

**EDUCATIONAL JOURNEYS OF FOUNDATION PHASE TEACHERS  
IN THE CONTEXT OF CURRICULUM CHANGE**

**BY  
INDRANI MOODLEY  
STUDENT NO.: 921306622**

**SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS  
FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF EDUCATION – TEACHER  
DEVELOPMENT STUDIES (TDS) IN THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION  
AND DEVELOPMENT, FACULTY OF EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY OF  
KWAZULU-NATAL, DURBAN, EDGEWOOD CAMPUS**

**DATE: JANUARY 2016**

**SUPERVISOR: DR. DAISY PILLAY**

## DECLARATION

I, Indrani Moodley, declare that

- i) The research reported in this dissertation, except where otherwise indicated is my original work.
- ii) This dissertation has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.
- iii) This dissertation does not contain other person's data, pictures, graphs, or other information, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other persons.
- iv) This dissertation does not contain other person's writing, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other researchers. Where other written sources have been quoted then:
  - a) Their words have been re-written but the general information attributed to them has been referenced;
  - b) Where their exact words have been used, their writing has been placed inside quotation marks and referenced.
- v) This dissertation does not contain text, graphics or tables copied and pasted from the internet, unless specifically acknowledged, and the source being detailed in the dissertation and in the References section.

Signed .....

# ETHICAL CLEARANCE



12 October 2012

Mrs Indrani Moodley 921306622  
School of Education  
Edgewood Campus

Dear Mrs Moodley

Protocol reference number: HSS/1044/012M

Project title: Educational journeys of Foundation Phase teachers in the context of curriculum change

## EXPEDITED APPROVAL

I wish to inform you that your application has been granted Full Approval through an expedited review process.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number. Please note: Research data should be securely stored in the school/department for a period of 5 years.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully

Professor Steven Collings (Chair)

/px

cc Supervisor Dr G Pillay  
cc Academic leader Dr D Davids  
cc School Admin. Mrs S Naicker

Professor S Collings (Chair)  
Humanities & Social Sc Research Ethics Committee  
Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building

Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban, 4000, South Africa

Telephone: +27 (0)31 260 3587/8350 Facsimile: +27 (0)31 260 4609 Email: ximbap@ukzn.ac.za / snymanm@ukzn.ac.za

Founding Campuses: ■ Edgewood ■ Howard College ■ Medical School ■ Pietermaritzburg ■ Westville

INSPIRING GREATNESS



## **SUPERVISOR'S AUTHORISATION**

This dissertation is submitted with / without my approval.

.....  
Dr. G. Pillay

## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to my first grandchild, Yeshasvi Muthiyalu, who has brought light into our lives and whom, I trust, will benefit from this and similar research which is aimed at improving the education and future of children.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I acknowledge the assistance, support, encouragement, critique and perseverance of the following persons:

The participants in my study

My supervisor, Dr Daisy Pillay

My critical friends who took the journey with me to obtain the Masters in Education

My friends and fellow colleagues

My family

## ABSTRACT

*This thesis presents an understanding of the experiences and negotiation of curriculum changes by Foundation Phase Teachers in three urban primary schools in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal. In documenting the stories of three Foundation Phase teachers lived experiences of the various curriculum changes, I was able to get glimpses into their personal- professional lives.*

*The study is located within the qualitative mode of inquiry in the interpretivist paradigm and the Narrative Inquiry method was used to help me understand and interpret the experiences and development of Foundation Phase teachers in the context of curriculum change. In the absence of support strategies and processes by the externally driven professional development programmes to support teachers emotionally and psychologically, I used Dale and James' (2013) discussion on "affective containment" to understand Foundation Phase teachers' emotional and psychological tensions in educational reform. Illeris (2009) is used to understand how the containment of Foundation Phase teachers' feelings, moods and tensions during the change process is necessary for providing the incentive for learning and effective functioning of teachers. I used Bell and Gilbert's Model on Teacher Development to understand how learning happened for Foundation Phase teachers on the personal, social and professional levels.*

*The study contributes to our understanding of how the lack of containment of feelings on the personal levels may have led to tensions, anxiety and stress for Foundation Phase teachers. This study also reflects on teacher training and development which may not have considered the emotions and feelings of teachers in the change process. New curriculum changes created a need for Foundation Phase teachers to re-professionalise and reskill themselves to enable them to implement the reforms in their classrooms. However, the findings revealed that the cascade model actually led to the de-*

*professionalisation of teachers which demotivated and frustrated them. Personal and professional learning experiences of Foundation Phase teachers are built on commitment and reflection of their professional practices through self-initiated learning within contextualised communities of practice.*



## TABLE OF CONTENT

Declaration .....	i
Ethical clearance .....	ii
Supervisors' authorization .....	iii
Dedication .....	iv
Acknowledgements .....	v
Abstract .....	vi
Table of Content.....	viii
CHAPTER ONE .....	1
INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW .....	1
Introduction.....	1
Why the need for this study?.....	3
• Policy Imperatives.....	3
• Contextual considerations .....	7
Focus and purpose of the study.....	9
Research Questions .....	11
Research Context .....	11
The Methodological approach .....	12
Organisation of the thesis.....	13
CHAPTER TWO .....	15
LITERATURE REVIEW .....	15
Introduction .....	15
SECTION A.....	15
Introduction.....	15
Curriculum .....	15
Curriculum Change .....	16
Tensions of curriculum change in the South African context.....	18
SECTION B .....	21
Introduction .....	21
Teacher-learning and professional development .....	22
Teacher-learning: Theories of learning.....	23
	viii

How learning happens.....	26
Conclusion .....	26
CHAPTER THREE.....	28
METHODOLOGY.....	28
Introduction .....	28
SECTION A.....	29
Research Methodology: Why Narrative inquiry? .....	29
Qualitative research.....	31
Research Context and Research Participants .....	32
SECTION B .....	34
Data production and generation .....	34
Messiness of fieldwork .....	36
Research design.....	36
SECTION C .....	37
Analysing the data.....	37
Personal Development .....	38
Social Development .....	39
Professional development .....	40
Possible Limitations and Challenges of the study .....	42
Trustworthiness.....	43
Conclusion .....	43
CHAPTER FOUR.....	44
NIMI’S, NADINE’S AND SYLVIA’S LIVED EXPERIENCES OF CURRICULUM CHANGE .....	44
Introduction .....	44
NIMI’S NARRATIVE: “REINVENTING MYSELF” .....	44
Teaching is teaching.....	45
Fumbling in the dark .....	46
It was not a train-smash .....	47
We need support.....	48
NADINE’S NARRATIVE: “CAN’T WAIT TO OPT OUT” .....	49
My passion has died .....	50
Bring back the 3 R’s.....	50
We are going nowhere .....	51
Drowning in the deep end .....	52
It’s a back-breaking job.....	53
Doing the best we can .....	53

SILVIA’S NARRATIVE: “MY JOURNEY THROUGH CHANGE” .....	55
Teaching was a calling .....	55
Change needs to be piloted .....	56
We are fighting a losing battle .....	57
Dealing with classroom challenges .....	58
What teachers go through .....	58
I do what is necessary .....	59
Conclusion .....	60
CHAPTER FIVE.....	61
ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE STORIED NARRATIVES .....	61
Introduction.....	61
SECTION ONE: What are Foundation Phase teachers’ personal and professional experiences in the context of curriculum change?.....	63
Introduction.....	63
PSYCHOLOGICAL AND EMOTIONAL TENSIONS.....	65
PROFESSIONAL TENSIONS .....	70
Conclusion to Section One.....	79
SECTION TWO: How are Foundation Phase teachers negotiating their personal and professional experiences in the context of curriculum change? .....	80
Introduction.....	80
(a) The personal domain.....	82
(b) The social domain.....	87
(c) The professional domain.....	91
Conclusion to Section Two .....	94
Conclusion .....	94
CHAPTER SIX.....	96
CONCLUDING CHAPTER.....	96
Introduction.....	96
Context of study.....	96
Methodological Reflections .....	97
Foundation Phase Teachers’ personal and professional experiences in the context of curriculum change .....	99
Foundation Phase teachers negotiating their personal and professional experiences in the context of curriculum change.....	101
Theoretical reflections.....	104
Practice Reflections.....	104
Policy Reflections .....	105

Suggestions for further research .....	106
Conclusion .....	107
REFERENCES.....	108
APPENDIX 1: Request for school principal’s permission to conduct research at his/ her School .....	126
APPENDIX 2: Request for consent of intended participant.....	128
APPENDIX 3: Consent form of participant in research .....	129
List of abbreviations.....	xii
List of figures .....	xiii
List of tables.....	xiv

## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

*C2005- Curriculum 2005*

*CAPS – Curriculum and Assessment and Policy Statement*

*NCS - National Curriculum Statement*

*OBE - Outcomes Based Education*

*RNCS – Revised National Curriculum Statement*

*DBE- Department of Basic Education*

*DOE – Department of Education*

*S A – South Africa*

*KZN – KwaZulu-Natal*

*GET – General Education and Training*

## **LIST OF FIGURES**

Figure 1: Life Lessons

Figure 2: Critical Question 1 Concept Mapping

Figure 3: Critical Question 2 Concept Mapping

Figure 4: Nimi's Collage

Figure 5: Nadine's Collage

Figure 6 :Sylvia's Collage

## **LIST OF TABLES**

Table 1: Profile of Participants

Table 2: Narrative Inquiry Research Design

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

### **Introduction**

I am a Foundation Phase teacher. As a young Indian girl, having grown up in a traditional Indian working class family during the apartheid era in the 60's, I did not have many career options other than teaching and nursing. I grew up in a family of five siblings of whom I am the second eldest. We lived in a little rural village, Kearsney, about five kilometres on the outskirts of the town of Stanger (now known as KwaDukuza) in KwaZulu-Natal (formerly known as Natal).

Kearsney was a place known for sugar farming and tea plantations. My father did not own any land and his work as a handyman earned just enough to sustain the very basic needs of our family. My mother was not highly educated but attempted to supplement the family income also through working, although payment was low. Her primary motivation was that we children have a more prosperous and easier life than her own through better education. She tried to ensure, therefore, that all our needs as school-going children were met, that my siblings and I attended school regularly and that we were studious.

My father was seen as the head of the household. He set the rules for us girls as housekeepers and we had to complete all household chores and garden work before commencing our school homework. Our parents reminded us often, "No matter what degree you have, in life you still need to know how to cook and how to wash the pots". This left a lasting impression on me and enabled me to merge my career with other important aspects of life.



I also fondly remember my primary school principal. He did not actually teach us any formal lessons but when a teacher was absent he found this an opportune time to take us out of the classroom and read fairy tales to us under the shade of the beautiful tall gum and ‘gwanja’ trees. The ‘gwanja’ trees as we came to know them as little children bore lovely red fleshy fruit which we enjoyed eating on our way to and from school. I remember very well the moral of many a story that my principal read and explained to us under the ‘gwanja’ trees. The principal treated every one of us with love and care, even those who were naughty. He prayed for the naughty learners in his office instead of using ‘the cane’.



*Figure 1: Life lessons*

My career choice and values in life were undoubtedly influenced by my life experiences, especially those that occurred in my early life while growing up in Kearsney in the 60's. As a primary school learner I experienced the best years of my life and, consequently, choosing to

become a Foundation Phase teacher was obvious for me. Like my school principal, I love stories, love learners and put emphasis on teaching values to them. I agree with White (2009, p. 863) that teacher-identities are “formed within cultural and institutional contexts”. Becoming a teacher also meant that I could fulfill my responsibility as a woman, housewife and a teacher because of the working hours and school holidays.

This love and desire for teaching young children has prompted me to ask, as a practicing teacher, whether teachers’ passion for learners and learning still happens in the context of the multiple and rapid curriculum changes in post-apartheid South Africa. I wanted to find out, from their personal perspectives, what challenges these teachers experienced with the changes and how they negotiated the changes. This led to my study wherein I wanted to research the effects of curriculum change on Foundation Phase teachers by listening to their personal narratives as part of a narrative inquiry research.

### **Why the need for this study?**

- ***Policy Imperatives***

There is general consensus that post-apartheid curricula changes were policy driven. The introduction of Curriculum 2005 (C2005), which saw the advent of Outcome-Based Education (OBE) in South Africa, was a consequence of the political shifts in South Africa. OBE was introduced to redress the inequalities of the past in the education sphere and to promote advancement in the socio-economic sphere. C2005 (or OBE) was a major curriculum reform in South African schools emphasising the development of skills and attitudes in learners. This required teachers to change to a more complex and demanding

teaching methodology, different from the easier, transmissive one attached to teaching a fixed curriculum. Curriculum 2005 was difficult to implement, even for the most experienced teacher (Msila, 2008).

The Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) came about as a result of a review of C2005 to improve implementation (Department of Basic Education, 2009). The Revised National Curriculum Statement was amended in 2012 and a single, comprehensive Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS), was adopted (Department of Basic Education, 2011).

However, the pace and speed at which these curricula changes were introduced, as well as their complexity, may have overwhelmed teachers. As aptly put by Vandeyar and Killen (2007): “Although the policy changes were driven by the government's drive to "redress past injustices in educational provision" (Department of Education, 1996:1) they have not necessarily resulted in major changes at classroom level - some educators still apply the same pedagogical practices they used a decade ago (Vandeyar & Killen, 2003)”.

I appreciate these writers’ points of view because I had found myself in a similar situation when the curriculum changes overwhelmed me. I knew of many colleagues who had difficulty coping with the changes too, and we fell back to past practices in our teaching although this was not in line with policy imperatives. I relied on past practices that were based on what I learned during my Foundation Phase teacher training at the Springfield College of Education. This college, which Wolhuter (2006) described as a college that

trained primary and secondary school Indian teachers during the apartheid era, became operational in 1951 in Durban, Natal. At Springfield College of Education, we were trained in how to implement the fixed curriculum at school. Throughout our training, we went on practice-teaching at schools. This gave us hands-on experience in putting theory into practice. This was of immense benefit to us as students, as it gave us an opportunity of getting to know what the classroom/ school situation feels like. Despite all the training and teaching practice, entering the school as a full-time teacher was scary as you now had to take full responsibility for the learners in your class in terms of their learning and personal safety. However, the curriculum was prescribed and, as teachers, we found this structure easy to follow in terms of lesson plans and methods of teaching. Being a novice teacher, I welcomed this, because it gave me direction through which I developed confidence in the classroom. This gave me a sense of control in the classroom because I knew what to teach and also how to teach. This boosted my self-confidence that ultimately boosted the performance of my learners in my class. Nonetheless I knew that the curricula changes beginning with C2005 sought to bring in a radical shift in teaching and learning. Relying on past methods was not the desired objective.

Another consideration was the National Policy Framework for Teacher Education and Development in South Africa (2006) which was designed to equip teachers in meeting the needs of the educational shifts, specifically with regard to curriculum for a democratic South Africa. It aimed to ensure that teachers are properly equipped to undertake their essential and demanding tasks; and they are able to continually enhance their professional competence and performance. The policy reinforces what writers such as Lieberman and Pointer Mace

(2008) emphasised, namely, that teachers need to be reskilled with new knowledge and training to enable them to cope in their professional practice.

The post-apartheid education system no longer relied on a fixed curriculum or on the teacher being merely an implementer of policy. Teaching and learning became dynamic and use had to be made of learners' experiences. Different assessment methods were introduced and teachers had to be properly equipped for the change and be continually developed.

According to Jansen (2001), Samuel (2008) and Swart and Oswald (2008), teachers felt that the curricula changes made new demands on them for which they were not adequately trained. These pressures were different from those experienced during the apartheid era, when teachers found the policy demands less demanding.

The pressures brought on by curriculum changes prompted me to research the experiences of Foundation Phase teachers in post-apartheid South Africa, including the challenges brought on by the curriculum changes that caused a policy shift from implementing a curriculum that was set and fixed to a more flexible and dynamic curriculum. This included exploring how they negotiated the changes, bearing in mind that policy considerations required a shift in the way of teaching and learning from that which was applicable in apartheid education. Erden (2010) argued that teachers would fail to implement the curriculum successfully if they do not understand the rationale behind the curriculum theoretical framework and if they did not believe that the change was meaningful, workable or practically implementable.

- ***Contextual considerations***

The work of researchers and authors on South African curriculum changes primarily conceptualises the professional experiences of teachers in implementing policy. They do not focus on the personal experiences that affected these teachers emotionally and psychologically. In my study, I wanted to bridge the gap in literature between the personal and professional experiences of Foundation Phase teachers in the context of curriculum change.

Adopting change in any situation presents many challenges and consequently, the transformation of the education system affected all South African teachers in their practice. Teachers were required to reskill themselves to cope with these challenges through professional development programmes. According to Meerah, Halim, Rahman, Abdullah, Hassan and Ismail (2010), effective implementation of the curriculum required teachers to be well-trained, highly motivated and professionally competent. Collinson et al., (2009) stated that the change in education requires teachers to have a new shift in thinking and learning. Dale and James (2013) emphasised that it is important that processes and strategies are in place to support teachers' emotional and psychological well-being during the change process. Change affects the moods and emotions of teachers because they now have to give up on their tried and tested ways for new ways of teaching, learning and assessment. Effective management of emotions can help to resolve many tensions experienced during educational change. On the other hand, if teachers are not emotionally and psychologically supported by strategies and processes, they can become frustrated and demotivated and will not engage in any meaningful ways of learning (Illeris, 2009).

In my study, I wanted to explore Foundation Phase teachers' personal and professional experiences of ongoing curriculum changes and what support is available or not in promoting learning opportunities for their professional practice. I wanted to understand how Foundation Phase teachers are negotiating the curriculum changes, not only on a professional level, but also on personal and social levels, a combination found to be intricately intertwined by researchers Bell and Gilbert (1996).

It is clear that curriculum change requires teachers to shift from a current programme which they are familiar with to a new programme - and that involves changes in knowledge, actions and attitudes. I highlight in the study teacher participants' stories of lived experiences through narrative inquiry. This methodological approach offers the space for teachers' voices and their stories, as constructions of self, capture their lives in all their complexities, ambiguities and contradictions (Pillay, 2003, p. 6). I wanted to know of teachers who work in schools in one provincial district in Durban, and to generate stories of their lives, to learn from their lives what it means to think and work within perpetual change in a meaningful and contextually relevant ways – and to be actively contributing to better ways of thinking about teacher learning and development in the context of curriculum change. Through this study, I want to understand how Foundation Phase teachers affectively managed to contain their psychological and emotional tensions through the process of learning and development in the context of curriculum change.

Considering the context in which professional learning and development has taken place post democracy, I wanted to understand what and how Foundation Phase teachers acquire new

skills, values, attitudes and knowledge. I also wanted to explore the deep emotions that Foundation Phase Teachers experienced during the change process and how they came to terms with these feelings if the teaching profession became more stressful and less satisfying to them. This may assist education authorities to assess whether the objective of the National Policy Framework for Teacher Education and Development in South Africa (2006), i.e., the continual enhancement of teachers' professional competence and performance is being met from a policy perspective. It may also assist in determining whether greater emphasis needs be paid to emotional and psychological support to mitigate the impact of change on teachers.

In this study, I took a journey into the world of three Foundation Phase teachers, Nimi, Sylvia and Nadine who shared their learning experiences in the context of curriculum changes in KZN, South Africa. KZN is one of the nine provinces in South Africa.

Foundation Phase teachers play a vital role in the education of the child in the most important years of childhood development. If the teacher is unsure, lacks confidence or does not have support in solving the complex challenges, problems become unsurmountable and the learner ultimately becomes the loser. Insight into these matters could assist policymakers in the formulation of policy and in training and development of teachers.

### **Focus and purpose of the study**

The purpose of the study was to explore Foundation Phase teachers' personal and professional experiences as they negotiated ongoing curriculum change in South Africa. I explored teacher-learning as a process that facilitates specific changes through the acquisition of knowledge,



skills, attitudes and beliefs, which lead to empowerment, development and change for Foundation Phase teachers on their personal, social and professional levels.

“Teachers professional learning can be taken to represent the processes that, whether intuitive or deliberate, individual or social, result in specific changes in the professional knowledge, skills, attitudes, beliefs or actions of teachers.” (Fraser, Kennedy, Reid, & McKinney, 2007, p. 157).

Bell and Gilbert (1996) in their Model on Teacher Development also emphasised teacher-learning as a process through which teachers develop their beliefs and ideas of what it means to be a teacher. They reflect on their classroom practice and attend to their feelings and attitudes to bring about change on a personal, social and professional level. Kelly (2006, p. 506) viewed teacher-learning as “the process by which teachers move towards expertise”.

This research study wanted to understand, in meeting the challenges of ongoing curriculum change, where, what and how teacher-learning was happening for Foundation Phase teachers. Thus, the purpose of my study was to explore the experiences of Foundation Phase teachers in the context of curriculum change and how this impacts on their personal, social and professional development. Particular regard was given to Bell and Gilbert’s Model on Teacher Development in this research to explore how Foundation Phase teachers negotiate the curriculum changes. This study was to provide me with a deeper understanding of Foundation Phase teachers’ personal and professional experiences of curriculum changes and the learning and development that enabled them to negotiate their professional practice in personally meaningful ways.

## **Research Questions**

Two key research questions informed this study:

- (1) *What are Foundation Phase teachers' personal and professional experiences in the context of curriculum change?*

In regard to this question, I explored Foundation Phase teachers' personal and professional experiences of curriculum change and whether the externally driven processes provided support mechanisms to manage their feelings, moods and tensions to enhance their capacity to teach and to improve their practice.

- (2) *How are Foundation Phase teachers negotiating their personal and professional experiences in the context of curriculum change?*

I explored how Foundation Phase teachers make choices about what to learn and how to learn and with whom, to enable them to change what they do daily in their classrooms in personally meaningful ways in response to the curriculum shifts.

## **Research Context**

According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007), the field of stories and storytelling is neglected in educational research. Through my research, I explored whether memory work will give a different dimension to Foundation Phase teachers' learning when the participants recalled their memories and told their stories, as well as whether this created a certain kind of understanding about their learning.

Through this study, I enhanced my learning and development, both as a Foundation Phase teacher and as a researcher. Exposure to the experiences of other scholars, lecturers and researchers, with memory work helped to further enlighten me. This study, using narrative inquiry through memory work, was worthwhile as it helped to enhance the understanding of Foundation Phase teachers' experiences and negotiation of the curriculum change. I hope that this will help to bring about positive changes in the education system.

### **The Methodological approach**

This study was located in the interpretivist paradigm. I selected the qualitative research approach for this study because qualitative inquiry looks at the understanding and meanings people attach to their lived experiences. The methodology used for this research is narrative inquiry. Narrative inquiry is based on the participants recalling their own experiences. The researcher then writes a narrative of the experience (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). In my study, I reconstructed the lived experiences of my participants into storied narratives. From this I was able to understand Foundation Phase teachers' experiences and their negotiation of the curriculum changes. A further reason for choosing this methodology is that narrative inquiry is a very naturalistic approach that allows one to talk freely about one's life (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). This allowed me, as a researcher to understand the feelings, moods and tensions experienced by my participants in the process of curriculum changes. Through this I was also able to understand how professional knowledge, skills and values are learnt by practicing Foundation Phase teachers for their development. Shifting to Narrative Inquiry helped to understand my participants' leaning experiences through their stories. Theoretically, Narrative Inquiry would

have given a deeper understanding of their learning and development on their personal, social and professional domains.

## **Organisation of the thesis**

### Chapter One

Chapter one provides an overview of the whole study. It provides the focus and purpose of the study as well as the rationale behind it. It also presents the key research questions informing this research and a brief synopsis of the methodological approach is provided.

### Chapter Two

Chapter Two engages in scholarly debate and discussion relevant to my research topic. The conceptual framework that is used for the analysis of Foundation Phase teachers' learning experiences in the context of curriculum change is also discussed in detail.

### Chapter Three

Chapter Three presents a detailed explanation of the research design and methodology used to generate data that produced the life stories of the participants. Narrative inquiry through memory work was used to explore the lived experiences of Foundation Phase teachers. Section A presents an outline of the research design and explains the research methodology used in this study, namely, narrative inquiry. A table that shows my data collection and production is presented. Reasons for the selection of my participants and the research setting are then provided. In section B, I offer an explanation of the data production methods used in this study. Section C presents

the issues relating to the analysis of the data, ethics, trustworthiness and possible limitations of the study.

#### Chapter Four

Chapter Four offers the narratives that were created and reconstructed from the interviews and collage inquiry. The narratives provide us with an insight of their lived experiences of curriculum change, their learning and development as well as the changes that took place within themselves on a personal, social and professional level.

#### Chapter Five

This chapter presents the analysis of the narratives in respect of the two critical questions. The analysis is presented under relevant themes that were identified from the storied narratives. This chapter is divided into two sections. Section A responds to the first critical question, where Dale and James (2013) and Illeris (2009) are used to examine what the learning experiences of Foundation Phase teachers in the context of curriculum change are. Section B addresses the second critical question on how Foundation Phase teachers learn in the context of curriculum change. Bell and Gilbert's (1996) model on professional learning is used in the analysis of the data.

#### Chapter Six

This chapter presents the findings and recommendations of the study. The methodological reflections and the synthesis of the findings in response to the two critical questions are presented.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **Introduction**

In the previous chapter, I introduced the purpose and focus of my study, gave my reasons for undertaking this research study and highlighted the key research questions. This chapter is divided into two sections (Sections A and B). I examined the existing literature bearing in mind that the focus is the stories of lived educational experiences of Foundation Phase teachers in the context of curriculum changes. Section A provides a discussion on curriculum change and tensions around curriculum change. Section B includes a discussion of debates on and about teacher-learning and professional development, followed by a discussion on different learning theories that I drew on to frame my study.

#### **SECTION A**

##### ***Introduction***

This section discusses curriculum changes and the tensions of curriculum change.

##### ***Curriculum***

The curriculum may be simply defined as the formal academic programme provided by a school as reflected in subjects on the time-table, which may also refer to a particular course of instruction or a syllabus (Gultig, Hoadley, & Jansen, 2002). Curriculum is all the learning planned and guided by the school, whether it is carried on in groups or individually, inside or outside the school (Kelly, 1983). In other words the curriculum is a guided programme of learning conducted by schools. Eisner (2006), Green (2008), Pinar (2009) and Reid (2012)

suggested that the world is complex which involves intuitive forms of thinking and behaviour. They therefore argued that curriculum is not constant and it cannot be planned precisely. This implies constant adaptation by teachers to stay relevant in teaching any curriculum, irrespective of changes and hurdles.

### ***Curriculum Change***

The post- apartheid transformation of the school education system aimed at bringing equity in the education of learners irrespective of race and other divisive elements. Prior to this there were in existence separate and unequal policies on education which were based on racial lines. The ruling minority formally designated as the White population in the country, enjoyed preference over the rest of the population, the so-called non-Whites. This was entrenched in a variety of ways, including legislation based on racial segregation, such as the Education and Training Act, 1979. The effects were, for example, the funding of education was not equal for the population groups, the content of the curriculum was slanted to White supremacy by distortions of historical facts, recognition of the culture and traditions of non-Whites was limited in the specified teaching curriculum, education promoted only Christian values and no emphasis was paid to providing sufficient numbers of qualified teachers to teach non-Whites (one-third of the teachers were unqualified). These are all well-known aspects of the apartheid rule covered in writing by various historians and authors such as Clark and Worger (2004) and Giliomee (2009).

The shift in government policy and practices after the election of the first-ever fully democratic government in South Africa in 1994 saw a process of change aimed at rectifying the imbalances of the past. The education transformation process had to be facilitated by new structures and

policies (Donald, Lazarus, & Lolwana, 2002). Curriculum 2005 (OBE) was introduced from Grades 1 to 9 in the General Education and Training (GET) band. The subsequent Revised National Curriculum (RNCS) was developed in the General Education band which made schooling for all learners compulsory, followed by the present Curriculum and Assessment Policy (CAPS). These changes shifted the emphasis to skills, values and attitudes as opposed to the traditional content-based curriculum (Harley & Wedekind, 2004; Maphalala, 2006).

The knowledge of what to teach and how to teach is a complex process in response to changing circumstances, such as when better teaching methods are researched and discovered, and content becomes dated by shifts in world trends, or, as in the case of South Africa, by the political change that provided for inclusive education in a non-racial society. In looking at curriculum change and why it is necessary, it must be borne in mind that, ultimately, the target and beneficiary is the pupil, learner or student (Department of Basic Education, 2009). For teachers, curriculum changes mean a substantial change in their instructional practice. Since what teachers do in their classrooms depends largely on their knowledge, teachers need to engage in relevant and appropriate learning and development to be able to enact reform-based curriculum (Borko & Putnam, 1996; Wallace & Loudon, 1998).

Teachers, like their learners, will need support and professional development to cope with the curriculum changes. As Shulman (1997) reiterated, learners' knowledge is dependent on increase in teachers' knowledge.



### ***Tensions of curriculum change in the South African context***

The following have been selected and identified as some of the tensions of curriculum change relevant to the focus of this study:

#### *Implementation of policy: Top- down approach in the implementation of curriculum changes*

In the political rush to bring about reform in education, teachers' voices, opinions and concerns were neglected (Hargreaves, 1994). Changes were imposed without being well thought-out, which affected the morale and motivation of teachers. Msila (2008) attributed the low morale and demotivation of teachers to inadequate consultation of teachers by policymakers. Teachers, he argued, were not part of the policy making decisions regarding curriculum changes. This inadequate consultation with teachers by policy makers created problems in the implementation process (Msila, 2008). This led to the situation that South Africa had excellent educational policies but had no knowledge about implementation.

For many teachers, the implementation of the curriculum in a top-down bureaucratic manner resembled the apartheid education in schools, as teachers were not part of the implementation process (Christie, 1999). As Collinson, et al. (2009) stated, participation of teachers in policy-making leads to better understandings of the implementation of educational policies in schools. Lack of teachers' participation leads to them feeling isolated and alone in their practices since they do not have a voice in decisions that impact on their teaching (Bell & Gilbert, 1996; Franzak, 2002). It is for this reason that South African teachers' experienced their responsibility within this changing landscape as implementers rather than formulators of policies (Carrim, 2003). The involvement of teachers in school reform was crucial to bringing about a change in

their professional practice (Craig, Kraft, & du Plessis, 1998). This is critical to the focus of this study.

*Lack of training and inadequate support in the implementation process*

The previous education system which was dominated by a linear, one-way process where the teacher imparted knowledge to the child, thus guiding the child to adulthood (Msila, 2008) was problematic within the changing normative framework within which teachers work. Initiatives driven by democratic principles, post-apartheid, aimed to change this oppressive structure to one where all are lifelong learners, seeking to become confident, literate, numerate, multi-skilled and compassionate with a respect for the environment and the ability to participate in society as a critical and active citizen (Department of Education, 2002). Thus the curriculum, methods of teaching and other facets of teaching pedagogy had to change from the previous system.

According to Jansen (2003) and Parker and Adler (2005), the South African government constructed time frames for the development and implementation of the new curriculum which created various challenges for teacher education and development. As a result, the changes were rushed and teachers were not ready early enough to understand and implement the changes.

The changing nature of teachers' work brought huge challenges in terms of work overload, work intensity and time management (Hargreaves, 1994). Teachers were faced with "issues that relate to high failure rates" (Moletsane, 2004, p. 202) and also issues around policy changes and curriculum transformation (Pithouse, 2004; Samuel, 2008). These teachers had to also teach in new ways for which they were not properly trained (Lieberman & Pointer Mace, 2008).

South African Foundation Phase teachers found themselves, like all other teachers, incapacitated and inadequate, and in need of appropriate and relevant development to cope with the transformation of the schooling programme. The rapid transformation of the curriculum, together with large classes, increased workload and the effects of ineffective training was overwhelming to teachers, leading to Foundation Phase teachers' feelings of frustration, stress and anxiety. An increase in accountability to parents and administrators also put teachers further under pressure. This had relevance for my study which explored how Foundation Phase teachers, who were under a lot of physical and mental strain despite their teacher training and years of experience, felt inadequate to respond to the call by policy makers.

Facilitators at workshops merely implemented policy, much to the frustration of the teachers who attended. Teachers got frustrated when, even after attending the workshops, they were unable to use the curriculum materials to improve their practice (Bell & Gilbert, 1996). Inadequate training forced Foundation Phase teachers to teach in ways in which they were experienced. Craig et al., (1998) conceded that many teachers "teach how they were taught". Wilson and Berne (1999) in support of teachers, argued that just changing the curriculum does not lead to a change in teaching practice. This seems to correlate to Shulman's (1997) and Bell and Gilbert's (1996) views that in order for teachers to be effective in their practice, they need to develop their pedagogical and curriculum knowledge on a continual basis.

Whilst there were some teachers who found ways to embrace and negotiate the changes, many remained demotivated and could not meet the demands made on them. In other words, some teachers could adapt to the changes, resulting in learning and development taking place for them,

but others found adapting to change difficult and stressful. After teaching for many years, Foundation Phase teachers suddenly felt out of control in their classrooms because they now had to teach in new ways for which they were not trained. Harley and Wedekind (2004, p. 200) referred to this as a “mismatch between what teachers trained for and the demands of their practice”.

Foundation Phase teachers found themselves requiring ongoing professional development to cope with curriculum changes relevant to their professional practice. Teacher development programmes according to Bell and Gilbert (1994, p. 488), were supposed to provide teachers with teaching strategies to address their competencies in the class and attend to feelings of inadequacy. However, the workshops attended by the Foundation Phase teachers were found to be “a waste of time”. This lack of support and processes led to inadequate training which made teaching for Foundation Phase teachers difficult. This once-off, top-down cascading model of professional development for South African Foundation Phase teachers is critical to understanding how the teacher participants in this study managed to propel themselves out of this dilemma to improve their thinking, planning and actions in the classroom.

## **SECTION B**

### ***Introduction***

In this section a brief discussion of teacher-learning and professional development is presented. This is followed by a discussion on how Foundation Phase teachers’ learning and change happens within the context of continuous professional development.

### ***Teacher-learning and professional development***

Teachers, especially in South Africa, have been faced with curriculum changes over the years. My study necessitated an understanding of teacher learning and development specifically in relation to Foundation Phase teachers in the context of curriculum change. One of the questions I hoped to answer was whether teachers in the Foundation Phase are engaging in learning that enables them to adequately meet their daily challenges in their professional practice and what and how their learning happened, that is personally, socially and professionally intersecting and relevant to their contextual realities. Exploring the literature on professional development and teacher-learning was, therefore, important in the context of this focus.

Hargreaves (1994); Fraser et al. (2007) and Evans (2002) stated that there is no clear definition of teacher development. According to Evans (2002), existing literature did not provide a definition of teacher professional development; and the process of how teachers learn or develop remained unclear. Her own definition of professional development is that it is a process whereby teachers' professionalism (status-related elements) and/ or professionalism (knowledge, skills and procedures teachers use in their work) may be considered to be enhanced. Based on this, she argued that the process of how teachers learn was complex and not a straight forward process, because teachers learn in different ways. However, there does seem to be evidence that teachers learn when they recognise a weakness in their practice and learn a new way of doing something, for example, a new way of teaching children to read (Evans, 2002). Furthermore, Evans (2002) explained how change took place at an attitudinal and functional level. Teacher development at a functional level took place when teachers sought new ways to improve their practice; and change

of attitude towards their work was development at the attitudinal level. Change that negatively affects teachers functionally and attitudinally could be detrimental to their practice.

### ***Teacher-learning: Theories of learning***

Behaviourists view learning as that which can be quantified and measured, and is seen as taking place through external stimuli and reinforcement by use of ‘rewards and denials or conditioning’ (Roberts, 1998, p. 35). The individual is not considered in this theory as it claims that the motivation to learn is external to the learner, whereby individuals respond to external stimuli.

Cognitivists differ from the behaviourists as they focus on the mental processes such as thinking, memory, knowing and problem-solving activities of the individuals (Mwamwenda, 2004).

Cognitivists claim that people are rational beings whose actions are the consequence of thinking, and not merely a response to external stimuli. The motivation for learning is intrinsic and it is the learner that drives the learning (Louw & Edwards, 2005; Smith, 2008).

State-driven professional development programmes used the cascade model to train teachers (Harley and Wedekind, 2004). The cascade model was problematic because people who trained at the top failed to cascade training within their schools due to insufficient training, which was the main problem with this top-down approach. Without question, Foundation Phase teachers need to engage in continuous professional development and learning to improve their practice. Whilst the models do espouse theories on how teachers may develop and why, there may be inadequate research on the impact of the process. For instance, what form of feedback is obtained from teachers to adjudicate the value and impact of professional development as seen by the teachers themselves? Are they benefitting from departmental interventions such as in

service programmes? Are they adequately and timeously equipped with skills to manage curriculum changes effectively? The personal experiences of teachers, with specific reference to Foundation Phase teachers' learning and development, is the focus of my research to attempt to answer such questions.

Whilst there are many theories of learning, I will briefly discuss the following which I found relevant for my study:

#### *Humanistic learning theory*

The humanists attribute learning as being self-directed. They argue that learning becomes meaningful only when it is self-directed (Maharg, 2000; Foley, 2001). For teachers engaging in self-directed learning means that learning will only be meaningful and holistic when they make decisions about their professional learning which helps to trigger a change at their personal, social and professional levels. Exploring how Foundation Phase teachers engaged in meaningfully relevant learning opportunities in the face of the deprofessionalisation that they experience within the cascading model of professional development, to initiate their own learning, is significant.

#### *Social learning theory*

Social learning theory bridges both the behaviourists' and cognitivists' views on learning. Social learning theorists claim that individuals learn from one another through observation, imitation and modeling (Louw & Edwards, 2005; Smith, 2008). Therefore, learning is determined by social, cultural and historical contexts. In this study, exploring how Foundation Phase teachers

learn and what support and processes supported their learning, in response to the change is important.

### *Holistic learning theory*

The theorists of holistic learning emphasise the concept of reflective learning that takes place within a social context, where the learner reflects on his or her learning (Bell & Gilbert, 1996; Jarvis & Parker, 2005). Reflection is viewed as an important part of change and the learning process and change of teachers which takes place within specific environments (Dewey, 1938). He argued that only when learners interact with their environment, does learning take place. He stated that teachers' learning should not be viewed as separate from the teaching environment. In this study, understanding what reflective practices Foundation Phase teachers adopt to move them out of their dysfunctional and misaligned personal and professional experiences is necessary in the face of ongoing curriculum change. Holistic teacher-learning involves the experiences, feelings and perceptions of the teachers as they reflect on their practice both individually and collaboratively to improve their practice.

These three learning theories assisted me in understanding teachers' learning as a process and phenomenon that goes beyond changing behavior. The holistic, humanistic and social learning theories focus on teacher learning as individual, social and contextually situated. These theories helped me as a researcher to explore how Foundation Phase teachers initiated their own learning and development both individually and collaboratively.



### ***How learning happens***

Learning is not solely an individual activity, it is also social (Evans, 2002; Lieberman & Pointer Mace, 2008). They argued that learning happens through experience and practice (learning as doing), through meaning (learning as intentional), through community (learning through participating and being with others) and through identity (learning as changing who we are). They recommended that teachers' social development should focus on learning communities, since teachers learn in a social context. Van Eekelen, Boshuizen and Vermunt (2005) and Swart and Oswald (2008) also saw learning happening both individually and collaboratively.

Teachers needed to continually reflect on their teaching both individually and collectively in order to improve teaching and learning (Southwood, 2002; Shulman & Shulman, 2004).

Reflection and collaboration were ways in which teachers learn. Reflection allowed teachers to share their experiences and feelings with their peers, with the aim of confirming or strengthening their beliefs about their practice. Collaboration helps teachers to work together in ways that scaffold and support each other's learning. Both through collaborating with other teachers and reflecting on their practice, teachers were able to increase their knowledge and improve their practice. Knowledge in teacher-learning was important. Ndjalane (2006) supported the view that knowledge of practice is constructed and influenced by the environment, ethos and culture of the school.

### **Conclusion**

In this chapter I engaged in debates around curriculum change, and teacher-learning and development in the context of educational reform. The argument that I am developing in this

research is that learning and development in response to change is a challenging and complex process. It is against the background of these curricula changes that this study explored the experiences and development of Foundation Phase teachers in the context of curriculum change. However, no study can be in isolation of work done already by other academics so, in order to have a wider understanding of the theoretical concepts framing the study, it was necessary to examine a wide variety of literature on what influenced or could have influenced Foundation Phase teachers' learning experiences and development. The next Chapter will focus on the research design and methodology that has been used to generate data with Foundation Phase teachers about their lived personal, social and professional experiences.

## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODOLOGY

#### Introduction

In Chapter Two, I presented a literature review on Foundation Phase teachers' experiences and negotiation of the curriculum changes as well as the theoretical framework underpinning this study. In this chapter, I present the research design and methodology that was used to generate data. In presenting the methodology, I firstly outline the reasons for the chosen research design and settings. Secondly, the research participants and methods of data collection are described. Finally, the data analysis procedures and ethical issues are presented. This Chapter is divided into three sections: Section A, Section B and Section C:

Section A: In this section I discuss three aspects of the research design:

- Narrative inquiry as the chosen methodology and how it relates to my study.
- The research design plan and outline for understanding Foundation Phase Teachers' experiences and development in the context of curriculum change.
- The selection of my research participants and the research context.

Section B: In this section I discuss the research plan, which includes:

- The data production methods and tools employed in this study.
- Foundation Phase teachers' experiences and development facilitated through unstructured interviews and collages.

- The tools which enabled me to obtain rich, thick data about my participants' experiences and development on their personal, social and professional levels.

Section C: In this section I discuss the analytical framing and production of the storied narratives, the data analysis, coding and interpretation.

## SECTION A

### **Research Methodology: Why Narrative inquiry?**

Narrative inquiry is the study of experience as story and it provides researchers a way to think about and share experience (Hamilton, Smith, & Worthington, 2008). Narrative inquiry employs memory work which involves examination of individuals' lived experiences and is a way of understanding and inquiring into experiences by the researcher engaging in person with the participants (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). My intention for using narrative inquiry as a methodology was to get the participants to express themselves through stories, as a way of constructing stories of their own learning and development as teachers.

Narrative inquiry was the most appropriate methodology to explore the lived learning experiences of Foundation Phase teachers in the context of the changing curricula. Pillay (2003) used narrative inquiry to explore the "lived" experiences of "successful teachers". This research is based on the lived experiences of the participants. Through interviews and collage-making, my participants were able to recall what it meant to be Foundation Phase teachers in the past, who trained in a different historical era, and also to describe their current experiences of the various curriculum changes. Narrative inquiry is an appropriate methodology for this study because

through exploring past and present experiences we are able to make sense of ourselves as teachers (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006).

Narrative inquiry is a way to understand and rethink teachers' stories. It is more than telling a story (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). "Humans are storytelling organisms, who lead storied lives" (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, p. 2). Therefore, stories told by my participants provided deeper understandings of Foundation Phase teachers' experiences and negotiation of the curriculum changes. Narrative inquiry is directed by the notion of how one views and relates one's experiences in the form of stories (Gudmundsdottir, 2001; Johnson & Golombek, 2002). Clandinin and Connelly (2000) state that stories, interviews, journals, photos, and life experiences are methods of narrative inquiry. Therefore, this fitted in with the qualitative approach that I employed in this study.

Different methods of data collection are used in narrative inquiry. In my study I used the arts-based method and memory work. Data was collected through unstructured interviews and the collage activities of the participants. The use of multi data collection methods helped me gain different perspectives of the 'lived experiences' of the participants regarding their personal challenges and negotiation of curriculum changes. Listening to and analysing their individual narratives, where they gave voice to their stories, resulted in the acquisition of rich descriptive data. By using narrative inquiry as a methodological approach, trustworthiness is established since they give clear and detailed explanations of what data sources are used and how data is generated and analysed (Feldman, 2003; Mishler, 1990).

## **Qualitative research**

Qualitative researchers are interested in understanding how people interpret their experiences, how they construct their world, and what meaning they attribute to their experiences. I adopted the interpretative approach to understand the lived experiences of Foundation Phase teachers through the various curriculum changes. The central concern of the interpretivist paradigm is the understanding of human experiences (Cohen et al., 2007). As a Foundation Phase teacher myself and the participants being my colleagues, I found it difficult as a researcher to separate myself from the research because the issue of subjectivity became more and more relevant. I had to come to terms with my own positioning on the issue of Foundation Phase teachers' emotions and tensions in the context of curriculum change. Since I could identify and relate to some of the experiences as recounted by the participants, I endeavored not to let my own experiences of being a Foundation Phase teacher influence the participants' stories of their experiences I was able to do this by not relating any of my own experiences and, rather, just responded to the data. Therefore, a qualitative approach within the interpretivist paradigm was the logical one to use. Denzin and Lincoln (2011) state that in the qualitative approach the researcher will use up extensive time with the participants, personally reflecting and changing what is on offer. Therefore, the qualitative design was appropriate for the understanding of the perspectives of other Foundation Phase teachers' experiences and how they negotiated the curriculum changes. Qualitative research is also a more naturalistic approach and captures data in a "real world" setting (Patton, 2014). I was thus able to obtain rich data by interacting with the participants in their natural settings. In my study I conducted interviews to generate verbal data and I used collage inquiry to generate non-verbal data.

“Qualitative research attempts to collect rich descriptive data in respect of a particular phenomenon or context with the intention of developing and understanding of what is being observed or studied” (Nieuwenhuis, 2010, p. 50). Teacher-learning involves the process of teachers knowing their practice in order to improve the learning of their learners (Kelly, 2008). In my study I used the qualitative approach within the interpretive paradigm for interpreting and understanding the experiences and what and how learning happens for Foundation Phase teachers in the context of curriculum change. This approach was appropriate for the construction of narratives of these teachers. Within the qualitative approach, multiple methods of data collection may be used (Cohen et al., 2007). In my study, I used collage inquiry and unstructured interviews to generate data.

### **Research Context and Research Participants**

My study was conducted in three urban primary schools in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal. The schools comprise the Foundation, Intermediate and the Senior Phases. These are government (State) schools meaning, inter alia, that the schools receive funding from the State as opposed to independent (private) Schools. These schools offer classes from grades R to grade 7. Nadine’s school had learners who were mostly refugees. These learners came from different African countries and spoke different languages. Nimi’s and Sylvia’s schools were urban schools but their learners came from the outskirts of Durban such as areas like Chesterville and Claremont and many of these learners travelled to school by bus. I selected these schools because they were sites for rich data as they had long-serving trained Foundation Phase teachers with experience in curriculum changes before and after the democratic change in South Africa.

The participants for my study were three Foundation Phase teachers, one from each of the three State-funded Primary Schools in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal.

**TABLE1: PROFILE OF PARTICIPANTS**

NAME OF PARTICIPANT	SEX	RACE	YEARS OF TEACHING EXPERIENCE	TEACHING PHASE	GRADE	EXPERIENCE IN C2005, NCS, RNCS & CAPS	SCHOOL
Nimi	F	Indian	33	Foundation Phase Teaching	1	Yes	Urban Primary School
Sylvia	F	Indian	29	Foundation Phase Teaching	3	Yes	Urban Primary School
Nadine	F	Indian	32	Head of Department Foundation Phase	3	Yes	Urban Primary School

Purposive sampling permits one to choose “data-rich” informants, ensuring that the data produced would allow one to obtain sufficient information to deeply understand the phenomenon studied (Cohen et al., 2007). Through purposive sampling, I chose teachers who have experienced the various curriculum changes, that is, Curriculum 2005, NCS, RNCS and CAPS. These experienced teachers were best placed to narrate their educational journeys relating to professional development and learning during curriculum change, thus highlighting what is relevant to the study.



## SECTION B

### **Data production and generation**

I used unstructured interviews and collage inquiry to generate data for my research .The data helped me to examine both critical questions that I set out to explore.

#### *Unstructured interviews*

Cohen et al. (2007) stated that an interview permits greater depth than any other method of data collection. Interviews are less formal and offer face to face contact whereby the researcher can probe the participants, so that further information is obtained that may lead to a deeper understanding of the issues being explored (Gay & Airasian, 2000). Unstructured interviews were conducted between the participants and me. The interviews were audio-taped and transcripts of the interviews were made for data analysis purposes. The voice recording provided a precise, verbatim copy of the participants' words, which could be replayed at any time for clarification and comprehension. Meetings were set for further discussions, to form part of the ongoing narrative record. Unstructured interviews helped me to gain an in-depth understanding of the learning experiences of the participants in the context of curriculum change.

As a researcher I did not assume a position of power over the participants. In the unstructured interviews I was an active listener and I did not question or interrupt the main narration of each participant. In the probing phase I did not ask questions that created an atmosphere of cross-examination. Negotiating power relations helped me as a researcher to create space for the participants' voices. Ensuring that the participants' voices were maintained was critical in the

qualitative research methods of unstructured interviews and collage to ensure trustworthy and insightful data.

Story telling is how people experience the world and it therefore has certain implications. As a researcher, it is ethical that I am one hundred percent attentive to the participants and am not judgmental, over empathetic, blaming or criticizing. During the interviews, I needed to be a good listener by being in the moment and moving with the story. In the interpretation and analysis of the story, it was vitally important that the voice of the participant was maintained throughout the narrative.

### *Collage Inquiry*

Collage is an art-based source of data defined as the process of “cutting and sticking found images and image fragments from popular print/ magazines onto cardstock” (Butler-Kisber, 2008, p. 265). The collage activity was done collaboratively with each of the participants and me as the researcher. This was a new experience for the participants and me. Each participant was requested to create an individual collage on the topic “My journey through curriculum changes”. The use of pictures, symbols and metaphors in a collage help to convey a message and engage with a topic (Raht, Smith, & MacEntee, 2009). Collage enabled me to delve into the deeper layers of the social and cultural context of each participant. My active participation in the collage activity allowed me to negotiate the problem of power relations as I was engaging at the same level as the participants. Furthermore, the collage activity allowed participants a free hand in expressing themselves which supplemented interviews alone for “good” data. The narratives constructed by the participants and the stories woven by them around collages helped me

understand the experiences and how learning was happening for Foundation Phase teachers in terms of their personal and professional development in regard to curriculum change.

**Messiness of fieldwork**

I did not realise that the fieldwork would be messy. Going out into the field was challenging. My participants are all full time employees with personal and work commitments. One of my participants was involved in planning her only daughter’s wedding. It was therefore difficult to get all three participants to complete and discuss the collage together as a group. I therefore had to do the collage activity individually with each participant, which was time consuming on my part as a researcher. I arranged to meet each participant at a venue suitable to them. Sylvia agreed to meet me at a coffee shop near her gym. We worked on the collage together just before her gym session. Both Nadine and Nimi invited me to do the collage activity in the comfort of their homes.

**Research design**

The following table summarises how the research questions were answered:

**TABLE 2: NARRATIVE INQUIRY RESEARCH DESIGN**

<b>RESEARCH QUESTION</b>	<b>NARRATIVE INQUIRY METHOD</b>	<b>CONTEXT</b>	<b>PARTICIPANTS</b>	<b>DATA SOURCES</b>
1. What are Foundation Phase teachers’ experiences in the context of curriculum change?	<p>Storyed Narratives</p> <p>Collage Inquiry</p>	<p>Three State primary schools in Durban, KZN</p>	<p>Three Foundation Phase teachers</p>	<p>Unstructured interviews</p> <p>Collage-making</p>

2. How are Foundation Phase teachers negotiating their personal and professional experiences in the context of curriculum change?	Storied Narratives  Collage Inquiry	Three State primary schools in Durban, KZN	Three Foundation Phase teachers	Unstructured interviews  Collage-making
---	---	--	---------------------------------	---

## SECTION C

### **Analysing the data**

My data coding was inductive because I could not develop the categories to code my data in advance as it emerged from the data (unstructured interviews and collage). In analysing and interpreting the data obtained I tried to elicit changes or growth related to teacher development and teacher-learning by reconstructing the teacher stories according to the employment-narrative analysis. The reconstructed stories were then thematically interpreted and subjected to an analysis of narratives using Bell and Gilbert's (1996) Model of Teacher Development, Dale and James' (2013) discussion on affective containment of feelings, moods and emotions and Illeris's (2009) model of the field of learning as analytical framing.

In this section I present the analytical framework used to analyse the storied narratives in this study. I used Bell and Gilbert's (1996) Model on Teacher Development to analyse Foundation Phase teachers' professional learning related to teacher change. They argued that in order for development to happen, professional development programmes must address the personal, social and professional components of teacher development. In the next section, I discuss their model of professional development.

### ***Personal Development***

According to Bell and Gilbert (1996), personal development is the first phase of development, which involves teachers' realisation that there are aspects of their teaching practice which are problematic. Foundation Phase teachers' experiences with the curriculum changes were very challenging. The externally driven professional development programmes did not support teachers emotionally and psychologically in the context of curriculum changes. The curriculum changes created both physical and mental tensions for the participants. As a result all three teachers underwent great physical and emotional strain and pressure in the classroom. Teachers need to be emotionally and psychologically supported in the change process (Dale & James, 2013). Illeris (2009) stated that there must be a continued balance between the incentive and functional dimensions of learning. Dale and James (2013) stated that there must be strategies and processes in place to support teacher moods, feelings and tensions. If these personal feelings are not supported, then learning can be unpleasant (Illeris, 2009). The majority of these programmes were geared to meeting policy demands with very little or no connection to classroom practice or to the teachers' personal and professional needs.

Teachers in the context of curriculum change had to make shifts in their teaching which was totally different from their training (Jansen & Taylor, 2003). Practicing teachers drew on their practical knowledge to cope in their classrooms (Eraut, 1994). Teachers are faced with a "culture of compliance" and given a "one size fits all" professional development workshops (Lieberman & Pointer Mace, 2008, p. 227). Bell and Gilbert (1996) conclude that before effective development takes place, a willingness to develop must be present in the teacher and the interest and motivation of teachers need to be addressed.

### ***Social Development***

Bell and Gilbert (1996) stated that social development showed how teachers relate to other teachers in collaborative ways to improve their practice and their learners' results. Bell and Gilbert (1996) added that there are certain social aspects that affect personal learning. Teaching in isolation was seen as problematic; therefore teachers valued collaborating with their colleagues in the workplace and with other teachers. Communities of practice were seen as a way forward in this regard (Lave and Wenger, 1991). In this way they networked and shared ideas and beliefs to address problems and concerns about their teaching practice. Through the process of networking and collaborating, teachers were able to develop their self-confidence and ability to critically reflect on their practice, which manifested in their professional development. In this phase, teachers began to initiate activities and relationships with their colleagues. In doing so, teachers felt good about sharing ideas and volunteering their time and energy for the betterment of their practice.

Therefore, school-based professional development practice was seen as a more consistent strategy for teacher-learning and development (Day & Sachs, 2004). Self-initiated, school initiated staff development programmes and learning from contextualised communities of practice could range from peers cascading information from workshops they attended, sharing ideas and information with the aim of enhancing their teaching and learning. These kinds of cluster professional development programmes were more popular than the State- initiated programmes, as colleagues looked to each other for support and guidance (Fraser et al., 2007).

### ***Professional development***

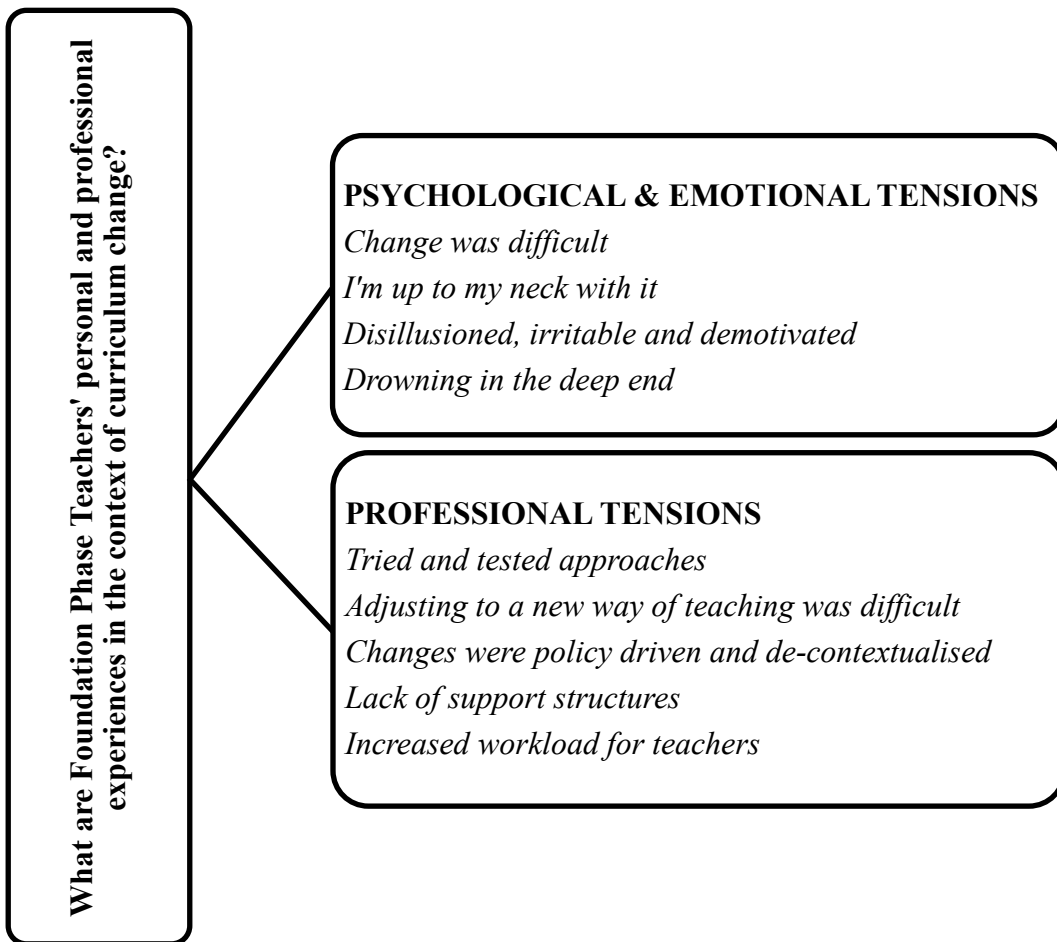
Closely related to social development was the professional development of teachers. According to Bell and Gilbert (1996), professional development for practicing teachers should be ongoing, and it was of considerable importance for successful teaching. Due to external and internal processes, schools are continually changing. Therefore professional development activities should be geared towards building the “capacity of the individual professional” (Ferguson, 2006, p. 2).

Bell and Gilbert (1996) postulated that tensions exist between teaching and learning in a school context. To resolve these tensions, Dale and James (2013) argued that there must be affective containment of feelings on the personal and professional levels of teachers. Only when there is a balance between the personal and professional levels can teachers function effectively in the classrooms (Illeris, 2009). Schools as communities of practice were also situated within a geographical and social context, where teacher-learning could be influenced by socio-cultural factors (Evans, 2002). Therefore the themes in my study were organised around what Foundation Phase teachers experienced and how they negotiated their learning and development from personal, professional and social (learning spaces, socio-cultural conditions) perspectives in the context of curriculum change.

I spent many hours trying to write-up the material. The fear of writing something that was wrong or the fear of changing the participants’ stories was overwhelming. Using other peoples’ stories and writing in the passive voice was daunting. I then decided to work on concept mapping for each critical question. This process eventually helped me get started with writing. When I started

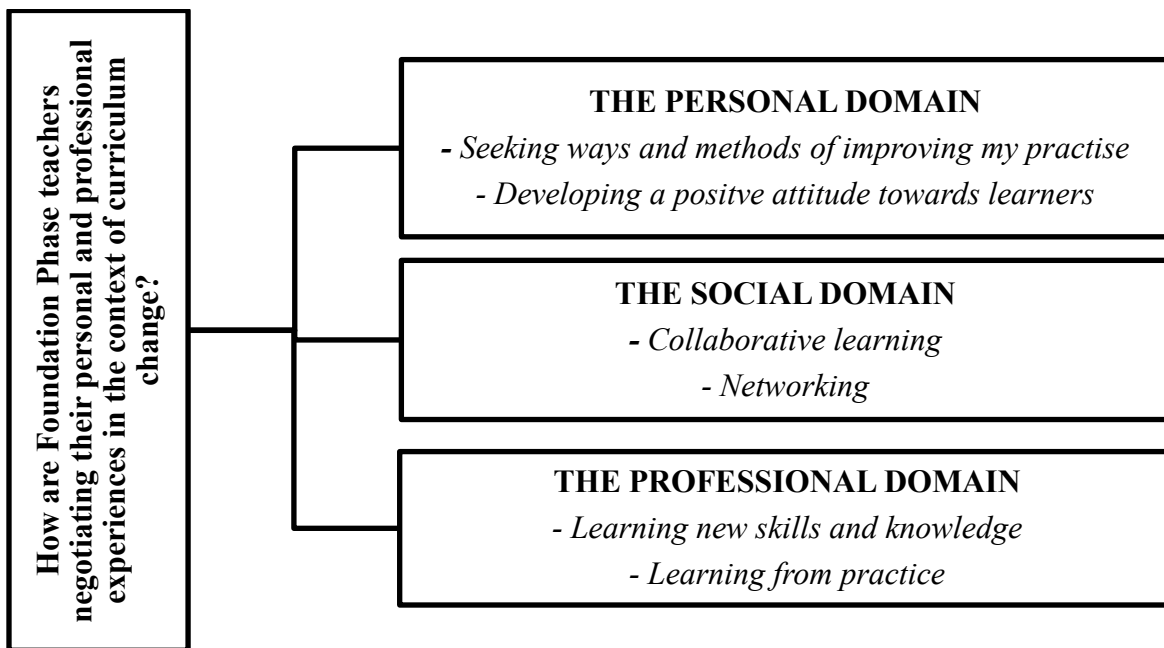
writing, concept mapping allowed ideas to flow that made the analyses of the data interesting and enjoyable. Concept mapping helped to show rigour and believability in the narratives and was useful to determine themes for Critical Questions One and Two as per the following illustrations:

**(a) FIGURE 2: CRITICAL QUESTION 1 CONCEPT MAPPING**





**(b) FIGURE 3: CRITICAL QUESTION 2 CONCEPT MAPPING**



Data from each interview was transcribed and coded according to themes. I developed themes and categories to recognise Foundation Phase teachers' experiences in the context of curriculum change. The actual words were transformed into data. Codes were used to study the interview transcripts of the participants. I colour-coded the data, creating themes and integrating codes. "By means of sampling, coding and comparison of data, the researcher discovers what is relevant to the study" (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 491). The similarities and differences of the coded data allowed me to group the related codes and themes into categories until coding was concluded.

**Possible Limitations and Challenges of the study**

This was a small scale, in-depth qualitative study that took place in three primary schools with three teachers. It was, therefore, not possible to make generalisations to other contexts. Being a

full-time employee, time was crucial and, consequently, I was not able to interview too many participants. My position as researcher/colleague was carefully negotiated to manage the power relations so as to ensure good data. Using arts-based, memory work methods were time consuming, however, they provided rich and ‘thick’ data about Foundation Phase teacher’s learning.

### **Trustworthiness**

Trustworthiness (validity) of the storied data was established by explaining in detail what data resources were being used and how data would be collected and analysed. Interpretative validity was obtained by asking participants to comment on my interpretations of the completed reconstructed narratives. The transcripts were returned to the participants to authenticate the accuracy of what was recorded and transcribed. This was done to also ensure that the participants’ ideas were suitably represented. The multiple data collection methods ensured the trustworthiness of the data collected. My position as a researcher meant that I interviewed participants who are also my colleagues and peers, who would trust my assurance that no information will be used where it will be damaging to them in any way.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter provided a detailed explanation of the research design and the instruments that were used to generate data for this study. The study adopted the qualitative framework within the interpretivist paradigm and offered reasons for choosing this paradigm. Narrative inquiry as the research methodology was discussed. Unstructured interviews and collages as data sources, selection of participants, ethical procedures and trustworthiness were also discussed in this chapter. In the next chapter, I present the Foundation Phase teachers’ narratives.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### NIMI'S, NADINE'S AND SYLVIA'S LIVED EXPERIENCES OF CURRICULUM CHANGE

#### Introduction

In the previous chapter, the research design and methodology that were used to generate data are highlighted. The reconstructed stories of Nimi, Sylvia and Nadine (pseudonyms) are composed from the different data sources (unstructured interviews and collage inquiry) emplotted along Foundation Phase teachers' learning experiences in the context of curriculum change. This chapter represents the reconstructed stories of Nimi's, Sylvia's and Nadine's lived experiences of the curriculum changes.

#### NIMI'S NARRATIVE: "REINVENTING MYSELF"

*It was the beginning of a very busy first term at school, when I received a telephone call from one of my colleagues. While we were catching up on school and family matters, I was asked whether I would be one of the participants in her study. I didn't hesitate to accept because my son was also reading for his Master's Degree at that time. Through him I understood the importance of participants in the study. We arranged to meet at my house. My name is Nimi and my journey through curriculum change follows:*

### ***Teaching is teaching***

I am 58 years old and I am teaching for over thirty years. I became a teacher because I was offered a bursary to study at the Springfield College of Education. Teaching for me was the only viable option since my parents could not afford to pay for my tertiary education. After completing my three years training at Springfield College I was appointed to a small primary school in Gillitts, a suburb in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal. At this school, there was no Head of Department which meant that there was no one to guide me. The training I received at Springfield College held me in good stead. It actually prepared me to be a good teacher. Although adjusting in the first year of teaching was difficult, I managed. The training and teaching practice we received at college boosted my confidence in the class. Furthermore, we knew what to teach because we followed a set syllabus. There was also uniformity because everyone followed a set syllabus. Great emphasis was placed on teaching the three R's and we not only knew what to teach, but also how to teach. It was easy to teach.

After 1994, sixteen years later, I experienced many curriculum changes, starting from Outcomes Based Education (OBE), National Curriculum Statement (NCS), Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS), and now Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS). Of all the changes, OBE was the worst because it was a major shift in how we taught as teachers. With OBE, there was no structured syllabus to follow and the paperwork and terminology were overwhelming. I continued teaching the old way because to me, teaching is teaching. My experience and training in teaching helped me to teach in a certain way and get across to my learners. I just carried on teaching the way I was trained to teach.

### ***Fumbling in the dark***

The inadequate training together with the poor workshop facilitators made my life in the classroom difficult. I think that the facilitators of the workshops are out of touch with the classroom. They are there only to ensure that policy is followed. I wonder if these facilitators actually go into the classrooms. I found I was fumbling in the dark because there was no support from the Department or the school management.

I find that CAPS approach too advanced for our learners. I teach in a school where there are all second language learners. The CAPS learners' workbooks cater for learners who know English and for learners who have been to pre-school – they are not for second language learners. CAPS is very difficult to follow where there are a variety of languages in a classroom. The Mathematics and English workbooks for CAPS are geared for the highflyers. Too many aspects and concepts are planned for one week.

The paperwork is just too much. Despite the Department telling us that in CAPS, everything is done for the teacher, I found this was not so. I had to streamline the planning to suit the needs of my learners. This was time consuming. I was forced to devise my own lesson plans, work schedule and assessment tasks because I could not follow CAPS as is. CAPS' planning was too extensive for my second language learners. CAPS did not take the needs of the learners into consideration and not all learners learn at the same pace. I also found that the assessment tasks and worksheets were suitable for the highflyers only. So at the end of the day, you do know what

works for your class. I make my own worksheets, for example, if I'm teaching the letter 'l', I will make a worksheet with words with the letter 'l' in them. I do not have to follow the workbooks.

### ***It was not a train-smash***

Although CAPS was more structured than the other curricula, I still needed to do the reading myself. The change in the curriculum was not a train-smash for me because I think that teaching is teaching. I was able to fall back on my more than 30 years of teaching experience to cope in the classroom.

Coping with the various curriculum changes was not easy. I had to do a lot of reading on my own since the workshops held by the Department were inadequate. Thinking positively helped me to embrace change and move forward. I did a course in Computer Studies. Becoming computer literate has helped me in lesson planning, worksheets and assessment tasks. I also completed a course in isiZulu, which helped me tremendously in teaching my second language learners. They now understand me and I, in turn, understand them. This enhanced the success of my lessons and the results of the learners.

I network with teachers from other schools, sharing ideas and discussing problems. I also found the NAPTOSA (union) workshops on curriculum to be quite beneficial. In order for my learners to benefit, I had to learn new knowledge.

Figure 4: Nimi's Collage



### *We need support*

Teachers are left to their own device. Although we attend the workshops, nobody gives you support in the classroom to check whether you are coping, or to guide and encourage you.

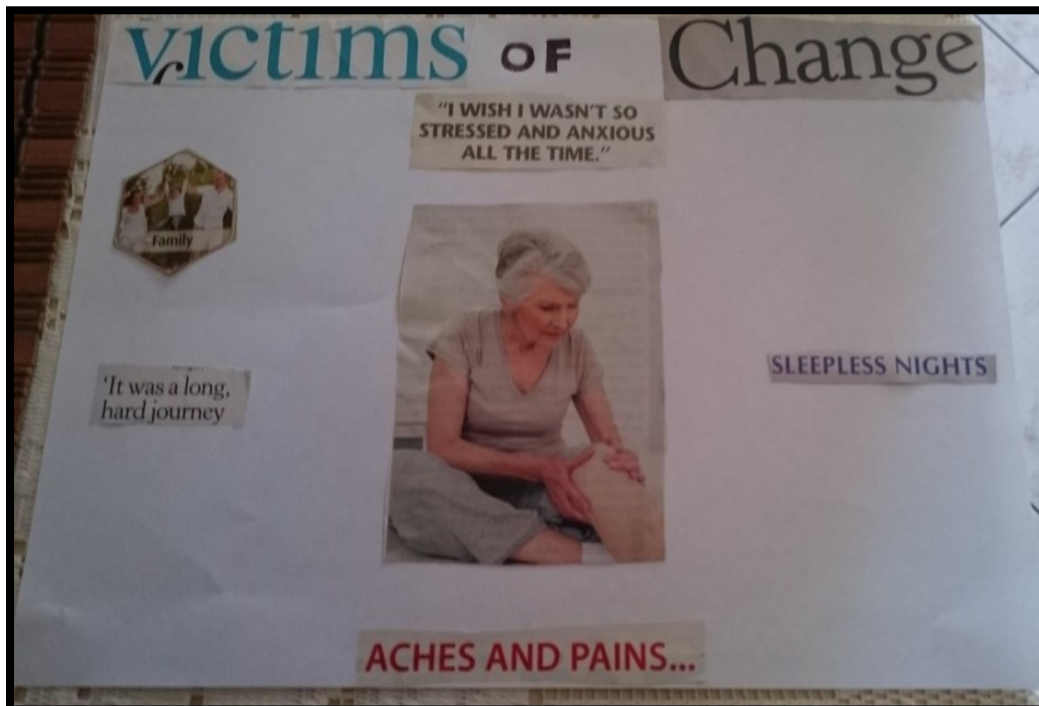
Teachers are not receiving support from school management or the department. I think everyone should be trained, including management, so that they are *au fait* with what is going on in the classroom, and they will be in a position to support the teachers in their schools. I just hope that the next Minister does not come in and change the curriculum policy again, wasting more money.

## NADINE'S NARRATIVE: "CAN'T WAIT TO OPT OUT"

*It was a long and hot summer's day. I just got back from school feeling very tired. I was relaxing on my couch when the phone rang. It was my colleague that I knew from my days in college.*

*While reminiscing about the good old days, she asked me to be a participant in her study. At first I was hesitant to be interviewed about my school life but when she told me that pseudonyms will be used, I agreed. My name is Nadine and this is my story.*

Figure 5: Nadine's Collage





### ***My passion has died***

I am 55 years old and I am teaching in the Foundation Phase for 32 years. I am the Head of Department at my school. My passion for teaching started from childhood – that passion I must say – is not anymore. I am up to my neck with teaching. I'm counting the years and I'm going to opt out of it soon because I can't handle it. It's getting worse every year. There is no satisfaction in teaching anymore. When I mark the books, I get so depressed when I question myself, "Did I teach these children?" and then you begin to question your ability as a teacher.

I started teaching in under the apartheid government; we had a good education system in terms of the Foundation Phase syllabus and teacher training. I came with a college trained background and we were well-trained to teach in the class. After 1994, with the number of curriculum changes, C2005, NCS, RNCS and now CAPS, the system has changed. Looking at the results of the learners, I can say, education has deteriorated over the years.

### ***Bring back the 3 R's...***

I think that there are too many fly-by-night colleges, where people are enrolling. The qualifications that they obtain are not equipping them to teach. New teachers that are coming into school are finding it very difficult because they have no practice. I personally think that teacher-training colleges should be back in full force to improve the calibre of teachers, thus improving education. The type of training we had, prepared us for the classroom. In the first year of teaching, we were equipped on how to teach and how to motivate learners, unlike the new teachers of today.

I think the current syllabus is too extensive for our learners. As a teacher who has experience in the old and the new system, CAPS does not allow for consolidation of concepts. For example, in Mathematics, they are too many concepts to teach, and whether the child is grasping them or not, we are moving ahead because we have a prescribed number of assessment tasks to complete. I think the curriculum definitely needs to be reviewed. We need to go back to the three R's of reading, writing and arithmetic where we teach from concrete to abstract, from simple to complex, drill phonic, flash-words and reading.

### ***We are going nowhere***

A very challenging problem we have, together with the curriculum changes, is the large classes. We have almost 100% second language learners whose home languages are isiZulu, Swahili, Xhosa or French but we are teaching them through the medium of English. Teaching these learners through a foreign medium of instruction is very challenging. The large class sizes together with a foreign medium of instruction, feels like we are going nowhere. The lack of parental involvement is also making our jobs very frustrating. There is no satisfaction in teaching. When you mark the books, you feel so depressed and you question yourself ... did I teach these children? You question your ability as a teacher. What am I getting out of this day in and day out? The learners are just pushed through the system. This is the result of our very low literacy and numeracy levels in the world. This is the reason why students can't write a proper sentence at university. Like I say, it's the system that's failing the children.

### *Drowning in the deep end*

I don't want to sound very cruel, but I feel that workshops are merely held to implement policy. The facilitators are merely cascading information. We are drowning in the deep end and no help is in sight. Subject advisors do not support us with regards to our problems in the classrooms. They come into our classrooms merely to check that policy is being followed. That's all they are there for and when we tell them about class numbers and other problems, they just shake their heads and do nothing about it. The teacher is left alone to deal with the problems. When inspectors came into our classrooms, in the apartheid era, it was better because they guided us and we became better teachers.

We have gone through four changes in the curriculum, OBE, NCS, RNCS and CAPS. There has been no stability and to me each change is more nonsensical. The present CAPS requires a six year old to write the ANA test. To me, getting a six year old to remember a whole year's work for this test is ridiculous. To me the ANA is also a waste of time.

To me, someone is making money out of these workbooks. There is not much thought put into these books. The books have questions that are tricky for little children. There's too much of detail on each page. These books are a waste of time because they are not user friendly. They are too big and bulky for little children. I find writing on the chalkboard more useful because the learners can emulate me. There is no uniformity in terms of content because of the lack of textbooks. An interested teacher will do research and find material to enhance the lessons, while on the other hand you would find teachers that will only teach what is provided by the department - and this is very skeletal.

### ***It's a back-breaking job***

After 32 years, I find teaching to be a back-breaking job. I don't have a life; I come home nice and tired. At my age of 55, teaching a class of 60 is back-breaking. There is no place in the class to do group teaching. The learners are sitting right near the chalkboard. The curriculum is too extensive and it lacks progression. I find myself rushing through the curriculum just to get the assessment tasks completed. As a result, the learners have not grasped the basic concepts.

Teachers are also required to keep a whole lot of records. Inclusive education classes should be brought back. With the large numbers in class, it is difficult to cater for children with special needs. I find it difficult to cope and it is hard when you don't have the training to cope with children with special needs. This job has given me hypertension. It's a back-breaking job and teachers are quitting.

Our learners come from very low socio-economic backgrounds. Most of them come without breakfast and packed lunches. Breakfast and lunch are provided for these learners. Teachers assist with this and they must record the menus for the day and the names of the learners that had meals. These records are additional to the whole lot of classroom records required by the department.

### ***Doing the best we can***

At night my sleep breaks at two in the morning and believe me, I'm thinking about the problems in school. I'm actually thinking of new ways or methods of getting the learners to understand. As a teacher you have to try new methods all the time. I get isiZulu and Swahili learners and parents who understand English to translate to other learners.

Once a parent came into my class to pay school fees. She is from Congo. I explained to her some of the problems we are experiencing, for example, proper use of toilets, learners not carrying pencils to school and not coming neatly dressed to school. I gave the parent fifteen minutes to talk to the learners regarding these problems. All the children listened because they could understand what she was saying.

Networking with other teachers helps in giving each other support. It also helps to share ideas. In my school, we have volunteers from the Circle of Care, a group of women who assist the learners with literacy. They don't take a cent. We don't have a classroom for them. These literacy lessons are held outdoors in our carpark, come winter or summer, these women come and sit out there and teach. These volunteers do not have classrooms with chalkboards so they do mostly oral work like phonics and reading with the learners.

I was used to teaching a structured syllabus. Despite the changes, I still try and implement some structure into the chaos. I try to at least teach the child the basics of reading, counting and writing so that the child can have some hope for the future. Let's hope the new Minister does not come and change things again. Each change results in instability in what we are doing and it is frustrating when as a teacher, you don't feel settled. Therefore, I think that policy-makers need to consider how change affects teachers. Every time a change in the curriculum was brought in, there was an emotional and a physical strain on us.

## SILVIA'S NARRATIVE: "MY JOURNEY THROUGH CHANGE"

*On my way to the gym for my regular training sessions I met my colleague and we got chatting. She informed that she was studying for her Masters' Degree and she was keen on having me as one of the participants for her study. I enquired more about the process and what was I expected to do. She explained that I will be interviewed about my experiences with curriculum change. I will also have to do a collage activity. I felt intimidated about doing the collage activity as it was something new to me. I said that I will not be able to be one of the participants. On second thoughts, I decided to participate in the study. A few weeks later I informed my colleague that I will be part of her study.*

### ***Teaching was a calling***

I trained at the Springfield College of Education. I loved children and my passion for teaching stemmed from this. I believe that teaching was a calling for me. I started teaching in 1984. When I started teaching there was more structure in the syllabus, you knew what to teach. The syllabus catered for the needs of the children. It helped to motivate the learners. As a diehard teacher, I continue to use my years of experience and training to teach my learners. With all the curriculum changes, starting from Outcomes Based Education to the present CAPS, the way I taught didn't change.

Figure 6 :Sylvia's collage



### *Change needs to be piloted*

Curriculum needs to change according to the needs of society and it also needs to be well thought-out, well-planned, well-structured and it must be piloted. It has to be piloted in both rural and urban schools. It is also important to get input from grassroots level, that is, from the teachers in the classrooms. The ideas for the curriculum change come from the top, from people who are not in touch with the classroom. This is the reason why changes in curriculum fail. When CAPS was introduced, there was a misconception in the media that everything is made easier for the teacher. This is an illusion. The workload is just too much. In all my years of teaching, this is my 29th year, I have never felt more disillusioned, irritable and demotivated from all of the changes. It just gets worse. CAPS is too prescriptive and this puts the teacher under a lot of pressure.

With the large numbers in class, I'm totally demotivated. I actually have spoken about leaving the profession. I'm absolutely passionate about teaching - anybody at my school will tell you that. Every morning I will walk into school with a smile and my colleagues felt this was odd. That was how I felt about education and wanting to make a difference, not anymore, not anymore. I also feel teaching is a thankless job, nobody appreciates what you do, not even the parents.

### ***We are fighting a losing battle***

Most of the school management has not attended workshops on curriculum change. They are out of touch with the classroom. Teachers feel alone in the classroom because they do not get support from their school management team. At the workshops as well, the facilitators are not equipped to assist us with certain curriculum issues related to our classrooms. At the end of the day I just feel we are fighting a losing battle. After 19 years of democracy, the literacy levels of our country are worse off.

CAPS is very prescriptive in terms of what is to be taught and what is to be assessed within a prescribed time. This is difficult to accomplish when firstly you have children of varying abilities and secondly, you have ninety percent of second language learners, where homework is not supervised because the parents are also not English speaking. However, we are forced to go through the prescribed tasks in preparation for ANA. I think it's an impossible task and I think too much is expected from us as Foundation Phase teachers and the learners as well. I attended a whole lot of workshops held by the department. I even switched unions, in order to take



advantage of the workshops held by that particular union. Unfortunately, not all the workshops were affordable to us.

### ***Dealing with classroom challenges***

I try my level best to call in the parents. I also try new strategies to get the learner to understand. Sometimes you win, other times you lose. But I try my best. Unfortunately there is no time for fluid grouping and remedial work which play a vital role in enhancing learners' understanding and learning. I network with other teachers, in my school and other schools, where we discuss problems from time to time. If we had success with something in our class, we share this with the other teachers. Not all teachers are open to this but there are teachers that are willing to share and help.

I speak very basic isiZulu and it helps for them to understand me. I found reading to my learners' every day helped them in language development. The subject advisor came into my class to listen to my lesson. He walked in when I was reading a story to my learners. I must tell you that he was so thrilled at the learners' understanding, questioning, answering and the funny things they came out with as well, that he decided to read them a story as well. Listening to the language also helps the learners to develop and emulate that style of writing. I also found that drama is an excellent way in which second language learners can develop confidence in English.

### ***What teachers go through***

Most of our children are bussed to school. We do not get any support from parents. There are also a lot of social problems. Many of our learners are staying with their grandparents. Each

learner has his or her own problems. Principals must take these factors into consideration when they jam pack the school with learners so that their salaries go up. They take in and take in, and in the meantime the teachers suffer. When we talk about quality education, you need to first look at what teachers are going through in the classrooms.

*I do what is necessary*

I think there must be a change because CAPS is not working. The paperwork is absolutely ridiculous, the worst in my 29 years of teaching. CAPS is too prescriptive. I try and keep the records but at the same time, I just do what is necessary for my class, what I understand and the way I want to keep it - and I can justify what I've done. Each teacher must do what works for his or her class because children have varying abilities that makes the classes different.

Foundation Phase teaching is a highly specialized field. I find that new teachers are not trained the way we were. As a result when they come into the classroom, they are in the dark, and everything has to be explained to them. When we went out as first year teachers, we went out prepared because we had excellent training. I think an increased number of training colleges need to be brought back.

I'm passionate about teaching. There are quite a few things that I can do besides teaching but my love for teaching and the children spurs me on. I love to go to school, hoping to make a difference in the learners, but it is the other factors that are annoying. I feel if each person pulls his or her weight, starting from the head of the school, you won't have so many demotivated teachers.

I believe working as a team and teamwork is crucial to achieve goals in education. Teamwork involves a partnership between the child, the school and the parent. We are faced with many changes, and as educators, we need to adapt to change. Educator programmes need to be intensified as teachers need more training and support to cope with the changes. Goals need to be set and with tolerance, love, motivation and creativity, these goals can be achieved. A motivated teacher will always inspire and bring out the best in the learner.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter presented the storied narratives of the three participants. From their narratives we were able to get a glimpse of Nimi's, Sylvia's and Nadine's personal and professional experiences as well as the changes that took place within them through their journey of curriculum change.

In the next chapter, I present the analysis of the narratives using Bell and Gilbert's (1996) three domains of teacher development, namely, personal, professional and social development together with Dale and James' (2013) discussion on affective containment to examine teachers' moods and emotions to support the analysis of the data.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE STORIED NARRATIVES

#### Introduction

In the previous chapter, I presented the storied narratives of Sylvia, Nimi and Nadine. Their stories provide an insight into their lived educational experiences as teachers pertaining to the various curriculum changes enacted in the Foundation Phase. They had all commenced teaching under the pre-Curriculum 2005 era and in the light of their extensive teaching experience it was interesting to understand how the changes in the curricula influenced what they think, feel and do as Foundation Phase teachers. In this Chapter, I present the analysis of the teachers' storied narratives in response to the two critical questions. I have divided the analysis into two Sections, Section One and Section Two. In Section One I respond to "*What are Foundation Phase teachers' personal and professional experiences in the context of curriculum change?*" and in Section Two I present the analysis of "*How are Foundation Phase teachers negotiating their personal and professional experiences in the context of curriculum change?*"

In Section One, I draw on Dale and James (2013) and their theory on affective containment to frame my analysis of Foundation Phase teachers' psychological and emotional (feelings, moods and anxieties) response to the different curriculum shifts. Dale and James (2013) argued that educational change could cause both pleasant and unpleasant feelings and if these feelings were not managed well, they could pose a number of problems. Dale and James (2013) stated that educational change can be complex and challenging for teachers. As a result change could be welcome and unwelcome because teachers have to learn new ways of thinking and acting as

teachers. This shift required from teachers depended on the processes and support available in promoting learning opportunities. By definition, “Affective containment explains the strategies and processes that enable feelings to be managed and productively used during organizational change” (Dale & James, 2013, p. 93). Through affective containment of emotions, a number of problems experienced during educational change could be solved. On the other hand, they argued, if emotions were not supported by strategies and processes, teachers could become demotivated and would not engage in personally meaningful ways to change. This may be detrimental to teachers’ practice. It was therefore important that effective containment of emotional and psychological tensions was securely established to support teachers during educational change.

We also draw on Illeris (2009) here to illuminate why the educational change process may be welcoming or not welcoming. According to Illeris (2009, p. 9) there were two psychological functions that needed to be considered to enable new ways of thinking and acting. There needed to be an integrated interplay between the *function of managing* the learning content and the *incentive function* of providing and directing the necessary mental energy that runs the process of learning content. If these two learning processes regarding educational change did not happen, then teachers would experience a range of psychological and emotional feelings. The selected excerpts of the teacher participants’ storied narratives revealed that neither function was engaged psychologically for meaningful engagement with the new curriculum shifts.

## **SECTION ONE: What are Foundation Phase teachers' personal and professional experiences in the context of curriculum change?**

### ***Introduction***

In this section I offer an analysis of Foundation Phase teachers in South African public schools who had to manage and negotiate various changes to the curriculum. Since the introduction of Outcomes Based Education (Curriculum 2005) too many quick changes happened for Foundation Phase teachers which, according to the Ministerial Task Team that evaluated Curriculum 2005, were hastily imposed in the euphoria of post-apartheid excitement (Department of Basic Education, 2009). According to Pinar (2008), change is a gradual process. The quick changes posed a challenge to Foundation Phase teachers.

Since change does not happen overnight, perceptions about change and the amount of control the teacher had in this process were important (Bertram, 2011). My study zooms into exploring the experiences of each Foundation Phase teacher participant's lived experiences in the context of curriculum changes. Evans (2002) argued that any change that negatively affected the functions and attitudes of teachers is detrimental to their development and to their practice. She also added that a teacher who is demotivated would show no development. Therefore, in the educational change process, the attitudes and feelings of teachers must be considered. If these attributes were ignored, then it could affect how the teacher functions in the classroom, seeing that attitudes and functioning go hand in hand.

In response to the question “*What are Foundation Phase teachers’ experiences in the context of curriculum change?*” I have developed the following themes to classify and explore the participants’ experiences in the context of curriculum change:

### **PSYCHOLOGICAL AND EMOTIONAL TENSIONS**

- *Change was difficult*
- *I’m up to my neck with it*
- *Disillusioned, irritable and demotivated*
- *Drowning in the deep end*

### **PROFESSIONAL TENSIONS**

- *Tried and tested approaches*
- *Adjusting to a new way of teaching was difficult*
- *Changes were policy driven and decontextualised*
- *Lack of support structures*
- *Increased workload for teachers*

Foundation Phase teachers experienced feelings of anxiety, stress and frustration in response to the continually changing curriculum initiatives. These tensions affected them both personally and professionally.

## PSYCHOLOGICAL AND EMOTIONAL TENSIONS

Teachers experience psychological and emotional tensions when they have difficulty in learning a new way of teaching. Sutton and Wheatley (2003) believed that when experienced teachers were uncertain whether or not they are doing a good job, they were more likely to experience anxiety if they were not psychologically and emotionally supported. I then drew on the selected data of the three participants Nimi, Sylvia and Nadine to show that there were no strategies and processes to support Foundation Phase teachers through their emotional and psychological tensions during educational reform, where teachers' learning did not happen in ways that helped them to manage the new context and develop the incentive to function.

- *Change was difficult*

All three teachers found adjusting to change difficult. They were therefore psychologically and emotionally affected by their negative experiences:

*Nimi: Coping with the various curriculum changes was not easy. OBE was the worst because it was a major shift in how we taught as teachers.*

*Sylvia: Curriculum needs to change according to the needs of society and it also needs to be well thought- out, well-planned, well-structured and it must be piloted. The ideas for the curriculum changes come from the top, from people who are not in touch with the classroom. This is why changes in curriculum fail.*



Nadine: *Every time a change was brought about, there was an emotional and physical strain on us. A very challenging problem we have, together with the curriculum changes, is the large classes.*

The numerous curriculum changes brought about psychological and emotional strain in Foundation Phase teachers' experiences of classroom practice. All three teachers found the curriculum changes very stressful and draining both physically and emotionally, which led to anxiety. Educational change could create a range of feelings that could cause various problems for those who are experiencing it (Dale & James, 2013).

The participants felt overwhelmed by the amount of work and the difficulty they faced engaging with new work. According to Harley and Wedekind (2004, p. 200), this experience of feeling overwhelmed arises because of "a mismatch between what teachers trained for and the demands of their practice." Dale and James (2013) stated that feelings expressed during the educational change process needed to be managed more effectively. These may include both pleasant and unpleasant feelings of the participants, without which their motivation for change may be lacking.

- *I'm up to my neck with it*

All three participants' responses to their experiences further emphasise that they were barely managing to control this overwhelming loss of control they faced. Msila (2008) alluded to the fact that that this sort of problem arose from inadequate consultation with teachers by policy-makers.

Nadine: *We have gone through four changes in the curriculum, OBE, NCS, RNCS and CAPS. There has been no stability and to me each change is more nonsensical. I'm up to my neck with it.*

Sylvia: *The workload is just too much. With the large numbers in class, I'm totally demotivated. I actually have spoken about leaving the profession. I was passionate about teaching, not anymore. I also feel teaching is a thankless job, nobody appreciates what you do, not even the parents.*

Nimi: *The facilitators of the workshops are out of touch with the classroom. They are only there to ensure that policy is followed. I wonder if these facilitators actually go into the classroom.*

In the above excerpts it is evident that Foundation Phase teachers were not adequately consulted by the policy makers on the various curriculum changes. The participants felt a sense of frustration when, after attending workshops, they were unable to use new curriculum materials to improve the learning of their learners (Bell & Gilbert, 1994, p. 483). The workshops were not aligned with what needs to be done in the classroom. This lack of external interaction between key stakeholders and the teacher made personal engagement with learning a constraint and a hurdle (Illeris, 2009). Ignoring these internal psychological processes of change interfered with the active involvement of teachers in their learning, and it left teachers feeling disillusioned, demotivated and irritable.

- *I felt more disillusioned, irritable and demotivated*

Sylvia's, Nadine's and Nimi's emotional turmoil, because of the continued or frequent changes, affected their morale as teachers. Emotions affect attention and goals (Clare & Gaspar, 2000). Fives and Gill (2014) stated that teachers' goals and aspirations are affected by their negative emotions. Therefore, it is important to consider how new reforms affect teachers' emotions.

*Sylvia: That to say teaching is made easier by all the changes is just an illusion to me. I never felt more disillusioned, irritable and demotivated because of all the changes and it just gets worse.*

*Nimi: Teachers were left to their own device. I found that I was fumbling in the dark because there was no support from the Department or the school management. The inadequate training together with the poor facilitators of the workshops did not make my life in the classroom any easier.*

*Nadine: Each change results in instability in what we are doing and it is frustrating when as a teacher, you don't feel settled. Therefore, I think that policy-makers need to consider how change affects teachers. The workshops are merely held to implement policy and they were a waste of time. The facilitators are merely cascading information. I have all kinds of aches and pains, it's a backbreaking job.*

Jansen (2001, p. 243) pointed out that “the sole requirement of teachers was bureaucratic and political compliance with state education” leading to the failure to recognise the important role teachers could play. Without adequate training, Nimi pointed out that teaching was difficult and Sylvia felt irritated, disillusioned and demotivated. Nadine also found the lack of help and support overwhelming. The participants were experienced Foundation teachers who felt anxious when they were uncertain whether or not they were doing a good job. They were used to being told what to do. How teachers felt, particularly their negative emotions could adversely affect their classroom interactions (Cross & Hong, 2012; Meyer & Turner, 2007; Schutz, Hong, Cross, & Osbon, 2006). Alienating teachers from the process and not providing the necessary strategies and processes to support the new learning, could have serious implications. Therefore, it is important that feelings of teachers are supported through processes and strategies during the change process.

- *Drowning in the Deep End*

Nadine expressed her experiences of the change and the support offered: *I’m counting the years and I’m going to opt out of it soon because I can’t handle it and it’s getting worse every year. Change, change and more change, we are drowning in the deep-end, no help is available to us.*

Sylvia was also unhappy with the changes and the top-down approach to the support: *It is also important to get input from grassroots level, that is, from the teachers in the classroom.*

*Nimi: Coping with the various curriculum changes was not easy and the workshops held by the Department were inadequate”.*

Teachers lacked autonomy and their knowledge was thus controlled by the State (Moore, 2000; Hayes, 2000; Pillay, 2003; Shezi, 2008). The cascade model was a form of “occupational control of teachers” (Ozga, 1995, p. 35 and Shezi, 2008) where teachers were told what to learn and how to learn. This showed a complete disjuncture between policy and practice. Msila (2008) alluded to teachers’ frustrations and marginalisation arising from inadequate consultation with teachers by policy makers. The teachers were overwhelmed with the content that they had to manage and therefore the incentive of providing and directing mental energy to engage in the learning process was constrained (Illeris, 2009, p. 9).

## **PROFESSIONAL TENSIONS**

Professional tensions refer to the tensions experienced by the participants in their practice. Research by Fraser et al., (2007) and Bell and Gilbert (1996) showed that when teachers’ professional development exercises were externally driven, there was little or no change. The employment of the cascade model to train teachers on policy implementation, subjected teachers to a top-down approach where they were not involved in selecting what and how they learnt (Jansen, 2001; Shezi, 2008). According to Illeris (2009, p. 9), there were two psychological functions that needed to be considered to enable learning. There needed to be an integrated

interplay between the *function of managing* the learning content and the *incentive function* of providing and directing the necessary mental energy that ran the process. The selected excerpts of the teacher participants' storied narratives revealed that neither function was engaged psychologically for meaningful engagement with the new curriculum shifts.

Msila (2008) emphasised that for effective changes to take place, teachers needed ongoing professional development. In this study, the cascade model did not provide the participants with adequate support and training which caused professional tensions. Professional tensions reflected that they were not adequately trained or prepared for the changes.

- *Tried and tested approaches*

Reverting to tried and tested approaches by teachers seemingly provided a way of negotiating the dilemmas that confronted them with the curriculum shifts. At their Training College, the Foundation Phase teachers were trained in what to teach and how to teach a prescribed curriculum. This was typical of a behaviourist approach to teacher education (Smith, 2008). However, this training gave teachers a sense of control in the classrooms, which inevitably boosted their self-confidence.

Sylvia, Nadine and Nimi continued to teach in the traditional ways. They resorted to practical knowledge and experience. Teachers stuck to their old practices when teacher development programmes they attended were not useful in their classrooms (De Clercq &

Phiri, 2013). This was reinforced in what the three teachers in the study experienced and expressed:

*Sylvia: As a die-hard teacher, I continued to use my years of experience and training to teach my learners. With all the curriculum changes, starting from OBE to the present CAPS, the way I taught didn't change.*

*Nadine: The type of training we had from college prepared us for the classroom, we were very equipped on how to teach and also how to motivate learners. I was used to teaching a structured syllabus. My experience and training in teaching a structured syllabus helped because it made teaching easy. With OBE, I just carried on teaching the way I was trained to teach.*

*Nimi: The training I received at Springfield College held me in good stead. It actually prepared me to be a good teacher. The training and teaching practice we received at college boosted my confidence in the classroom. Furthermore, we knew what to teach because we followed a set syllabus, Great emphasis was placed on teaching the three R's and we not only knew what to teach, but also how to teach. I continued to teach the old way. My experience and training in teaching helped me to teach in a certain way and get across to my learners. I just carried on teaching the way I was trained to teach.*

After teaching for more than two decades, teachers suddenly felt out of control in their classrooms (Lieberman & Mace, 2008). The clear indication was that these experienced Foundation Phase teachers in the face of ongoing curriculum change felt that they are inadequately prepared to teach in a new way and, therefore, resorted to their experience and what they know already, to continue teaching. Facilitators were seen as mere policy implementers and they lacked training in supporting teachers' emotions and moods experienced during the educational reform process. These workshops did not provide the mental energy or incentive for new learning.

- *Adjusting to a new way of teaching was difficult*

All three participants expressed anxiety following difficulties in coming to grips with new ways of teaching. James and Connolly (2000) regarded schools as places of high emotion, particularly anxiety, caused by a variety of factors including curriculum changes and new methods of professional practice.

*Nimi: After teaching in the Foundation phase for thirty five years, adjusting to a new way of teaching was difficult. Of all the changes, OBE was the worst because there was no structured syllabus to follow and the paperwork and terminology was overwhelming.*

*Sylvia: The paperwork is absolutely ridiculous, the worst in all my years of teaching. I try and keep the records but at the same time, I just do what is*



*necessary for my class, what I understand and the way I want to keep it – and I can justify what I've done.*

*Nadine: I was used to teaching a structured syllabus. I came with a college trained background and we were well-trained to teach in the class.*

Having no structure to their learning, and as experienced teachers, this affected the management of their work. The lack of support structures and strategies for the teachers' management of their teaching led to anxiety, fear and stress. Thomas and Beauchamp (2011) alluded to the fact that this development process was similar to that of novice teachers who had to learn a new way of teaching.

- *Changes were policy driven and decontextualised*

Further to the above realities, the accounts by the three participants indicated that the changes to the curriculum were policy driven. Facilitators of the workshops merely spewed out and implemented policy which resulted in the frustration of teachers (Lieberman & Pointer Mace, 2008).

*Sylvia alludes to this: Curriculum change has to be piloted in both rural and urban schools. The reason for this is that many ideas come from the top, from people who are not in touch with the classroom. This is the reason why changes in curriculum fail.*

Nadine states: *There is no satisfaction in teaching. When you mark the books, you feel so depressed and you question yourself, did I teach these children? You go back questioning your ability as a teacher. Then again it's the system and not us.*

Nimi: *I had to fall back on my more than thirty years of teaching experience to cope in the classroom because the workshops were inadequate.*

These constraints made these Foundation Phase teachers feel that they were burdened with the process of change. Teacher development programmes were supposed to provide teachers with teaching strategies to develop their confidence to implement the new curricula. The top-down approach to professional development gave teachers directives as to what, how and where they learn. A “one-size-fits-all” approach was adopted (Lieberman & Pointer Mace, 2008, p. 227), where the teachers’ contexts, experiences, interests and learning styles were not considered.

In order for educational change to be successful, the involvement of teachers was vital. Teachers could produce change in their practice when they were able to direct their own learning. As Pillay (2003, p. 26) stated, “...teachers are not objects to be changed but complex subjects with power and knowledge to change”. Therefore teachers’ perceptions and perspectives needed to be taken seriously by policy makers. In other words, teachers’ voices and input from a grassroots’ level needed to be considered by the policy makers. Their top-down approach failed to pay attention to teachers’ capacity to change and their desires to change. The incentive for learning was thus absent.

Professional development is an ongoing process. Teachers need to keep abreast of teaching trends and methods in order to improve their teaching and their learners' results. Faced with so many changes within a short space of time left all three participants feeling incompetent to manage their new learning and this made them question their teaching abilities. When teachers' learning is not supported, there will be no incentive to develop and function.

- *Lack of support structures*

All three teachers stated that they feel alone in the classroom because of a lack of support from both the department and school management. The participants felt alienated because the workshops were policy driven with facilitators who were out of touch with the classroom. To add to this, school management was also not trained to support teachers on the new changes in curriculum. Lieberman and Pointer Mace (2008) stated that teachers are given a "one-size-fits-all" professional workshop. This culture of compliance did not cater for different methods of teaching and the different needs of learners.

Nimi explained this problem vividly: *Teachers are left on their own. I think everyone should be trained, including management, on changes so that they can be in a position to assist and support teachers.*

Sylvia also expressed her concern in this respect: *Most of the school management have not attended workshops on curriculum change, they are out of touch with the classroom.*

Nadine added her concern here as well: *Subject advisors do not support with problems in the classrooms. The teacher is left alone to deal with problems. Subject advisors merely come into our classrooms merely to check that policy is being followed. That's what they are there for and er...when we tell them about class sizes and other problems.... they merely nod their heads and they do nothing about it.*

All stakeholders should be trained in order to offer support to teachers. School management was out of touch with the classroom. Teachers in South African schools felt a sense of powerlessness because they were “implementers rather than formulators of policies”. Carrim, (2003, p. 318) and Shezi (2008) stated that the cascade model used to develop teachers was not sensitive to social and political systems of the schools. The needs of individual teachers were also not taken into consideration (Tammets, Valjataga, & Pata, 2008). This caused tensions in their practice because there was a lack of support at the school level, district level and provincial level.

- *Increased workload for teachers*

When curriculum changes were implemented, teachers were made to believe that teaching would be made easier, but the three teachers felt that their workload had

increased. Teachers' work had become increasingly intensified (Hargreaves, 1994). The administrative assessment tasks left teachers with little time to connect with their learners and to keep abreast with new trends in teaching. This impacted negatively on the success of learners.

The new curriculum brought many challenges too quickly for the teachers. There was more emphasis on records rather than teaching and there were greater demands and expectations on teachers. An increase in accountability to parents and administrators put teachers under pressure (Hargreaves, 1994). Emphasis on maintaining these records rather than teaching was frustrating to teachers and made some of them want to leave the profession.

Sylvia stated: *When CAPS was introduced, there was a misconception that everything is made easier for the teacher. The workload is just too much.*

Sylvia has lost her passion for teaching: *I was absolutely passionate about teaching, anybody will tell you that. I will walk into school with a smile on my face. This is how I felt about education - not anymore. I'm totally demotivated. I have actually spoken about leaving the profession.*

Nadine was emotionally and physically stressed: *To me, after thirty years, I find teaching to be frustrating. I don't have a life; I come home nice and tired. Teachers'*

*workload was intensified by unnecessary record keeping. She had reached the end of her tether: Can't wait to opt out, just counting my years.*

Nimi summed this up as: *The paperwork is just too much. Despite the Department telling us that in terms of the new curriculum CAPS, everything is done for the teacher. I found this was not so.*

The present cascade model led to the deprofessionalisation of teachers (Shezi, 2008) which led to their frustration and low morale. Only when teachers negotiated their own learning in meaningful ways, would they enable change in how they think, act and behave (Carrim, 2003; Shezi, 2008; Lieberman & Pointer Mace, 2008). The lack of processes and strategies to support the participants' emotions during curriculum change led to them feeling out of control in their classrooms. This led to demotivated teachers who lacked confidence and passion to function effectively in the classrooms.

### ***Conclusion to Section One***

From my analysis, I am able to explain Foundation Phase teachers' experiences with regard to ongoing curriculum changes. My study reflects the emotional and physical tensions (stress, anxiety, frustration and failure) that personally affected these teachers attitudinally, emotionally and intellectually. These emotional and psychological tensions constrained their abilities to learn. However, their feelings at a personal level propelled them to find new personally meaningful ways of coping in the classroom, resulting in a change in their attitudes, beliefs and values that

triggered a change in their professional and social levels. Thus, with the next critical question, I will explore how these changes brought about a difference in their teaching practice.

## **SECTION TWO: How are Foundation Phase teachers negotiating their personal and professional experiences in the context of curriculum change?**

### ***Introduction***

In responding to Critical Question one, the analysis under Section One clearly highlights that Foundation Phase teachers' emotional and psychological feelings were not considered and supported during the change process. Due to the lack of acknowledgement by policy enforcers that strategies and processes were needed to enable teachers to manage the curriculum changes emotionally and psychologically, teachers experienced a sense of isolation, alienation and other psychological and emotional instability. This is one of reasons that Chisholm et al. (2005), drew the conclusion that teachers in post-apartheid South Africa experienced multiple, complex and constantly changing requirements in their teaching and learning contexts contributing to high levels of stress and potential burnout.

Being concerned about their capacity to teach and their responsibility to their learners, the participant teachers in my study found ways to creatively manage the changing curriculum context. In this Section Two, I offer an understanding of how and why Foundation Phase teachers did not give up but tried to find personally meaningful ways to learn. I will analyse how the participants' feelings of frustration and helplessness provided the impetus at their personal level to take responsibility for their own learning and development in managing the changes and

to improve their performance. Here I draw on Bell and Gilbert's (1996) Model on Teacher Development to understand Foundation Phase teachers' professional development that considered just what teachers needed to do in the context of curriculum change, what they needed to learn and how they wanted to learn. This model by Bell and Gilbert was helpful in providing the conceptual lens. It helped understanding of how Foundation Phase teachers were learning and also how they were developing in terms of their personal, social and professional dimensions of professional development which also incorporated change or modification of attitudes, beliefs and values that impacted on their practice.

Professional development, in this study and analysis, included teachers' learning and their developing beliefs and ideas, their classroom practice and attending to their feelings associated with change (Bell & Gilbert, 1996). Professional development according to this model also encompassed professional learning (or teacher learning) which were the processes that resulted in "specific changes in professional knowledge, skills, attitudes, beliefs or actions of teachers" (Fraser et al., 2007, p.157).

Professional development is understood as holistic experiences' development on personal, social and professional levels (in this case in teaching) and incorporates changes in attitudes, values and beliefs. Evans (2002) explained that functional development has two features of change, namely, procedural and productive. These included new ways of working and gaining knowledge (intellectual focus within the attitudinal), and learning new methods to improve one's practice. In this Section I analyse the professional development and learning experiences of Nadine, Nimi and Sylvia from the personal, social and professional perspectives. I show how these teachers



engaged in personally meaningful ways to negotiate change in the absence of any strategies and processes to support and manage their emotions on the personal, social and professional levels during the change process.

The following key themes for critical question two were identified:

(a) The personal domain

- *Seeking ways and methods of improving my practice*
- *Developing a positive attitude towards learners*

(b) The social domain

- *Collaborative learning*
- *Networking*

(c) Professional domain

- *Learning new skills and knowledge*
- *Learning from Practice*

**(a) The personal domain**

Bell and Gilbert (1996) drew the conclusion that before effective development takes place, a willingness to develop must be present in the teacher. This involves teachers coming to realise that some aspects of their practice were problematic. This realisation spurred the participants to find ways to address the problem and thus improve their practice. Teacher-

learning was propelled when they become aware of what their practice entails, thus making them more aware of their learning needs (Illeris, 2009). The desire to change and improve came from within the teacher. Jarvis (1992) and Nieto (2003) added that teachers continually rediscovered who they are through learning, as they continually negotiated and interpreted their roles as they move in and out of learning experiences. Personal development therefore entailed teachers feeling more empowered with respect to their own development. Bell and Gilbert (1996) stated that no progress takes place without personal development which considered beliefs, values and attitudes, as important aspects for effective learning. Therefore when looking at the Foundation Phase teachers' learning and development in the context of curriculum change, we are considering the beliefs, values and attitudes that shape what and how they learn in coping with curriculum change. This realization leads to Foundation Phase teachers' social and professional development.

- *Seeking ways and methods of improving my practice*

On the personal level, the participants in the study initiated their own learning. They planned and executed their own learning activities (Kwakman, 2003).

As Sylvia explained: *Each teacher must do what works for their classes because children have varying abilities that makes the classes different. I speak a little isiZulu that has helped me to communicate with my second language learners.*

Nadine spent sleepless nights thinking about ways of helping her learners in the class: *At night my sleep breaks, at two in the morning, and believe me I'm*

*thinking about the problems in school. I'm actually thinking of new ways or methods of getting the learners to understand. As a teacher you have to try new methods all the time.*

*Nimi: I have completed a course in isiZulu and Computer Studies. She also says that at the end of the day, you know what works for your class. I make my own worksheets. If I'm teaching the letter "l", I will make a worksheet with all the words beginning with "l". I do not rely on the department workbooks only.*

These teachers looked at aspects of their teaching that were problematic and looked for solutions to be more effective in their profession. Teachers who are self-directed aim to develop new skills, knowledge and attitudes in order to improve their practice (Nieto, 2003). However, the curriculum changes were a challenge to South African teachers who had inadequate skills and knowledge (Ono & Ferreira, 2010).

The participants engaged in reflection, which helped in promoting their personal and professional development through seeking ways to address problems in their practice. The process of reflection helped these teachers to rethink their ideas and beliefs about teaching (Bell & Gilbert, 1996, p.105). My participants, through reflection, tried out new ideas to help them cope in their classes. Reflection has helped Sylvia put new ideas into action. She learnt isiZulu to also improve her practice as a teacher.

Reflection has helped Nadine to undertake new ways of improving teaching and learning in her class:

*In order for me to understand my second language learners and vice versa, I try to get peers, prefects and parents as interpreters.*

Evans (2002, p.131) stated that attitudinal development involves change on an “intellectual and motivational” level. “A teacher who becomes more reflective, for example, would be manifesting intellectual development” (Evans, 2002, p.131). The participants displayed intellectual development by reflecting on their methods of teaching, which in turn, helped them to try new and different ways of helping their learners. Teacher reflection provides a powerful platform to highlight important moments of learning for the teacher (Ng, Widjaja, Chan, & Seto, 2012).

- *Developing a positive attitude towards learners*

The Foundation Phase teachers’ relationship of love and care towards their learners also added a new meaning to their teacher self just as found by Ritchie and Wilson (2002). This led to an inner desire to bring about change in them, which invoked a personal change in their attitudes, beliefs and values. They also indicated that their identity as a teacher was linked to being a learner and a researcher through which change and development took place (Bell & Gilbert, 1996). The participants were motivated to find other spaces for learning within and outside of their schools .The participants tried out new activities and methods to improve learner performance.

Sylvia: *I found reading to my learners every day has helped to improve their oral and written skills in English.*

Self-directedness and motivation were key features in Nimi's learning. Her motivation to succeed is evident in the following: *I did a lot of reading on my own. Most of the learners don't speak English. When I communicate with them in isiZulu, they understand me, in this way I don't get frustrated and neither do they. Other teachers who don't know isiZulu will also call me to translate what the learners in their classes are saying.*

Nadine used her own intuition to uplift her learners: *If I had a problem, I try something new to get them to understand. A parent came into my class to pay school fees. She is from Congo. I explained to her all the problems we encounter with our learners in terms of punctuality, toilet training, coming to school untidily dressed and lack of stationery. I gave her fifteen minutes to talk the learners about these issues. All the learners listened attentively to her because they understood what she was saying.*

Pillay and Govinden (2007) drew attention to the way in which teachers worked innovatively within the constraints of the South African system. They argued that change and movement form the very basis on how teachers moved from what is, to what could be. There are powerful ways in which teachers can restructure themselves in becoming agents of change.

## **(b) The social domain**

- *Interaction with other teachers and members of the community*

Social development reflected on how teachers relate to other teachers in collaborative ways to improve their practice and the results of their learners (Bell & Gilbert, 1996).

On a social level, interaction with other teachers and members of the community empowered Nadine, Sylvia and Nimi. This was a means of collaborative learning whereby teachers took the initiative to learn and make decisions to improve their practices (Phiri, 2011). The participants did not seem to favour, or feel as being very efficient, the externally driven measures, i.e., planned formal learning (workshops and school development meetings) and planned informal learning (such as departmentally initiated web networking).

Nadine teaches in a school where she faces various social problems on a daily basis, and, as a nurturing teacher, she finds ways of solving them. She makes a choice of resisting feelings of inadequacy and frustration and strives to excel. This enables her to initiate change in her life as a teacher, in her learners and community. Her learning extends to more than just gaining knowledge; it is also about caring for others. She believes that skills and knowledge should be used for social upliftment and the building of a better society. Dewey (1899) argued that the school played an important role in creating an environment that catered for the interests and needs of the child that will allow the child to flourish.

Nadine co-ordinates a community outreach programme at her school to uplift the learners: *We have members of the community, called The Circle of Care that assists us with reading. They don't take a cent from us. These literacy lessons are outdoors in the carpark, we don't have a classroom for them but come winter or summer, these volunteers are out there teaching the learners reading, sentence construction and phonic. We have started a breakfast programme from 7 to 7. 30. We give the learners who come to school without breakfast, porridge in the morning.*

Sylvia: *I believe working as a team and teamwork is very crucial to achieve goals in education. Teamwork involves a partnership between the child, the school and the parent.*

Nimi: *I share ideas and discuss problems with other teachers. I also found the NAPTOSA (union) workshops on curriculum to be quite beneficial. In order for my learners to benefit, I had to learn new knowledge.*

Collaborative learning helped in changing problematic aspects of their teaching. This type of learning helped to deal with real problems at school (Phiri, 2011). The feedback and support they received from this social interaction with other teachers, teachers' union and members of the community gave them a feeling of empowerment and upliftment and were more useful than the planned externally organised workshops by their employer. The breakfast programme at Nadine's school was seen

as a way forward for them. It is noted that in McKinney et al., (2005), as cited by Fraser, et al. (2007), externally driven measures are identified as two of Reid's quadrant components of teacher learning which, in this instance, are seen by the participants as not being effective. However, social interaction empowered the participants in the study in their professional development process through talking and sharing experiences, beliefs and feelings. "Social interaction broke down the isolation of teachers in the classrooms" (Bell & Gilbert 1996, p.140).

- *Networking*

The participants seemed not to favour the externally driven measures, i.e., planned formal and informal learning which are essentially transmissive (workshops and school development meetings). These one-dimensional approaches to professional development programmes were less successful in terms of teacher-change and development as they neglected the personal and social aspects of teacher learning. Bertram (2011) alluded to the fact that despite huge investments in teacher development workshops, there was little evidence of improved formal schooling in South Africa over the past fifteen years. She further added that professional development programmes should bring about teacher learning. A teacher attending a workshop does not necessarily mean that she has learnt new knowledge or that her teaching has changed. Professional development programmes (formal and informal) that attend to more facets of the personal and social aspects of learning were more



likely to bring about transformational professional learning in teachers (Fraser et al., 2007, p.19).

*Sylvia: I switched unions to take advantage of the workshops held by that union... I network with other teachers in my school and other schools, where we discuss problems from time to time, sometimes others may come up with a better solution and if I had success with something, I shared this.*

*Nimi stated: It isn't easy when you have to do everything on your own. I networked with teachers in other schools. You know when you discuss with someone else, it helps to see if you are on the right track or not. I gained knowledge through networking with other teachers.*

*Nadine: Networking with other teachers help in giving each other support. It also helps to share ideas.*

In order to manage her feelings associated with change, Sylvia undertook a calculated risk and switched unions. This provided her with an alternative learning space to develop herself which the Department of Education failed to provide. All three participants found networking with other teachers very helpful although Nadine felt she benefited more from collaborating with community members and parents. Through networking, ideas and problems are shared. Sharing resources and information created a social space for learning that led to their change and

development. Networking can provide safe and challenging spaces for powerful teacher learning and growth (Brodie, 2013). This learning helped develop the participants' beliefs, ideas, classroom practice and attend to their feelings associated with curriculum change. Formal and informal learning can take the form of teachers' learning through study, reflection, interaction and dialogue with colleagues, attending conferences, workshops, asking questions and sharing information (Du Plessis & Conley, 2007; Wilson & Demetriou, 2007). Brodie (2013) added that professional development programmes that focus on teacher learning in and from practice were more likely to produce positive changes in teaching.

**(c) The professional domain**

- *Learning new skills and knowledge*

Professional development formed an important part of teacher learning (Bertram, 2011). Msila (2008) stated that change can be a daunting experience for teachers and they, therefore, needed proper empowerment programmes to embrace change. All three participants who trained in the apartheid era had to now learn new knowledge and skills to cope with the demands of transformation in education. Learning new knowledge and new methods of teaching to improve one's practice would feature as the intellectual element within the attitudinal development (Evans, 2002). Aronowitz and Giroux (1985) argued that if teachers were expected to implement a uniform and standardized curriculum, then this ignored such factors as the cultural diversity,

historical background of schools, and the challenges and difficulties of dealing with less privileged learners.

The inadequacy in addressing the developmental needs of teachers from a practical and realistic perspective was probably why the participants had the following to say about learning to cope with curriculum changes:

*Nimi: I had to streamline the planning to suit the needs of my learners. I was forced to devise my own lesson plans, work schedules and assessment tasks because I could not follow CAPS as is. CAPS did not take the needs of the learners into consideration and not all learners learn at the same pace.*

*Nadine : We need to go back to teaching the three R's of reading, writing and arithmetic, where we teach from concrete to abstract, from simple to complex, drill phonic, flashwords and reading.*

*Sylvia: A motivated teacher will always inspire and bring out the best in the learner. I try my level best to call in the parents. I also try new strategies to get the learner to understand. Sometimes you win, other times you lose but I try my best.*

Nimi, Sylvia and Nadine did not allow themselves to be constrained in their development, learning and change by the lack of professional support at their schools

and by inadequate workshops. Their quest for knowledge propelled them to find other ways of learning, despite the reality of learners coming from different experiences, cultures and linguistic practices being ignored by the facilitators. However, the frustration of not being able to implement the new curriculum changes left the teachers feeling despondent but they tried to find innovative methods that worked best for their learners.

- *Learning from practice*

Nimi, Nadine and Sylvia used their practical knowledge to enhance teaching and learning in their classroom. Professional development must be realistic in providing teachers with knowledge on how to organise learning in their classrooms (Bertram, 2011).

*Sylvia: I try new strategies to get the learner to understand. I speak very basic isiZulu which helps my learners to understand me. I found reading to my learners everyday helped them in language development. Listening to the language also helps the learners to emulate that style of writing. I also found drama is an excellent way in which second language learners develop confidence in English. A subject advisor came into my class to observe my teaching. It so happened that he walked in when I was reading a story. I must tell you that he was so thrilled at the learners' understanding, questioning and answering and the funny things they came out with as well.*

Nimi: *I devised my own lesson plans and assessment tasks because I could not follow CAPS as is. CAPS' planning was too extensive for my second language learners and it didn't take the needs of the learners into consideration.*

Nadine, despite being used to teaching a structured syllabus, tried her best in the class. *Despite the changes, I try and implement some structure into the chaos. I try to at least teach the child the basics of reading, counting and writing so that the child can have the some hope for the future.*

### ***Conclusion to Section Two***

The frustrations, anger and feelings of inadequacy on a personal level triggered a change in their attitudes, values and beliefs. These changes on a personal level also led to changes on the social and professional levels. The teacher, despite the physical and emotional tensions, did not give up but instead, through networking, collaboration and reflection, improved their practice.

### **Conclusion**

Teacher development is about teacher-learning, rather than getting teachers to change. Through learning, Foundation Phase teachers were developing their beliefs, ideas, feelings and classroom practice. This involved their personal, professional and social development which was interactive and interdependent. This study showed that Foundation Phase teachers' personal desire to change for the benefit of their learners led them to initiate their own formal and informal learning through collaboration and networking with contextualised communities of practice which included community volunteers, parents, peers and learners. Learning happened for the

participants when they engaged with parents, members of the community, their peers and learners. Both individual and collaborative forms of learning were significant levels in professional development. Collaboration built a culture where learning and development were supported (Kwakman, 2002). Bertram (2011) added that teacher learning was enhanced when teachers learn from one another in informal ways.

In the next chapter I will provide a summary of the study, a conclusion and some of my insights for future practice and further research in this field.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **CONCLUDING CHAPTER**

#### **Introduction**

I started this study wanting to find out about the experiences of Foundation Phase teachers working in South African schools, within the context of ongoing curriculum change. As a Foundation Phase teacher, my curiosity was aroused by the challenges I was facing daily in my classroom in negotiating the new approaches and strategies being implemented in the Foundation Phase. In this research process I set out to explore and understand how Foundation Phase teachers negotiated the tensions and intentions of the curriculum changes. I composed the stories of three Foundation Phase teachers emplotted along their lived personal and professional experiences.

#### **Context of study**

This study presents the understanding of the three Foundation Phase teachers' lived experiences in the context of curriculum change in three urban primary schools under the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education, Pinetown Education District, in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal. The thesis opens up possibilities for understanding how these Foundation Phase teachers managed their emotions to enhance their capacity as teachers in order to improve their practice.

In the absence of relevant personal support and because of inadequate externally driven professional development teachers experienced feeling of anxiety, frustration and disillusionment (Day & Gu, 2007). By documenting the stories of the Foundation Phase participants, I was also able to depict how teacher-learning and development happened for them on their personal, social and professional levels. Foundation Phase teachers experienced numerous challenges as discussed by Jansen (2001), Samuel (2008) and Swart and Oswald (2008). However, my study shows that some Foundation Phase teachers acquired new knowledge, skills and values that enabled them to respond to curriculum change.

### **Methodological Reflections**

Through narrative inquiry, I have deepened my understanding of the lived experiences of three Foundation Phase teachers. This methodology offered me alternative ways to delve into Foundation Phase teachers' complex lived experiences.

My research study is located within the interpretivist paradigm where I could understand the Foundation Phase teachers' experiences through the narratives. I found narrative inquiry powerful and useful in understanding teacher learning and development because as a researcher, this paradigm allowed me to explore the experiences of Foundation Phase teachers as being dynamic and multiple. Through the teachers' stories told during the unstructured interviews and experienced through collage inquiry, the emotional, physical and psychological pain participants experienced in relation to the kinds of professional development support, were highlighted and made visible. I found the use of stories to be a creative and unrestricted way to understand and



explore glimpses of my participants' daily lives. Through the teachers' stories, I was able to learn how they were able to construct and reconstruct themselves personally and professionally in the context of curriculum change.

In this study, three Foundation Phase teachers focused on significant people-critical moments and critical experiences in their lives during their open-ended interviews. In giving my participants ample time and space to tell their stories allowed me to gain rich, thick data. The use of collage, an art-based method, helped the Foundation Phase teachers to remember certain experiences when they were cutting and sticking pictures. In this way I was able to gain more depth and clarity on their experiences, moods and emotions. The study revealed that development and change in the participants' personal, social and professional levels helped them to embrace and respond in more meaningful ways which in turn helped to improve their practice.

The collage activity allowed the participants to express themselves in a different way that went beyond the use of the spoken word. The freedom and the enjoyment of the cutting and sticking allowed other emotions that were not expressed through interviews to surface. The collage activity facilitated the unpacking and understanding of difficult and complex questions that participants are not comfortable with or found difficult to verbalise in linear telling, as elucidated upon by Gerstenblatt (2013). This added to the richness of the data, which explains why narrative enquiry was seen as the most appropriate method for Foundation Phase teachers to recall their memories and tell their stories.

## **Foundation Phase Teachers' personal and professional experiences in the context of curriculum change**

With the introduction of OBE, NCS, RNCS and CAPS, teachers had to learn to move from the role of teachers as implementers to that of facilitators (Jansen & Taylor, 2003). Lessons shifted from being teacher-centred to learner-centred (Ono & Ferreira, 2010; Warnich & Meyer, 2013). These curriculum shifts created personal and professional tensions for Foundation Phase teachers. Professional development programmes did not consider the personal and professional dimensions of teachers' experiences, which included emotions related to the shifts. Dale and James (2013) stated that if these emotions are left unattended and unsupported, it could lead to unpleasant experiences of learning. The "affective containment of feelings, moods and tensions" (Dale & James, 2013) together with Illeris's (2009) model of learning was useful in understanding the need for the 'affective containment' of Foundation Phase teachers' anxieties and tensions arising out of ongoing curriculum change and its impact on teachers' professional practice. Inadequate and decontextualised professional training, which failed to consider strategies and processes to contain individual teacher's personal experiences and emotions in response to the new ways of teaching, learning and assessment, made teacher learning meaningless. For example, the lack of intervention by the authorities to educate Foundation Phase teachers in coping strategies or training to manage a diverse classroom, left teachers floundering "in the deep-end".

Foundation Phase teachers' experiences with regard to ongoing curriculum changes reflect deep emotional and physical pain (stress, anxiety, frustration and failure) that personally affected these

teachers attitudinally, emotionally and intellectually. These emotional and psychological tensions constrained their incentive to learn new ways as well as to improve their functionality in the classroom.

The study also revealed that Nimi, Sylvia and Nadine experienced great physical and emotional stress. However, this did not deter them from doing the best they could for their learners. The study showed that the participants persevered against the odds to improve their practice by engaging in learning through self-initiated and contextualised communities of practice that were both individual and collective. Nimi streamlined her lesson plans to suit the needs of her learners. Sylvia switched unions in order to learn new skills and knowledge to cope in the classroom. She also learned that reading every day to her second language learners helped to improve their performance in class. Nadine believed in the holistic development of the child. Her self-initiated learning experiences that involved providing breakfast for the learners and also encouraging learners to interpret for other learners has helped in her daily practice. Self-initiated learning helped to reinvent and empower them in their practice, rather than sitting back and becoming victims of the system.

Winch (2014) stated that one's emotional health was just as important as one's physical health. In my study, the participants suffered emotional and physical pain. Stress, frustration, anxiety, failures and rejection are feelings that hurt more, and it takes a longer time to recover from these feelings. These feelings can lead to one feeling demoralized and defeated. However, despite their experiencing emotional and physical pain, the participants were determined not to set themselves

up for failure. They fought against these negative feelings of helplessness and took control of their situation by initiating their own learning.

**Foundation Phase teachers negotiating their personal and professional experiences in the context of curriculum change.**

In order to successfully meet the educational demands, teachers needed to continually strengthen their knowledge-base with appropriate support (Shulman, 1987). This study found that the decontextualised departmental workshops did not provide the participants with adequate training and development to teach the new curricula. They therefore had to find individual and collective ways through self-learning and networking with other teachers to develop new teaching strategies to negotiate the changes. Individual and collaborative learning helped to develop teachers professionally (Kwakman, 2003).

Bell and Gilbert's (1996) Model on Teacher Development was a useful lens for this question. My study has produced a particular understanding of the personal, social and professional development within each participant. According to Bell and Gilbert (1996) when participants were able to affectively contain their emotions and tensions on a personal level, they were able to learn and develop on social and professional levels. The externally driven professional development initiatives took on a top-down implementation code and the facilitators of training were themselves floundering. Whether any meaningful learning was taking place through this process is questionable. The data revealed that little or no learning took place at these workshops which led to the participants engaging in their learning and development on their own. The participants, despite being frustrated by the lack of training and support, were able to initiate

ways of negotiating the new curricula demands. They were forced to reskill themselves and acquire new knowledge through self-initiated and self-directed learning which helped them to negotiate their personal and professional experiences of curriculum changes. My understanding is that these self-initiated learning experiences provided emotional and psychological support for Nimi, Sylvia and Nadine to enable them to reinvent themselves on a personal, social and professional level. This empowerment made them create their own spaces for learning and development and thus improve their practice.

My study found that through learning from a contextualised community of practice, the participants, on a personal level were able to gain a deeper understanding of themselves in relation to parents, peers and the community, and in relation to their learners in particular. Nimi was a positive person who embraced change. She engaged in various ways of improving herself in order to benefit her learners. She completed courses in isiZulu and Computer Studies. Sylvia learnt more about herself and what it means to work with others and with learners. Nadine changed from a negative to a positive person. She realised the importance of having a positive attitude towards her learners. Nimi, Nadine and Sylvia had to therefore acquire and apply new understandings and skills to sustain a better practice.

The study reflects that through the process of collaboration, the participants' self-confidence and ability to critically reflect on their teaching practices grew, thus making them feel good about sharing ideas and creating a willingness to share their teaching practice with others. These developments support their professional development. As Nadine, Sylvia and Nimi became more empowered they became more flexible and more responsive to accommodate changes in their

classroom practice. My study also shows that teacher-learning through collaboration and networking with other teachers brought about development that goes beyond just being a teacher. Through their learning in these social spaces, the participants were able to challenge an educational system that was producing feelings of powerlessness and failure.

Learning through networking and collaboration brought about social transformation for both the participants and their learners. Through networking and collaboration, Nimi, Nadine and Sylvia shared ideas which developed new ways of thinking and doing things that enabled reinvention. The change in their knowledge, skills, attitudes and beliefs influenced their personal, social and professional lives in a positive way.

One of the aims of continuing professional teacher development is to “provide teachers with a clear guidance about which professional development activities will contribute to their professional growth” (Department of Education, 2006, p.17). The participants, therefore took it upon themselves to join professional organisations to empower themselves in the classroom.

Sharing ideas and teaching strategies through networking and collaboration with other teachers helped these Foundation Phase teachers to cope with problems in the classroom. Nadine learnt that teachers need to have a more holistic understanding of the child which became an important issue for her. Nimi created a new image of herself in the way she related to her learners. She learnt that teacher-learner relationship is a two way process which involves learners interacting with teachers and teachers interacting with learners. Sylvia acknowledged the importance of

teachers employing more creative ways of teaching. She realized that as a teacher she can make choices about what and how she teaches.

### **Theoretical reflections**

“Affective containment” of Foundation Phase teachers’ feelings and tensions were not supported at the externally driven professional development programmes. When these teachers attended these workshops they were not supported emotionally and psychologically. The facilitators were not trained to deal with these issues, they were there to implement policy only and therefore the workshops adopted a technical approach. Their learning at these externally driven programmes was therefore meaningless. My understanding is that these teachers were determined not to become victims of the education system. They initiated their own learning through self-initiated learning and contextualised communities of practice. This learning helped to affectively contain their feelings and tensions and Illeris (2009) stated that this provided an incentive to learn and function in the classroom. These self- initiated and self-directed learning experiences created a social space for Foundation Phase teachers to choose how to learn, what to learn and from whom to learn. When the teachers did this they were happy and comfortable to learn which helped to improve their practice.

### **Practice Reflections**

Foundation Phase teachers are prepared to teach in spite of the impediments they face and they are keen to learn how to teach the new curricula. However, a lack of emotional and psychological support, professional development and training limited teacher learning and

change. Teachers' learning in my study was achieved through self-initiated learning and learning from contextualised communities of practice which included learners, parents, peers and volunteers from the community which created spaces for learning, since what was offered by the departmental workshops was inadequate for their learning and development. Foundation Phase teachers gained new knowledge and skills through self-learning and networking. Sharing ideas with colleagues and other teachers helped them to create social spaces for their learning. Therefore, motivation, feedback and support from the education department are vitally important for teacher development. Training and development of the Foundation Phase curriculum and methods of teaching must include strategies and processes to support teachers both personally and professionally for effective learning of teachers.

### **Policy Reflections**

The main aim of this study was to understand the learning experiences and development of Foundation Phase teachers in the context of curriculum change. My interest in the topic stems from the challenges I experienced with OBE, NCS, RNCS and CAPS. Through this study I was able to gain an understanding of the experiences of Foundation Phase teachers and how they found ways to affectively contain their emotions and tensions in the context of curriculum changes.

Narrative inquiry gave a new dimension to the learning experiences of Foundation Phase teachers that clearly revealed the emotions, tensions and moods that they experienced in the context of curriculum change. Learning and development initiatives by the Department of



Education for teachers need to look at how curriculum changes effect teachers both emotionally and psychologically which is under-researched and limited. Through their stories, I understood how learning happened for them which were spontaneous, self-directed and self-initiated. Through story-telling, the participants also learned about themselves. Teacher-learning through story-telling thus became an important pedagogical tool for Foundation Phase teachers in linking their past to the present practice.

### **Suggestions for further research**

This study involved participants from developed urban areas. The rural element may provide additional data in light of the different type of community and resource considerations.

Negotiation of changes and professional development needs by teachers may be different in such settings. It would be interesting to find out what experiences and negotiations of curriculum changes took place for other Foundation Phase teachers with differing backgrounds where questions such as the following can be posed:

What are the experiences of Foundation Phase teachers in rural schools in the context of curriculum change and what are these teachers' personal and professional learning experiences in the context of curriculum change?

## **Conclusion**

Foundation Phase teachers working in the context of ongoing curriculum change experienced a range of feelings that affected them psychologically and emotionally. The particular teachers whose stories are represented in this study showed how they were able to creatively work around the negative moods and emotions experienced personally and professionally. These feelings created the impetus for their professional choices and decisions around what to learn, from whom to learn and how to learn. It assisted them in negotiating their professional practice in personally relevant ways.

## REFERENCES

- Aronowitz, S., & Giroux, H. (1985). *Education under siege*. New York: Burgin & Garvey.
- Bell, B., & Gilbert, J. (1994). Teacher development as professional, personal, and social development. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 10*, 483-497.
- Bell, B., & Gilbert, J. (1996). *Teacher development: A model from science education*. London, UK: Falmer Press.
- Bertram, C. (2011). What does research say about teacher learning and teacher knowledge? Implications for professional development in South Africa. *Journal of Education, 52*, 1-24.
- Borko, H., & Putnam, R. T. (1996). Learning to Teach. In D. C. Berliner, & R. C. Calfee (Eds.), *Handbook of Educational Psychology* (pp. 673-708). New York: Macmillan Library Reference. USA: Simon & Schuster Macmillan.
- Brodie, K. (2013). The power of professional learning communities. *Education as change, 17*(1), 5-18.
- Butler-Kisber, L. (2008). Collage as inquiry. In J. G. Knowles, & A. L. Cole (Eds.), *Handbook of the arts in qualitative research* (pp. 265-276). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

- Carrim, N. (2003). Teacher identity: Tensions between roles. In K. Lewin, M. Samuel, & Y. Sayed (Eds.), *Changing patterns of teacher education in South Africa: Policy, practice and prospects*. Sandown: Heinemann.
- Chisholm, L., Volmink, J., Ndhlovu, T., Potenza, E., Mahomed, H., Muller, J., & Mphahlele, L. (2005). A South African curriculum for the twenty first century. *Report of the review committee on Curriculum*.
- Christie, P. (1999). *Changing curriculum: Studies on outcomes-based education in South Africa*. Cape Town, SA: Juta and Company Ltd.
- Clandinin, D. J., & Connelly, F. M. (2000). Narrative inquiry. *International encyclopedia of education*, 1-23.
- Clark, N. L., & Worger, W. H. (2004). *South Africa - The Rise and Fall of Apartheid (Seminar Studies in History)*. London, UK: Pearson-Longman.
- Clore, G. L., & Gaspar, K. (2000). Feeling is believing: Some affective influences on belief. In N. Frijda, T. Manstead, & S. Bem (Eds.), *Emotions and Beliefs: How Feelings Influence Thoughts* (pp. 10 - 44). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2007). *Research methods in education* (6th ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.

- Collinson, V., Kozina, E., Lin, Y-H. K., Ling, L., Matheson, I., Newcombe, L., & Zogla, I. (2009). Professional development for teachers: a world of change. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 32(1), 3-19. doi: 10.1080/02619760802553022.
- Connelly, F. M., & Clandinin, D. J. (1990). Stories of experience and narrative inquiry. *Educational researcher*, 19, 2-14.
- Connelly, F. M. & Clandinin, D. J. (2006). Narrative inquiry. In J. Green, G. Camilli, & P. Elmore (eds.), *Handbook of complementary methods in education research* (pp. 375-385). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Craig, H., Kraft, R., & du Plessis, J. (1998). *Teacher development: Making an impact*. Washington, DC: ABEL Clearinghouse for Basic Education, Academy for Educational Development and World Bank Human Development Network.
- Cross, D. I., & Hong, J. Y. (2012). An ecological examination of teachers' emotions in the school context. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 28(7), 957-967.
- Dale, D., & James, C. (2013). The Importance of Affective Containment during Unwelcome Educational Change The Curious Incident of the Deer Hut Fire. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 1741143213494885.

- Day, C., & Gu, Q. (2007). Variations in the conditions for teachers' professional learning and development: Sustaining commitment and effectiveness over a career. *Oxford Review of Education*, 33(4), 423-443.
- Day, C., & Sachs, J. (2004). Professionalism, performativity and empowerment: discourse in the politics, policies and purposes of continuing professional development. In C. Day, and J. Sachs (Eds.), *International Handbook on the Continuing Professional Development of Teachers*, Maidenhead, Birks: Open University Press.
- De Clercq, F., & Phiri, R. (2013). The challenges of school-based teacher development initiatives in South Africa and the potential of cluster-teaching. *Perspectives in Education*, 31(1), 77-86.
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2011). *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research*. Sage.
- Department of Basic Education. (2009, October). *Report of the Task Team for the Review of the Implementation of the National Curriculum Statement*. Retrieved from <http://www.education.gov.za/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=n1YYGPv1/94%3D>
- Department of Basic Education. (2011, May). *Curriculum news: Improving the quality of learning and teaching. Strengthening Curriculum implementation from 2010 and beyond*. Retrieved from

[http://www.education.gov.za/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=rSVS%2FDrXte8%3D&tabid=348  
&mid=1018](http://www.education.gov.za/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=rSVS%2FDrXte8%3D&tabid=348&mid=1018)

Department of Education. (1996). *South African Schools Act, Act 84 of 1996*. Pretoria:  
Government Printer.

Department of Education. (2002). *Education for all status report 2002*. Retrieved from  
<http://www.education.gov.za/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=qDcj%2Bc%2FtD5A%3D&>

Department of Education. (2006). *National policy framework for teacher education and  
development in South Africa*. Pretoria, Department of Education.

Dewey, J. (1899). *The School and Society*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Dewey, J. (1938). *Experience and Education*. Indianapolis, IN: Kappa Delta Pi.

Donald, D., Lazarus, S., & Lolwana, P. (2002). *Educational psychology in social context (2nd  
ed.)*. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.

Du Plessis, P., & Conley, L. (2007). Children and poverty in South Africa: the right to social  
security. *Educational Research and Review*, 2(4), 49-59.

- Eisner, E. (2006). *Reimagining schools: The selected works of Elliott Eisner*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Eraut, M. (1994). *Developing professional knowledge and competence*. London: Routledge.
- Erden, E. (2010). *Problems that preschool teachers face in the curriculum implementation*. Unpublished master's thesis, Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Turkey.
- Evans, L. (2002). *Reflective Practice in Educational Research: developing advanced skills*. London, UK: Continuum.
- Feldman, A. (2003). Validity and quality in self-study. *Educational researcher*, 32(3), 26-28.
- Ferguson, G. (2006). *Language Planning and Education*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Fives, H., & Gill, M. G. (Eds.). (2014). *International Handbook of Research on Teachers' Beliefs*. Routledge.
- Foley, G. (2001). Radical adult education and learning. *International Journal of Lifelong Education*. doi: 10.1080/02601370010008264.



- Franzak, J. K. (2002). Developing a teacher identity: The impact of critical friends practice on the student teacher. *English Education, 34*, 258-280.
- Fraser, C., Kennedy, A., Reid, L., & Mckinney, S. (2007). Teachers' continuing professional development: contested concepts, understandings and models. *Journal of In-service Education, 33*(2): pp.153–169.
- Gay, L. R., & Airasian, P. (2000). *Educational research: Competencies for analysis and experience*. New Jersey, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Gerstenblatt, P. (2013). Collage portraits as a method of analysis in qualitative research, *International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 12*, p.295-309.
- Giliomee, H. (2009). A note on Bantu education, 1953 to 1970. *South African Journal of Economics, 77*, 190-198. doi: 10.1111/j.1813-6982.2009.01193.x
- Greene, M. (2008). *The public school and the private vision: A search for America in education and literature*. New York, NY: The New Press.
- Gudmundsdottir, S. (2001). Narrative research on school practice. In V. Richardson (Ed.), *Fourth handbook for research on teaching* (pp. 226-240). New York: MacMillan.

Gultig, J., Hoadley, U., & Jansen, J. D. (2002). *Curriculum: Learning Guide*. Cape Town, SA: Oxford University Press.

Hamilton, M. L., Smith, L., & Worthington, K. (2008). Fitting the Methodology with the Research: An Exploration of Narrative, Self-Study and Auto-Ethnography. *Studying Teacher Education*, 4,17-28.

Hargreaves, A. (1994). *Changing teachers, changing times: teachers' work and culture in the post-modern age*. London, UK: Cassell; New York, NY: Teachers' College Press; Toronto, CA: University of Toronto Press.

Harley, K., & Wedekind, V. (2004). Political change, curriculum change and social formation, 1990 to 2002. In L. Chisholm (Ed.). *Changing Class: Education and social change in post-apartheid South Africa* (pp.195-220). Cape Town, SA: Compress.

Hayes, D. (2000). Cascade and training teacher's professional development. *English Language Journal*, 54(2):135-145.

Illeris, K. (2009). A comprehensive understanding of human learning. In K. Illeris (Ed.), *Contemporary theories of learning*. Routledge: London and New York.

James, C., & Connolly, U. (2000). *Effective change in schools*. Psychology Press.

Jansen J. D. (2001). Image-ining teachers: Policy images and teacher identity in South African classrooms. *South African Journal of Education*, 21(4), 242-246.

Jansen, J.D. (2003). Accountability, Autonomy and the Regulation of the Teaching Profession in South Africa. *Research Papers in Education*, forthcoming.

Jansen, J. D., & Taylor, N. (2003). Educational change in South Africa 1994-2003: Case studies in large-scale education reform. *Country Studies Education Reform and Management Publication Series*, 2, 5-44.

Jarvis, P. (1992). Reflective practice and nursing. *Nurse Education Today*, 12, 174-181.

Jarvis, P., & Parker, S. (Eds.). (2005). *Human learning: A holistic perspective*. London: Routledge.

Johnson, K. E., & Golombek, P. R. (Eds.). (2002). *Narrative inquiry as professional development*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Kelly, A. V. (1983). *The Curriculum: Theory and practice* (4th ed.). London, UK: Paul Chapman.

Kelly, P. (2006). What is teacher learning? A socio-cultural perspective. *Oxford Review of Education*, 32(4): pp.505–519.

Kwakman, K. (2003). Factors affecting teachers' participation in professional learning activities.

*Teaching and Teacher Education, 19*, 149-170.

Lave, J., & Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated learning: Legitimate peripheral participation*. New

York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Lieberman, A., & Pointer Mace, D. (2008). Teacher learning: the key to education reform.

*Journal of Teacher Education, 59*(3), 226-234.

Louw, D. A., & Edwards, D. J. A. (2005). *Psychology – An Introduction for Students in South*

*Africa* (2nd ed.). Johannesburg, SA: Heinemann.

Maharg, P. (2000). Rogers, constructivism and jurisprudence: Educational critique and the legal

curriculum. *International Journal of the Legal Profession, 7*(3), 189-203.

Maphalala, M.C. (2006). Educators' experiences in implementing the revised national

Curriculum Statements in the GET Band. Unpublished Doctoral Thesis. KwaDlangezwa:

University of Zululand.

McKinney, S., Carroll, M., Christie, D., Fraser, C., Kennedy, A., Reid, L., & Wilson, A. (2005)

*AERS: Learners, Learning and Teaching Network Project 2-Progress Report*. Paper

delivered at Scottish Educational Research Association Annual Conference, Perth,

Scotland, 24-26 November.

- Meerah, T. S. M., Halim L., Rahman, S., Abdullah, T., Harun, H., Hassan, H. A., & Ismail, A. (2010). Teaching marginalized children primary science teachers professional development through collaborative action research. *Cypriot Journal of Educational Sciences*, 5, 1.
- Meyer, D. K., & Turner, J. C. (2007). Scaffolding emotions in classrooms. In P. A. Schutz & R. Pekrun (Eds.), *Emotion in education* (pp. 243–258). San Diego, CA: Elsevier.
- Mishler, E. (1990). Validation in inquiry-guided research: The role of exemplars in narrative studies. *Harvard educational review*, 60(4), 415-443.
- Moletsane, M. K. (2004). *The efficacy of the Rorschach among Black learners in South Africa*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Pretoria, Pretoria, South Africa.
- Moore, A. (2000). *Teaching and Learning – Pedagogy, Curriculum and Culture*. New York, NY: Routledge-Falmer.
- Msila, V. (2008). Transforming teacher practice: A look at the experiences of two first-year teacher-learners in the NPDE programme. *Educational Research and Review* 3(6),195–203.
- Mwamwenda, T. S. (2004). *Educational Psychology: An Africa Perspective* (3rd ed). Sandton, SA: Heinemann Publishers.

- Ndlalane, C. (2006). *Teacher clusters or networks as opportunities for learning about science content and pedagogical content knowledge*. Unpublished PhD dissertation. Pretoria, SA: University of Pretoria.
- Ng, K. E. D., Widjaja, W., Chan, C. M. E., & Seto, C. (2012). A case study on developing a teacher's capacity in mathematic modelling. *The Mathematics Educator*, 16(1), 1-31.
- Nieto, S. (2003). *What keeps teachers going?* Teachers College Press.
- Nieuwenhuis, J. (2010). Analysing qualitative data. In K. Maree (Ed.), *First steps in research* (99-122). Hatfield, Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Ono, Y., & Ferreira, J. (2010). A case study of continuing teacher professional development through lesson study in South Africa. *South African Journal of Education*, 30(1), 59-74.
- Ozga, J. (1995). Deskillling a profession: professionalism, deprofessionalisation and the new managerialism. In H. Busher & R. Saran (Eds.) *Managing Teachers as Professionals in Schools*. London: Kogan Page.
- Parker, D., & Adler, J. (2005). Constraint or catalyst: The regulation of teacher education in South Africa. *Journal of Education*, 36, 59-78.

- Patton, M. Q. (2014). *Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods Integrating Theory and Practice* (Fourth Edition), Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, CA.
- Phiri, R. (2011). Cluster teaching as an arena for continuing teacher professional development: A case study in Mpumalanga. Unpublished Med report, Johannesburg: Wits School of Education.
- Pillay, D., & Govinden, B. (2007). In search of home - practices of the self in selected teacher narratives. *Journal of Education*, 42, 125-139.
- Pillay, G. (2003). *Successful teachers: A cubist narrative of lives, practices and the evaded*. Unpublished D.Ed Thesis, Faculty of Education, University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa.
- Pinar, W. F. (2009). *Intellectual advancement through disciplinarity: Verticality and horizontality in curriculum studies*. Boston, MA: Sense Publishers.
- Pithouse, K. (2004). Self-study through narrative interpretation. In C. Mitchell, K. O'Reilly-Scanlon & S. Weber (Eds.), *Just Who Do We Think We Are? Methodologies for Autobiography and Self-Study in Education* (pp. 206-217). London, UK: Routledge-Falmer.

Putnam, R. T., & Borko, H. (2000). What do new views of knowledge and thinking have to say about research on teacher learning? *Educational Researcher*, 29(1), 4-15.

Raht, D., Smith, J., & MacEntee, K. (2009). Engaging youth in addressing HIV & AIDS: Creative and participatory methods in the classroom. In C. Mitchell & K. Pithouse (Eds.), *Teaching and HIV & AIDS* (pp. 219-236). Johannesburg: MacMillan South Africa.

Reid, W. (2012). *Case studies in curriculum change: Great Britain and the United States*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Ritchie, J. S., & Wilson, D. E. (2000). *Teacher narrative as critical inquiry: Re-writing the script*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Roberts, J. (1998). *Language Teacher Education*. London: Arnold.

Samuel, M. (2008). Accountability to whom? For what? Teacher identity and the force field model of teacher development. *Perspectives in Education*, 26, 3-16.

Schutz, P. A., Hong, J. Y., Cross, D. I., & Osbon, J. (2006). Reflections on investigating emotions among educational contexts. *Educational Psychology Review*, 18, 343–360.  
doi:10.1007/ s10648-006-9030-3.



- Shezi, V. S. (2008). *Does the cascade model work for teachers? An exploration of teachers' experiences on training and development through the cascade model*. Unpublished masters dissertation, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban, South Africa.
- Shulman, L. S. (1987). Knowledge and teaching: Foundations of the new reform. *Harvard Educational Review*, 57, 1-22.
- Shulman, L. S. (1997). Disciplines of inquiry in education: An overview. In R. M. Jaegar (Ed.), *Complementary methods for researchers in education* (pp. 3-19). Washington, DC: American Education Research Association.
- Shulman, L. S., & Shulman, J. H. (2004). How and what teachers learn: A shifting perspective. *Journal of curriculum studies*. 36(2), 257-271.
- Smith, J. A. (2008). *Qualitative Psychology: A Practical Guide to Research Methods* (2nd ed). London, UK: Sage.
- Southwood, G. (2002). Instructional Leadership in schools: reflections and empirical evidence. *School Leadership and Management*, 22, 73-91.
- Sutton, R. E., & Wheatley, K. F. (2003). Teachers' emotions and teaching: A review of the literature and directions for future research. *Educational psychology review*, 15(4), 327-358.

- Swart, E., & Oswald, M. (2008). How Teachers Navigate their Learning in Developing Inclusive Learning Communities. *Education as Change*, 12(2): 91-108. Retrieved from [http://www.researchgate.net/profile/Estelle\\_Swart/publication/235560392\\_How\\_teachers\\_navigate\\_their\\_learning\\_in\\_developing\\_inclusive\\_learning\\_communities/links/0f317539c5d97b4021000000.pdf](http://www.researchgate.net/profile/Estelle_Swart/publication/235560392_How_teachers_navigate_their_learning_in_developing_inclusive_learning_communities/links/0f317539c5d97b4021000000.pdf)
- Tammets, K., Väljataga, T., & Pata, K. (2008). Self-directing at social spaces: conceptual framework for course design. In *World Conference on Educational Multimedia, Hypermedia and Telecommunications* (Vol. 1, pp. 2030-2038).
- Thomas, L., & Beauchamp, C. (2011). Understanding new teachers' professional identities through metaphor. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 27(4), 762-769.
- Van Eekelen, I. M., Boshuizen, H. P. A., & Vermunt, J. D. (2005). Self-regulation in higher education teacher learning. *Higher Education*, 50, 447-471.
- Vandeyar, S., & Killen, R. (2003). Has curriculum reform in South Africa really changed assessment practices, and what promise does the revised National Curriculum Statement hold? *Perspectives in Education*, 21, 119-134.
- Vandeyar, S., & Killen, R. (2007). Educators' conceptions of classroom assessment in post-apartheid South Africa. *South African Journal of Education*, 27, 101-115.

Wallace, J., & Louden, W. (1998). Curriculum change in science: Riding the waves of reform. In B. J. Fraser, & K. G. Tobin (Eds.), *International handbook of science education* (pp. 471-485). Dordrecht, NL: Kluwer.

Warnich, P., & Meyer, L. (2013). Trainee teachers' observation of learner-centred instruction and assessment as applied by History and Social Sciences teachers. *Yesterday and Today*, 9, 00. Retrieved from [http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci\\_arttext&pid=S2223-03862013000100003&lng=en&tlng=en](http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S2223-03862013000100003&lng=en&tlng=en)

White, K. R. (2009). Connecting religion and teacher identity: The unexplored relationship between teachers and religion in public schools. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 25(6), 857-866.

Wilson, E., & Demetriou, H. (2007). New teacher learning: substantive knowledge and contextual factors. *The Curriculum Journal*, 18(3), 213-229.

Wilson, S. M., & Berne, J. (1999). Teacher learning and the acquisition of professional knowledge: An examination of research on contemporary professional development. *Review of Research in Education*, 24, 173-209.

Winch, C. (2014). Education and broad concepts of agency. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 46(6), 569-583.

Wolhuter, C.C. (2006). Teacher Training in South Africa: Past, Present and Future. *Education Research and Perspectives (Australia)*, 33, 124-139.

**APPENDIX 1: Request for school principal’s permission to conduct research at his/ her School**

.....  
.....  
.....

The Principal

.....

Dear Sir

**REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH AT YOUR SCHOOL**

I am an M.Ed student at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (Edgewood College) and I am undertaking a research project as part of my studies. The title of the project is “*Educational Journeys of Foundation Phase Teachers in the context of Curriculum Change*”.

Implementation of curriculum changes poses challenges as it requires teachers to shift from a current programme which they are familiar with to the new programme. This involves changes in knowledge, actions and attitudes.

The aim of this project is to explore the personal and professional development of Foundation Phase teachers in the context of curriculum change. I will explore how their learning experiences lead to development and change. I also want to understand how Foundation Phase teachers are acquiring or extending their skills and knowledge about their professional practice in the context of curriculum change.

It is hoped that this project will make a significant contribution to research regarding professional development and curriculum change.

I kindly request permission to conduct my research at your School. I would like to interview one Foundation Phase teacher from your School on his/her experiences of curriculum change.

I would agree to the following:

1. In no way would the research interfere with teaching and the running of the School.
2. Participation by the teacher would be voluntary after being given full information about the research and teacher’s involvement.
3. A consent form will be signed by the participating teacher. The participant has a right to withdraw from the project at any time without any negative consequence.
4. Should for any reason you find that you wish to withdraw your permission for the research, you may do so at any stage of the research without any negative consequence to you or the School.

I would use unstructured interviews, artifact retrieval and collage to collect my data. If I gain informed consent from the participant, I will use this data in a way that respects his/ her dignity and privacy. Copies of the participant's contributions will be securely stored and disposed of if no longer required for research purposes. The participant's name or any other information that might identify him/ her or the school will not be used in any presentation or publication that might come out of this study.

The study will not use any learners.

If you require any further information about this study upon its completion, I will be most willing to provide you with this.

Thank you for your assistance.

Should you have any queries about the research, please contact my supervisor Dr G Pillay, at the School of Education, UKZN, during working hours, at 031-2607598. If you have any questions relating to the rights of research participants, you can contact Ms Phume Ximba in the UKZN Humanities and Social Science Research Ethics Office on 031-260 3587.

Thank you for your assistance.

Yours faithfully

---

**MRS I MOODLEY**

Cell. No. ....

**APPENDIX 2: Request for consent of intended participant**

.....  
.....

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Dear.....

**REQUEST FOR CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN MY RESEARCH PROJECT**

I am an M.Ed student at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (Edgewood College) and I am undertaking a research project as part of my studies. The title of the project is “Educational Journeys of Foundation Phase Teachers in the context of Curriculum Change”. The aim of this project is to understand where, what and how teacher learning is happening for Foundation Phase teachers.

I have identified you as a possible participant for the study. Your participation is voluntary. I kindly request permission for you to participate in my research study.

The project is supervised by Dr G Pillay, a lecturer at the School of Education at UKZN. Should you wish to verify the content of this letter, you may contact her at the university during working hours, at 031-2607598.

I will use unstructured interviews, artifact retrieval and collage inquiry to collect data about your experiences with curriculum changes in the Foundation Phase. These activities will be conducted several times over a period of two months commencing in December 2012. Each activity will be approximately 30 minutes and will be held at a time and place that is convenient to you. The activities will not interfere with your official duties. With your permission, all interviews and participation in activities will be electronically recorded. Alternatively, notes will be recorded.

The research is subject to strict ethical considerations stipulated by the University which ensures utmost confidentiality. Pseudonyms will be utilized to avoid personal identification of participants throughout the research process, including any publications. You have the right to withdraw from participation at any point without any negative consequence to you or your school. There are no potential risks to you should you participate in the project. The information you provide will be used solely for the purpose of research. The information provided by you will be kept in a safe and secure place by the University for a period of 5 years and will be destroyed through shredding of documents and destruction of any physical media.

If permission is granted by you for participation in the research study, you are kindly requested to fill in the attached declaration.

Yours faithfully

\_\_\_\_\_  
**MRS I MOODLEY**(Cell. No.: .....)

### APPENDIX 3: Consent form of participant in research

#### DECLARATION: CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH PROJECT

I \_\_\_\_\_ (full names of participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project entitled “Educational Journeys of Foundation Phase Teachers in the context of Curriculum Change”.

I understand that I am free to withdraw from the project, without prejudice, at any time if I want to.

I consent to the following data collection activities (please tick)

	YES	NO
Interviews		
Viewing of documents from my portfolio as selected by me		
Making copies of documents from the portfolio		
Creating a collage		
Photographing of collage		
Digital recording of interviews		
Digital recording of discussion on documents from portfolio		
Digital recording of discussion on collage		

\_\_\_\_\_  
**SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT**

**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_