the two participants who both taught and/or still teach at the same art centre. Upon arrival at the ROL session, participants 1F and 3M did not need any introduction, for they knew each other already. They then shared with me that participant 3M took over from participant 1F after she resigned from the art centre. I did not have any prior knowledge of this, but took the opportunity to ask both participants if there were any similar experiences shared between them with regards to working at the art centre. Participant 1F, aware of participant 3M's issue with the principal over Saturday classes, said she does not think that the principal had such an issue with her. Participant 3M responded by saying *"you were just quiet about it"*. This was true, as participant 1F admitted to just doing her job but hated having to teach art classes on a Saturday. She minded a lot, but just kept quiet and searched for another job instead. Apparently, the teacher before her also resigned because of the same issue over teaching on Saturdays, so it has clearly been a recurring problem.

e) Second waterfall



The second waterfall signified the participant's *"fall"* into the school where she is teaching currently. Adapting to a different school was not so much the challenge as the fact that the participant had to teach Design for the first time.

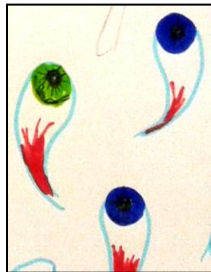
f) Penny



Teaching Design was further represented by a coin, with the participant saying that she is still waiting for the proverbial penny to drop. Participant 1F feels she is still struggling to understand Design and exactly how to teach it because it is different to visual art. The participant found visual art much easier to mark, in comparison to Design which the participant described as being very difficult and very abstract. For her, the difficulty lies in giving a mark to a good, but simplistic design, as well as distinguishing between exceptional and average work when you're faced with the projects of an entire class. With visual art, someone cannot really make something simple. There always needs to be more to get good marks. With Design, the participant feels simplicity can add to the success of

a design, yet when bombarded with a lot of projects that are sometimes very similar, it can become “*blurry*” and difficult to establish the good from the bad.

g) Eyeballs



The eyeballs in the drawing represent participant 1F’s search for something “*more*”. She is not sure what exactly she is looking for, but she feels that she is constantly on the lookout. According to the participant, this is also very painful (therefore the blood veins behind the eyeballs) because she is not taking everything in at the moment or living in the moment so to speak. The participant feels overwhelmed and this is causing her to search for something else, to either deal with or relief this feeling.

The second objective was for the participant to illustrate elements that will have a positive impact on her career and well-being as an art teacher by completing his ROL and using symbols that represent the ideal experiences that she would like in the future in order to be more successful.

h) Books



The books represent participant 1F’s current quest to better understand Design as a subject. The participant is still at a stage where she needs to expand her theoretical knowledge of the subject because it is her first year of teaching it. The books also refer to the participant’s desire to do her Master’s degree. The participant is therefore, craving an improved education in general.

i) Paintbrushes



In the individual interviews, participant 1F mentioned a strong desire to create more of her own art. Since then, she has been doing exactly that and this seems to bring the participant more stability. She refers to painting as her “*up*”. That is why the participant drew paintbrushes with arrows pointing upwards. It is the one thing that seems to relax and quieten her mind. The participant has small classes this year and uses this to her advantage. When she puts the learners to work, the participant also starts working on her

own artwork. Apparently, it started with another colleague in the art department who challenged participant 1F to a “*paint-off*”. This got the ball rolling and apparently, it has been very stimulating. The participant mentioned that she started on an abstract piece because she is not very good at it. She did not like the end result and reworked it to become a desert landscape, which she is quite proud of. If the participant can fit painting into her busy schedule, then it would bring a different dimension to her future experiences as an art teacher.

j) Money



The participant drew money, but that did not seem to be a very important part of her ideal future as an art teacher. It would make the participant happier to a certain degree, but its effect on the participant’s life would not be as significant as some of the other elements.

k) Talking fish



The fish that is talking (speech bubble) refers to participant 1F’s need to be validated. The participant sometimes needs someone to just acknowledge that she is doing a good job. She admitted that this would significantly boost her confidence. Especially with kids as well, if they do not feel confident they perform badly and the participant says that goes for adults as well sometimes. If the participant feels more confident, then she thinks she will also do a much better job.

l) Branches/paintbrushes



Participant 1F used branches with green leaves and paintbrushes to represent greener pastures and the idea of something that makes her genuinely happy inside. She is not entirely sure what would bring her that happiness that she is looking for, but it is always there. The participant admitted that it might also just be the current chaos that she is feeling because of exam time.

All the elements on the right-hand side seem to be going upwards, like all the things participant 1F drew would literally lift her spirit and future aspirations as an art teacher.

The reality is that the participant still feels like she is at the bottom of the last waterfall. Further elaboration on what causes the participant to feel as if she is still “falling” or finding herself at the bottom, seemed to be the colleague she is currently working with.. Apparently, the colleague is very good, witty and extremely bright though not technically as strong as the participant, but this seems to intimidate the participant and makes him feel less confident.

Upon hearing this, participant 3M agreed completely. According to him, the fact that they are comparing themselves with others is a sensitivity issue. Participant 3M says it is difficult because he thinks that all artists are very sensitive people and pick these things up, where the average person would not necessarily pick it up. Human relations, because art teachers are constantly in it, “gets to you”. Participant 1F feels the same and wishes that she was not so sensitive.

m) Airplane


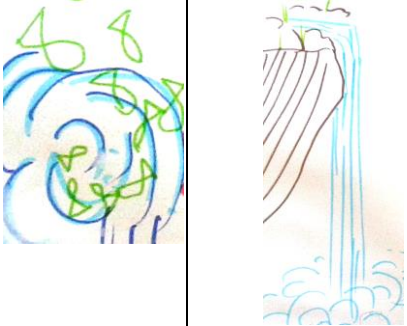






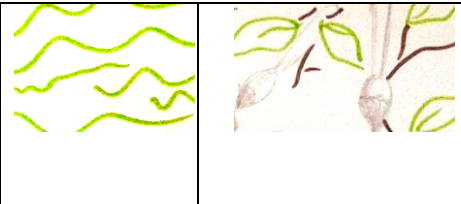

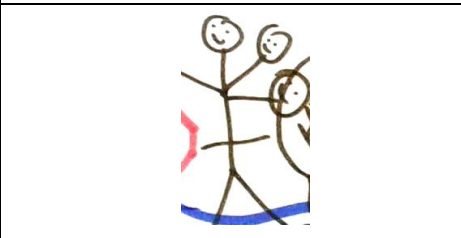

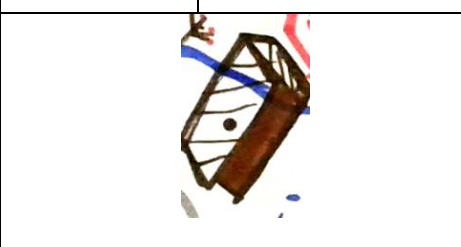
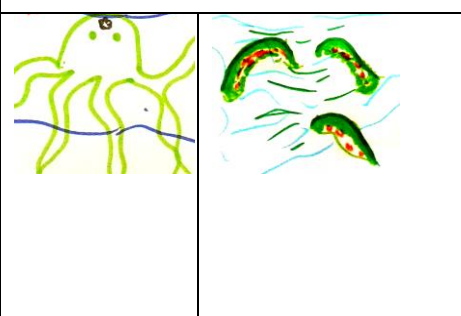

The airplane refers to participant 1F’s wish to travel someday. This was also supported by the participant 3M who said that he wants to do that as well.



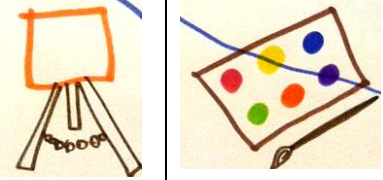


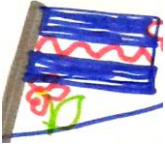


The ROL session ended with the topic of a balanced life, distractions and greener pastures. One participant said that everyone has something other than their professional life that challenges them: If it is not a wedding, then it is a Master’s degree. If it is not a Master’s degree, then it is a baby. If not a baby, then something else. It is the one constant in life.











4.5 Discussion

The visual representations from the River of Life sessions were collected and summarized in the following table:

| | Symbols used by participants | Identification | Meaning |
|----|---|---------------------|---|
| 1. |  | Crowd of people | People judging participant |
| 2. |  | Whirlpool/waterfall | Difficulties experienced by the participants. |
| 3. |  | Log | Difficulties experienced by the participants (prohibiting the flow of the river), but can also be used to hold on to. |
| 4. |  | Fence | The barrier between the current situation and potential opportunities elsewhere. |
| 5. |  | Glass of wine | Social aspect of de-stressing / also references to blood, sweat, and tears that go into work |
| 6. |  | Lifebuoys | Support from friends/staff |

| | | | |
|-----|---|----------------------|--|
| 7. |  | Greener pastures | The prospect of something better or ideal job |
| 8. |  | Stop sign | A specific challenge one participant experiences as subject head |
| 9. |  | Multi-headed figure | Pressures of having to multi-task |
| 10. |  | Shark/ferocious fish | Negative representation of the participants' principal. |
| 11. |  | Door closing | Opportunities closing |
| 12. |  | Octopus | Versatile workload (teaching of more than one subject) and feeling of drowning |
| 13. |  | Drowning figure | Heavy workload resulting in feeling of drowning |

| | | | |
|-----|---|--------------------------------------|---|
| 14. |  | Parachute | In drawing, there is no safe place to land i.e. lacking support |
| 15. |  | Red heart | Ideal of school management sharing participant's love for art |
| 16. |  | Art materials | Ideal situation would be receiving the necessary materials to effectively teach art |
| 17. |  | Paintbrushes | Desires to make more of one's own art |
| 18. |  | Nature (trees, flowers, and the sun) | Ideal teaching experiences with fewer challenges |
| 19. |  | Flag | Ideals of playing a more prominent and influential role in the school as a teacher |
| 20. |  | Money | Ideals of compensation equaling the time and effort that goes into teaching |
| 21. |  | Smiley face | Ideal principal: One that is friendly and supportive |

| | | | |
|-----|---|----------------|--|
| 22. |  | School of fish | Ideal learners would all work together in unison |
| 23. |  | Fish & rock | Challenging situation stabilizing |
| 24. |  | Talking fish | Need for validation |
| 25. |  | Axe | Breaking through language and cultural barriers |
| 26. |  | Fisherman | Participant's role and influence on the subject |
| 27. |  | Rubbish | Numerous challenges experienced eg. uncertain future and school politics |
| 28. |  | Bridge | Maintaining a balanced life (socializing vs working) |
| 29. |  | Hand | Resignation of principal stabilized school dynamics |
| 30. |  | Bird | Ideal of having freedom to create more |
| 31. |  | Floating soil | Ideals of teaching (not resembling reality) |

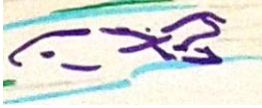
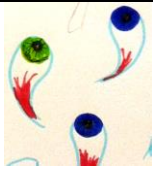



| | | | |
|-----|--|-----------|---|
| 32. |  | Dead fish | Feeling of being suffocated and dissatisfied |
| 33. |  | Eyeballs | Search for something more fulfilling |
| 34. |  | Books | Desires to learn more about Design as a subject and possibility of pursuing Master's degree |
| 35. |  | Coin | Waiting for proverbial penny to drop |
| 36. |  | Airplane | Desire to travel more and expand knowledge |

Table 4.2 Summary of visual symbols used of River of Life drawings

The more prominent symbols used in the ROL drawings that seemed to have been repeated by more than one participant were the representation of a figure/creature drowning; water moving downwards (waterfall and whirlpool); principals drawn as fish with sharp teeth; creatures like an octopus; a tree trunk in the water (in both cases it also had dual symbolism with each of the participants that used it) and generally, green leaves or grass meant prosperity and positive experiences. Only three positive experiences were mentioned, namely the support from staff members; a challenging situation easing after moving to another school/art centre and a particularly difficult relationship with a principal being relieved because of their (principal's) resignation.

Some of the major challenges that the participants faced during their first teaching years were the strenuous relationships with their respective principals; feeling overworked and stressed; school politics; multitasking; breaking through language and cultural barriers; the idea of a more promising future elsewhere; comparison to colleagues; people judging; and the search for a more prominent and valued position as an art teacher in their workplaces.

Challenges unique to art education were the lack of support for art from school management; lack of art materials; restraints on creating own art; desire for more freedom when it comes to creating art (in the classroom); the need to improve knowledge of Design as a subject. The things that would give the novice art teachers more value and significantly change their experiences in a positive way, is more money; cooperation from learners; expanding their knowledge; maintaining a balance between their professional and social lives; the prospect of greener pastures; creating more of their own art; permanent job positions; travelling and more support from their respective schools/art centres in terms of supplying them with adequate resources and generally valuing visual art as an important subject. From these ideals that the participants elaborated on, creating more of their own art and support from their schools/art centre in terms of resources and valuing art are specifically related to art education. The following table summarizes the data collected from the ROL session:

| Novice teachers' experiences: Successes | Novice teachers' experiences: Challenges | Novice teachers' experiences: Support | Novice teachers' ideals for future to improve experiences |
|--|---|---|--|
| Some challenging situations stabilizing in 2 nd year Principal resignation | Judgement Other opportunities Hard work Subject head responsibilities Multitasking Principal Lack of opportunities for growth in school Heavy workload Lack of resources Not creating enough of own art Salary not equalling workload Language barrier Uncertain future School politics Ideals of teaching ≠ reality Dissatisfaction | Support from colleagues Lack of support from management e.g. principal | Love for art Fewer challenges Prominent role in school Friendly and supportive principal Learners working together Validation Balanced work/social life Create more own art Fulfilment Increased subject (Design) knowledge Masters studies Travel more |

Table 4.3 Summary of River of Life data

4.6 Analysis of total findings

The data collected from both the individual interviews and the ROL narratives were transcribed, analysed and coded, and comparisons were drawn between the three participants' experiences. Descriptive codes were used to summarize the collective data from the interviews and ROL, which enabled a synthesis and the identification of themes, by considering repetition, use of metaphors and analogies, and similarities and differences (Ryan & Bernard, 2003:89-92). Themes come both from data, as well as an investigator's prior theoretical understanding of the phenomenon under study (p. 88). I will, therefore, discuss the data in conjunction with the literature on novice art teacher experiences.

Zimmerman's (1994) study of 20 pre-service art teachers, identified challenges that included issues with discipline, flexibility, individualizing the curriculum, communicating information, clean-up, using visuals, telling stories, time constraints, and evaluation (p. 62). Similar challenges were identified in my own research which relates to the novice art teachers' ability to manage discipline, being flexible (i.e. taking on multiple job responsibilities), evaluation, and time constraints that related to heavy workload and influenced the participants' well-being. In her research on pre-service art teachers, Kowalchuk (1999:81) asked participants to reflect on their experiences by means of written tasks. Similar categories to my own study were identified within the participants' reflections, such as classroom management; instructional strategies; art content; motivating learners; planning lessons; and the politics of teaching. Other major challenges emerging from, specifically, art teachers' tales through research done in Israel by Cohen-Evron (2002:79) include a feeling of isolation, having to negotiate the status of art, and conflicts with the educational system. The participants in my study also reported feeling isolated, and in one participant's case, felt like the principal did not support art in the school. These challenges were echoed in research by Anhorn (2008), who reported on novice art teachers who faced difficult work assignments, unclear expectations, inadequate resources, isolation, role conflict and reality shock (p. 15). In terms of resources, one participant in my study had access to technology that enhanced his art teaching experience with the learners, yet the other two participants commented substantially on the lack of resources (financial as well as art materials). Stress was an issue that came up a lot during my discussions with all three novice art teacher participants in this study. Kuster *et al.* (2010) acknowledge that one of the most common challenges that novice art teachers reported on was balancing time and energy. This was also reported on by one participant during the ROL session: The ideal of having a more balanced work-social life. Not only is it difficult and time-consuming to plan meaningful lessons, the respondents in the study by Kuster *et al.* also commented on all the

extra tasks they were required to do that made them feel overwhelmed and exhausted (p. 48). Overwhelmed and exhausted was exactly what one of the participant's in my study was feeling. She reported on the difficulties she experienced having to teach more than one subject (Visual Art and Afrikaans), being the subject-head of Afrikaans, and her workload increasing because of extra tasks she had to complete because of an incompetent colleague. The same participant's challenges in motivating learners, and taking over from someone else, is echoed in Kuster *et al.* (2010) research where they reported on novice teachers' feelings of frustration that accompanied comments relating to learners' disinterest in classroom activities. Some respondents noted that this improved as they made personal connections with the learners, but this took continual attention, energy and a building of trust throughout the year (p. 48).

The reported successes from the study by Kuster *et al.* (2010) included building trust and a sense of community. Not only did the novice teachers feel strongly about connecting with the learners, but they also felt it important to facilitate long-term change in their learners' perspectives. Secondly, was the pride that each respondent felt through the dialogue about art that they could facilitate within their classrooms, as well as the wider school community. Thirdly, the respondents reported feeling that they were making a difference in the lives of their learners and lastly was the opportunity for these novice art teachers to showcase high-quality artworks by the learners (p. 50-51). All three reported successes from the Kuster, *et al.* study relate to similar success that the participants in my study experienced. Schlichte, Yssel, and Merbler (2005) also conducted interviews with five novice teachers concerning their first-year experience and their findings focused on the importance of relationships with others in the school context. They found that one participant's success was as a result of these supportive relationships (with co-workers, administration staff, learners etc.). Zimmerman (1994) also reported on the support and encouragement that the novice teachers in the study received from their mentors. Although the participants in my own study did not have mentors, they experienced similar support and encouragement from either a colleague or, more specifically, the WCED visual art subject advisor during their initial teaching years.

Through interpretive analysis of the interview and ROL data, six themes were identified as being the main areas where novice art teacher experienced successes and/or challenges, namely their relationships with various groups within the organisation (i.e. colleagues, management, learners, and parents); availability of teaching resources; pedagogical tools (teaching skills); classroom management; workload; and personal wellbeing.

| | Research objectives | | | |
|-----------------------------|---|---|-----------------|-------------------------|
| | Successes | Challenges | Support | |
| | | | Positive | Negative |
| Relationships | Connections Principal (resignation) | Parents Lack of communication Principal Judgement School politics | Colleagues | Colleagues Principal |
| Resources | Technology | Resources | | Principal |
| Pedagogical tools | Drawing skills | Planning Assessment Inclusive teaching Knowing the learners Difficult subject to teach | Subject advisor | PGCE |
| Classroom management | Motivating learners | Discipline Class sizes Taking over from someone Language barrier | | Principal |
| Workload | | Workload Hard work Responsibilities Multitasking Remuneration | | |
| Well-being | Job satisfaction Confidence Self-reliance and pride | Insecurity No time for own creations Stress Isolation Opportunities elsewhere Lack of opportunities for growth Uncertain future Teaching ideals ≠ reality Dissatisfaction | | |

Table 4.4 Themes developed from data

4.7 Interpretation of total findings

The theoretical perspectives of Kelchterman (1993; 1994; 1999), namely the narrative-biographical perspective and the micro-political perspective, were used to further interpret

the findings. In the narrative-biographical perspective, Kelchtermans, 1993 emphasise the subjective meaning that beginning teachers give to their career experiences. To understand the interaction between the beginning teacher and the school as an organisation, they used the micro-political approach (Ball, 1987, 1994; Blase, 1997), paying special attention to the different interests that determine the thoughts and actions of the organisation members. According to Findlay (2006), the micro-political perspective:

“considers the power relations within the context of the school and the extent to which novice teachers are required to conform to existing practices...They enter this context with a developing sense of who they are (professional self) and how they want to teach (subjective educational theory), which may or may not be accommodated by the school (p. 516)”.

When considering the data, the novice teacher participants' identities as educators and their subjective educational theories were strongly rooted in their biographical narratives, i.e. the participants' own descriptions and first-person perspectives about their main experiences as novice teachers, along with the influence of micro-political perspectives shaped by their experiences within their organisations i.e. schools. The combination of these perspectives, make up the total account of the participants' experiences, whether positive or negative.

A lot of the data collected from the participants, referred to pedagogical skills that, usually, one expects to exist because of their education i.e. skills you learn during teacher training. It was, therefore, surprising to find that a lot of the challenges that novice teachers faced, were with aspects of teaching such as assessments, planning, inclusivity, and establishing the learners' knowledge base.

Other participant experiences were directly related to the organisational environment (e.g. school, art centre). For example, the relationships with colleagues, availability of resources, classroom management, and the teaching workload. Although classroom management usually forms part of teacher training, in the case of the participants, it related to the school because of the lack of support from management (in dealing with disciplinary issues), along with large classes and language barriers which exists because of the school profile. All these reported successes, challenges and support stem from the working environment they enter as a beginner teacher, while having their own sense of professional self and subjective educational theory. Challenges arise when the school cannot/does not accommodate the novice teacher's sense of self and how they want to teach. One example of this can be seen in some of the participants' commitment to the

subject, only to be met with resistance and an unsupportive environment for visual art which can be seen in the mismanagement of art budgets and the lack of resources.

The last category, namely personal well-being, seemed to exist because of all the above. Pedagogical skills attained (or not attained) during teacher training, along with experiences that come from their working environment, all determined the state of the participants' well-being. Unfortunately, the participant's accounts of their well-being were more negative than positive. The participants generally felt more stressed, lonely, and dissatisfied, than confident and proud. This was evident in both the interviews, as well as the ROL drawings. In terms of support, the data suggests that very little is currently being done by school management teams to effectively support novice art teachers. No formal induction programmes were offered to any of the participants, nor a formal mentoring system. Participants were supported through the informal relationships with colleagues and most importantly, by the WCED subject advisor. It was evident that the support from the latter was the only assistance that enhanced their initial teaching experience.

Positive experiences that specifically relate to art/art education were the connections the participants made with individual learners; their own ability to make art that earned them the respect of the learners as an art teacher; the support from the WCED visual art subject advisor and in some cases having the latest technology and other resources to effectively teach art. Challenges that specifically relate to art/art education were loneliness; lack of time to make own art; a lack of support for the arts that resulted in the participants not receiving adequate facilities and resources to teach art effectively; mismanagement of art funds; and art classrooms in dire need of maintenance.

Combining a narrative-biographical and a micropolitical approach, the idea that teachers' actions as members of an organisation are guided by professional interests had a central place in the study. Interests were conceived of as "desired working conditions" (Kelchtermans & Ballet, 1999). I, therefore, offered an inverted version of the research question to get a slightly different perspective on the matter. During the ROL, I posed the question: What factors will contribute to the participants' success as art teachers in the future. This question allowed the exploration of micro-political actions, which are "demarcated as aiming to establish, safeguard and restore the desired working conditions" (Findlay, 2006:516). By reporting on what novice teachers need or simply, would like, to have more successful and satisfying teaching experiences, one can infer from it what they currently find challenging or where they still need appropriate support. Some examples of

factors that would enhance the participants' current teaching experiences are supportive principals; more time to pursue further studies and the making of art; a more prominent role within the school's organisational setup; a balanced work/social life etc. The significance of the reported "wish list" as indicated in Table 4.4, is for the higher education council, tertiary education institutions, subject advisors, schools, and art centres to establish what kind of support novice art teachers need and establish how these specific needs can be met within each organisation.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

5.1 Summary of findings

It was evident from the data that the participants' experiences within their first three years of teaching art at a high school and/or art centre, consisted of both positive and negative experiences. These experiences were all rooted firmly in the perspectives set out by Kelchtermans (1999) namely professional identity and ideals about teaching (*narrative biographical perspective*), as well as the role of their school environment (*micro-political perspective*). Unfortunately, the challenges faced by novice art teachers outweigh the positive experiences.

Some of the more positive experiences that all three participants had from a professional point of view during their first teaching years were the sharing the burdens of work with colleagues; job satisfaction; feeling a sense of pride and self-reliance; making connections with individual learners and support from colleagues. The participants in this research also faced numerous challenges such as multitasking to a degree that led to stress; issues with planning and assessment; taking over from another teacher; dealing with parents; managing disciplinary issues; teaching with an inclusive approach; feelings of insecurity as a teacher; troublesome experiences in the PGCE course; dealing with stress; the heavy workload that hinders a balanced social life; judgement from people; feelings of inadequacy; conflict with principals; disciplinary procedures that were not effective or supportive; a lack of communication from the schools; internal school politics and classes exceeding acceptable number of learners.

5.2 Implications for art education

Minimal research has been done concerning the experiences of novice teachers in South Africa. One study, entitled *Beginner Teachers in South African Schools: Readiness, Knowledge, and Skills*, was conducted by the South African Human Sciences Research Council at 340 schools in five provinces in 2006 (Arendse & Phurutse, 2009). The five provinces, Western Cape, Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, Mpumalanga and Free State were selected as previous research indicated that more teachers were hired in these provinces. The study was prompted by concern that a high number of teachers leave the profession in South Africa within the first five years, while the number of teachers who resign before they are 30 is significantly higher than the number who resign after reaching this age (*The*

Mail & Guardian, 19 May 2009). This can be attributed to several factors, including poor support from official structures, unattractive remuneration and working conditions and the 'difficulties faced in the transition from trainee to practicing teachers. No significant research has been done to specifically investigate the support and challenges of novice visual art teachers.

By exploring the experiences of novice art teachers in the Western Cape in this thesis, teaching institutions, the education department, and school administrators can begin to understand the experiences of novice art teachers and start employing effective support systems that will sustain novice art teachers during their first three years of teaching and hopefully, retain more of our quality art teachers. The challenges, especially, that novice art teachers experience (Fig.5c) – whether applicable to all novice teachers in general or more subject specific – need to be used as a guide to design various support systems that might improve novice teacher's experiences. Art specific challenges of a biographical nature, namely feelings of isolation; no time for own creations; and finding visual art a demanding and difficult subject to teach, are experiences that are of a more personal nature and not always possible to address from an organisational standpoint. Art related challenges such as the lack of resources; limited space and facilities; and the PGCE course not being of adequate support to pre-service art teachers, might be issues that role players such as tertiary training institutions, places of employment (schools, art centres, etc.), and the WCED can directly address.

Research also suggests that effective induction programs can support beginning teachers and enhance teacher retention (Chubbuck, Clift, Allard, & Quinlan, 2001; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). This, together with resources; adequate facilities and space; and proper art teacher training, will not only enhance novice art teachers' initial teaching experience but promote a greater success rate in terms of learner performance and teacher well-being, which in turn will improve novice teacher retention.

5.3 Recommendations

Attrition rates have remained relatively stable over the last two decades (Ingersoll & Smith, 2004). The overall stability in attrition rates may be due to induction programs being unavailable to 20% of new teachers (Ingersoll & Smith, 2004) or the induction programs that are offered may be inconsistent in quality or may not be configured to respond to the unique needs of individual teachers (Fry, 2007). Reducing attrition can decrease shortages

of highly qualified teachers (Harrell, Leavell, van Tassell & McKee, 2004), resulting in both enhanced student achievement (Wong, 2004) and higher levels of cost-effectiveness for the schools (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2005). Achieving such an outcome in part through effective induction programs requires a comprehensive understanding of the needs of beginning teachers in different contexts to identify ways to provide them with better support (Fry & Anderson, 2011). Hoy (2000:2) affirms the importance of induction by stating that 'some of the most powerful influences on the development of teacher efficacy are mastery experiences during student teaching and the induction year'. The report by the South African Human Resources Research Council (Arendse & Phurutse, 2009) noted that most beginner teachers could be retained if they were offered:

- salary incentives,
- sufficient teaching and learning resources and
- well-paced educational changes.

The report called for intervention to tackle problems faced by beginner teachers, the fleshing out of teacher support programmes at school and district level, and longer periods of practical training for teacher trainees.

Teacher induction programmes in countries such as the US, China, Japan, Australia, Canada, Germany, Belgium, Britain, France, Ireland, Norway, Switzerland, Korea (Howe, 2006), Cyprus, Estonia, Ireland, the Netherlands, Scotland and Norway (European Commission, 2010), underscore the significance of providing support to novice teachers to attract better candidates; reduce attrition; improve job satisfaction; enhance professional development and improve teaching and learning. In these countries, there is recognition that the time spent in schools during practicum is not nearly adequate to prepare students to become effective teachers. As such, new teachers, after graduating from university or college, work closely with an experienced and competent teacher (mentor) for a specified period of time to become acquainted with the school system and develop enough confidence and expertise to be able to handle their own classes effectively – this avoids the sink or swims situation new teachers are often faced with when there are no support programmes in their early years of teaching (Human Resource Development Council, 2014:20).

A key feature of school-based teacher education is the mentor, and the importance of mentoring in teacher education has long been established (Hayes, 2001; Tang & Choi, 2005). In 2014, the Western Cape Primary Science Programme (PSP) received the Global

Best award for science, technology, engineering and maths in Africa from the International Education Business Partnership Network (IPN) (*SA People News*, 17 Nov 2014). PSP is a non-profitable organisation with over 30-years' experience in the field that develops the professional competence and expertise of primary (or elementary) school teachers in the Western Cape's poorest areas. It focuses primarily on teacher development in the subjects of natural sciences, mathematics, languages, social sciences, and environmental studies. It works with over 1 000 teachers a year, using what it calls a Joint Mentorship Programme. This model gives a two-year cycle of support for first-time teachers. The main components of the programme are training to build novice teachers' content and concept knowledge, intensive classroom mentoring and coaching to strengthen their teaching practice, and the supply of resources to enrich their teaching and learning in the classroom.

There are currently no similar programs that develop novice art teachers in South Africa even though the "foundational skills in areas such as mathematics, science, language, the arts, and ethics are essential components of a good education system" (Human Resources Development Council, 2014:12).

5.4 Conclusion

Verbal narratives of positive experiences relating specifically to art education, like participants making connections with individual learners; their own ability to make art that earned them the respect of the learners as an art teacher; the support from the WCED visual art subject advisor and in some cases having the latest technology and other resources, were recorded with great satisfaction and hope for future art teachers.

Looking specifically at the challenges that novice art teachers face professionally, personally and within their school environments, the data shows that the challenges clearly outweighed any positive experiences that novice art teachers have during their first three years of teaching art. It is also evident that there is a lack of effective support conducted by schools and/or art centres for novice art teachers. Challenges that specifically relate to art / art education are loneliness; lack of time to make own art; a lack of support for the arts that resulted in the participants not receiving adequate facilities and resources to teach art effectively; mismanagement of art funds and art classrooms in dire need of maintenance, are some of the challenges and requirements of novice art teachers that need to be adhered to.

In terms of support, the data suggests that very little is currently being done by school management teams to effectively support novice teachers in general. Novice art teachers not only receive minimal or no support from school management, but they also experience a general lack of support for art as a subject within some high schools. No formal induction programmes were offered to any of the participants, nor a formal mentoring system. Participants were supported through the informal relationships with colleagues and most importantly, by the WCED subject advisor. It was evident that the support from the latter was the only assistance that really enhanced their initial art teaching experience.

Since the implementation of Curriculum Assessment Policy (CAPS) in 2014, the Arts and Culture subject was renamed as Creative Arts and is still a compulsory subject in the curriculum for learners up to Gr. 9. This research can serve as the foundation on which educational authorities and school management teams can design, create and implement effective induction and/or mentoring programmes which answer to the specific needs of novice art teachers by referring to the challenges documented in this research. By doing this, we can start to retain more of our art teachers to strengthen and incorporate more effective art education in our schools for the future.

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Appendix A

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ENQUIRIES: Dr A T Wyngaard

Ms Dornehl Kitching
30 Phesantekraal Street
De Bron
Bellville
7530

Dear Ms Dornehl Kitching

RESEARCH PROPOSAL: THE EXPERIENCES OF NOVICE ART TEACHERS IN HIGH SCHOOLS

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 **01 March 2015 till 30 June 2015**
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: 17 September 2014

Appendix B



2015

M Ed

The experiences of novice art teachers in high schools (art centres included)

I hereby confirm that I am participating in the research on novice art teachers of my own free will. The research has been fully explained to me and I understand that participation in the research cannot be detrimental in any way.

I agree to the interview being recorded. I also understand that I have the right to ask for the recording equipment to be turned off at any time during the interview.

The data that is collected through this research will be treated as confidential and my results will be known only to me, or will otherwise be anonymous. I can ask questions or approach the researcher at any time if I experience problems during the course of the research.

I agree to participate in this research under the conditions set out for me. I am free to withdraw from the research at any stage.

Signed.....

Name:

Date:

Appendix C



2015

M Ed

The experiences of novice art teachers in high schools (art centres included)

I hereby confirm that I am participating in the research on novice art teachers of my own free will. The research has been fully explained to me and I understand that participation in the research cannot be detrimental in any way.

I agree to the visual narrative (River of Life drawing) and the accompanied recording to be used in the thesis. I also understand that I have the right to ask the interviewer to exclude any information that might be of a sensitive / harmful nature.

The data that is collected through this research will be treated as confidential and my results will be known only to me, or will otherwise be anonymous. I can ask questions or approach the researcher at any time if I experience problems during the course of the research.

I agree to participate in this research under the conditions set out for me. I am free to withdraw from the research at any stage.

Signed.....

Name:

Date: