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**INYUVESI
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TEACHING PRACTICES AND EMOTIONS OF SENIOR PHASE

TEACHERS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC:

A CASE STUDY

BY

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DECLARATION

This thesis has been submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Masters in Education in the Postgraduate Programme of the College of Humanities, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg, South Africa. I, Eric Nkosiyeaphana Ndlovu, student number 9902748, declare that:

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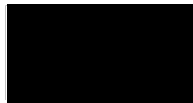
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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my wife, Mrs S'bongumusa Jacqueline Ndlovu for her support encouragement and love.

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First and foremost, I would like to thank God for the spiritual guidance and motivation in completing this dissertation.

Furthermore, I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to:

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PREFACE

The research study described in this dissertation was carried out with five English Home Language teachers at two public schools in the Wembezi Circuit of the uThukela District. The interviews commenced in June 2021 and concluded in July 2021, under the supervision of Dr J. Naidoo and Dr J. Pennefather of the Pietermaritzburg campus of the University of KwaZulu-Natal. This study represents the original work completed by the author and has not been submitted in any form for any diploma or degree to any other tertiary institution. Where the author has made use of the work of other authors, this has been duly acknowledged in the text.

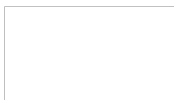


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ABSTRACT

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in South Africa and the declaration of a national lockdown in March 2020 resulted in the closure of schools. Social distancing became an important measure to curb the spread of the pandemic. As a result, learners had to stay at home while embarking on alternative learning. Therefore, this research study examined the experiences and emotions of senior phase teachers in the process of adjusting their teaching practices and curriculum coverage during the COVID-19 pandemic. This study was grounded on Hargreaves's (2001) theory of emotional geographies of teaching as it the most relevant theoretical framework for this study. Hargreaves's (2001) five emotional geographies of teaching are sociocultural, moral, physical, political and professional.

Furthermore, this study was located within the interpretive research paradigm due to its appropriateness in helping the researcher to obtain an in-depth understanding of the reality of teachers' circumstances during the COVID-19 pandemic. According to Mack (2010), interpretive studies focus on an individuals' ability to construct meaning. In answering this study's two research questions, this study adopted two forms of data generation instruments which were semi-structured interviews and collages. Purposive sampling was applied in conducting this study as it allowed a small number of participants to be selected based on a stipulated criterion. Therefore, the researcher purposefully selected six grade seven teachers teaching different subjects in a primary school during the COVID-19 pandemic. This was done to get in-depth knowledge on the experiences of senior phase teachers in the process of adjusting teaching strategies and curriculum coverage during COVID-19 pandemic. The findings of this study indicated that the outbreak of the pandemic compelled teachers to adjust to COVID-19 regulations. In doing so, the implementation of the following actions was in practice: health protocols such as social distancing and sanitising, rotation systems, curriculum trimming, use of digital technology. There were a number of factors that impaired the process of adjustment in many ways. These included scarcity of resources and heavy workloads for teachers, as well as other socio-economic challenges. In addition, the findings of the study revealed that, in adjusting teaching strategies during COVID-19, teachers experienced feelings of fear and anxiety and felt the need for varying degrees of support from different role players such as parents, the Department of Basic Education (DBE) and fellow teachers

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Chapter one: Introduction and background to the study

1.1. Introduction

This research study examined the experiences of senior phase teachers in the process of adjusting their teaching practices and curriculum coverage during the COVID-19 pandemic. The study also explored the emotions of senior phase teachers during this process. In this chapter, I outline the problem statement and the background to the study in which I explain the problem of the study, rationale of the study and the research questions. This is followed by a brief discussion of the literature on experiences and emotions of teachers in the process of adjusting teaching practices, strategies and curriculum coverage. This chapter also reviews the theoretical framework, methodology of the research study design, methods of data generation, data analysis, ethical issues and limitations of the study. I conclude this chapter with a brief summary of the five chapters in this thesis.

1.2. Background of the study

The study examined the experiences of senior phase teachers in the process of adjusting their teaching practices and curriculum coverage during the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, it explored the emotions experienced by senior phase teachers while adjusting their teaching practices and curriculum coverage teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic. This section discusses the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on the South African education system.

According to Huang et al. (2020), the first case of COVID-19 was first reported in December 2019 in the city of Wuhan, the capital of Central China's Hubei province. The virus then travelled to various other continents, such as America and Europe, and eventually arrived in South Africa. Mahaye (2020) and Van Der Berg and Spaul (2020) affirm that the first case of COVID-19 in South Africa was reported on 5 March 2020.

Aarts et al. (2021) point out that the spread of the Coronavirus became a threat to societies across the world, but the most worrying issue was the unavailability of the vaccine making lockdown, social distancing, wearing of masks and quarantine the only alternative measures to curb the rapid spread of the virus.

Lancos and Christian (2021) contend that the implementation of lockdown had a negative impact on schools across the world, particularly in developing countries such as South Africa that were more severely affected than developed countries. In addition, Onyema et al. (2020) argue that the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic and the consequent lockdowns forced people to work and learn at home which profoundly disrupted the education systems internationally. Therefore, countries had to identify replacement mechanisms to traditional teaching and learning strategies. Many countries, including South Africa, opted for blended and online learning.

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in under-developed, developing and developed countries abruptly forced education systems to undergo digital transformation (Iivari et al., 2020). According to Reimers (2022), however, since South Africa is a developing country with vast education imbalances between public and private schools and urban and rural geographical locations, the process of digital transformation was very irregular and biased which meant that the majority of citizens were unable to access digital learning due to numerous challenges. These challenges included the unavailability of resources such as necessary digital devices and network connectivity and access as well as inadequate training for both learners and teachers in using online learning technology. Therefore, the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic had a huge impact in South Africa because the country is poorly resourced and is already suppressed by other pandemics such as Tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS. Moreover, Abidah et al. (2020) assert that the education departments' prolonged efforts to introduce suitable teaching and learning strategies to facilitate home based learning resulted in the loss of teaching and learning time creating stress and anxiety for teachers, learners and the society at large.

1.3. Rationale of the study

The fundamental objective of undertaking this study was to explore the experiences and emotions of senior phase teachers in the process of adjusting their teaching strategies and curriculum coverage during the COVID-19 pandemic. According to Ramrathan (2021), South African schools closed for a long period of time due to the lockdown in which social distancing was the key aim. This led to various proposals and debates based on curriculum recovery plans after the lockdown period. Huang et al. (2020) describe how an online teaching and learning strategy became mandatory in many countries during the COVID-19 pandemic.

According to Hargreaves (2001), teaching is traditionally regarded as a subject delivery practice in which teachers teach in isolation. Hargreaves (2001) also suggests that teaching involves emotions and relationships among teachers, parents and learners. Teaching as a team contributes to teachers' emotional and moral support through sharing new ideas and opinions. Collaborative and cooperative approaches to teaching symbolise expanding and developing forms of new professionalism in teaching. According to Hargreaves (2001), collaborative engagements lead to improved student performance. Hargreaves (2001) contends that little research has been done to describe the uses of collegiality and emotional support for teachers. He adds that, for many decades, to be a teacher was to be a member of a lonely crowd. This contributed to teachers being psychologically lonely in such a way that they were unable to talk about their feelings and to discuss their professional challenges.

The COVID-19 pandemic, however, radically changed teachers' conditions. Social distancing regulations compelled teachers to move out of their comfort zone and adopt new teaching strategies. Therefore, there is a great need for research on emotional geographies of teachers during the COVID-19 pandemic. There is limited research on teaching and teachers' experiences of the pandemic. There is also a lack of literature on the emotions of teachers during the COVID-19 pandemic while they adjusted their teaching strategies and curriculum coverage. According to Daniel (2020), the COVID-19 pandemic brought a huge challenge to the global education system, and addressing learning needs in line with the pandemic became paramount. Capacity building for new teaching, learning and assessment strategies such as remote teaching and blended learning was needed within a short space of time. Moreover, Broodryk and Robinson (2021) assert that there is a great need to understand the people who were affected and their experiences and emotions when assessing the psychological impact of COVID-19 and lockdown regulations. It was for these reasons I became motivated to conduct a research study on this relevant and recent issue to examine deeply the emotions and experiences of teachers in the process of adjusting to alternative teaching strategies and curriculum coverage during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Personally, I also experienced challenges, both professionally and emotionally, in my teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic due to a number of challenges. These included the allocation of subjects I had never taught or specialised in added onto my workload and the influx of contradicting instructions from the department of education.

I also suffered from the increase in my workload, contradicting suggestions on new teaching practices and the accommodation of learners who were absent from school due to COVID-19 trauma, the system for the rotation of learners attendance and learners' failure to recall. These factors exposed me to stress, depression and emotional frustration orchestrated by my inability to comply with the given curriculum coverage plan in the reduced teaching time. Consequently, I was motivated to conduct this study. The study also intended to examine the influence of adjusted teaching strategies employed by senior phase teachers during the COVID-19 pandemic on curriculum coverage. The findings of the study could make recommendations and contribute to knowledge about teaching strategies and curriculum coverage.

1.4. Research questions

1. What were senior phase teachers' experiences of adjusting their teaching strategies and curriculum coverage during the COVID-19 pandemic?
2. How did senior phase teachers feel about adjusting their teaching strategies and curriculum coverage during the COVID-19 pandemic?

This research study consisted of the two questions listed above that aimed to examine the experiences and emotions of teachers in the process of adjusting their teaching strategies and curriculum coverage during the COVID-19 pandemic. According to Asbury and Kim (2020), prior to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, teachers experienced many challenges including poor working conditions, heavy workloads, overcrowding and low wages which led to teachers' frustration, lack of morale and poor learner performance. Blame for poor performance is often shifted to teachers while ignoring underlying factors leading to this. Asbury and Kim (2020) further suggest that the teaching profession was less recognised and teachers were regarded as lazy with frequent negative reports about teachers in the media. This was a further challenge teachers faced before the COVID-19 pandemic.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, teachers were expected to transform their teaching approaches from face-to-face to blended and remote teaching and still cover the entire curriculum without provision of necessary resources to do so. Drawing on Beauchamp and Thomas (2009), it is possible that the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic added to the burden of teachers resulting in more stress and depression.

Deguen et al. (2020) argue that the greatest burden in the education system during the COVID-19 pandemic was on teachers who had to work hard trying to convert their teaching programmes, annual teaching plans and assessments to accommodate home-based learning. Deguen et al. (2020) also contend that teachers were expected to teach learners who were severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic in many ways including death of parents, starvation, anxiety, stress and trauma, depression and different forms of abuse. Therefore, this suggests that teachers were making large sacrifices in their efforts to ensure that learners continued learning during the COVID-19 lockdown when they became victims of the circumstances. The two questions articulated above assisted me to examine and understand the emotional impact of their sacrifices.

1.5. Literature review

In order to evaluate the number of studies undertaken in relation to the topic of this study, the variety of literature based on the experiences and emotions of teachers in the process of adjusting practices, strategies and curriculum coverage during the COVID-19 pandemic was reviewed. While reviewing literature, I found that since the COVID-19 pandemic is recent and popular, there is a multitude of literature on the lockdown regulations, impact of COVID-19 on education and teaching strategies used during the pandemic. However, there is less literature on the experiences and emotional impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on teachers in their attempts to ensure curriculum coverage. In addition, to address the two research questions of this study, literature about the COVID-19 pandemic and education, revised teaching strategies in primary schools and curriculum coverage was reviewed. Since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic affected most countries, the review of literature had to cover different contexts including global, African and South African contexts.

Literature reveals that coverage of the full curriculum was not possible in many schools as a result of national lockdowns and the shutdown of schools in South Africa. Van Der Berg and Spaull (2020) argue that school closures in South Africa also resulted in financial stress for many families which contributed to many mental health illnesses for teachers, learners and parents. In addition, the increasing child abuse, fear, loneliness and domestic violence experienced by learners staying at home were noticeable.

Furthermore, since schools are centres of many services to learners, the closing of schools affected the supply of numerous services essential to learners such as T.B. and HIV/AIDS testing, trauma and abuse counselling and immunisation. Consequently, school closures led to a lack of services for vulnerable youth that had lasting effects. This will leave a mark in the history of the country and learners of this time.

1.5.1. COVID-19 pandemic and education

According to Zhang et al. (2020), the outbreak of COVID-19 in China forced the Chinese government to establish a series of mechanisms to curb the spread of the virus. The main mechanism adopted by the Chinese government was a national lockdown which resulted in the closing of schools and imposed many challenges to learners who had to rely on online education only. Aarts et al. (2021) assert that, in Netherlands, lockdown regulations also seemed to cause negative results for citizens including job loss and relocation and the interruption and devastation of the education system in the country. Consequently, the education systems in these countries had to adjust to a new normal. The new digital system of teaching and learning was unusual to parents, learners and teachers and became financially demanding with many people unable to afford it due to lockdown restrictions and the loss of jobs.

Onyema et al. (2020) argue that learners in most developing and under-developed countries in Africa could not return to school for many months after the lifting of hard lockdowns because of poor infrastructure. For example, many public schools were too overcrowded and congested to implement social distancing, and lacked necessary precautions such as running water, ablutions and disinfects or sanitisers to secure staff and learners against infection. According to Van Der Berg and Spaul (2020), the outbreak of COVID-19 and declaration of the national lockdown in South Africa led to the suspension of physical schooling. Consequently, children across the country were compelled to stay out of schools to observe social distancing and many reports indicate that schools lost learning time due to the lockdown. This had a temporal and permanent impact on the education system in South Africa. Consequently, there was high rate of learner dropouts and curriculum disruptions.

1.5.2. Revised teaching strategies in primary schools

According to Badie (2020), in order to maintain curriculum coverage, the implementation of e-learning as a means of home-based learning under the circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic was one of the alternative interventions seen as suitable for the education system in China. Sahin and Shelley (2020) add that, during lockdown, the Chinese Ministry of Education decided to employ network resources and television to meet the learning needs of the learners from rural areas with weak signal. The rest of the country made use of network cloud platforms, the Chinese television channel for classroom air learning, online teaching guidance, online learning videos, electronic textbooks, previews and online homework manuals, live broadcasting and recorded broadcasts.

According to Iivari et al. (2020), the most common teaching strategy used by Finland was Google Meet which allowed teachers to meet online to plan the timetable and share subject related matters. Google Classroom was used for teaching, learning and assessment (Iivari et al., 2020). Iivari et al. (2020) highlight that India also smoothly shifted over to digital learning as they had experience of online learning before the lockdown. De (2020) asserts that, in contrast, the ministry of general education in Zambia opted to adopt normal social online teaching approaches such as e-learning and social media platforms including WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Moodle, Dropbox and cloud, Google Drive, Skype and Yahoo. According to Sintema (2020), Zambia faced many challenges in implementing alternative teaching and learning strategies to maintain curriculum coverage during and after the country's lockdown mainly due to insufficient resources and funding for online learning. Mahaye (2020) argues that the South African Department of Basic Education, after the declaration of national lockdown by President Cyril Ramaphosa, similarly had to implement blended teaching strategies as an alternative approach.

Blended learning is challenging because it requires internet connectivity and necessary devices to which most schools in South Africa do not have access. However, blended learning coupled with social media, television and radio channels were suggested to address a number of factors that limit learners' access to quality education and curriculum coverage during the rotational attendance period.

1.5.3. Curriculum coverage

Ramrathan (2021) critically discusses the impact of lockdowns and social distancing regulations in response to COVID-19, particularly on curriculum coverage. According to Ramrathan (2021), the policy of a staggered return to school allowed grade 12 and seven learners to return to school earlier than other grades. The rationale for this was that these are transitional grades and other grades have more years remaining to cover lost curriculum content. Other proposals included cancelling mid-year and September holidays, extending school days and hours, including Saturdays as part of the school week, and commencing the new year earlier than usual in order to extend teaching and learning hours. These suggestions aimed to address the crisis in education as a result of the extension of the lockdown by the government which meant that majority of learners were unable to learn effectively or be assessed.

According to Christie and Monyokolo (2018), different professional practices that were suggested by Jikimfundo were interrupted by the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in South Africa which compromised the standard of South African education. These practices include coaching workshops for teachers, using a curriculum monitoring tool, professional and supportive conversations about curriculum coverage tools, planners and tracker tools and other techniques to address problems related to curriculum coverage and teaching practice. The intention of these activities and professional practices was to support curriculum coverage and improve teachers' professional capacity to enhance learners' performance.

1.6. Theoretical framework

This research study was grounded on Hargreaves's (2001) framework of emotional geographies of teaching. According to Hargreaves (2001), the emotional geographies of teaching framework outlines emotional understanding and emotional geographies. Emotional understanding describes how teachers interpret learners' feelings and their behaviour whereas, emotional geographies describe emotional understanding and misunderstanding in teaching resulting from the relationships and interactions among teachers, learners and parents. Hargreaves (2001) outlines five emotional geographies of teaching namely, sociocultural, moral, political, physical and professional emotional geographies. These will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.

1.7. Research design and methodology

The study was located in the interpretive research paradigm and used a qualitative research methodological approach. Krauss (2005) contends that interpretive researchers are willing to understand and explain social reality through the eyes of their participants. Ryan et al. (2007) assert that interpretive research is compatible with qualitative research since both acknowledge that knowledge development is dependent on participants' points of view.

Purposive sampling was used to select participants in this study. Etikan et al. (2016) contend that in purposive sampling, the researcher purposefully chooses participants or cases for inclusion in the study based on particular qualities, characteristics, knowledge and experiences the participant possesses, as well as the researcher's anticipation of their provision of important information. Therefore, in order to get in-depth knowledge on the experiences and emotions of senior phase teachers in the process of adjusting teaching strategies and curriculum coverage during the COVID-19 pandemic, I purposefully selected six grade seven teachers teaching different subjects in a primary school during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Data was generated using a case study research design. According to Scotland (2012), case studies are aligned with interpretive methodology as they aim to understand phenomena. Rule and John (2011) describe an educational case study as the understanding of education action rather than the evaluation of education action. During data generation, I abided by the ethical principles suggested by Ryan et al. (2007), that in order to protect participants, researchers should ensure that participants are aware of the anonymity, autonomy and maleficence principles applicable throughout the process of data generation.

The data generation instruments used in this study were semi-structured interviews and collages. Brenner (2006) asserts that an interview is an interactional relationship between the interviewer and an interviewee in an ongoing process of making meaning around a particular phenomenon. Ryan et al. (2007) assert that interviews are frequently conducted face-to-face, however, online and emailed interviews can also be employed when necessary. Roberts and Woods (2018) contend that collage is the placing of representational and non-representational objects onto a sheet of paper for the purpose of making specific meaning.

The data analysis technique employed in this study was thematic data analysis. According to Braun and Clarke (2012), this involves systematically arranging, selecting and coding data into patterns that give understanding and meaning to address a particular research topic.

1.8. Outline of the chapters

This section provides the breakdown of each chapter in this dissertation.

Chapter one is an introduction of the study in which different aspects of the study are briefly discussed. These include the background of the study, the rationale for the study, research questions, literature review, theoretical framework, research design and methodology and the outline of the chapters.

Chapter two discusses the literature reviewed and the theoretical framework of the study. This research study was based on Hargreaves's (2001) theory of emotional geographies of teaching. The literature review provides information and knowledge derived from literature that addresses the topic under study, evaluates the amount of available knowledge and highlights knowledge gaps. Literature on the COVID-19 pandemic and education, revised teaching strategies in primary schools, curriculum coverage and the senior phase of education was reviewed in this study.

Chapter three presents the methodological approach adopted in the study and discusses the research design, data generation methods and data generation instruments. This chapter also describes the research paradigm, epistemology and ontology, and sampling procedures of the study. Lastly, the chapter explains the data analysis process and ethical issues and concludes with an outline of the limitations of the study.

Chapter four presents the analysis of data generated from participants' semi-structured interviews and collages where teachers presented their views based on their experiences and feelings during the process of adjusting their teaching strategies to ensure curriculum coverage during the COVID-19 pandemic. The emerging themes are interpreted drawing on Hargreaves framework of emotional geographies of teaching and relevant literature.

Chapter five concludes this dissertation with a discussion of the key findings from the data generated addressing the two main research questions of the study. Recommendations for further research are also discussed.

1.9. Conclusion

This chapter presents an overview of this research study in which the background and the rationale of the study were discussed, followed by the brief discussion of the literature relevant to the study and the theoretical framework adopted. The chapter also provided an outline of the chapters of this dissertation. The next chapter discusses the literature relevant to the study and the theoretical framework of Hargreaves's (2001) emotional geographies of teaching.

Chapter two: Literature review and theoretical framework

2.1. Introduction

This research study examined the experiences of senior phase teachers while adjusting their teaching practices and curriculum coverage during the COVID-19 pandemic. It also explored the emotions of senior phase teachers during this process.

This chapter reviews literature relevant to this study. The first section discusses the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on education. This is followed by an overview of curriculum coverage during COVID-19 in which literature about the implications of COVID-19 on the coverage of the curriculum is discussed. The third section describes the revised teaching strategies adopted in primary schools as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Lastly, the definition of the concept of ‘Senior Phase’ in the South African schools’ context is highlighted. The chapter concludes by discussing the conceptual framework of Hargreaves’s (2001) theory of emotional geographies of teaching.

2.2. COVID-19 pandemic and education

According to Huang et al. (2020), the outbreak of COVID-19 was first reported in December 2020 in the city of Wuhan, the capital of Central China’s Hubei province. The Coronavirus then spread across China. The Chinese government therefore acted swiftly to curb the spread of COVID-19 and issued a notice for all people to quarantine until further notice, resulting in students being unable to attend schools physically as of 17 May 2020. According to Zhang et al. (2020), the outbreak of COVID-19 in China forced the Chinese government to establish a series of mechanisms to stop the spread of the virus. After the declaration of the lockdown, the Chinese government initiated the “Suspending Classes Without Stopping Learning” policy which encouraged curriculum coverage through COVID-19 friendly alternative teaching strategies and resources since face-to-face teaching and learning strategies were regarded as potential COVID-19 spreaders.

COVID-19 spread from China to the rest of the world. Keefe (2020) described the COVID-19 pandemic as the severest threat to Americans. This was due to the combination of deaths, infections and detrimental effects of social distancing measures implemented to lessen the spread of the virus. These intervention strategies were disruptive to the educational systems as learners had to adhere to lockdown regulations and stay at home indefinitely. Onyema et al. (2020) claim that the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic and increasing number of infections and deaths in the United States of America caused the president to declare a national lockdown which resulted in closure of all schools. This meant that all planned learning activities, such as scheduled tests and examinations, were cancelled. Regions of the country which suffered a more rapid spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, such as New York and California, could not resume in-person teaching and learning for the rest of their academic schooling year. In addition, Basilaia and Kvavadze (2020) suggest that following the suspension of contact learning activities from the 2nd March 2020 by the ministry of education in Georgia, the situation in education in the country changed. Unexpectedly, the Government of Georgia declared a state of disaster with effect from the 21st of April 2020. Restrictions related to the state of disaster resulted in the extension of the suspension of teaching and learning activities which affected learners negatively. The prolonged school closures in America as a result of the national lockdown raised concerns about curriculum coverage and learner performance. Aarts et al. (2021) assert that on the 27th of February 2020, Netherlands confirmed the first case of coronavirus which then speedily spread throughout the country compelling the Netherlands government to execute measures to curb the spread of the virus. Lockdown became the main mechanism to slow down the infection rate (Aarts et al., 2021).

According to Onyema et al. (2020), millions of students in Spain were negatively affected by the closure of schools as part of national lockdown regulations to mitigate the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic. Closure of schools in Spain also led to a suspension of all planned teaching and learning programmes which resulted in the suspension of employment contracts of many employees in the education sector. Similarly, Onyema et al. (2020) contend that in India the government ordered education institutions to close down while imposing the “Janata” curfew to restrict movement of people.

The Indian government also ordered the police to create awareness campaigns against the spread of the Coronavirus while monitoring the movement of people. The “Janata” curfew had a negative impact on education in India as it resulted in the cancellation of all planned teaching and learning programmes including programmes to prepare learners for final examinations.

Abidah et al. (2020) maintain that the implementation of lockdown regulations in Indonesia were more strenuous and problematic for institutions of learning that were new to online teaching and learning systems than those that were already versant in online teaching and learning. The citizens of Indonesia experienced significant trauma and stress when the government announced that contact classes would be replaced by digital classes. Abidah et al. (2020) assert that teachers and learners from public schools felt abandoned as the initiative was hard for them to implement based on practical, social and financial circumstances in the country.

Deguen et al. (2020) highlighted the impact of lockdown regulations on children in most European countries. They argue that schools are not only centres of education but also provide other basic services to children such as nutrition, immunisation and health, social and emotional support to ensure life security for learners. Therefore, Deguen et al. (2020) suggested that extending the closure of schools and quarantine could have serious long-term effects on learners in terms of learning, social, mental and physical well-being. According to Deguen et al. (2020), the reopening of schools in compliance with each country’s COVID-19 health protocols would benefit learners. Schools were allowed to reopen provided safety precaution measures were taken to ensure the safety of all stakeholders.

Láncos and Christián (2020) contend that the Hungarian parliament strengthened the implementation of lockdown measures for Hungarian citizens by passing ‘domestic soft law’. According to Láncos and Christián (2020), ‘domestic soft law’ regulated the movement of citizens and enforced citizens’ adherence to lockdown regulations. This policy was implemented as one of government’s strategies to mitigate the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic. As in other countries, these measures compelled the education system to look for alternative means to maintain curriculum coverage until the relaxation of ‘domestic soft law’.

According to Onyema et al. (2020), closure of schools due to prolonged lockdown regulations also affected many countries in Africa including Nigeria, Ghana, Senegal and Ethiopia. However, the closure of schools was more harmful to developing and under-developed countries than developed countries. This resulted in poor student performance, lack of academic interest, involvement in crime and loss of interest in learning. Onyema et al. (2020) further claimed that prolonged lockdown regulations could lead to unnecessary congregations next to schools resulting in vandalism of school infrastructure, poor quality teaching and learning and lack of academic achievement. In addition, Onyema et al. (2020) argue that most developing and under-developed countries in Africa could not return to school as soon as developed countries. This was because of insufficient infrastructure causing many public schools to be too overcrowded and congested to implement social distancing. Many schools also lacked necessary precautions such as running water, ablutions and disinfectants or sanitisers to secure staff and learners against infection during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Sintema (2020) maintain that, on the 20th of March 2020, the government of Zambia advised all Zambian citizens to self-isolate at home. This happened after they hypothesised that COVID-19 would negatively affect people as reported in China. Furthermore, Sintema (2020) asserts that, on the 20th of March 2020, the Zambian government pre-maturely closed all schools including public and private schools. This was done to curb the spread of COVID-19 as reported in many countries such as China and America. However, the Zambian government knew that their decision to close schools could have a negative impact on grade 12 learners. Learning areas such as maths, science, design and technology could be more affected since schools closed before term one examinations were written. Sintema (2020) explains that the Zambian education system operates in trimesters meaning that each term prepares learners for the following term. Thus, the planning of the entire year focusses on preparing learners to write their final examinations in November successfully. Therefore, closing schools for an indefinite time period as an initiative to curb the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic disturbed planned academic learning activities and resulted in curriculum gaps and high failure rates for the learners. De (2020) similarly contends that the Zambian government's decision to close schools around mid-March 2020 might have a devastating impact on the pass rate of students from secondary schools. The drop of the percentage of passes in grade 12 final results due to the disturbance of the annual school calendar and the interruption of

preparatory activities was anticipated. This might have been due to the inaccessibility of resources experienced by the teachers and students learning away from their institutions.

According to Mahaye (2020) and Van Der Berg and Spaul (2020), the first case of COVID-19 in South Africa was reported on the 5th of March 2020. In response, the South African government, based on the severity of the coronavirus, issued a lockdown notice to control the spread of the coronavirus. The government's decision to close schools was based on the positive correlation between school closure and the decrease in the spread of COVID-19 observed in other countries. Mahaye (2020) argues that the decision raised questions about how children would be able to make up for the lockdown period since the system of education in South Africa is structured according to a planned calendar. Furthermore, Mahaye (2020) suggested that the prolonged closure of schools might have a permanent impact on learners since a high rate of learners' dropouts and curriculum disruptions were anticipated, particularly affecting students with special needs, such as poor performing and slow learners, who are more dependent on physical explanation and guidance from teachers.

2.3. Revised teaching strategies in primary schools

Corlatean (2020) claimed that the education system was one of the social areas that faced the greatest challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic and outlined teaching strategies adopted by the United Kingdom education system during the time. The outbreak of COVID-19 compelled education stakeholders to suddenly change their normal rules of operation, examination methods and teaching strategies over a short space of time. According to Corlatean (2020), the COVID-19 pandemic led to enormous changes in teaching and examination methods which shifted to digital online platforms. This resulted in new teaching strategies requiring technological equipment such as computers, an online syllabus, proper technological equipment for teaching e-learning courses and related computer programmes.

According to Badie (2020), it became a necessity for China to prepare the education system to overcome new challenges through converting normal teaching and learning procedures to appropriate methods of teaching, learning and creativity in an abnormal context. Badie (2020) recommended that teachers brainstorm new teaching, learning and assessment techniques and methods in line with the COVID-19 pandemic context. The sharing of new ideas is essential at

times of transition when comparing and evaluating many ideas leads to the production of useful ideas to overcome challenges and improves the quality of teaching under such circumstances.

The idea to implement e-learning as a means of home-based learning under the circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic was one of the alternative teaching strategies used by the education system of China. According to Zhou et al. (2020) and Sahin and Shelley (2020), the “School’s Out, But Class’s On” regulation notice issued by the Ministry of Education in China suggested the use of network resources and television. This suggestion aimed at addressing learning needs for learners from rural areas where there is weak signal to strengthen the implementation of digital learning platforms country wide. Digital learning platforms used included the China television channel for classroom air learning, online learning videos, electronic textbooks, online homework manuals, live broadcasting and recorded broadcasts. In addition, Zhang et al. (2020) assert that, in order for the Ministry of Education in China to carry out transformation in the education sector, it had to outsource resources through partnering with private companies. Furthermore, the Chinese government and private sector worked tirelessly to improve the availability of online education resources to the general public. This was accomplished through skills capacity training, development implantation plans, online teaching quality standards and technical support.

According to Iivari et al. (2020), Finland is among the countries whose education was not too negatively affected by school closures, since before the outbreak of COVID-19, they had already started reforming their education. Teachers and learners in Finland had already undergone training for online learning. However, there were few challenges that needed attention such as mop-up technological skills development training for teachers who were new in the system and those who still needed more training. The most common teaching strategy used by Finland was Google Classroom which allowed teaching, learning and assessment to take place online. Teachers also met on Google Meet to discuss timetable and subject related matters.

Similarly, Iivari et al. (2020) contend that India smoothly shifted over to digital learning since they also had experience of online learning before the lockdown. Iivari et al. (2020) assert that classes were conducted through Google Classrooms and students were encouraged to wake up in time to log into their devices and be ready for a class on time. Even though transformation in India was smooth, teachers reported a few challenges. These challenges included the inaccessibility of some

learners which was due to some learners relocated to places where teachers could not get hold of them or teachers not having their contact details. In addition, certain learners were unable to wake up and log-on in time while some parents distracted learners by giving them interruptive instructions while they were trying to concentrate on lessons. Moreover, certain learners saw the opportunity to have a break and did not take learning online as seriously as face-to-face learning while others ignored submission due dates for assignments and projects. Teachers were also concerned that preparing for an online lesson was more difficult and time consuming than preparing for face-to-face learning. Iivari et al. (2020) further suggest that India, despite transitioning smoothly to online learning, also suffered challenges similar to those of developing countries. These challenges included internet connectivity problems and lack of technological devices, such as computers and smart phones. In addition, most learners had to rely on their parents' smart phones which were not always available due to parents' work-related or important personal use of their devices.

Keefe (2020) discusses the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the education system of America where K-12 schools were temporally closed to protect students and teachers from being exposed to the coronavirus. Unlike colleges and universities, the K-12 schools' system was not prepared and had no experience or access to technology. Most districts struggled to supply learners with technological devices necessary to teach online. The greatest concern, according to Keefe (2020), was for grade 11 and 12 learners as it was unclear how they would catch-up on the K-12 curriculum within a short space of time. In comparison, young children still had more years of schooling to catch-up on K-12 curriculum. Therefore, in order to address the curriculum coverage crisis, the education system proposed 'spring advance placement' take home tests for learners to complete at home.

According to Sahin and Shelley (2020), even though the United States of America and Turkey are developed countries, they are not well equipped with all resources. During the COVID-19 pandemic, they ran short of the resources needed to implement digital education as mandated by the national lockdown and social distancing regulations. These countries-initiated distance education for which instructors and officials needed to familiarise themselves with technological teaching, prepare and design online courses, identify best practices for synchronous and

asynchronous learning, prepare students for online learning and plan online assessment activities. In doing so, they had to bear in mind that some subjects, like engineering, physical science, technology and design, require practice. According to Sahin and Shelley (2020), the Ministry of Education employed suitable teaching strategies to meet the curriculum needs of these subjects. Teaching strategies such as Face to Face Laboratory Courses, Hybrid Model, Remote Access Laboratory Courses, Perform Experiments Remotely, Zoom, EBA Platform, Videoing, WebEx, Canvas and Blackboard were used.

According to Basilaia and Kvavadze (2020), the outbreak of COVID-19 in Georgia prevented the use of learning and teaching resources such as books, blackboards, whiteboards, projectors, audio-visuals and digital boards. Therefore, the General Education Ministry of Georgia adopted an online learning system as an alternative to traditional learning. Subsequently, lesson instructors were assigned to provide support to learners through the use of emails and other relevant communication techniques. In addition, Microsoft Teams was introduced for almost all public schools and the education management information system created accounts for all teachers to run virtual classes easily. Zoom and Google Meet were also among the technology used for alternative teaching strategies that were adopted in Georgia. De (2020) adds that virtual or distance learning was accomplished through Google Hangouts through which virtual classrooms were implemented. Lastly, the use of TV channels to host support lessons and other leaning programmes contributed significantly to teaching, learning and curriculum coverage in Georgia. Basilaia and Kvavadze (2020) suggest that in order for the department of education to enable the facilitation of online learning, internet connectivity for many households, including rural households with little internet access internet, had to be improved.

Abidah et al. (2020) asserts that after the outbreak of the COVID-19 and the announcement of a national lockdown in Indonesia, the Ministry of Education and Culture encouraged the use of online learning throughout the country. Consequently, the Ministry of Education and Culture offered numerous support activities in order to smooth the transformation process. Amongst these support activities were a learning portal called “portal Rumah Belajar”, virtual laboratories, question banks and digital classes. The Ministry of Education and Culture received additional support from the private sector. Many companies, including Quipper, Google Indonesia, Sekolahmu, Smart Classes, Zenius, and Microsoft rendered online learning platforms for free to

public schools in Indonesia. In addition, Abidah et al. (2020) assert that the Ministry of Education and Culture made use of public social media platforms such as YouTube, Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, Line, Zoom, Scoology and Kahoot as additional means to cover curriculum. However, even though it was part of the vision and mission of the Indonesian government to transform national education towards industrial revolution 4.0, challenges were encountered such as the planning and speed recovery of necessary resources like network access, training facilities and programmes and learning equipment.

Furthermore, Onyema et al. (2020) suggests that most developing countries, such as Nigeria, Ghana, Senegal and Ethiopia, were compelled to choose online learning as an alternative teaching strategy during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, this system had numerous impediments and barriers including poor electricity power or load shedding, network issues and insufficient facilities and resources. In addition, there was a lack of training for personnel, teachers and parents, insufficient funding and a trend to resist change.

Sintema (2020) asserts that Zambia, as a developing country, faced many challenges with alternative teaching and learning strategies to maintain curriculum coverage after the country's lockdown. This was mainly due to insufficient resources and funding to implement online learning. The majority of the Zambian population did not have access to internet or necessary devices which hindered the implementation of online learning. According to Sintema (2020), the standard of education and support in Zambia was very low leading to huge knowledge gaps between high performing and slow learners as many slow learners were unable to learn independently and depended on teachers' explanations in class. Therefore, according to De (2020), the ministry of general education in Zambia opted to adopt normal social online teaching approaches. Among these were e-learning and social media platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Moodle, Dropbox and cloud, Google Drive, maths tutorials, live Skype and Yahoo.

According to Mahaye (2020), prior to the lockdown, the South African department of education had curriculum catch-up intervention programmes that were implemented during winter holidays. Such programmes were normally planned so that teaching and learning could carry on in schools on weekends and during school holidays. Van Der Berg and Spaull (2020) point out that the lockdown regulations for social distancing did not allow the implementation of pre-designed

curriculum coverage intervention programmes as schools were mandatorily closed or attended in small numbers. The need to integrate both face- to- face and blended teaching strategies became alternative approaches. Blended learning is challenging as it implies internet connectivity services and necessary devices which most schools do not have.

Singh (2003) defines blended leaning as a multiple delivery media designed to promote learning. Blended learning may include different forms of learning tools like collaboration software and electronic performance support systems. Blended learning is either online or offline: online blended learning is where learning takes place over internet or intranet whereas offline blended learning includes the provision of study material over the internet and social media platforms such as WhatsApp, emails, Google, and television programmes. Ramrathan (2021) elaborates that the implementation of blended learning is seen as the recognition of ‘two school worlds context’ in which a group of minority privileged elite will easily access online learning compared to the majority of children from lower socio-economic backgrounds.

2.4. Curriculum coverage

Pillay (2020) and Christie and Monyokolo (2018) define curriculum coverage as the attainment of all basic skills and the successful achievement of all expected learning outcomes by the learners. The Jika iMfundo collaborative project and Programme to Improve Learning Outcomes (PILO) was introduced in 2015 with an aim to develop and implement learning improvement programmes at district and school levels. Coaching workshops on the use of a curriculum monitoring coverage tool and professional and supportive conversations about curriculum coverage tools, planners and tracker tools and other problems related to coverage and teaching practice were conducted in school clusters for teachers and school management teams.

Ramrathan (2021) critically discusses the impact of lockdowns and social distancing regulations on curriculum coverage. The implementation of Google Classrooms and other digital learning platforms received many criticisms. It was seen as ignoring the reality of ‘two school worlds context’ in which the minority privileged elite could easily access online learning while the majority of children, who are from a lower socio-economic background, find this challenging.

A great concern, however, was about the uncertainty of a prolonged lockdown period as a means to save lives and the implementation of planned initiatives to save the academic year. Different proposals on curriculum coverage and the extension of the academic year were debated among relevant stakeholders and platforms.

The policy of a staggered return to school was suggested so that grade 12 and seven learners could return to school earlier than other grades to catch up on critical learning time in these transitional grades which do not have additional education years to cover lost curriculum content. This initiative, according to Ramrathan (2021), was implemented to address the concern about the under-preparedness of grade 12 learners for tertiary education.

The Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) (Department of Basic Education, 2011) regards continuous assessment as a key component of the teaching and learning. This was contradicted, however, by the proposal of the Congress of South African Students to scrap 2021 mid-year examinations for the purpose of using examination time to catch-up the curriculum. Other proposals that were debated were the scrapping of mid-year and September holidays, the extension of schooling days and hours and the inclusion of Saturdays as part of the school week. In addition, it was suggested that, in order to extend teaching and learning hours, the new year should commence earlier than usual. Eventually, the Department of Basic Education implemented a curriculum trimming policy to address curriculum coverage despite school time lost to accommodate COVID-19 changes.

2.5. Senior phase

According to the CAPS (Department of Basic Education, 2011), the senior phase band comprises of grades seven to nine. The eight senior phase band subject offerings are Home Language, First Additional Language, Mathematics, Natural Sciences, Social Sciences, Technology, Economic management Sciences, Life Orientation and Creative Arts. The allocated instructional time varies according to the amount of content per subject in which Languages are allocated more time compared to other subjects like Life Orientation. The time allocations are as follows: Home Language is allocated five hours a week, First Additional Language is allocated four hours a week, Mathematics is allocated four and half hours a week, Natural Sciences is allocated three hours a week, Social Sciences is allocated three hours a week, Technology is allocated two hours a week, Economic Management Sciences is allocated two hours a week, Creative Arts is allocated two

hours a week and Life Orientation is also allocated two hours a week to the total of 27,5 hours a week. However, the closure of schools due to the COVID-19 pandemic compelled the South African education system to undertake curriculum trimming. The next section deliberates on the theoretical framework employed to frame the study.

2.6. Theoretical framework

The purpose of this section is to outline the theoretical framework underpinning this study while also highlighting how the theory framed and guided this study. The main focus of the study was to understand teachers' experiences of adjusting their teaching strategies in the unprecedented times of COVID-19. Furthermore, this study aimed to examine the emotions teachers experienced as a result of adjusting their teaching strategies. Hargreaves's (2001) theory of emotional geographies of teaching was used as the theoretical framework in this study as it was the most relevant and useful theory the research questions.

This study used Hargreaves's (2001) five emotional geographies of teaching to examine senior phase teachers' experiences and emotions during the COVID-19 pandemic when they had to adapt their teaching approaches and curriculum coverage. The five emotional geographies as well as collegiality are discussed in detail below.

2.6.1. Sociocultural geographies

Hargreaves (2001) contends that sociocultural geographies refer to differences in class and culture between teachers and parents and learners leading to conflicts of interest and misunderstandings. According to Hargreaves (2001), there are many sociocultural factors that affect the relationship among teachers, learners and parents. To elaborate, most often teachers belong to cultures different from those of learners they teach. This is usually due to the fact that teachers are normally deployed in schools away from their geographical locations. This mismatch of cultures results in teachers misunderstanding their learners' cultures and family setups. The socioeconomic gap between teachers and learners' families results in teachers being viewed as superior to learners and parents. This creates a mental distance, poor relationships and lack of understanding between teachers and their learners and parents. Hargreaves (2001) also argues that teachers socially and culturally

isolate themselves from communities in which they teach by not attending community social celebrations and funerals. Limiting themselves to learning and practising norms means that they do not understand the beliefs and culture of communities for which they work leading to poor relationships as well the perpetration of acts of discrimination, lack of cooperation, inadequate academic, extra-curricular and co-curricular support and poor parental involvement and support of school activities.

Hargreaves (2001) adds that teachers' poor understanding of the cultural practices of the communities they teach exposes them to stereotypic bias, misconceptions and conclusions based on predictive assumptions about people they serve. Teachers' poor understanding of the sociocultural background of the communities they serve may also lead to teachers associating the conditions of parents, community members and learners, such as poverty, single parenthood and unemployment, with their sociocultural background. In addition, sociocultural distance between teachers and the communities they teach creates a situation in which teachers blame the sociocultural background of the communities they serve for learners' bad behaviour while, at the same time, parents and the entire community blame teachers because they have the tendency of undermining the culture of the community by passing negative remarks or trying to drive learners away from their cultures rather than appreciating them. Therefore, Hargreaves (2001) recommends that teachers see these cultural differences as an opportunity for building better emotional understanding and creating good working conditions among themselves and their learners and communities rather than as obstacles to teaching and learning.

2.6.2. Moral geographies

Hargreaves (2001) describes moral geographies as the difference in purpose among teachers, parents and learners in which all parties set goals and priorities which might be similar or different. In most cases, people experience a sense of happiness when they have achieved their purpose and experience emotional stress when they have not. Teachers experience positive emotions when they receive support, acknowledgement, appreciation and gratitude from the community, learners and parents they serve. Conversely, teachers experience negative emotions when they are not admired, not supported and criticised by colleagues, parents, learners or the community. Acknowledgement of teachers' work and efforts by parents, communities and learners through verbal positive

feedback, submission of learners to their school and appraisals encourages them to come back to school, keep up a good work ethic and remain at the same school.

Hargreaves (2001) suggest that the initiative by the school management team (SMT) and other colleagues to appreciate good work done by teachers through letters, verbal feedback, school praise, recognition and appraisals done either during promotion, resignation, transfer, or retirement may morally motivate teachers and energise positive emotions. In addition, Hargreaves (2001) suggests that acknowledgement and appreciation of other teachers simultaneously affects teachers directly and indirectly in such a way that teachers who are not acknowledged or appreciated strive to achieve what other colleagues have achieved. In contrast, negative emotions can develop when teachers feel that their purpose is endangered through unacceptance, community dissatisfaction, lack of acknowledgement and support and unfair criticisms. Similarly, teachers develop negative emotions when they feel that their purpose is not being fulfilled due to different factors such as anxiety, pressure and uncertainty due to certain circumstances, overwhelming workload, curriculum changes, work environment changes and restructuring. Consequently, teachers become demotivated, devastated, lose energy and develop anger, frustration and retreat which can lead to poor academic performance, transfer, resignation or early retirement.

According to Hargreaves (2001) parents may possess a different purpose to that of teachers which can lead to increased moral distance and conflict between them. Parents' poor understanding of current and over-changing curriculum as well as pass requirements might also create conflict and moral distance since their purpose is to see their children receiving quality education and progressing to the next grade. Therefore, parents get frustrated, angry and dissatisfied with unusual teaching techniques and approaches employed by teachers. In addition, moral distance limits progress when learners are not performing well in their studies and parents question teachers' competence, decision making, professionalism and expertise in their dissatisfaction with the children's performance at school. Consequently, this difference of purpose becomes the source of negative emotions between teachers and parents. However, Hargreaves (2001) suggests that these differentiated purposes between parents and teachers should not create distance between people, but rather a learning opportunity since it is essential to learn from other people's comments and suggestions.

2.6.3. Political geographies

Political geographies describe hierarchal power relations among teachers, learners and parents causing poor relationships and communication (Hargreaves, 2001). According to Hargreaves (2001), teaching is infiltrated by political antagonism which creates unnecessary pandemonium within the education sector as well as teaching and learning. Political interference in schools leads to power imbalances between people resulting in the suppression of teachers by authoritarian managers. A top-down policy implementation approach and intrusive, unwanted, unnecessary and unescapable reforms imposed on teachers create emotional distance among colleagues and make teachers experience anger, frustration, depression, anxiety and dissatisfaction leading to early retirement, resistance and resignation. Hargreaves (2001) asserts that it is normal for people always to seek power and that they feel emotionally comfortable, satisfied and secured when afforded with power and status. In contrast, a reduction in power, gratitude and status makes people feel emotional discomfort, anger, dissatisfaction and fear.

2.6.4. Physical geographies

Physical geographies encompass the differences in geographical residential location of teachers and those they serve which lead to poor connection between parties. Hargreaves (2001) suggests that frequency and continuous physical interaction is paramount to the creation of the emotional bond between teachers, learners and parents. However, Hargreaves (2001) contends that in most cases teachers use other forms of interaction, such as telephone calls, social media platforms like WhatsApp, emails and Facebook and communiqué to communicate with parents. These forms of interaction automatically hinder face-to-face and physical connection between them. In the event that parents are invited to a meeting or school visit, the agenda seems to be teacher dominant. In other words, teachers dominate the talks and show little responsiveness to parents' understanding about their own children. This demoralises parents and discourages their involvement in the education of their children.

According to Hargreaves (2001), many studies show that there are more chances of positive emotional relationships between parents and teachers when communication and interaction is done by means of face-to-face informal discussions within a relaxed environment and friendly atmosphere than when communication and interaction involves telephone calls, communicate or

social media platforms. Hargreaves (2001) suggests that teachers who maintain positive emotional relationships and understanding with parents often also have positive emotional relationship and understanding with learners. In contrast, teachers who fail to maintain physical closeness and good relationships with parents often face disrespectful and unbecoming attitudes and behaviours from learners at school.

2.6.5. Professional geographies

Professional geographies relate to the status and view of teaching as a profession. Teaching is often regarded as a superior profession which creates the distance between teachers, parents and learners leading to poor relationships and cooperation. Hargreaves (2001) contends that, unlike other professions such as police, magistrates, medical doctors and judges where emotional entanglements with their clients is not acceptable, the teaching career requires emotional understanding and closeness between the teacher and clients.

Hargreaves (2001) further suggests that even though there is a need for teachers to understand their clients emotionally, professional distance is also necessary. As a result, teachers' status within the society seems to create professional distance between them and people they are serving.

Hargreaves (2001) asserts that it is common for teachers to keep professional distance between them and parents and learners by defensively claiming that they are experts, qualified and graduated to teach, and therefore have authority to make judgements and exercise professional autonomy. As a result of teachers' defensive attitude towards parents and learners, there is unnecessary misunderstanding between teachers and parents resulting in rebellious behaviour, such as poor cooperation and support, from parents and community members. Poor cooperation and parental support might be in terms of parental involvement in school programmes, activities and committees or neglect of parental responsibilities like monitoring learners' homework. This may also lead to unnecessary removals of learners from the school and a bad reputation for teachers and the school.

Hargreaves (2001) further suggests that in times of rapid systematic and school-wide changes, teachers develop negative emotions of dissatisfaction coupled with anger, jealousy, frustration and anxiety.

Hargreaves (2001) asserts that teaching is not only about pedagogy, expertise and teaching methodology, it is also an emotional practice involving teachers' feelings about their students, daily work and personal effectiveness. The emotional geographies of teaching theory (Hargreaves, 2001) is underpinned by two concepts, namely, emotional understanding and emotional geographies. Emotional understanding describes how teachers interpret learners' feelings and their behaviour. Emotional geographies, on the other hand, involve both emotional understanding and misunderstanding in teaching resulting from the relationships and interactions among teachers, learners and parents. Hargreaves (2001) describes five emotional geographies, namely, sociocultural, moral, professional, political and physical geographies. He further suggests that these five emotional geographies outline emotional closeness and distance factors that can threaten emotional understanding among teachers, learners and parents.

According to Hargreaves (2001), the emotional geographies of teaching are not natural or universal. They vary according to culture and work context. This means that they are not static and do not transcend culture. Rather, the emotional geographies of teaching are informed by the environment, culture, work context and country in which teachers work. That is, in each of these different settings, there is a different perception and understanding of distance and closeness among teachers, learners and parents. For instance, closeness among the teacher, learner and parent within a private school context is usually greater than in most public-school contexts.

Hargreaves (2001) asserts that, in order to address distance and poor relationships among colleagues, learners and parents, cooperation and collaboration are seen as the most significant tools. Cooperation and collaboration are vital in creating moral support and energy for teachers. The improvement of teacher morale produces effective teaching and learning and results in better student performance. In addition, teacher collegiality is significant in the creation of a positive environment within an organisation which reduces the distance between colleagues. Collegiality may be achieved through a variety of activities such as teacher appraisal, rewards, open discussions and debates, teamwork, professional learning communities and mentoring.

Hargreaves (2001) also argues that contextual factors to which teachers are exposed change teachers' emotions within their working life, which may be positive or negative. Contextual factors may lead to caring, loving, motivated and passionate teachers or angry, aggressive, guilty, jealous,

frustrated and stressed teachers. Teachers' emotions can have a significant impact on how they interact with colleagues, parents and learners.

Hargreaves (2001) contends that the most important aspect of emotions is social distancing. Hargreaves emotional aspect of social distancing recognises the variety of factors that may create distance and affect closeness among teachers and their colleagues, teachers and learners, learners and other learners, learners and parents as well as teachers and parents. Physical distances that are a result of department policies regulating the physical contact between teachers and learners and natural distances dictated by customs and beliefs that segregate adults from children may unintentionally create spiritual and emotional distance between them. The emotional closeness of teachers, learners and parents maximises the emotional understanding among them while social distancing threatens the emotional understanding and relationship between them.

Hargreaves (2001) also suggests that people's expressed behaviour is the outcome of emotional exposure and influence. In most cases, teaching is treated as matter of being qualified to teach a subject and not about care, passion and empathy. These are largely treated as matters of personal temperament not required to qualify as a teacher. Hargreaves (2001), on the other hand, regards teaching and learning as the combination of both skills and knowledge coupled with well-shaped emotions in which there is a complementary relationship between knowledge and skills and empathy and emotions. According to Hargreaves (2001), the acknowledgement of the interdependence between emotional experiences and subject related teaching capacity seems to have a huge impact on teachers' satisfaction and positive attitude and improves human relations generally.

Hargreaves's (2001) emotional geographies of teaching can be used to understand the significant impact of contextual factors created by the COVID-19 pandemic on teacher, learner and parent emotions and behaviour. Van Der Berg and Spaul (2020) and Luis and Vance (2020) affirm that lockdowns and school closures exposed many learners to physical, emotional and psychological factors such as malnutrition, sexual abuse, physical violence, domestic slavery, isolation, early pregnancy, forced marriage, cheap labour, and vulnerability to diseases resulting in depression, stress and anxiety. This implies that the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic introduced challenges to humankind which subsequently created changes in peoples' behaviour. Farboodi et al. (2020) confirm that social distancing as a result of COVID-19 exposed teachers, learners and

society to different forms of stressful and psychological situations. Teachers were exposed to changes in teaching strategies, assessment techniques, teaching resources and the entire culture of the schooling system. These factors had a long-term effect on the emotions of teachers, learners and parents.

Shadraconis (2013) contends that in times of crises, leaders need to inspire, encourage, motivate and collegially work together to ensure collective attainment of organisational goals, vision and mission as well as the improvement of the wellbeing of an organisation. Thus, in the COVID-19 context, the effective management of new teaching, learning and curriculum coverage strategies during COVID-19 was dependent on the amount of mutual understanding, communication, cooperation and interconnectedness among all role-players.

2.6.6. Emotional geographies of collegiality

Hargreaves (2001) maintains that collaborative and collegial teaching gives teachers moral support and energy leading to more effective and productive teaching and learning than teaching in isolation. Team teaching also keeps teachers confident and motivated since they are able to gauge and compare their level of understanding and performance to their colleagues whilst they are also able to disclose their challenges, strengths and weaknesses based on their daily professional experience. The creation of a positive environment builds necessary opportunities for teachers to share information and ideas to facilitate quality teaching and outstanding work performance. Hargreaves (2001) argues that previously, teachers engaged in rivalry, leaving them in isolation within the dense population and cut off from each other. This was due to the unavailability of relevant systems to reinforce collegiality among teachers from the same institution or department. Comparatively, nowadays teachers are encouraged to work as a team.

Hargreaves (2001) states that both formalised and informal platforms of collegial and collaborative associations are vital for sharing information. In this regard, teachers can share recent curriculum reforms, teaching practices, strategies and techniques and learner performance. This can strengthen the bond and closeness between teachers while academic performance might improve. According to Hargreaves (2001), teachers crave appreciation, gratitude, rewards and acknowledgement for their achievements and progress either from the parents, community and learners or from their

employer. The above can be done through simple gestures like verbally thanking teachers or issuing them achievement and merit certificates and job promotions.

2.6.7. Hargreaves's emotional geographies in the COVID-19 context

Hargreaves's (2001) theory of the emotional geographies of teaching was useful and the most suitable theoretical framework to analyse both research questions in this study. Hargreaves's emotional geographies, in particular, physical, moral, and political emotional geographies, were suited to the study since they address the experiences and emotions of teachers. Hargreaves's notion of teacher collegiality was also useful to analyse research question two.

According to Hargreaves (2000), physical geographies describe continuity and frequency in interaction among teachers, parents and learners using various means of communication to strengthen mutual understanding. The study focused on senior phase teachers' implementation of adjusted teaching strategies and curriculum coverage during the COVID-19 pandemic when there were social distancing challenges, school closures and the rotation of learners. During this period, teachers, learners and parents were physically separated by lockdown regulations while at the same time they were expected to work together to complete the curriculum.

Hargreaves (2001) describes moral geographies as outcomes of the combination of positive and negative emotions. This is a result of either pursuing common goals through positive appreciation and support between role players or disagreements, negative comments and dissatisfaction among teachers, learners and parents. The implementation of adjusted teaching strategies and curriculum coverage in the times of COVID-19 was the responsibility of teachers, parents and learners. However, its achievement was dependent on mutual support and sharing a common goal to improve teaching and learning. The attainment of this goal required moral understanding from all stakeholders of the school. This was especially necessary during the hard times of the COVID-19 pandemic when everyone's progressive opinions were in high demand. According to Hargreaves (2001), moral emotions can also be implemented and strengthened through teacher collegiality whereby teachers themselves undergo different forms of teacher support initiatives.

Hargreaves (2001) further explains that political geographies are the practice of power imbalances in which teachers suffer from anger, dissatisfaction and stress due to the imposition of policies by authoritative leadership. Similarly, parents may feel undermined by teachers or, alternatively, teachers may perceive parents as more powerful than them in terms of decision making. Thus, in

ensuring curriculum progression, interaction, cooperation and communication channels between stakeholders during the COVID-19 pandemic was more important than before the outbreak of COVID-19 as lockdown regulations interrupted usual communication, cooperation and interaction channels in many ways. Consequently, these power imbalances gave rise to emotional uncertainty.

The study explored the influence of power imbalances among teachers, authorities and parents in the implementation of adjusted teaching strategies and curriculum coverage during the COVID-19 pandemic. Subsequently, it evaluated the relevance of the emotional geographies of teacher collegiality in the creation of an environment conducive to teachers coping with the changes related to COVID-19. Collegiality was necessary to moderate pressures and expectations coming from the education department and community at large for teachers to save the nation by saving the academic year at the expense of their safety.

2.7. Conclusion

In this chapter I reviewed literature related to the research topic of this study with the aim of gaining insight into what has been examined by other authors. I discussed literature based on the experiences and emotions of teachers in adjusting teaching strategies during the COVID-19 pandemic. This was done by comparing empirical research from different contexts including global, African and local contexts.

The discussion of literature was organised by different themes namely: COVID-19 pandemic and education, revised teaching strategies in primary schools and curriculum coverage during the Covid-19 pandemic. The second part of this chapter was a discussion of Hargreaves's (2001) theory of emotional geographies of teaching underpinned by emotional understanding and emotional geographies. Hargreave's (2001) five emotional geographies, namely, sociocultural, moral, professional, political and physical geographies, which was most suitable as a theoretical framework, are discussed. The following chapter discusses the research design and methodology adopted by this study.

Chapter three: Research design and methodology

3.1. Introduction

This chapter outlines the research design and methodology implemented to address the research questions guiding this study. According to Scotland (2012), research methodology is the plan of action for data generation and the use of methods processes and techniques to generate and analyse data. This chapter first discusses the research paradigm, before giving a brief description of a qualitative research approach. Next a discussion of the case study methodology approach, including its strengths and weaknesses, are presented. This is followed by a detailed outline of the data generation methods used in the study – semi-structured interviews and collage. Lastly, issues of trustworthiness, ethical issues as well as limitations of the study and how I overcame them are discussed.

3.2. Research paradigms

Taylor and Medina (2011) describe a research paradigm as the comprehensive world view, belief system and guiding research framework of a study. Similarly, Kekeya (2019) describes a research paradigm as the group of general philosophical assumptions concerning ontology, epistemology and methodology. In addition, Kivunja and Kuyini (2017) define a research paradigm as a researcher's world view which means that the research paradigm shapes the beliefs and principles of a researcher and how s/he perceives the world in which s/he lives. The research paradigm enables the researcher to understand and attain knowledge based on beliefs about the nature of reality. Most importantly, Poni (2014) suggests that the paradigm has a significant role to play in research project as it influences the researchers' approach and construction and interpretation of the meaning of reality.

According to Taylor and Medina (2011), the interpretive paradigm is subjective since it focuses more on the relationship between the researcher and participants' experience of reality. In this regard, the researcher is passionate about understanding reality through participants' points of view. The researcher closely interacts while keeping a progressive relationship with participants for the intention of finding out more about participants' feelings and behaviour. Kekeya (2019) and Mackenzie and Knipe (2006) argue that the interpretive paradigm is underpinned by multiple realities which are socially constructed and created through day-to-day social activities, experiences and interactions with reality. According to Elshafie (2013), the interpretive paradigm

employs a qualitative research methodology in which interviews, field notes, diaries and observations are used. Elshafie (2013) and Mackenzie and Knipe (2006) also suggest that interpretivists believe that ethical dimensions, such as confidentiality and the privacy of participants, are very important during the research process.

This study was conducted during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic and during lockdown, when there was no clear indication whether teaching and learning would return to normal or not. There were lots of discussions about adjusting the education system to accommodate the situation. There was also curiosity about the future impact of lockdown regulations on education in the country which seemed to be struggling to transform. There were a few interventions to ensure that teaching and learning continued such as TV and radio learning channels. Therefore, the research paradigm suitable to this study was one that could allow the researcher to bring knowledge, understanding and ideas based on the problem at hand.

This study was located in the interpretive research paradigm due to its appropriateness in helping me to obtain an in-depth understanding of the reality of the COVID-19 pandemic. According to Mack (2010), interpretive studies focus on an individual's ability to construct meaning. This is grounded on the ontological assumption that there is no single interpretation of reality as people interpret events differently. The interpretive paradigm takes a subjective interpretative stance. Consequently, Krauss (2005) contends that interpretive researchers are willing to understand and explain social reality through the eyes of the participants.

According to Vasilachis (2009), a qualitative research methodology is interpretive since it employs explanation methods and flexible analysis such as coding. Scotland (2012) agrees that interpretive research undertakes qualitative data generation and analysis. However, Scotland (2012) contends that the trustworthiness of interpretive research is questionable based on the subjectivity of reality. This means that the research participants cannot provide the same interpretation of reality and that knowledge produced through the interpretive research is not transferable due to its lack of coherency.

3.2.1. Ontology, epistemology and methodology

According to Taylor and Medina (2011), each paradigm has its own ontological viewpoint on the nature of reality, epistemology and methodology. Similarly, Mackenzie and Knipe (2006) suggest that research methodology includes the ontological and epistemological assumptions in the study.

The research methodology also outlines the methods of data generation and analysis employed in the research study. Taylor and Medina (2011) define ontology as the nature of a researcher's viewpoint which might be internal or external to the knower. However, Elshafie (2013) suggest that ontology answers the question "what is out there that we need to know?" Taylor and Medina (2011) describe epistemology as the view of knowledge to be produced whereas, according to Kekeya (2019), epistemology refers to the understanding of the nature of the world. Taylor and Medina (2011) explain methodology as an approach to be used in generating knowledge involving data generation instruments and analysis.

3.3. Research approach

According to Mackenzie and Knipe (2006), a researcher can choose between different types of research approaches, namely, qualitative or quantitative research methodologies. The difference between them is that in the qualitative research approach, data is represented through pictures, numbers, words and icons while the data analysis is done using thematic data analysis whereas, in quantitative research methodology data is represented using numbers and analysed through statistics. Another possible research approach is a mixed-methods approach, which Ivankova et al. (2006) describe as possessing both qualitative and quantitative features. Ivankova et al. (2006) argue that the rationale behind using mixed methods in one study is to employ the strengths from both research approaches for the purposes of strengthening the research study and producing genuine research findings.

3.4. Qualitative methodology approach

In the quest to explore the experiences and emotions of senior phase teachers in the process of adjusting their teaching practices and curriculum coverage during the COVID-19 pandemic, a qualitative research methodological approach was used. Yilmaz (2013) defines qualitative research as an inductive, interpretive and emergent method to study a particular phenomenon, social situation or human being in their natural setting. This is done to uncover narrative meaning that people attach to their experiences of the world. According to Krauss (2005), qualitative research is characterised by the uniqueness of meaning construction. In addition, Scotland (2012) contends that interpretive research undertakes qualitative data generation and analysis. However, Ryan et al. (2007) assert that interpretive research is incorporated in qualitative research since it

acknowledges different beliefs about how knowledge is developed and accepts that knowledge development is dependent on participants' views.

Vasilachis (2009) suggests that qualitative research is interpretive since it employs explanation methods and flexible analysis such as inductive coding. Qualitative research takes into account the dynamic of social context, participants world views, sense and meaning making, actors accounts of social interaction, life experiences and peoples' thinking. Therefore, qualitative research was suitable for this study to provide necessary evidence about teachers' understanding and explanation of what was expected of them in relation to teaching and curriculum coverage during the COVID-19 pandemic.

3.5. Case study

This study employed a case study research approach. The case in this study was the experiences and emotions of senior phase teachers in the process of adjusting their teaching practices and curriculum coverage during the COVID-19 pandemic. A detailed discussion of case study features, strengths and weaknesses is provided in this section.

3.5.1. Defining a case study

Thomas (2011) describes a case study as an in-depth exploration of a phenomenon from various viewpoints and perspectives in a real context. Krusenivik (2016) suggests that a case study is the most common type of qualitative research methodology even though it has certain weaknesses. Baxter and Jack (2008) emphasise that a qualitative case study research design is the type of research that enables exploration of a specific phenomenon within its context through the utilisation of different sources of information. Baxter and Jack (2008) further describe the case study research design as a form of research approach that ensures exploration of an issue through multiple lenses to enable the researcher to understand the phenomenon better. Gerring (2004) agrees that a case study enables the researcher to understand the phenomenon better. The main focus of case studies is to answer how and why questions.

The rationale behind my choice of a case study research approach for this study was highlighted by Baxter and Jack (2008) who argue that a case study research methodology encourages collaboration between the researcher and participants. This creates space for participants to express their views of the reality freely and, during the process, the researcher is able to understand the actions of the participants better. This view is also supported by Bennett (2014) who describes

case study as a democratic research method because it observes individualistic freedom of expression and viewpoint without creating any form of impediments.

3.5.2. Characteristics of a case study design

According to Scotland (2012), case studies belong to interpretive methodology since they aim to understand phenomena. Scotland (2012) further asserts that a case study is an in-depth study of human experiences and activities that happen over an extended period of time. Thomas (2011) regards a case study as an in-depth enquiry from numerous angles of complexity and distinctiveness into a specific project, policy or organisation. For a case to exist, the researcher needs to identify typical units of a phenomenon to be observed or studied. Thereafter, it is necessary to interpret its significance or place it into a specific context.

Baxter and Jack (2008) argue that the research question is guided by the case and context while it is very important to maintain the scope of the study through placing boundaries. Gerring (2004) argues that a case study does not necessarily explore a single case, rather, researchers can have a series of things in mind when undertaking case study research. In a case study, the researcher needs to decide whether it is best to use single, holistic or multiple case studies. Gibbert et al. (2008) agree that researchers need to make sure that they provide a clear rationale for the case study and sufficient details about the context. Contemporarily, a case study is the study of a single unit with the intention of understanding a bigger set of other related units. Rule and John (2011) describe an educational case study as an understanding of an education action rather than the evaluation of education action.

3.5.3. Types of case studies

Baxter and Jack (2008) and Thomas (2011) mention three different types of case studies: intrinsic, extrinsic or instrumental and holistic. An intrinsic case study is based on the researchers' interests while an instrumental case study originates from external motivation and factors. On the other hand, holistic case study is the combination of both intrinsic and instrumental case studies. A case study research design can also be explanatory, descriptive or multiple. According to Gibbert et al. (2008), explanatory case studies examine phenomena that have not been studied before and create basis for further research studies. In contrast, descriptive case studies describe the phenomenon under investigation whereas, multiple case studies employ both case studies interchangeably.

Thomas (2011) asserts that a case study might be single case, meaning that the study contains one case, or a case study might be plural case, meaning that the case study contains more than one competing case. Tight (2010) confirms that a case study has two dichotomous dimensions, namely, single and multiple cases. In addition, Tight (2012) contends that case studies have five potential rationales which are relevant, longitudinal, typical, critical and extreme rationales.

This study employed the intrinsic and descriptive case study. The passion to undertake this study emanated from within myself as a researcher while my intention was to describe the experiences and emotions of teachers in detail.

3.5.4. Limitations of a case study

Baxter and Jack (2008) suggest that one of the limitations of the case study research approach is its lack of clear boundaries between the phenomenon and context. In addition, researchers tend to try to address research questions that are too broad or topics consisting of too many objectives for one study through case studies. Baxter and Jack (2008) further contend that reporting case study research findings is a complicated activity since it is a complex approach. Case studies compel researchers personally to change a complex phenomenon into a format that can be easily understood by the reader of a research study. Moreover, Tight (2010) argues that many practitioners regard the case study as degrading to their academic disciplines as it has inadequate accuracy, rigor and objectivity.

Tight (2010) highlights numerous limitations of a case study. One limitation is that a case study is context-based and not transferable or generalisable; consequently, it cannot contribute to scientific development. Tellis (1997) also identifies a lack of generalisability as a frequent criticism of the case study methodology. This is due to the fact that it often depends on a single case which renders it incapable of providing any generalisable conclusions. Krusenvik (2016) further mentions that a case study is criticised for its inability to generalise its findings. The knowledge is valuable rather than practical, and it is more useful for generating hypotheses than testing them. It is also biased towards verification. Krusenvik (2016) claims that the independence of the researcher is also questionable. It is questionable solely because in some types of case study research, the researcher plays an interactive role at a distance with the research end results in mind while guiding the subjects towards confirmation of expected results. Bennett (2004) affirm that case study methods

contain selection bias because they provide autonomy for researchers to select the research design or phenomenon to be studied with an intention to favour their expectations and interests.

Another concern is that case studies tend to repeat cases that have already been examined. Furthermore, Krusenivik (2016) argues that the case study research method is too descriptive and qualitative leading to its inability to contribute to scientific research as case study findings lack validity and reliability. According to Yazan (2015), case study has become a contested terrain because it does not have well-defined and well-structured procedures. This results in emerging researchers becoming confused when they have to differentiate between the case study and other forms of qualitative research. Krusenivik (2016) claims that, even though case study research is adopted by many researchers, it attracts little attention and support due to its lack of well-defined protocol. The status of the case study as a research method is not clear and there is no real consensus as to what a case study is about, how to conduct it or what results can be obtained from it. Baxter and Jack (2008) suggest that the fact that case studies' ethicality adheres to the anonymity principle creates a loophole for participants to provide self-protective and self-aggrandising responses that are not real or true.

Research context

The study was located in three schools in the uMvoti Circuit of the uMzinyathi District in KwaZulu-Natal. The schools were situated in a semi-rural area of eMatimatolo village. The schools are from black African community. The first school consisted of 800 learners and 24 members of staff. The school management team comprised of 5 individuals, namely the Principal, Deputy Principal and three Departmental Heads. The second school comprised of 1200 learners and 46 members of staff. The SMT comprised of 6 members, namely the Principal, 2 Deputy Principals and 3 Departmental Heads.

The medium of instruction in all three schools was English while iSizulu was offered as the Home Language and English as a First Additional Language. All sampled schools were made up of Foundation Phase (grade R to 3), Intermediate Phase (grade 4 to 6) and Senior Phase (grade 7). The participants for this study taught grade seven with the long teaching service. Furthermore, many learners lived in poverty, unemployment, illiteracy and with their grandparents or in child-headed households.

3.6. Participants and sampling

This section outlines the sampling procedure followed in selection of participants for this study. According to Taherdoost (2016), a sample is a small proportion representing the population that is selected since it is easier for the researcher to draw data from the sample than generating data from all the research cases in the populations. Therefore, in order to reduce the size of cases, it is important to apply a suitable sampling technique. Migiro and Magangi (2011) and Taherdoost (2016) describe two types of sampling techniques. These are probability and non-probability sampling techniques.

Pandey and Pandey (2021) assert that in probability sampling, all items in the population have equal opportunities of being represented in the sample whereas, in non-probability sampling there is no need for the equal representation of all items. Rather, non-probability sampling focuses on the inclusion of specific cases or individuals. This study adopted a case study research design and used non-probability sampling. Purposive sampling was used to select participants in this study.

According to Etikan et al. (2016), in purposive sampling, the researcher purposefully chooses participants based on the qualities, knowledge, experience and relevant characteristics they possess. This study required information about experiences and emotions related to teaching strategies and curriculum coverage employed by senior phase teachers during the COVID-19 pandemic which could only be provided by teachers teaching at the senior phase during the COVID-19 pandemic. Rai and Thapa (2015) contend that it is preferable for the researcher to select a small sample size hence it is easily accessible, less expensive and data is easily analysed.

Therefore, this study focused on three primary schools which warranted purposive sampling in conducting this study to select a small number of participants based on a stipulated criterion. The inclusion criteria was that participants needed to possess essential information about teaching and curriculum coverage strategies employed by senior phase teachers during the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, I purposefully selected six grade seven teachers teaching different subjects in a primary school before and during the COVID-19 pandemic. This was done to get in-depth knowledge on the experiences of senior phase teachers in the process of adjusting teaching strategies and curriculum coverage during the COVID-19 pandemic. In order to maintain the

credibility of the study, six teachers were purposively selected from three different primary schools which were conveniently located.

3.7. Data generation instruments

In order to address the research questions, this study adopted two forms of data generation methods. These were semi-structured interviews and collages. The motive behind using two data generation instruments was to ensure validity of the findings. Next, the data generation methods used in this study and their appropriateness are discussed.

3.7.1. Semi-structured interviews

Kvale (1996) describes an interview as a conversation that has a specific structure and purpose to exchange ideas while it embodies a careful questioning, answering and listening approach. Brenner (2006) asserts that an interview is an interactional relationship between the interviewer and an interviewee in an ongoing process of making meaning grounded on a particular phenomenon. The interview process is mostly dominated by the researcher through the introduction of the topic and follow up questions. Kvale (1996) further mentions different forms of interviews including oral and written interviews. Brenner (2006) suggests that verbal data is often generated through recording and note taking while written data is generated through interviews or tests. Ryan et al. (2007) elaborate that interviews are frequently conducted face-to-face, however, online and emailed interviews are also employed when necessary. Hofisi et al. (2014) assert that semi-structured interviews are flexible for both the interviewer and the participant. The researcher prepares a list of open-ended questions or an interview guide with specific topics to be covered while the interviewee is at liberty to reply freely and without confinement.

In this study, semi-structured interviews were conducted during leisure and spare time including weekends, after school and holidays. In order to create a conducive, safe and positive atmosphere, semi-structured interviews took place in the office of the Deputy Principal which I occupy. Ethical principles, intentions and procedure of the study were explained to all participants while they were also afforded the opportunity to ask for clarity. Questions from the interview schedule were asked and participants' answers were probed further for more explanation when necessary. Participants

were given the opportunity to jot down and organise their responses when they needed to do so. The semi-structured interviews were audio-recorded to capture all information shared and the flow of conversation was not interrupted. This exercise enabled me to work hand-in-hand with participants while in good position to ask probing questions and capture additional information through eye contact and body gestures. However, I also took notes where necessary, especially in areas of interest and in areas that needed probing for additional clarity.

3.7.2. Strengths of semi-structured interviews

Brenner (2006) contends that interviews allow researchers to generate data through audio-recording. This enables the researcher to capture an actual picture of what transpired during the interview such as participant's actions, expressions, feelings and words. In addition, Hofisi et al. (2014) claim that semi-structured interviews are flexible to the interviewer and the participant. The researcher prepares a list of open-ended questions or an interview schedule on specific topics to be covered while the interviewee is at liberty to reply freely and without confinement. Furthermore, Hofisi et al. (2014) contends that semi-structured interviews can be conducted face-to-face in which responses can be improved or probed further. Semi-structured interviews can also be conducted telephonically which is convenient and ensures facial anonymity.

3.7.3. Limitations of semi-structured interviews

According to Brenner (2006), audiotapes may be intimidating and threatening whereas taking notes while the participant is responding to questions may interrupt the interview process. Open-ended interviews are time consuming compared to close-ended interviews since they require more interaction and engagement from an interviewer. Brenner (2006) further asserts that, in an interview, the researcher often dominates the process which can easily influence the kind of information received through probing. In addition, the researcher can easily manipulate, amend or modify information to suit him/her without participant's consent.

According to Kvale (1996), there is no common procedure or standard rules for interviews. So, an interviewer can easily embark on an interview without any preparation and may end up asking unnecessary or confusing questions. Furthermore, Cho (2014) contends that the interviewee is absent during the transcription and analysis of data which means that the interviewer treats the interviewee as a tool to access knowledge. Cho (2014) also suggests that the interviewers' probing questions are not taken into account during data extraction and analysis which neglect the role of

the interviewer in the interaction. Hofisi et al. (2014) assert that although semi-structured interviews can be conducted telephonically, this is more expensive and prohibits the researcher from capturing non-verbal communication.

3.7.4. Collages

According to Pillay et al. (2019), collage is the technique of art whereby a range of materials comprising of pieces of fabrics, found objects or magazine cuttings are creatively pasted onto a chart. They are also organised into a visually meaningful display portraying a specific message. Pillay et al. (2019) suggest that collage is flexible since it permits participants to express their views in their own way. Vaughan (2005) complements this idea and suggests that piecing together various materials of different colours and shapes involves imaginative power to reveal enclosed messages. In addition, Roberts and Woods (2018) emphasise that collage is the placing of representational and non-representational objects onto a sheet of paper for the purpose of making specific meaning.

Therefore, implementation of a collage as one of the data generation methods in this study served the purpose of affording participants the opportunity to express their views artistically. It also opened a platform for participants to substantiate and supplement knowledge they have presented through the interview process. This idea is supported by Roberts and Woods (2018) who suggest that, at some point, words become inadequate to express human experience. Roberts and Woods (2018) believe that images can offer an opportunity for research participants to express experiences in a creative way.

In the quest to examine participants' emotions and experiences in the process of adjusting their teaching strategies and curriculum coverage during COVID-19, collages were most relevant. In order to execute this exercise, participants were given the necessary resources to design their collages. These resources included old magazines and newspapers, a pair of scissors, A3 white paper and glue. Participants were also guided to select pictures, images, words and phrases of their choice in line with the research questions guiding this study. This exercise seemed to be the most exciting exercise because it was playful and practical while at the same time served data generation purposes.

3.7.5. Strengths of collages

Pillay et al. (2019) describe collage as the cheapest data generation method in which only glue and paper are needed to paste found materials. Collage is also easy to make and allows anyone to participate irrespective of perceived artistic skills and the material to create a collage is easily found. The final work produced is rich in meaning. According to Pillay et al. (2019), collage is flexible in such a way that it permits participants to express their views in their own way.

3.7.6. Limitations of Collages

Ricks (2007) asserts that collages use visual materials with authentic messages and infuses new meaning in line with the research topic which detracts from the authentic meaning of the visual materials used. This artistic activity depends more on the creativity of a participant and so might produce a meaningless message. According to Whitelaw (2021), a collage can be misleading as it invites a discourse regarding the interpretation of its meaning. To address this limitation, I asked participants to interpret their collages. It often provides multiple meanings which the reader can interpret differently from the writer. In addition, Whitelaw (2021) contends that this new kind of dialogue and discourse leads to a dramatic shift that influences ways in which people read and assess text and material. Selection of collage materials relies mostly on participant's culture and experience rather than the arts. It can also be framed in a way that is exclusive, isolating discriminating and intimidating to certain participants. Collage is more associated with talent since it requires more doing versus thinking.

3.8. Data analysis

According to Mack (2010), interpretive studies suggest that knowledge is gained inductively. Thomas (2001) contends that inductive approaches aim to unlock meaning and the understanding of complex qualitative data through the formation of a summary of themes, patterns and categories from raw data. Maguire and Delahunt (2017) describe thematic data analysis as the process of seeking important and interesting themes and patterns within qualitative data for the purpose of making sense out of them. Braun and Clarke (2012) add that thematic data analysis is a method for systematically arranging, selecting, coding and giving understanding to patterns of meaning across qualitative data to address a particular research topic.

Maguire and Delahunt (2017) further mention two levels of thematic data analysis. These are semantic and latent levels. The semantic level deals with the identification of themes and patterns

while the latent level focuses on the interpretation of the underlying ideas of the qualitative data. This interpretive study was grounded on a qualitative methodology, and therefore adopted the thematic data analysis method.

3.9. Limitations of the study

When undertaking this study to explore experiences and emotions of teachers while adjusting their teaching strategies and curriculum coverage in the COVID-19 pandemic, I was aware of the limitations of the study and I prepared to overcome them in various ways. One of the limitations of this study was that it was a case study which, according Tight (2010), is context-based and not transferable or generalisable. This minimised the contribution of the case study to the scientific world. Indeed, this is supported by the fact that this study was based on the context of three primary schools within the uMvoti circuit in the uMzinyathi district in KwaZulu Natal. In order to address this, I decided to balance representation by selecting schools from different socio-economic backgrounds, quintiles and geographical locations. Secondly, this study focuses on six senior phase teachers within uMzinyathi district which is a small portion of teachers. Nevertheless, the fact that the study addressed a global issue, the findings of the study could present general insight into the experiences and emotions of teachers in the process of adjusting teaching strategies and curriculum coverage in general.

3.10. Ethical issues

Ryan et al. (2007) assert that, in order to protect participants, researchers should ensure that participants are aware of the anonymity, autonomy and maleficence principles applicable throughout the process of data generation. According to Wiles et al. (2008), there is a close relationship between anonymity and confidentiality. Confidentiality in ethics literature refers to the principle of privacy meaning that participants have a right to keep their information secret. However, anonymity means that the identity of participants is unknown. In addition, Wiles et al. (2008) describe confidentiality and anonymity as the researchers' effort to ensure that data generated from participants cannot be traced back to them.

In maintaining the confidentiality and anonymity of participants, numerous meetings were held with participants to discuss important ethical aspects and procedures. Ethical aspects included anonymity, autonomy and maleficence principles, data generation instruments, duration of the study and the content of the informed consent letter.

In addition, Fahie (2014) suggests that researchers need to provide their participants with sufficient details of the study for them to give their informed consent. Gordon and Prohaska (2006) add that it is very important that researchers reveal all information pertaining to voluntary participation and withdrawal of participation from the research process. Participants need to understand that their participation is of their own free will and they have the right to withdraw from the research procedure at any time. Furthermore, qualitative studies usually employ interviews and observation which require a close relationship between the researcher and the participants. Consequently, researchers need to be aware that sensitivity issues may interrupt the process and there is a risk of physical, verbal and sexual violence or traumatising. Participants need to be alerted to these risks in order to sign informed consent.

In order to address ethical issues, I applied for ethical clearance from the University of KwaZulu-Natal Research and Ethics Committee which reviewed the significant details of the study. Secondly, I complied with the suggested ethical procedures in which a letter to apply for a psychological intervention from the uMvoti circuit wellness centre was forwarded. This was done to ensure that psychologists from the circuit office were on standby in case their intervention was needed. Thirdly, I consulted relevant gate keepers to request permission to conduct the study. The application letter to request permission to conduct the study was submitted to the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Basic Education head office. In order to gain access to school principals and School Governing Body, I forwarded informed consent letters with sufficient details of the study to all participants. Consent letters were accompanied by the Permission letter issued by the Head of the KZN Department of Basic Education.

After gaining permission to conduct the study, I discussed information pertaining to the study such as the rights of participants, participants' selection criteria, purpose of the study and confidentiality clauses with the participants. This information was formally disclosed to principals, SGB members and participants during formal meetings. I further committed to protect the privacy and confidentiality of participants, schools and the department. In order to ensure this, I did not use actual participants' characteristics such as gender, name, occupation and location. Instead, I used pseudonyms and also ensured that those who had access to the data, maintained confidentiality as well. In addition, I avoided discussing matters arising from participants' interviews with other participants or irrelevant persons in a way that might expose the identity of the participants. I also

assured participants and stakeholders that the data would solely be used for the study and kept in the university for five years before being destroyed. Lastly, I had a meeting with staff members who volunteered to participate to discuss the whole process of the study.

3.11. Trustworthiness of the study

According to Gunawan (2015), most qualitative researchers do not provide an adequate description of their assumptions and methods in the data analysis process which raises issues of bias and speculation. Gunawan (2015) further suggests that trustworthiness is commonly judged based on credibility, dependability, transferability and conformability. Credibility pertains to internal validity, dependability deals with the reliability of the study, transferability involves the external validity of the study while conformability embodies issues of presentation. Krefting (1991) argues that qualitative approaches major objective is to generate a hypothesis which is subject to further investigation rather than testing the hypothesis. This affects the external validity of the study. Krefting (1991) further states that the credibility of the study is affected by the duration of time the researcher has to handle and generate data. Shenton (2004) maintains that the researchers' relationship with the phenomenon, context of the study and participants has a major negative impact on the credibility of the study. Shenton (2004) adds that the qualifications and experience of the researcher also has an impact on the credibility of the study since most novice researchers lack necessary researching skills. According to Gunawan (2015) and Shenton (2004), lack of reliability and dependability is a threat to the validity and credibility of qualitative studies as most qualitative researchers neglect reliability tests such as member testing, peer scrutiny of the research project and peer checking. Consequently, this reckless tendency raises question as to whether the researcher has correctly analysed data and whether the researcher has not tampered with generated data.

Furthermore, Krefting (1991) and Shenton (2004) stress that the transferability of the findings depends on their representation of the population. However, most qualitative findings represent a small portion of the population which hinders the transferability opportunities of the findings. In addition, Krefting (1991) mentions triangulation as an important attempt to address conformability of the findings of the study whereby different sources of data are explored. Likewise, Shenton (2004) suggests that triangulation involves the implementation of different methods of data

generation. Shenton (2004) reveals that the nature of sampling technique can also affect the conformability and credibility of the findings.

In attempt to strengthen the trustworthiness of the study, I decided to adopt several strategies. In addressing my positionality, since the study was also conducted within my school, I disclosed and clarified my role and responsibility as an independent researcher. Subsequently, I explained my independence throughout the study while assuring participants that they were free to disclose any information in line with the study. This exercise was done to ensure that my position at school did not interfere with the results of the study.

In order to ensure conformability of the study, triangulation, in which data was generated from two different sources, was used. Data generation was done through semi-structured interviews and collages both of which comprise different characteristics and limitations. The transferability of the study was also increased by selecting a balanced population representation. To achieve this, three different schools were selected based on socio-economic background. In addition, transferability was maintained through the selection of a universal topic which covered and affected global societies.

3.12. Conclusion

In chapter three, I explained the qualitative research methodological approach as well as the interpretive paradigm. This was followed by a discussion of the study's case study research design and the data generation methods adopted, which included semi-structured interviews and collages. Furthermore, this chapter discussed data analysis, purposive sampling and the limitations of the study with strategies to overcome them. Lastly, ethical issues and trustworthiness were discussed. The following chapter outlines the data presentation and research findings.

Chapter 4: Presentation and analysis of data

4.1. Introduction

The previous chapter outlined the research design and methodological approach used in this study to address the two research questions. The focus of this chapter is to present data generated through semi-structured interviews and the collages obtained from six participants. Hargreaves's (2001) theory of the emotional geographies of teaching was used as a theoretical framework to interpret and analyse the data generated in this study. In addition, relevant literature reviewed in chapter two was used to make sense of the findings of this study.

Data was generated from six participants who taught the senior phase with experience of teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic in the uMvoti Circuit of the uMzinyathi district. The discussions in this study were constructed based on data generated through semi-structured interviews and collages. The reason behind implementing two data generation methods was to for triangulation to increase the confirmability of the findings. Data was transcribed manually and cross-checked by participants for validity purposes. This happened after an in-depth reading of the semi-structured interview transcripts was done for the purpose of gaining a thorough understanding of the data before it was analysed. Most importantly, the data generated was coded and classified into categories of common sub-themes emerging from the views of the participants that addressed the two research questions:

1. What were senior phase teachers' experiences of adjusting their teaching strategies and curriculum coverage during the COVID-19 pandemic?
2. How did senior phase teachers feel about adjusting their teaching strategies and curriculum coverage during the COVID-19 pandemic?

These two research questions aimed to address the research problem which was based on the exploration of the experiences and emotions of senior phase teachers in adjusting teaching strategies and curriculum coverage during the COVID-19 pandemic. This study adopted thematic data analysis which, according to Maguire and Delahunt (2017), deals with the identification of themes and patterns and the interpretation of the underlying ideas in the qualitative data. This chapter begins with brief biographical narratives of the six participants obtained through data generated from collages and semi-structured interviews.

In order to protect the anonymity of the participants, pseudonyms were assigned for both participants and institutions. This was done through consultation with all participants. The following pseudonyms were used: Mchunu, Khumalo, Mveli, Mdunge, Mshibe and Mavundla. As a result of their anonymity, participants were free to provide detailed information on their personal and professional experiences and emotions in adjusting their teaching strategies and curriculum coverage during the COVID-19 pandemic.

4.2. Biographical narratives of Participants

This brief overview of the participants' narratives aims to provide background of the participants based on education history, professional and general experience as well as insight into their relation to the research topic. The adjectives in the following narratives were mostly provided by the teachers themselves and the narratives were generated from data in the collages and semi-structured interviews.

4.2.1. Mveli's narrative

Mveli is a teacher at Zenzele Primary School who has taught grade seven English, Economic Management Sciences (EMS) and Mathematical Accounting since 2010. She graduated with a Diploma in Business Studies in 1999, followed by a National Diploma in Cost and Management Accounting in 2001 and she obtained her Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) in 2014. She grew up in a township environment, but she was willing to explore different places. Through that, she became motivated to teach in the semi-rural school situated in Greytown, KZN. This school is one of the schools that were historically disadvantaged, and it lacks a number of learning resources and facilities. This school also has a large number of learners with challenges such as learning and financial barriers.

Mveli was motivated to become a teacher as she enjoys engaging with children and she is inspired by observing her learners showing their belief in her. Mveli is the type of teacher who is diverse, dynamic and kind-hearted. She regards herself as 'your go-to' kind of teacher, meaning that she is easily approachable. She also regards herself as a mediator, supervisor, problem solver and the kind of teacher who likes to take charge. She is a free-spirited teacher who enjoys thinking creatively by implementing new activities.

4.2.2. Mchunu's narrative

Mchunu is a qualified teacher who is teaching Mathematics and English at Mthandeni Primary School situated at Greytown, KZN. He has a long service in education and he has served Mthandeni Primary School for more than 20 years. Mchunu was promoted to a Departmental Head (Senior Phase) in 2021 after acting in the post for more than five months. He is in possession of a Bachelor of Education Degree and majored in intermediate and senior phase coupled with several certificates of merits and achievement awards for his outstanding academic performance. Mchunu is a talented teacher in the area of cultural activities and sports. he also serves in a number of school committees such as teaching relief and curriculum committees.

Mchunu is a highly active and motivated teacher. He was inspired by his former principal who was one of the best principals in the area. In this regard, through his interaction with his former principal, he learnt to care, love, respect and be humble to everyone irrespective of gender, race and age. He has also acquired self-discipline and passion coupled with a sense of resilience, dedication and hard work. His expertise helped him to stand as a pillar of strength for teachers in his phase during the difficult COVID-19 pandemic as he has never panicked. He only married five years previously as he had so many challenges relating to poverty eradication in his family. He has a sense of humour while he is more than a teacher to his learners and enjoys seeing his learners learn within a happy environment.

Lastly, according to Mchunu, South Africans deserve better than what they are receiving from schools. He is also concerned with the slow pace of the eradication of poverty in rural communities which he feels affects the quality of education in these communities. As a result, he stated, *“The advent of the pandemic had capitalised on the poverty state of the community as it severely harmed learners who come mostly from poor economic background communities compared to economically well-established communities.”*

4.2.3. Mdunge's narrative

Mdunge is a teacher at Mhlabunzima Primary School situated next to a timber farm. She was born in this area and also got married to a local man who loved her and has taken care of her since then. She has been teaching at Mhlabunzima Primary School for more than 25 years and is soon going to retire. She started teaching grade seven many years ago and is still enjoying the teaching profession.

Mdunge lives with a minor physical disability which sometimes hinders her ease of movement within the school as the school was built before the policy of inclusive schools was established.

Mdunge is a well-motivated teacher who was inspired by her cousin to become a teacher. She was encouraged by the success of her cousin as a teacher and the way her cousin loved her profession.

Mdunge explained:

Every time when I meet my cousin, she is in her formal look, a high heel shoe and stockings while she always smiling happily. Through that positive attitude from my cousin, I thought that the teaching profession was the best career. This was also perpetrated by the way she was honoured and respected by the community whereby when she happens to pass by home, everyone will stare at her until she disappears.

Mdunge has a unique personality. She is a shy person who always doubts herself, yet, after agreeing to do something, she does it perfectly. She loves her learners and is trying her best to balance her love and patience with all categories of learners including learners with learning challenges.

4.2.4. Mshibe's narrative

Mshibe has been a teacher at Zenzele Primary School since 2009. She is a Maths, Natural Science and Life Skills teacher specialising in grades six and seven. Mshibe obtained her Bachelor of Education Degree many years ago as she has been in the system for more than 30 years. She is looking forward to retiring. She has been selected as a participant in this study because she meets all stipulated requirements as she has been teaching senior phase before and during the pandemic. Therefore, she can provide relevant information on experiences and emotions of teachers while adjusting to teaching strategies and curriculum coverage in the COVID-19 pandemic.

She held the belief, “*Being a teacher at the time of COVID-19 was a mixture of experiences as at some point we were in a good position to realise our potential as teachers while at the same time we were are still traumatised by what we have seen.*” Mshibe had gone through a lot even before the advent of the COVID-19 as she had suffered from a stroke and also undergone a heart operation. In order to save her life, after the advent of the COVID-19, Mshibe had to apply for comorbidity leave. She mentioned that:

The advent of COVID-19 interrupted my life while I was still enjoying coming back to work after being sick for too long. As my doctor advised me that I am vulnerable to COVID-19, I had to lock my house and allow no visitors and in later on I decided to switch off my phone and not attend to any sad messages from my relatives.

This initiative was taken with the aim of protecting her from heart failure and from receiving sad news from her relatives. However, this did not help as she continued receiving news through other family members’ cell phones.

4.2.5. Mavundla’s narrative

Mavundla is a passionate teacher. She graduated as a teacher 20 years ago after struggling as she was studying part time. She started teaching at the school as a volunteer teacher dependent on the stipend from the SGB. In all these years, she has taught at senior phase, teaching different subjects such as Natural Science, which is her favourite subject, and Maths. She is the mother of two children one of whom passed on a few years ago. She was left with the youngest of her children. Despite these challenges, she was able to cope with her further studies.

She is a well-motivated teacher who goes the extra mile to help her learners during teaching and learning time. After hours she is a good coach in gospel and choral music and netball. In her narrative, it became evident that, even though many teachers struggled to teach learners online during the COVID-19 pandemic, she was able to implement online learning for her learners through WhatsApp and phone calls.

4.2.6. Khumalo's narrative

Khumalo has been the Departmental Head in the senior phase for more than ten years teaching Social Sciences and Technology to grade sevens. She is one of the best teachers at her school as she has consistently produced good results. Furthermore, Khumalo is highly qualified as she graduated with a diploma in Education and a Bachelor's degree in Education and was awarded many academic achievement certificates within and outside the school. She also qualified as a participant in the study as she had been teaching before and during the COVID-19 pandemic. She was also one of the school leaders and was therefore involved in many of the school structures that had to make decisions in order to respond to the challenges of the pandemic.

She explained that, as the SMT of the school, they experienced challenges as they had to keep adapting to the context. She stated, *"I observed that no one was an expert of COVID-19 and this could result in contradicting ideas, views and policies but as ground managers, we were at the forefront in which many criticisms from the community and teachers were pointing to us"*.

4.3. Analysis of data and emerging themes

Inductive data analysis was used to analyse data for both research questions. Hmedan and Nafi (2016) suggest that the inductive data analysis takes the approach that data analysis starts from the specific to theorise more broadly. Similarly, Soiferman (2010) argues that inductive data analysis moves from a small to a big picture of the phenomenon under study. This means that, data is presented from the context of the participant to draw conclusions about the broader context. In this regard, data analysis in this study was based on the experiences and emotions of senior phase teachers in South Africa adjusting their teaching strategies during COVID-19. This was based on the context of three schools situated in the rural areas of KwaZulu Natal. From this specific context, the study drew certain conclusions about the experiences and emotions of teachers during COVID-19 more generally. According to Kiger and Varpio (2020), thematic data analysis is the process of identifying codes and developing themes that emerge from generated data. Therefore, in this study, different themes and sub-themes were developed from participants' responses.

Research question one focussed on senior phase teachers' experiences of adjusting their teaching strategies and curriculum coverage during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, research question two focussed on how senior phase teachers felt about adjusting their teaching strategies and curriculum coverage during the COVID-19 pandemic. The following section discusses the themes and sub-themes in relation to research question one. The themes that emerged were: use of digital technology, health protocols, rotation system and heavy workloads, curriculum trimming, socio-economic background and scarcity of resources.

4.3.1. Research question 1: What were senior phase teachers' experiences of adjusting their teaching strategies and curriculum coverage during the COVID-19 pandemic?

4.3.1.1. Use of digital technology

During stringent COVID-19 lockdown restrictions, the Department of Basic Education (DBE) was compelled to suspend face-to-face learning. This was implemented for the purpose of preparing the education sector to have the necessary capacity and resources to address the pandemic as well as to enforce the necessary protection against the virus at a time of uncertainty. As a result, schools were advised to conduct teaching and learning online to cover the remaining curriculum. However, based on the context of public schools in South Africa, the implementation of this proposal was very challenging. In moving forward, the DBE suggested various alternative online learning platforms such as radio programmes, television channels, newspaper channels and social media learning platforms.

In that regard, Mweli pointed out, *"There was a suggestion by DBE that since schools were unable to teach physically, they must adopt online learning"*. As a result, Mweli felt that teaching learners online failed to happen due to reasons such as the socio-economic background of the country, learners and schools. Mweli further mentioned, *"SA public schools and communities don't have online learning resources such as computers, televisions, radios, cell phones or internet connectivity"*. These resources were needed in order to teach online.

In the same vein, Khumalo viewed the geographical location of her school as a contributing factor to the inability of her school to implement online learning. In substantiating this, Khumalo highlighted, *"The majority of quintiles one to three schools which are amongst rural, semi-rural and township schools were unable to attend schools online compared to quintiles four and five schools."*

In elaborating on this, Khumalo argued that consequently, during the suspension of contact learning, many learners from quintiles one to three schools were unable to attain any form of education. Similarly, Mchunu confirmed, *“It was well known that our schools are situated in deep rural areas where no one can even listen to you when you talk about learning online.”*

In contrast, Mavundla disagreed with the notion that the closure of schools due to national lockdown stopped learners from learning. According to Mavundla, teaching and learning was in place as various online learning platforms were introduced by the DBE to keep learners learning at home.

These learning platforms included television programmes, radio broadcasted programmes and social media platforms such as WhatsApp and Facebook. Mavundla argued, *“Who said people from rural areas cannot learn online? To me that’s a wrong perception hence these learners we are teaching are born by very young parents whom them and their children are well vested with technology.”* Mavundla believed that everyone, regardless of geographical location, owns a smart cell phone. Mavundla was able to expand learning opportunities for her learners by creating a WhatsApp group for her class. Mavundla also used cell-phone calls to provide parents and learners with extra clarity and feedback on her learning activities during the COVID-19 lockdown.

The narrative presented by the participants resonated with Basilaia and Kvavadze (2020) who argued that the outbreak of COVID-19 compelled the education system to transform from traditional to digital teaching and learning. The sudden replacement of teaching resources such as books, blackboards, whiteboards, projectors and digital board by digital learning devices became mandatory in many countries. Similarly, Sintema (2020) contends that the majority of the developing and under-developed countries do not have access to the internet. They also lack devices necessary for digital and online learning which deprived learners of the opportunity to learn during the COVID-19 lockdown. Similarly, teachers in South Africa, a developing country, experienced challenges regarding online learning equipment such as computers, smart phones, electricity and internet connectivity.

Consequently, Ramrathan (2021) suggested that the implementation of online learning in South African schools ignored the reality of public schools in South Africa. The study found that the majority of schools from rural quintiles one to three had learners from poor socio-economic backgrounds.

As a result, these schools were unable to take part in online learning whereas learners at private schools from more privileged economic backgrounds did not face these challenges. In this, this study corroborated the findings of Ramrathan (2020).

According to Hargreaves's (2001) notion of physical geographies, the geographical residential location of teachers and learners and parents are different. Hargreaves (2001) suggests that frequency and continuous physical interaction is paramount to the creation of the emotional bond between teachers and learners and parents. In this regard, findings indicated that the immediate declaration of the state of disaster led to segregation of residential location between teachers and learners' families. This was due to the fact that human movement and contact was prohibited. Consequently, this led to almost no physical interaction among parents, learners and teachers which created poor relationships. Since good interaction and collaboration was vital to discussing possible suggestions towards alternative teaching strategies necessary during COVID-19 pandemic, learners lost learning time, leading to lack of curriculum coverage, due to these poor interactions.

4.3.1.2 Health protocols

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in South Africa brought about many changes in schools' operations. These changes were mostly introduced to eliminate the contribution of schooling in the spread of COVID-19 in the community.

According to Mavundla, there were fundamental changes that took place after the outbreak of the COVID-19. She described, "*We had to practice new health habits such as the wearing of face masks, social distancing, sanitising hands regularly, prohibition of kissing and hugging and keeping sanitisers in every school corner*".

Likewise, Khumalo stated that in implementing social distancing in schools, school floors were marked showing the 1.5-meter distance. She claimed, "*The outbreak of the virus in South Africa resulted in lockdown regulations, as a result, schools had to practice social distancing.*" In this regard, social distancing was implemented from the school gate in assemble arenas, admin blocks and classes.

Most of these changes were based on the observation of health protocols which were designed to protect citizens against the disease. Based on Mchunu's collage, these health protocols also brought changes with regard to teaching and learning whereby teachers had to teach learners standing far away from them and online.

Mchunu believed that the implementation of these COVID-19 health protocols wasted much teaching and learning time. This was due to the fact that there was no extra time reserved for such practices. Mchunu mentioned, "Every morning you could see long queues along the entrance gate whereby screening and checking of face masks was done. This procedure was a waste of teaching and learning allocated time."



Figure 2: Khumalo's collage

Mdunge and Mchunu's concerns were echoed by Khumalo. Khumalo felt that, although health protocols implemented in schools saved many lives, they also occupied much of the teaching and learning time. According to Khumalo in her collage, the schooling new "normal" wasted of teaching time with learners standing in long queues in the morning waiting to be sanitised. In addition, people were screened and recorded to determine whether they were healthy enough to attend school or should be quarantined for showing symptoms of COVID-19. Similarly to Mchunu's collage, Khumalo compared schooling life before and during COVID-19.

She mentioned that, before COVID, schooling life was free and there were many entertaining curriculum enrichment programmes such as grade R graduations, matric farewells, achievers and prize giving days and educational tours. According to Khumalo, these activities were necessary in supporting the curriculum. During the pandemic there were numerous restrictions in terms of social contact which prevented many of these from taking place.

Among these restrictions were the isolation of learners and teachers with COVID-19 symptoms, vaccination of teachers and learners and regular sanitising of hands. Khumalo believed that the implementation of COVID-19 regulations within teaching and learning time resulted in the lack of curriculum coverage.

Mshibe, on the other hand, believed that the implementation of health protocols as part of the measures to curb the spread of the COVID-19 disease was a good start towards good health. According to Mshibe, this was the beginning of good practice in which everyone learnt to live healthily and safely. In her narrative, Mshibe stated, *“COVID-19 has taught people to always be clean in such a way that hands be washed always, windows be kept open, and surfaces be always sanitised.”*

Deguen et al. (2020) concurred with the findings of this study that extending the closure of schools and quarantine could have serious long-term effects on learners in terms of learning, social, mental and physical well-being. According to them, the reopening of schools in compliance with each country’s COVID-19 health protocols would benefit learners. However, they maintained that this could happen on the basis that safety precaution measures were taken into consideration to ensure the safety of all stakeholders. In the same vein, Di Domenico et al. (2021) claimed that, in the middle of 2021, countries such as Greece, France and Australia implemented a staggered return of learners to school. However, health precautions and protocols such as wearing of mask, contact tracing, social distancing, testing and quarantine were strictly observed.

Farboodi et al. (2020) assert that social distancing as a result of COVID-19 exposed teachers, learners and communities to stressful and psychological situations. This was due to the fact that people learn better through contact and physical communication and connection which the policy on safety protocols prohibited within schools. This resulted in learners and teachers living lonely and stressful lives in which meeting, playing together and eating together became a form of misconduct.

4.3.1.3. Rotation system and heavy workloads

Ramrathan (2021) outline the policy on staggered return to school in which it was suggested that grade 12 and seven learners would return to school earlier than other grades. The reason behind this suggestion was that these are transitional and exit grades without years of education remaining to cover any lost curriculum content.

The curriculum coverage deficits happened solely because of the failure to administer teaching and learning online due to several challenges. In implementing the staggered return to schools, teachers as agents of change had to work very hard to prepare themselves for the return of learners to school within the COVID-19 context. In doing so, teachers tried their best to explore new teaching approaches in line with the new “normal”. More importantly, new teaching strategies always had to maintain social distancing as mandated by the national health protocol.

The most useful teaching strategy that teachers relied on before the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic-19 was group work. Khumalo noted, *“It allows slow learners to learn easily from their peers hence it become easy for learners to learn from their classmates than the teacher.”* In addition, Mavundla suggested that group work promotes team building among learners. She stated, *“Learners enjoy working together as a team while having freedom to mix and share knowledge with each other.”* Moreover, Mshibe, based on her experience of teaching at senior phase, concluded that learners know what they have discussed with peers better than what they have been taught by teachers. Similarly, Mchunu shared that discussions among groups of learners are helpful in facilitating lessons. During these discussions, many challenges in understanding taught content are addressed by peers. In support of group work, Mchunu suggested, *“Other learners work well with others in groups as they are shy or scared of their teachers.”* In line with this, Kozar (2010) believes that group learning as compared to individual learning result in more meaningful psychological connection and deeper knowledge processing among learners. This meant that depriving learners of the opportunity to join together through information sharing during COVID-19 psychologically affected them.

Moreover, in public schools, grouping learners into smaller groups lessens the burden for teachers as many public schools have large learner enrolments leading to overcrowded classrooms. Relatedly, Mshibe mentioned, *“It is easy to mark the group activity than individual activity as it saves time and allow the teacher to move fast to the next topic...it also become easy to group*

learners according to their learning abilities like slow, medium and high performers.” On the other hand, Mshibe believed that, even though one-on-one teaching approach demanded much of more of teachers’ time, it benefited learners more. Mweli suggested, “One-on-one teaching and learning system was helpful to learners with learning challenges hence they were able to receive individual attention from their teachers.”

Based on the policy at the time, schools were mandated to reduce the number of learners attending school depending on the availability of floor space. In this regard, many schools decided to implement the rotation system in which learners attended classes in turns. However, data from the participants indicated that the rotation system had many challenges.

According to Khumalo, during the rotation system, learners attended school in small and manageable numbers. Consequently, only half of the school was able to attend classes each day. She stated, *“at Matshezulu Primary School, learners’ enrolment is too big in such an extent that each grade has two blocks that is A and B which after the re-grouping of learners, each grade produced four blocks.”* Mchunu agreed, *“The process of rotating learners resulted to the school utilising even prefab classes that were not used for teaching and learning before the pandemic”*. Mchunu also suggested that the rotation of learners to occupy more classes as one of the measures to maintain social distancing resulted in a need for more manpower and doubled workloads. For example, a class of 60 learners had to split into three classes tripling teachers’ workloads and compelling the government to employ teacher assistants.

In addition, Mweli confirmed that the situation in many public schools is unlike that in the ex-model C and private schools. Mweli stated, *“Unlike in private schools, we have big enrolment of learners leading to overcrowding and due to the prohibition of mass gathering, schools had to implement rotation of learners’ system.”* This was a challenge for infrastructure and resources in many South African public schools. Mavundla confirmed, *“Re-allocation of additional workload to teachers costed them lot of time and it happened at the time where everyone was frustrated and expected to recover curriculum lost time.”* Likewise, Mweli mentioned, *“Hence learners were taking some days away from school, they end up forgetting what they have learnt”*. In addressing this, she said, *“Teachers had to repeat what has been already taught.”* This resulted in the loss of teaching and learning time which contributed to the inability to move the curriculum forward.

Mchunu believed that another reason for teachers repeating lessons emanated from the learner absenteeism as a result of parents failing to understand the rotation timetable. Previously, it was easy for parents to ensure that children were attending school Monday to Friday. However, rotation attendance made it difficult to keep track of which days learners were supposed to be at school.

In his narrative, Mchunu stated, *“Most of our learners live with illiterate parents who sometimes can’t read and understand the rotation timetable...this stops them from monitoring their kids’ attendance.”* In the same vein, Khumalo noted, *“Learners sometimes don’t understand the reason for going to school when their siblings are asleep while other learners can’t read the timetable on their own.”*

Correspondingly, Hargreaves (2001) view is that teachers develop negative emotions when they feel that their purpose is at odds with different factors. These factors include overwhelming workloads, curriculum changes, work environment changes and restructuring which lead to anxiety, pressure and uncertainty. Participants in this study suggested that the rotation system contributed to the burden carried by teachers through the heavy workloads allocated to them. This was due to the fact that dividing a big class into smaller groups produced two or more groups depending on the size of the class causing teachers’ workloads to double or triple.

Hargreaves (2001) also suggests that continuous physical interaction is important in the creation of a close bond between role players. During the COVID-19 pandemic, teachers were teaching learners under severe social distancing restrictions. These restrictions disallowed contact between teachers and learners which resulted in changes in teaching strategies. This negatively impacted upon the experience of teaching and learning for both teachers and learners often leading to a loss of morale for both. Furthermore, data revealed that poor and lack of face-to-face communication channels as a result of the prohibition of parents from school premises during the COVID-19 pandemic led to misunderstanding between teachers and parents. These were exacerbated because, during COVID-19, there were more changes in the way schools were run. These changes were not well communicated to parents leading to misunderstanding between parents and teachers.

4.3.1.4. Curriculum trimming

In order to address the challenges related to shortage of teaching and learning time and rotation of learners, curriculum trimming was introduced. The DBE urgently developed intervention strategies in order to reduce heavy workloads on teachers through curriculum trimming.

Curriculum trimming entailed the omission of certain topics from the annual teaching plan and the removal of two subjects from the subject streams.

According to the findings, curriculum trimming helped teachers a lot in reducing the heavy workload resulting from the rotation of learner's system. However, the implementation of the curriculum trimming process resulted in both positive and negative aspects. According to Khumalo, one of the positive aspects about the implementation of curriculum trimming was that it was able to address the challenge of teachers' heavy workloads. She claimed "*The curriculum trimming includes taking off some topics in the Annual Teaching Plan coupled with the withdrawal of two other subjects from the curriculum*". This meant that hours that allocated for the trimmed-out subjects were given to teachers to provide some respite. Similarly, Mweli added that schools received a revised teaching plan from the DBE with the trimmed topics. The revised teaching plan omitted certain topics while adding topics from other subjects. This was done for the purposes of reducing teachers' workload.

Even though the curriculum trimming policy seemed to be a good initiative, certain participants suggested that it was problematic. Findings show that the DBE caused a lot of confusion by trimming down subjects from the annual teaching plan while also adding topics from trimmed out subjects to other subjects. According to Mavundla, curriculum trimming created confusion for most teachers who had been teaching a subject for many years as they had to change their routines in planning and prepare contingency plans. As a result, teachers had to waste time searching for information and integrating new topics with older one. Mavundla mentioned that, because teachers were not trained on how to implement the policy, communication with other colleagues became essential during the implementation of curriculum trimming. Mavundla noted, "*With regard to curriculum trimming, as a teacher I had to go an extra mile through inter and intra networking with colleagues who have better understanding of added topics to my subject and it was also vital to search through internet.*"

Moreover, Mweli mentioned that, even though she agreed that curriculum trimming assisted teachers, it was a violation of the rights of learners who were not receiving the planned curriculum. Mweli suggested, "*Most of these adjustments by the DBE took away the right of the learners to learn certain content important and required in their future.*" She suggested that curriculum

trimming focussed on teachers' workload and not the impact of omission of certain information on the future of the learners.

Despite the efforts of the DBE to trim the curriculum, Mdunge shared that teachers continued not to complete the curriculum. This was because teachers were not involved in the development of the plan as it was imposed on them while at the same time there were no workshops on the policy. In order to address this, the DBE designed another intervention instrument called the 'hand-over tool'. According to Khumalo, "*Handing-over tool was our last hope that even though I failed to cover all topics as expected, but the next teacher will start from where I ended.*" The function of the hand-over tool was to improve communication between teachers of different grades about the status of curriculum coverage. This also served as a document that notified the next grade teacher of the curriculum progress made by the learners and the previous grade teacher.

Reader (2006) suggests that organisational change is generally implemented for the purpose of improving organisational ability, health and effectiveness to overcome a competitive and complex world. In this case, however, the COVID-19 pandemic created a complex and challenging context which required numerous organisational changes. Reader (2006) stresses that, in implementing organisational change, the organisation should use necessary tools such as participation, informed and shared commitment and fairness.

According to Hargreaves (2001), teaching is infiltrated by political antagonism in which top-down policy implementation approaches and intrusive, unwanted and unnecessary reforms are imposed on teachers. Therefore, the development of the policy of curriculum trimming could have been an effective reform if it had been well communicated to the teachers. Relevant capacity and consultation programmes with teachers on the ground could have been done by department officials. In other words, subject advisors or teacher development directorates from district office could have conducted workshops based on the implementation of the curriculum trimming policy rather than formulating and imposing this on the teachers without clarity, consultation or progress monitoring.

4.3.1.5. Socio-economic background and scarcity of resources

Ramrathan (2021) critically discusses the impact of lockdowns and social distancing regulations to curb the spread of COVID-19 on curriculum coverage. The greatest argument was that the

uncertainty of prolonged lockdown periods as a means to save lives interrupted the implementation of planned initiatives to save the academic year.

Different proposals on curriculum coverage and the extension of the academic year were debated among relevant stakeholders and platforms. The implementation of internet, Google Classroom and other digital learning platforms received many criticisms. The above statement is in line with the views of participants in the South African context that, the purpose of the national lockdown was to prepare government institutions to carry day-to-day duties without spreading the virus. However, after the staggered re-opening of schools, it became evident that the country had failed many learners and benefited few based on socio-economic background. In this regard, many students from poor socio-economic backgrounds were more affected than those from stable socio-economic backgrounds.

According to Mchunu, sharing resources was one of the strategies used to overcome the challenge of scarcity of resources in teaching before the COVID-19 pandemic. Resources such as books, pens, rulers and calculators were shared among learners before the outbreak of the pandemic. This was not possible during the pandemic. Mchunu explained, *“This exposed learner who were unable to provide themselves with learning resources and disturb the pace of the lesson.”* In other words, the prohibition of sharing teaching and learning resources served to protect learners and teachers from the pandemic while hindering their access to necessary learning resources. Similarly, Mshibe suggested that the COVID-19 pandemic exposed the poor economic background of many learners and schools who could not afford to buy their own learning resources. Mshibe also noted, *“The economic background of our school made things worse for our kids whereby the majority of our learners doesn’t have personal learning resources like rulers, calculators and even pens while COVID-19 restrictions were against sharing learning resources.”*

Furthermore, according to Mavundla, the scarcity of and inability to share learning resources greatly contributed to the slow pace of curriculum coverage and teachers’ inability to cover the full curriculum. Mdunge observed that at her school, sanitising teaching and learning resources became one of the alternative strategies used in addressing the challenge of scarcity of resources. Mdunge stated, *“In addressing the issue of sharing of resources hence some learners are without necessary learning equipment, there should be sanitisation of equipment before sharing it.”*

In the same vein, Sintema (2020) contends that Zambia, as a developing country, faced more challenges with alternative teaching and learning strategies to maintain curriculum coverage after the countries' lockdown mainly due to insufficient resources and funding. This finding was in line with what participants in the study suggested regarding the South African context in which most public schools found it hard to function under the pandemic. Even after schools were allowed to attend face-to-face, the working conditions, infrastructure and learning resources hindered the smooth execution of teaching and learning. This became apparent soon after the DBE emphasised the implementation of health precaution in all schools within the country.

Likewise, Aarts et al. (2021) asserts that lockdown regulations seemed to have negative results on citizens in such a way that many people lost their jobs and also had to relocate. In addition, García and Weiss (2020) contend that the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic happened at a time when the education system was already challenged and not prepared to cope with the COVID-19 situation. This gave rise to different challenges emanating from socioeconomic disparities that had a huge impact on teaching and learning during the pandemic. In addition to that, socioeconomic disparities may lead to inequalities in learning outcomes in the long run.

Moreover, many children were already struggling to learn effectively under normal circumstances before the COVID-19 pandemic. This was exacerbated in the abnormal circumstances of COVID-19. This was discussed by García and Weiss (2020) who identified the differences in the way different families provided learning resources for children. These differences were heightened by several factors that emanated after the COVID-19 pandemic including the economic gaps resulting from unemployment, retrenchments and shut down of businesses during that time.

4.3.2. Research question 2: How did senior phase teachers feel about adjusting their teaching strategies and curriculum coverage during the COVID-19 pandemic?

This section discusses the themes and sub-themes in relation to research question two. Data revealed the themes of teachers' fear and anxiety in a number of areas, uncertainty about implementing new teaching strategies, fear of contracting COVID and support during COVID-19 including parental support, support from DBE, emotional support and teaching support.

4.3.2.1. Fear and anxiety

This study discovered through data generation and analysis that the COVID-19 disease brought about a lot of fear for both teachers and learners. Each day they were worried about what would happen to their colleagues and learners. However, teachers could not show their fear of COVID-19 since they were trusted by many people. Therefore, they were expected to pretend to be strong.

According to Khumalo, *"Teachers had to be very strong in front of the learners."* This was because of the positionality of teachers and their roles as role models. In elaborating on this, Mweli explained, *"Under the advent of the pandemic, teachers had to pretend to be brave and always portray positive attitude before the community."* The purpose of this was to give strength to the community and reassure learners and that COVID-19 could be handled. Based on the above utterances by Mweli, it became evident that immediate professional changes emanated from the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic which left teachers with distorted professional identities and feelings. Mweli stated, *"As teachers we were not sure of what will happen hence there were lot of changes in our day-to-day professional work"*. Mweli further suggested that this was mentally confusing. For example, the lockdown restrictions prohibited the gathering of masses while at the same time the teaching profession is mostly dependent on the masses. In the same vein, Mchunu mentioned that teachers found themselves masking their emotions to satisfy other people. Mchunu explained, *"Teachers as agents of change were expected to pretend to be strong physically, emotionally, psychologically and spiritually."* Teachers' positive attitudes brought strength and hope to the learners and the entire nation to face and conquer COVID-19 challenges.

Similarly, Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) discuss the impact of context on identity shift. They contend that teachers' identities are dynamic as they shift over time based on different factors such as individual, job and life experiences. They also suggest that a teacher might have a mixture of or multiple identities.

Certain periods in the professional life of teacher, such as times of education reforms, with a high level of emotions involved might affect teachers' identities. For teachers to be able to continue performing their professional duties under the fearful conditions of the COVID-19 pandemic, they had to hide their emotions of fear and anxiety, stress, trauma and psychological discomfort and express a calm persona to pretend to be ready to face the reality of the pandemic.

This statement is in line with Hargreaves' (2000) notion of emotional labour in which teachers find themselves in a dilemma when compelled to sell their emotional well-being to please the employer, colleagues, learners or parents. This emanated from the fact that teachers pretended to be strong enough to work under COVID-19 conditions while sacrificing their health to continue to educate learners. Consequently, teachers found themselves masking their emotions to satisfy other people. Subsequently, as a result of pressures and expectations coming from the department and community at large, teachers had to convey a professional identity at the expense of their authentic emotional state.

4.3.2.2. Uncertainty about implementing new teaching strategies

Based on the data from the participants, it became worrying to think about the future of learners in grade one in 2020 as there was a feeling that education reforms due to COVID-19 had extremely affected them. Consequently, it seemed like there were slim chances that this damage could be fixed. Mavundla speculated, *"Current matriculants couldn't write and excel examination papers that were written before the outbreak of COVID-19 unless the standard of the paper would be compromised... I wonder what will happen in 2032 when the grade ones of 2020 will be doing grade 12."*

Teachers in practice were exposed to numerous COVID-19 contextual factors such as changes in teaching strategies, assessment techniques and teaching resources. These factors seemed to have long-term effects on the emotions of teachers and learners. Mavundla explained her emotional pains,

It is common for teachers that they receive professional satisfaction after they have done their job well. However, during the pandemic, teaching happened but for the sake of compliance. Teachers tried to use most teaching strategies at their disposal but the length of the curriculum versus the length of available teaching time could not correlate.

Mshibe noted that the mental wellbeing of teachers was not fit and strong in preparation to carry their expected professional duties properly. Mshibe said, *“After everything, we are left with emotional scars and bruises in which no one cares about them.”* This was due to the fact that teachers were not provided with necessary support. Consequently, teachers failed to complete the annual teaching plan. This on its own became stressful, depressing and traumatic to them as they knew they would be held responsible for the incompleteness of the curriculum.

Khumalo confirmed that during the COVID-19 pandemic, learners had gone through severe stresses, *“As a teacher you feel that some learners were trying very hard to attend classes physically but seemed to be mentally away.”* Consequently, these challenges made teachers feel mentally drained too and they lost morale. Khumalo further stressed that it was fruitless to teach depressed, stressed and traumatised learners as they could not concentrate which led to poor academic performance. On its own, this situation destroyed the teachers’ emotional wellbeing leading to depression and trauma on the side of the teacher as well. Moreover, she commented on teachers’ accumulation of emotional grief as a result of their feelings of helplessness when watching learners’ futures being put in jeopardy by insufficient curriculum coverage and poor academic performance. In the same vein, García and Weiss (2020) elaborate that, even though the impact of COVID-19 might not be measured, it is evident that learners went through psychological distress and that their academic performance deteriorated. Reimers (2022) mentioned that a survey conducted in Mexico revealed that 30.3 % of students from secondary schools complained that they did not receive any support from parents. This is due to the low level of parent education and the unavailability of resources to access information platforms such as Google Learn. Similarly, in the South African context, many parents were unable to play their part in supporting their children cope with education reforms during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Furthermore, Reimers (2022) suggests that there is a lot to be done by policymakers in addressing the curriculum gaps caused during the COVID-19 pandemic. Among the interventions to address education shortcomings during the COVID-19 pandemic is the enforcement of mechanisms to encourage parents to support learners during recovery programmes to address curriculum gaps for disadvantaged learners. Reimers (2022) emphasises that it is of paramount importance that relevant stakeholders come up with necessary mechanisms to address gaps caused during COVID-19.

Correspondingly, Hargreaves (2001) mentions that factors such as pressure and uncertainty, curriculum changes, work environment changes and restructuring may create negative emotions on teachers. The participants in my study expressed regret that they were progressing learners to next grades knowing that justice had not been served to the learners. In other words, teachers were doing it to comply with the situation despite their concerns. This suggests that teachers found themselves caught in a dilemma whether to uphold their professional oath or to protect their jobs.

4.3.2.3. Fear of contracting COVID-19

It was evident that during the COVID-19 pandemic, teachers were not sure whether to prioritise their health or the academic success of their learners. The prohibition of group activities due to social distancing resulted in most teachers taking risks regarding the use of group work. Since many public schools are overcrowded, it seemed that the group teaching strategy was the best strategy to save time and to minimise marking.

According to the findings of the study, teachers tried everything possible to ensure that teaching and learning took place during the turmoil of COVID-19. However, Mchunu reported that, in the long run, teachers realised that their efforts were risky. Khumalo also felt that teachers sometimes had to break health protocols and cross boundaries for the sake of fulfilling their job obligation. Among other things, the fact that group teaching strategies were prohibited led to teachers marking individual learners' exercise books and handling learner materials which put them at risk of infection. Khumalo expressed, *"It is important that as a teacher you mark the learners' book."* Subsequently, in order to hasten the pace, some teachers had to mark exercise books without sanitising. Mdunge observed that, many teachers took exercise books home which was potentially dangerous to their health and that of their families. *"It is emotionally touching that teachers were doing this through the pressure from their seniors who did not care about the situation in which teachers find themselves in."*

Correspondingly, Khumalo shared, *"I ended up risking my life taking learners' books home for marking while I was not sure which book in the batch is contaminated. I had to do that knowing very well that that it was a serious risk for me and for my families."* This statement revealed her emotional experiences regarding the tension of learning how to adjust teaching strategies while at the same time they being expected to cover the curriculum. She explained that the size of the classes impacted on the marking load making it difficult to cope.

According to lockdown regulations, social distancing needed to be maintained at all times. However, according to Mavundla, for the teachers to explain and clarify something to the learners, they had to risk their lives by moving closer to learners. This led to the anxiety of not knowing whether they might have contracted the disease through breaking social distancing norms. Similarly, Mdunge described the anxiety of the consequences of breaking social distancing rules when teachers could not teach without getting close to the learners. Hargreaves (2001) confirms that contextual factors that teachers are exposed to might result in positive or negative emotions such as caring, frustration or stress. In this regard, COVID-19 restrictions was stressful and depressive to teachers leading to negative emotions such as regret and dissatisfaction.

4.3.2.4. Support during COVID-19

1. Parental support

Participants' responses revealed that teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic was challenging and required sufficient support from different stake holders including parents, teachers and DBE. In this regard, Mdunge suggested, *"During the COVID-19 pandemic, parental involvement was needed a lot solely because learners were spending more time at home with parents than at school."* This meant that parents had a huge responsibility to ensure that children at home completed their homework and were ready for the next day.

Mavundla added that the outbreak of the COVID-19 exposed a huge parental support gap. As a consequence of COVID-19, she noticed that many children had lost parents and guardians through the virus and felt that communities had a role to play in closing this gap. She explained, *"I suggest that communities should develop a support system in which every adult take charge of children within their communities."* This suggestion drew on the traditional idiom that says "it takes the whole village to grow a child".

In addition to the trauma experienced by families, participants' responses revealed that teachers experienced increased trauma and stress due to the high mortality rate of learners' caregivers. This severely affected the learning and well-being of both learners and teachers in many ways. that the findings of this study showed a huge correlation between learners' private challenges and academic challenges. Mchunu explained, *"The COVID-19 surge caused lots of mortality in our societies in which the majority of people who lost their lives are grannies. This left many families with no source of income."*

This was particularly evident in rural areas where many families are dependent on social grants and pensions received by grandparents. Khumalo added, *“It became very depressing to teach a learner with empty stomachs due to the reason that the person who was receiving money on her/his behalf is late.”* This, according to Khumalo, was one of the causes of stress and depression for many teachers while it contributed to poor concentration and poor learner performance.

Mweli also highlighted the huge parental support gap in many schools during COVID-19. Teachers were compelled to convert most of their assessment into homework. As a result, the need for parental involvement became greater than before. The mere fact that parents were not allowed to visit schools should not have stopped them from exercising their parental roles. Mshibe shared the same view claiming, *“Despite helping children with school homework, there were many other parental responsibilities that were expected from parents during the pandemic.”* These responsibilities included parental monitoring of learners’ rotation timetables, ensuring that children were wearing their face masks and that they were not loitering around increasing their risks of exposure to the virus. The above participants’ views magnified the significance of parental support and attitudes in the success of teaching and learning during COVID-19.

However, it was noted in this study that during this period many families were struggling with accessing necessary resources while at the same time parents were not well equipped to perform their responsibilities to the required level. In addition to this, Spinelli et al. (2021) point out that the closure of childcare facilities and services brought a lot of burden to parents adding to the worsening of conditions of living for many families during the COVID-19 pandemic.

2. Support by DBE

Findings revealed that the DBE was expected to provide physical, professional and emotional support to schools. Physical support could be in the form of face masks and sanitisers, water containers, desks, soaps and running water. Professional support included curriculum workshops on curriculum trimming, alternatives to contact learning, dealing with social distancing, assessment during COVID-19 and dealing with infected and quarantined learners. Emotional support was also needed in the form of counselling. However, participants noticed that the DBE paid attention to physical support while ignoring other forms of support.

Mchunu claimed, “*The DBE seemed to be not concerned with their employees’ emotional health.*” This became obvious when officials decided to lock themselves in their homes and sent messages to schools while teachers were teaching at schools and vulnerable to infection. Furthermore, despite expectations, the DBE did not provide psychological support to teachers in addressing stress, trauma and depression.

In addition to support for teachers, Mshibe complained that the department could have done more to occupy learners who were at home during the rotation system. Mshibe also said, “*The department could at least intervene in assisting learners by providing necessary equipment for them to study online.*”

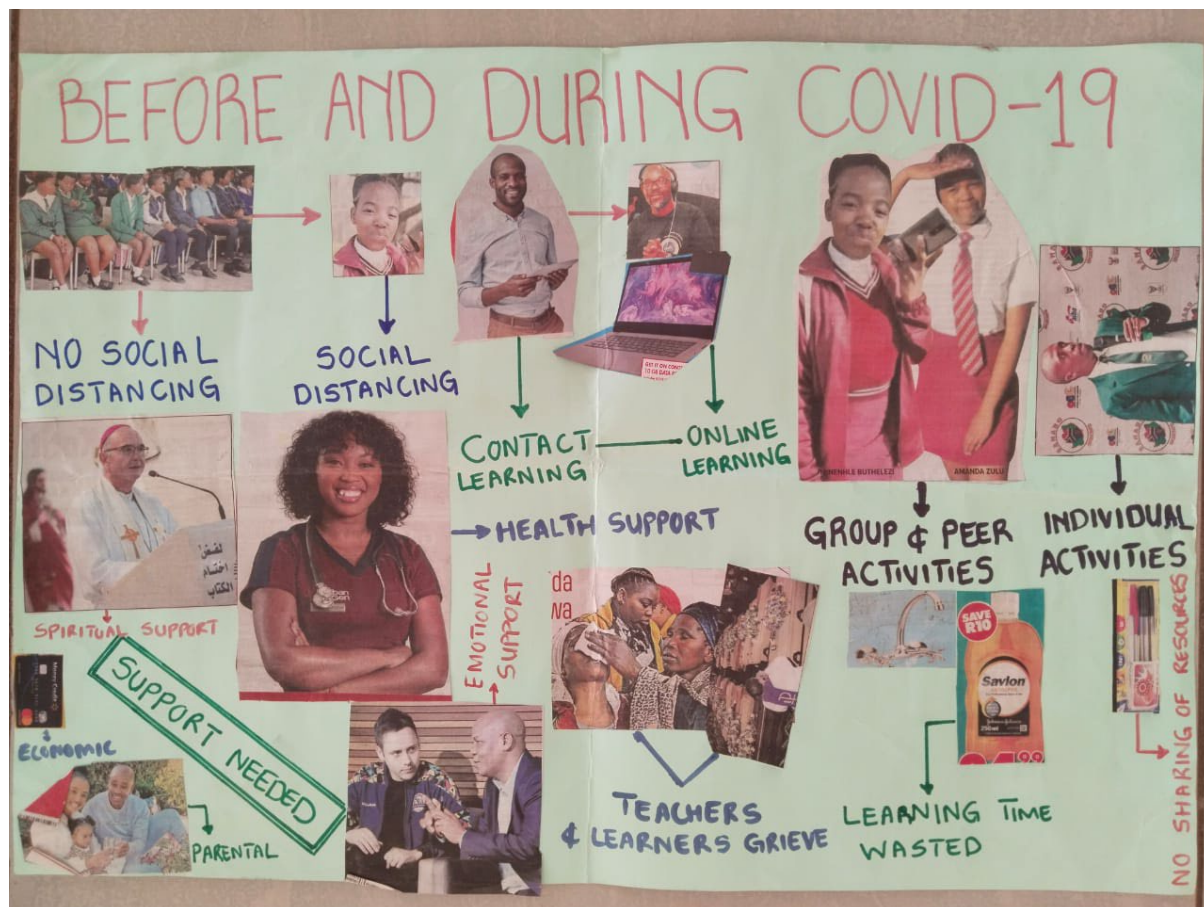


Figure 3: Mweli's collage

In her collage, Mweli shared that teachers needed more support from the DBE due to the severity of the impact of COVID-19 on the lives of the people. The pandemic had a huge impact on schooling which resulted in a shift in teaching and learning from physical to online.

Preferably, the DBE would have been responsive and progressive in terms of transforming the education system through helping schools facilitate online teaching and learning during lockdown.

Mwelis' collage further portrayed the process of change starting from before the pandemic. Her collage demonstrated the impact of COVID-19 on humankind which resulted in the necessity for much support. When narrating her collage, she mentioned different forms of support needed from the DBE. These included health, spiritual, professional, economic and emotional support.

Conversely, Mdunge complimented the DBE on the amount of support that was provided to schools. Applauding the DBE, Mdunge said, "*The DBE helped us a lot by employing assistant educators to schools.*" In elaborating on this support, she mentioned a few of the important interventions made by the DBE. Amongst these interventions were the provision of additional jojo tanks and containers, face masks, sanitisers, trimming of the curriculum and the development of COVID-19 related policies.

According to Hargreaves (2001), teachers need appreciation, gratitude, rewards and acknowledgement for their achievement and progress from the community, parents, learners and, most significantly, from employers. This acknowledgement can be in the form of small gestures such as verbally thanking teachers, awarding achievement and merit certificates and job promotion. During COVID-19, teachers went an extra mile in teaching learners. They ignored the fact that most of their schools lacked safety precautions measures such as running water and ablutions to ensure the continued education of South African children. They did this based on a belief that their efforts and contributions would benefit the entire nation. They should have been appreciated and supported by the DBE in equal measure. Unfortunately, this did not happen.

3. Emotional support

The research findings revealed the challenges that teachers and learners experienced during the pandemic which resulted in a great need for emotional and spiritual support. According to Mchunu, teachers were left alone with bleeding emotional and mental wounds to handle. Teachers at school had to deal alone with teachers and learners who lost their loved ones, who were sick, quarantined, stressed, depressed, traumatised and overloaded. On top of that, teachers were grieving the loss of their own relatives and loved ones through COVID-19.

At the same time, they were unable to get closure as there were many restrictions regarding travelling, visiting, viewing of bodies and funeral attendance.

Mavundla felt that the department could have provided learners and teachers with counselling sessions as she presumed that many people who died during the pandemic did not die of COVID-19 but rather through anxiety. Mavundla mentioned, *“It was noticeable that many people who were dying were people with heavy weight which in many cases were people from middle class like school principals, famous politicians and managers which raised fear of the virus to everyone.”* Similarly, Mshibe claimed, *“Some people were becoming severely ill after having heard breaking news that Mr so and so has passed on because of COVID-19 and that’s why I decided to switch off my phone.”* Participants’ reflections suggested that they believed that if people were provided with psychological support, they might have not died the way they did.

In addition, Mdunge made it clear that there was a great need for a professional person who could stand in front of teachers and learners and render counselling service while giving them hope, courage and a way forward. In support of this, Mdunge mentioned, *“A lot of support was expected from various specialists such as health support, emotional and psychological support, economic support, spiritual support and parental support which unfortunately were unavailable.”*

In relation to this, Spinelli et al. (2021) explain that the arrival of COVID-19 and lockdown regulations to many countries affected the whole population’s well-being in the sense that people suffered psychological distress, irritability, stress, depression and post-traumatic stress symptoms. Therefore, it goes without say that the whole society, including local government agencies, non-profit organisations and religious organisations, had a responsibility to support teaching and learning. This included the redesigning of policies that would address reforms after the COVID-19 pandemic. In support of this, Ranellucci and Bergey (2020) claim that it is important to support teachers emotionally during incredibly stressful periods.

Crutchfield and Eugene (2022) argue that the long-term impact of the pandemic might not be visible today but, in the long run, it will become apparent. Amongst the outcomes of COVID-19 are the increase in dropout rates and a myriad of psychological symptoms and trauma. This calls for districts to balance the academic goals and mental well-being of the learners and teachers post-COVID-19.

Furthermore, in support of this, Hargreaves (2001) asserts that teaching is not only about pedagogy, expertise and teaching methodology. It is also an emotional practice affected by contextual factors and stressors. Consequently, psychological interventions and support could help a lot in addressing issues pertaining to coping with stress, depression and trauma as a result of the pandemic for both teachers and learners.

4. Teaching support

It was noted, based on the findings of the study, that there was also a great need for professional support from the district level. Teachers needed clarity in the implementation of several policies and professional issues such as teaching expectations over lockdown restrictions, hand-over tools and curriculum trimming. In this regard, Mchunu mentioned that there were many changes in the curriculum that subject advisors could have explained to teachers better through workshops. Other changes that teachers needed guidance for were alternatives to contact learning, dealing with social distancing, assessment during COVID-19 and dealing with infected and quarantined learners.

Mavundla maintained, *“I individually, opted for online learning for my learners in which I used WhatsApp and phone calls to communicate with learners and parents regarding given work.”* This revealed that during, difficult times, teachers never stopped teaching learners despite waiting for the DBE to support them professionally. Teachers continued to employ relevant teaching strategies such as homework and take-home learning packs to help learners learn.

In addition, Mshibe stated that teachers also motivated learners to continue learning despite the unusual and distressing circumstances. Extra lessons or classes also helped a lot in recovering lost time and in overcoming the situation. These allowed learners with learning challenges to be given individual attention. Mshibe revealed, *“The most useful teaching instrument during the pandemic was the use of remedial activities.”* Remedial activities, in short, are alternative assessments executed by the teacher after the assessment of all learners in the class.

Teachers also drew on support from one another. This was confirmed by Mchunu who stated, *“In order to contribute to saving teaching time, colleagues had to assist each other.”* This improved collegiality among staff members which was very important and useful in assisting teachers to improve newly acquired skills and abilities.

In the same vein, Khumalo noted, *“My decision to opt for inter and intra networking helped me a lot in acquiring necessary knowledge.”* In addition, Khumalo emphasised the role played by Life Orientation teachers, saying, *“We cannot forget the important contribution done by Life Orientation teachers.”* According to Khumalo, Life Orientation teachers had a huge role to play in helping learners and teachers cope with the devastating challenges of the pandemic.

Literature reveals the importance of teachers supporting and collaborating with one another. Wines (2019) suggests that collaborative teaching is developmental in the sense that it creates knowledge, skills and professional practices through the sharing of opportunities among colleagues. In addition, Vescio et al. (2008) outline the importance of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) in developing teachers as they maximise improvements in teaching practice and students’ results. Tucker (2022) explains that during COVID-19, the implementation of PLCs shifted from face-to-face to online. While the purpose of PLCs remained the same, to direct collaborative partnership among teachers towards the improvement of teaching practice, PLCs during COVID-19 shifted in terms of the focus of development of teachers as they focussed on the integration of technology and new teaching methodologies in adjusting teaching practice.

Hargreaves (2001) maintains that collaborative and collegial teaching gives teachers moral support and energy leading to effective and productive teaching and learning compared to teaching in isolation. Team teaching also keeps teachers confident and motivated since they are able to compare their level of understanding and performance to their colleagues and share their challenges, strengths and weaknesses based on their daily professional experience. The creation of a positive environment builds necessary opportunities for teachers to share information and ideas towards quality teaching and outstanding work performance. Based on this, it was noticed by participants in my study that collaborative teaching in which teachers shared knowledge before going to the class became useful during the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, during the rotation system, workload was tripled which made teamwork essential so that teachers could share it.

4.4. Conclusion

This chapter presented data generated about the experiences and emotions of senior phase teachers in the process of adjusting their teaching practices and curriculum coverage during the COVID-19 pandemic. Data was generated from six participants who were selected from three different schools within the uMvoti Circuit. Research findings were drawn from thematic data analysis of data obtained through semi-structured interviews and collages.

Data analysis revealed that the schooling system was severely affected by the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic while the severity of the impact varied. The outbreak of pandemic affected teachers emotionally and physically to such an extent that teachers continued to suffer psychologically after the end of the pandemic.

This was a result of the pressure experienced in ensuring that teaching and learning continued during the challenging circumstances of COVID-19. On the other hand, research findings indicated that teachers learnt a lot throughout the pandemic.

Among some of the issues teachers learnt was the implementation of teaching techniques that were ignored prior to the advent of the pandemic. Some of those teaching techniques include remedial work, online learning and the development of take-home learning packs. They learnt about the uses of social media, like WhatsApp, in promoting teaching and learning. Results suggest that the pandemic taught teachers to make use of social media platforms as an alternative tool for teaching and learning.

Lastly, it seemed that most intervention policies suggested by the Department of Basic Education to address the issue of curriculum recovery had many disadvantages. These policies included trimming, rotation systems, and online learning. This was due to the fact that they were not properly discussed with teachers prior to their implementation while at the same time they were not properly monitored in order to assess whether they were serving the intended purpose or not. A discussion of findings, conclusions and recommendations for further research is presented in the next chapter.

Chapter 5: Discussion of findings, recommendations and conclusion

5.1. Introduction

The aim of the research study was to examine the experiences of senior phase teachers in the process of adjusting their teaching practices and curriculum coverage during the COVID-19 pandemic. Furthermore, the study explored the emotions of senior phase teachers in adjusting their teaching practices and curriculum coverage while teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic. The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the key findings of this study in relation to the two research questions and present recommendations for future research. The findings presented in this chapter emanated from data gathered through semi-structured interviews and collages from six research participants.

This study aimed to address two research questions namely:

1. What were senior phase teachers' experiences of adjusting their teaching strategies and curriculum coverage during the COVID-19 pandemic?
2. How did senior phase teachers feel about adjusting their teaching strategies and curriculum coverage during the Covid-19 pandemic?

The data generated was analysed using thematic data analysis, and both research questions were analysed inductively using Hargreaves's (2001) theory of emotional geographies and related literature. This dissertation was structured as follows:

Chapter one provided an outline of the purpose of the study as well as the aim, background and rationale. It also presented the key research questions of the study, the methodology employed, the literature reviewed, the theoretical framework and a summary of the structure of the dissertation.

Chapter two presented the literature reviewed in the study. This literature focussed on the background of COVID-19, teaching strategies in the senior phase, curriculum coverage and the senior phase band in South Africa schools. It also discussed Hargreaves's (2001) emotional geographies of teaching as the theoretical framework employed in the study. In discussing the theoretical framework of the study, different emotional geographies of teaching were reviewed.

Chapter three outlined the research methodology and design implemented to address the research questions guiding this study. It also discussed the interpretive research paradigm and the qualitative research approach. This was followed by a discussion of the case study research design. This chapter also provided a detailed outline of the data generation methods used in the study, namely, semi-structured interviews and collages. Lastly, the chapter explained issues of trustworthiness and ethical issues considered in this study.

Chapter four focussed on the presentation of data generated through semi-structured interviews and collages obtained from six participants. Hargreaves's (2001) theory of emotional geographies was used as a theoretical framework to interpret and analyse the findings generated from both research questions. In addition, relevant literature reviewed in chapter two was used to make sense of the findings of this study while different themes and sub-themes emerged through the analysis of the data.

Chapter five discusses the conclusion of this thesis by responding to the two research questions. Findings bring to light that, after the declaration of lockdown, schools had to implement digital teaching. As a result, different online learning approaches such as TV and radio education programmes, social media platforms and newspapers were suggested. This chapter also discusses the limitations of the study and provides recommendations for future research.

5.2. Summary of key findings: Research question one

The following findings were identified in response to research question one: What were senior phase teachers' experiences of adjusting their teaching strategies and curriculum coverage during the Covid-19 pandemic?

The narratives of senior phase teachers teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic period revealed that the outbreak of the pandemic compelled teachers to adjust to COVID-19 regulations. In doing so, the following practices were implemented: health protocols, including social distancing and sanitising, rotation systems leading to heavy workloads, curriculum trimming and the use of digital technology. The scarcity of resources and other socio-economic challenges impaired the process in many ways. The discussion of COVID-19 health protocols and socio-economic challenges follows.

5.2.1. Administering COVID-19 regulations decreased teaching time

According to Mahaye (2020) and Van Der Berg and Spaul (2020), the first case of COVID-19 in South Africa was reported on 5 March 2020. Consequently, the South African government, based on the severity of the coronavirus, issued a lockdown notice to ensure that the spread of the coronavirus was controlled. The findings of this study corroborated that, after the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Coronavirus Advisory Committee in consultation with the Department of Health in South Africa suggested the implementation of national lockdown regulations. In order to curb the spread of the coronavirus, the government announced national lockdown restrictions with varying alert levels. According to Keefe (2020), social distancing and quarantine were the most significant measures to lessen the spread of the virus but other measures were gradually implemented. However, findings revealed that these intervention strategies were disruptive to the education system as learners had to adhere to lockdown regulations and stay at home. Findings of this study confirmed that the implementation of lockdown regulations led to the national closure of schools which resulted in learners not being allowed to attend schools physically; however alternative options for teaching and learning were sought.

According to Corlatean (2020), the COVID-19 pandemic led to enormous changes in teaching and examination methods which were shifted to digital online platforms to comply with COVID-19 regulations. Based on the South African context, the data showed that, in order to carry on with teaching and learning, the KZN DOE came up with alternative teaching and learning strategies. In confirming this, this study revealed that online learning activities were available during closures of face-to-face learning institutions and included television programmes, radio broadcasted programmes and social media platforms such as WhatsApp and Facebook.

The narratives of participants suggested that the implementation of online teaching and learning was unsuccessful in most of the schools because many public schools from quintiles one to three lacked resources such as internet, cell phones and laptops or computers. The narratives presented by the participants resonated with Sintema (2020) who argued that the majority of the developing and under-developed countries do not have access to the internet presenting a huge barrier to online learning.

In addition, this study revealed that the new “normal” routines and procedures which emanated from national lockdown regulations had a negative impact on the coverage of the curriculum and wasted teaching and learning time. This was caused by daily safety procedures such as sanitising of hands, screening and recording and ensuring that learners observe social distancing and wear face masks. Deguen et al. (2020), however, point out that extending the closure of schools and quarantine could have serious long-term effects on learners in terms of learning, social, mental and physical well-being. Thus, returning to schools, despite the wasting of time by safety procedures, was preferable.

5.2.2. Adjusting to the digital technologies, rotation system and curriculum trimming

Onyema et al. (2020) contend that most developing and under-developed countries in Africa could not return to school soon after hard lockdown. Therefore, there was a great need for the implementation of digital technology. This, according to participants, was challenging in South Africa because it required more support from the KZN DBE and parents. Amongst what was required were computers, cell phones and internet connectivity. Teachers also needed training on the use of digital devices. As a result of the lack of resources to fulfil these requirements, the KZN DBE had to fast track the re-opening of schools. In order to do this, the policy of a staggered return to school was suggested so that grade 12 and seven learners could return to school earlier than other grades (Ramrathan, 2021).

Participants observed, however, that the staggered return to school faced many challenges. This was because of the condition of infrastructure in many public schools where overcrowding made it difficult to implement social distancing. Literature shows that many South African schools lacked necessary precautions such as running water, ablutions and disinfects or sanitisers to secure staff and learners from the pandemic. They also lacked learning and teaching materials such as furniture and floor space.

Furthermore, during the staggered re-opening of schools, participants observed that schools were required to adhere to social distancing as a COVID-19 mitigation strategy. Therefore, in order to implement social distancing, this study revealed that many schools decided to opt for a rotation of learner’s system in which learners interchangeably attended school in small groups. In implementing this, teachers as agents of change had to work very hard in preparing themselves for the return of learners to schools with safety precautions in place. Therefore, teachers explored new

teaching approaches that were in line with the new “normal” of COVID-19. Participants’ narratives confirmed that learners returning to school faced many challenges. This was because the level of infrastructure and resources in many public schools caused teachers significant frustration. Furthermore, the implementation of health protocols and rotation of learners reduced teaching time leading to an inability to complete curriculum.

In support of the findings of this study, Corlatean (2020) affirm that the COVID-19 pandemic arrived while the department of education was not prepared for it. For that reason, education stakeholders suddenly had to change their normal rules of operation, examination methods and teaching strategies over a short space of time. According to Hargreaves (2001), teachers develop negative emotions when overwhelmed by factors such as workload, curriculum changes, work and environmental changes and restructuring leading to anxiety, pressure and uncertainty, therefore, the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic affected teachers psychologically and resulted in negative emotions.

Findings from participants revealed that the KZN DBE introduced a curriculum trimming policy. Curriculum trimming consisted of the omission of certain topics from the annual teaching plan and the removal of two subjects from the subject streams. In short, the curriculum trimming policy aimed to address the shortage of teaching and learning time and was an intervention strategy to reduce teachers’ heavy workloads.

However, the implementation of curriculum trimming had certain challenges as it was not discussed with teachers as implementers. Amongst the challenges mentioned by participants was that even though two subjects were removed from the curriculum, some topics from these trimmed out subjects were retained and transferred to other subjects. This caused a problem because teachers were not trained to teach the new topics. As a result, teachers had to spend time learning new content through collaboration with their colleagues.

5.2.3. Scarcity of resources and socio-economic challenges compromised teaching.

According to Iivari et al. (2020), in most developed countries such as Finland and China, education was not too negatively affected by school closures. This was because before the outbreak of COVID-19, these countries had already embarked on reforming their education system to include digital and online teaching strategies. Thus, their teachers and learners had already undergone training to use online learning.

However, Sahin and Shelley (2020) suggest that even though the United States of America and Turkey are more developed countries, they were not well equipped with sufficient resources to implement country-wide online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. In other words, even though developed countries were not as affected by lockdown regulations as developing and under-developed countries, they also experienced shortages of certain resources needed to implement digital education as mandated by national lockdowns and social distancing regulations.

Comparatively, Sintema (2020) argues that developing countries such as South Africa and Zambia faced more challenges in shifting to alternative teaching and learning strategies to maintain curriculum coverage after these countries' lockdowns were announced. In line with research data generated from participants in this study based on the South African context, Sintema (2020), suggests that not everyone was able to access alternative learning activities as suggested by the KZN DOE. This was due to the unavailability of necessary learning resources and equipment such as televisions, smart cell phones, radios and internet connectivity.

Data from this study also reflected that the scarcity of resources was more severe in public schools than private schools which had necessary online learning resources for teaching and learning. Ramrathan (2021) affirms that the implementation of digital learning platforms received many criticisms. Digital learning platforms seemed to ignore the reality of the 'two school worlds context' in which a minority group of privileged elite could easily access online learning whereas, the majority of children from lower socio-economic backgrounds found this challenging. Participants revealed that this was evident as most, if not all, private schools in South Africa were able to implement digital learning during the pandemic more successfully than public schools.

5.3. Summary of findings: Research question two

The following themes were identified in response to research question two: How did senior phase teachers feel about adjusting their teaching strategies and curriculum coverage during the COVID-19 pandemic? The findings of the study revealed that in adjusting teaching strategies during the COVID-19 pandemic, teachers experienced feelings of fear and anxiety and felt the need for varying degrees of support from different role players such as parents, the KZN DBE and colleagues. A discussion of the experiences of participants follows.

5.3.1. Feelings of fear and anxiety underpinned teaching

The findings of this study revealed that recurring changes and transformations in the teaching profession during the COVID-19 pandemic posed many challenges to all stakeholders. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the schooling system was totally changed without teachers, parents and learners' mental and psychological preparedness to cope with the change. Frustratingly, most of the changes that were introduced by the KZN DBE during the COVID-19 pandemic were not clearly articulated or communicated. As a result, it was noted that the system of education changed daily without the engagement of teachers as implementers. In the long run, the COVID-19 curriculum changes became a cause of physical, emotional, psychological, financial and spiritual stress for many teachers.

Reader (2006) stresses that in implementing organisational change, the organisation uses necessary tools such as participation, informed and shared commitment and fairness. Most importantly, these activities are suitable to promote people's engagement with the process of finding lasting solutions to tough and challenging situations. According to Heifetz and Linsky (2011), these are adaptive challenges. During the COVID-19 pandemic, however, effective change and development was not possible in the education system in South Africa due to numerous challenges such as lack of resources and ineffective policy implementation. Hargreaves (2001) argues that teachers develop negative emotions when they feel that their purpose is at odds with different factors. These factors may include anxiety, pressure and uncertainty due to certain circumstances, overwhelming workload, curriculum changes, work environment changes or restructuring. The findings of this study revealed that this was the case during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The discussion above highlighted the notion that teachers tried everything possible to ensure that teaching and learning continued during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the study found that participants realised that their efforts jeopardised their health. Teachers sometimes had to break health regulations and cross boundaries for the sake of fulfilling their job obligations. Participants believed that the prohibition of group work activities led to most teachers marking individual learners' exercise books. Participants felt that marking learners' books was unsafe to both teachers and the learners due to the risk of infection which led to fear and anxiety.

Participants in the study noted that lockdown regulations were clear in stating that everyone must always maintain social distancing. Sometimes, however, in order for teachers to explain and clarify

a concept for learners, they had to move closer to learners. Teachers continued to do this during the COVID-19 pandemic for the sake of learners. After moving around class rows explaining and addressing certain topics and learning challenges, teachers became nervous about whether they were still safe or had contracted the disease. Teachers' goal to keep themselves safe was at odds with their purpose to teach learners effectively. during the COVID-19 pandemic. Thus, many teachers felt the negative emotions described by Hargreaves (2001). These included anxiety, pressure and uncertainty due to COVID-19 circumstances, overwhelming workload, curriculum changes, work environment changes and restructuring. Consequently, teachers become demotivated, devastated, angry frustrated and lost energy.

Furthermore, findings showed that, in giving hope to society, teachers had to overcome or disregard their feelings of fear, anxiety, depression and trauma and pretend as if everything was going well. Teachers had to appear strong in front of learners with a positive attitude to show learners and the entire nation that everyone could rise above COVID-19 challenges. If teachers showed that they were nervous, the entire society could become nervous too. On the one hand, teachers' positive attitudes helped to keep schools running, but, on the other hand, teachers were emotionally drained as a result. This statement is in line with Hargreaves (2000) idea of emotional labour in which teachers find themselves in the dilemma of whether to show their authentic emotions or to sell their emotions to please their employer, colleagues, learners or parents. Most often, teachers find themselves masking and manufacturing their emotions to satisfy other people.

Moreover, the findings of this study noted that the mental wellbeing of teachers was not fit and strong enough to handle the pressure directed at them to carry on with their expected professional duties properly. This was due to the fact that they were not provided with necessary support. Consequently, teachers failed to complete the annual teaching plan which resulted in stressful, depressing and traumatic emotions.

Furthermore, this emotional interruption disturbed the well-being of teachers since, as Hargreaves (2001) argues, it is very hard to separate teaching and emotions. This suggests that, as a teacher, one feels sad when a learner in ones' class or school is getting hurt. This was the case during the COVID-19 pandemic when learners were losing their parents and breadwinners. It is the nature of teachers to mediate the feelings their learners are going through. On that note, it was confirmed that, during the COVID-19 pandemic, learners went through trauma and teachers felt helpless

when faced with learners unable to concentrate as a result of trauma, anxiety, or depression. Teachers also had to face losses of their own parents, relatives, or friends. Consequently, teachers felt mentally drained which led to the loss of morale and hope.

Hargreaves (2000) describes moral geographies as the outcomes of the combination of positive and negative emotions. This is as a result of either sharing common goals through positive appreciation and support between role players or disagreeing through negative comments and dissatisfaction among teachers, learners and parents. In this regard, the implementation of adjusted teaching strategies and curriculum coverage in times of COVID-19 was the responsibility of teachers, parents and learners. Participants believed that its achievement was dependent on the mutual support and sharing of a common goal to improve teaching and learning. The above statements revealed that participants felt very guilty that learners were progressing to the next grades without full curriculum coverage. Teachers were concerned about what would happen to the COVID-19 classes after progressing to the next grades or next level of education without necessary skills and knowledge. This emotional feeling by teachers is confirmed by Hargreaves (2001) who argues that contextual factors that teachers are exposed to continuously change the context of their emotions within their working life.

5.3.2. Teachers received varying degrees of support

In overcoming the challenges discussed, participants felt that more support was necessary from relevant stakeholders including parents, teachers and the DBE. This support would have led to closer relationships and could have improved partnership, cooperation and understanding in terms of the changes in the way teaching and learning was conducted during the pandemic among all parties concerned.

Hargreaves (2001) suggests that the emotional closeness of teachers, learners and parents maximises the emotional understanding among them while social distancing threatens the emotional understanding and relationship among them. In addition, Hargreaves (2001) states that teachers experience positive emotions when they receive support, acknowledgements, appreciation and gratitude from the community, learners and parents they serve. This study revealed that there were many forms of support that teachers needed such as parental, KZN DBE, teaching and professional support.

5.3.2.1. Parental support

Spinelli et al. (2021) point out that certain parents were severely affected by COVID-19 to such an extent that their ability to execute their parental roles was impaired. In relation to this, Suárez Fernández et al. (2022) explain that, during the COVID-19 lockdown period, many changes occurred. In line with this, findings of this study showed that teachers were compelled to convert most of their assessment into homework. As a result, the need for parental involvement became greater than before.

Findings from the study divulged that during the COVID-19 pandemic, schools received less parental support than expected. This was due to numerous reasons such as most learners stayed with grandparents as their biological parents were at work. Since the pandemic was more dangerous to elders which resulted in a high rate of mortality for them, many children were left without caregivers. This gave rise to emotional and psychological impairment and an inability to cope academically resulting in learner dropout, absenteeism, hunger and high failure rate.

5.3.2.2. Support by DBE

Findings suggest that the DBE was able to provide physical support to schools such as the face masks and sanitisers. However, findings indicated that the DBE failed to provide professional support in the form of curriculum workshops to teachers to train them in curriculum trimming, alternatives to contact learning, dealing with social distancing, assessment during COVID-19 and dealing with infected and quarantined learners.

This finding resonates with García and Weiss (2020) who suggested that district and school leaders should provide teachers with the necessary skills and knowledge relevant to the pandemic situation and examine professional development needs and other support needed by teachers to adapt to the COVID-19 context.

In addition, participants explained that the department was also expected to provide psychological support to teachers to address the stress, trauma and depression they experienced due to COVID-19. The research findings in this study revealed that teachers and learners went through difficult times during the pandemic. This resulted in a great need for different forms of support, of which emotional support was most important. There was also a need for professional counselling services for teachers and learners to give them hope, courage and a way forward. Similarly, Crutchfield and Eugene (2022) suggest that, in times of crisis, district teams of counsellors should provide

counselling to victims at schools. Psychological support in the form of counselling could have helped teachers and learners significantly to cope with the stress, depression and trauma that was a result of the pandemic.

5.3.2.3. Teaching and professional support

The lack of professional support to teachers forced teachers to find other means to get the necessary information during the COVID-19 pandemic. Teachers decided to collaborate with colleagues with valuable experience in topics in which they were not trained. In line with this, Wines (2019) suggests that collaborative teaching is developmental while Vescio et al. (2008) outline the importance of PLCs in developing teachers to maximise improvements in teaching practice and students' results. PLCs are a platform through which teachers share views about children's ability to learn and the role of different role players such as teachers, learners, parents and administrators. They are also a platform of dialogue between teachers who collaboratively interact in matters regarding curriculum, instruction and development of learners.

Participant responses revealed that, in a sense the COVID-19 context, enabled informal collaborative teaching to emerge, functioning like informal PLC's, where teachers had to draw upon one another's experience and expertise in the absence of formal support from subject advisors. Similarly, Hargreaves (2000) contends that physical geographies describe continuity and frequency in interaction in which various means of communication are utilised to strengthen mutual understanding and enforce collegiality.

He argues that, although, previously, teachers were cut off from one another through the unavailability of relevant interaction systems, collaborative and collegial teaching is important as it gives teachers moral support and energy towards effective and productive teaching and learning. In the same vein, findings showed that the outbreak of COVID-19 contributed immensely to the improvement of relationships among teachers through teamwork and collegiality.

5.4. Limitations of the study

This study had several limitations. Firstly, the findings of the study cannot be generalised because it was a case study and the sample size consisted of only six participants was based on three schools from one circuit in KwaZulu Natal, South Africa. Furthermore, all sampled schools were public schools from rural areas in quintiles one and two, meaning that their socio-economic background was poor. Therefore, the study's findings cannot be applied to schools from higher quintiles with

more resources. In addition, the study only focussed on the experiences of grade seven teachers while leaving aside experiences of teachers from other grades. In addition, the credibility of the study may be somewhat questionable since the researcher was also a grade seven teacher. A further limitation is that the collages did not focus on teachers' emotions or feelings. Lastly, the majority of participants were female as, out of six participants, there was only one male. Although, initially, participants were balanced in gender, two male participants decided to withdraw from the study.

5.5. Recommendations

This study was a small-scale study involving three schools and six participants. Given the diversity and inequality in schooling contexts, more studies across a range of contexts would give a deeper understanding of the experiences and emotions of senior phase teachers in the process of adjusting their teaching practices and curriculum coverage during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The findings of the study suggested that the COVID-19 pandemic has left teachers and learners with emotional and psychological scars. These scars emanated because teachers and learners went through different hardships as discussed above. Teachers expected the DBE to provide relevant support and counselling to learners and teachers in preparing them to work during the pandemic and address the anxiety, emotional and psychological disturbances they experienced.

It is therefore recommended that the DBE provide counselling as an intervention to address emotional and psychological stress caused during the COVID-19 pandemic. Even though COVID-19 has passed, there is still a need for the DBE to strengthen professional support for teachers in different areas of professional development including digital teaching.

Furthermore, since the study highlighted that the outbreak of the pandemic exposed that the public education system in South Africa is far behind other countries and private schools which were able to implement online learning, the DBE needs to learn from the developed countries such as China, Turkey, Finland and United State of America and upgrade the country's education system. On that note, I recommend that the DBE seeks means to address the challenges of the South African system of education through the provision of necessary infrastructure and resources.

In addition, even though the DBE has a responsibility to formulate policies, it is important that policies are communicated to teachers. At the same time, it is important that the DBE embark on the creation of opportunities for teacher collaboration and a PLC platform. Lastly, it is necessary

for the DBE to revisit “teacher-learner” ratio. This became obvious during the implementation of social distancing whereby schools were mandated to keep small groups of learners in the classes. In implementing this, private schools were able to secure spaces for the whole enrolment while public schools had to implement the rotation of learner’s system. This happened because public schools had insufficient classrooms and high learners-teacher ratio while lacking necessary resources such as clean ablutions and running water.

5.6. Further research

This study revealed that teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic created severe gaps in curriculum coverage. Therefore, there is a need for further study on the impact of the curriculum gaps as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic on the learners’ ability to cope with matric and post-matric education.

5.7. Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to examine the experiences of senior phase teachers in the process of adjusting their teaching practices and curriculum coverage during the COVID-19 pandemic, and to explore their emotions while adjusting their teaching practices and curriculum coverage. Semi-structured interviews and collages were used to explore teachers’ experiences and emotions. Based on the findings of the study, it is evident that the process of adjusting teaching practices was physically and mentally draining for teachers.

Collaboratively, teachers tried their best to overcome most challenges brought about by the outbreak of the pandemic as they were expected to teach learners under difficult and depressing circumstances. The study revealed that even though teachers in South Africa were able to receive physical support from the DOE, much more support was needed. Support that was lacking included parental, emotional, psychological and professional support leading to significant grief. While parental support was most needed at the time, most parents were unable to play their role to support education due to COVID-19 related pressures.

Lastly, the study highlighted how the advent of the pandemic magnified the gap between public and private schools. This was an eye opener to everyone and revealed that there is a lot to be done in transforming and upgrading South African education. It also magnified the working conditions and the standard of the infrastructure within public schools compared to private schools. Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic revealed many loopholes in the curriculum and its delivery such as the

need for capacity building in the implementation of digital online learning for both teachers and learners and the supply of necessary online resources such as computers and internet connectivity to all schools. The study highlighted that the improvement of infrastructure such as toilets, classrooms and sanitation and a review of learner-teacher ratios are urgently needed.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Letter to Principal

Matimatolo Primary School

P. O Box 1023

Greytown

3250

22 March 2022

Dear Sir

My name is Eric Nkosiyeaphana Ndlovu (Student No. 9902748) a Master of Education (MEd) student in the School of Education at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (Pietermaritzburg campus). As part of the requirement for this degree, I am required to conduct a research project. The title of my research study is: Teaching practices and emotions of senior phase teachers during the Covid-19 pandemic: A case study.

The aim and purpose of this research study is to examine the experiences of senior phase teachers of adjusting their teaching practices and curriculum coverage during the Covid-19 pandemic. Also, this study aims to explore the emotions of senior phase teachers of adjusting their teaching practices and curriculum coverage teaching during the Covid-19 pandemic. I request your assistance in this research project by being granted permission to conduct my study in your school/institution. This study is expected to use two of participants who are teachers in your school and will involve the following procedures. Participants will be required to participate in semi-structured interview that is expected to last between 20 to 40 minutes at a time suitable to them which will not disturb teaching and learning. Follow-up interviews may be conducted if necessary. Each interview will be noted and voice-recorded. Participants will also be requested to design a collage. The duration of their participation if they choose to participate and remain in the study is expected to be 4-6 weeks.

This study will not involve any risks and/or discomfort for the school and participants. Also, the study will not provide direct benefits for the school or participants.

In the event of any problems or concerns/questions you may contact me, my supervisor or the UKZN Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee, contact details as follows:

My contact number

Email: nkosiyeaphana.nn@gmail.com

Cell: 082 963 9703

Supervisor

Dr J. Naidoo

Email address: naidooj@ukzn.ac.za

Telephone 033 260 5867

UKZN Research Office

Research Office, Westville Campus

Govan Mbeki Building

Private Bag X 54001

Durban

4000

KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA

Tel: 27 31 2604557- Fax: 27 31 2604609

Email: HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za

Participation in this research study is voluntary and participants may withdraw participation at any point. In the event of refusal/withdrawal of participation the participants will not be penalised. There are no consequences for participants who withdraw from the study.

No costs will be incurred by participants as a result of participation in the study and there are no incentives or reimbursements for participation in the study.

All names of schools and participants will be changed and pseudonyms will be used so that schools and participants remain anonymous. Information provided by participants will remain confidential and will not be shared with anyone else. Data generated through semi-structured interview and collage will be stored in my supervisor's office (Room 47), at the School of Education, Pietermaritzburg campus for five years, and thereafter be destroyed.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Yours in Education

Mr. E.N. Ndlovu

DECLARATION OF CONSENT

I _____ (Full names of the school principal) have been informed about the study entitled: Teaching practices and emotions of senior phase teachers during the Covid-19 pandemic: A case study by Eric Nkosiyeaphana Ndlovu.

I understand the purpose and procedures of the study.

SIGNATURE OF PRINCIPAL

DATE

Appendix 2: Letter to Participant

Matimatolo Primary School

P. O Box 1023

Greytown

3250

22 March 2022

Dear------(name of the participant)

REQUEST FOR PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH PROJECT

My name is Eric Nkosiyeaphana Ndlovu (Student No. 9902748) a Master of Education (MEd) student in the School of Education at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (Pietermaritzburg campus). As part of the requirement for this degree, I am required to conduct a research project. I request your participation in this research study. The title of my study is: Teaching practices and emotions of senior phase teachers during the Covid-19 pandemic: A case study.

The aim and purpose of this research study is to examine the experiences of senior phase teachers of adjusting their teaching practices and curriculum coverage during the Covid-19 pandemic. Also, this study aims to explore the emotions of senior phase teachers of adjusting their teaching practices and curriculum coverage teaching during the Covid-19 pandemic. This study is expected to use two of participants and will involve the following procedures. As participants, teachers will be requested to participate in semi- structured interview that is expected to last between 20 to 40 minutes at a time suitable to them which will not disturb teaching and learning. Follow-up interviews may be conducted if necessary. Each interview will be noted and voice-recorded. Participants will also be requested to design a collage. The duration of your participation if you choose to participate and remain in the study is expected to be 4-6 weeks.

This study will not involve any risks and/or discomfort to teachers. Also, the study will not provide direct benefits for teachers.

In the event of any problems or concerns/questions you may contact me, my supervisor or the UKZN Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee, contact details as follows:

My contact number

Email: nkosiyephana.nn@gmail.com

Cell: 082 963 9703

Supervisor

My supervisor is Dr J. Naidoo who is located at the School of Education, Pietermaritzburg campus of University of KwaZulu-Natal.

Telephone 033 260 5867, Email address: naidooj@ukzn.ac.za

UKZN Research Office

Research Office, Westville Campus

Govan Mbeki Building

Private Bag X 54001

Durban

4000

KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA

Tel: 27 31 2604557- Fax: 27 31 2604609

Email: HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za

Participation in this research study is voluntary and you may withdraw participation at any point. In the event of refusal/withdrawal of participation you will not be penalised. There are no consequences for participants if they withdraw from the study.

No costs will be incurred by teachers as a result of participation in the study and there are no incentives or reimbursements for participation in the study.

All names of schools and participants will be changed and pseudonyms will be used so that schools and participants remain anonymous. Information provided by learners will remain confidential and

will not be shared with anyone else. Data generated through semi-structured, narrative interviews, poetry and collage will be stored in my supervisor's office (Room 47), at the School of Education, Pietermaritzburg campus for five years, and thereafter be destroyed.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Yours in Education

Mr. E.N. Ndlovu

DECLARATION OF CONSENT

I, _____ (Name of participant) have been informed about the study entitled: Teaching practices and emotions of senior phase teachers during the Covid-19 pandemic: A case study by Eric Nkosiyeaphana Ndlovu.

I understand the purpose and procedures of the study.

I have been given an opportunity to ask questions about the study and have had answers to my satisfaction.

I declare that my participation in this study is entirely voluntary and that I may withdraw at any time without affecting any of the benefits that I usually am entitled to.

If I have any further questions/concerns or queries related to the study I understand that I may contact the researcher at nkosiyeaphana.nn@gmail.com or 082 963 9703.

If I have any questions or concerns about my rights as a study participant, or if I am concerned about an aspect of the study or the researchers then I may contact:

HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION

Research Office, Westville Campus

Govan Mbeki Building

Private Bag X 54001

Durban

4000

KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA

Tel: 27 31 2604557 - Fax: 27 31 2604609

Email: HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za

Additional consent, where applicable

I hereby provide consent to: (Please circle response)

Participate in semi-structured interview

YES / NO

Audio-record and note taking my interview

YES / NO

Design a collage

YES / NO

Signature of Participant

Date

Appendix 3: Data generation instruments

Collage

Steps to be followed in the creation of the collage portrait

Step 1: Greet and welcome the participants and check if they had any challenges after the interview

Step 2: Reiterate consent agreement and remind them of anonymity, autonomy and maleficence principles.

Step 3: Explain the procedure for the process while stressing to participants that if they feel traumatised, they are free to report immediately so that psychological assistance will be organised for them.

Step 4: Describe collage making and its intention in relation to the research process.

Step 5: In response to the second research question “How did senior phase teachers feel about adjusting their teaching strategies and curriculum coverage during the Covid-19 pandemic?” design a collage.

Step 6: Take out collected materials such as pieces of fabrics, newspapers and magazines you think you can use to express your ideas and opinions based on the title and questions (you can also share materials with your colleagues or use the ones collected by the researcher).

Step 7: On the piece of paper provided to you, try to organise your material logically.

Step 8: Prepare explanatory concepts, words or phrases by trying to design them either through the computer or cut them from the magazine and newspaper or use a marker.

Step 10: Paste material first followed by an explanatory concept, words or phrase when necessary at the end.

Step 11: Try to present the message and meaning of your collage to yourself.

Step 12: Decide whether you wish to present your collage to other participants or you wish to present it to the researcher only.

Step 13: Present your collage as you wished

Step 14: Conclude the session by thanking participants for participating.

Interview Schedule

Project title

Teaching practices and emotions of senior phase teachers during the COVID-19 pandemic: A case study.

Research questions

1. What are senior phase teachers' experiences of adjusting their teaching strategies and curriculum coverage during the Covid-19 pandemic?
2. How did senior phase teachers feel about adjusting their teaching strategies and curriculum coverage during the Covid-19 pandemic?

Introduction

1. Welcome interviewees and ask if they need anything (restroom, water, etc.).
2. Explain what my study is about and how long the interview session will take (minimum time allocated).
3. Reiterate consent agreement and remind them of anonymity, autonomy and maleficence principles.
4. Explain the procedure for the interview while stressing to participants that if they feel traumatised, they are free to report immediately so that psychological assistance will be organised for them.
5. Ask them if they have any questions before the beginning of an interview and let them know we are about to begin.

Interview questions

Question 1: What do you know about Covid-19? (brief background)

Question 2: What general changes in relation to your professional practice have you noticed after the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic?

Question 3: How have you changed your teaching strategies in your subject/s during the Covid-19 pandemic?

Question 4: How did you adjust yourself to the above-mentioned changes?

Question 5: To what extent did your adjusted teaching strategies influence curriculum coverage? Explain or give an example.

Question 6: How were you able to manage to balance the adjustment of teaching strategies with curriculum coverage?

Question 7: How did you feel when you had to adjust teaching strategies?

Question 8: What was your experience of adjusting your teaching strategies during Covid-19?

Question 9: What was your experience of adjusting curriculum coverage during Covid-19?

Question 10: What forms of support do you think you needed or would be useful? (parental, learner, colleagues and departmental)

Question 11: What forms of support did you receive? (parental, learner, colleagues and departmental)

End of the interview session

Appendix 4: KZN DBE Permission Letter



KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCE
EDUCATION
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

OFFICE OF THE HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Private Bag X9137, PIETERMARITZBURG, 3200
Anton Lembede Building, 247 Burger Street, Pietermaritzburg, 3201
Tel: 033 392 1063

Email: Phindile.duma@kzndoe.gov.za

Enquiries: Phindile Duma

Ref.:2/4/8/4030

Mr EN Ndlovu
PO Box 1561
GREYTOWN
3250

Dear Mr Ndlovu

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE KZN DoE INSTITUTIONS

Your application to conduct research entitled: **"TEACHING PRACTICES AND EMOTIONS OF SENIOR PHASE TEACHERS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC: A CASE STUDY"**, in the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education Institutions has been approved. The conditions of the approval are as follows:

1. The researcher will make all the arrangements concerning the research and interviews.
2. The researcher must ensure that Educator and learning programmes are not interrupted.
3. Interviews are not conducted during the time of writing examinations in schools.
4. Learners, Educators, Schools and Institutions are not identifiable in any way from the results of the research.
5. A copy of this letter is submitted to District Managers, Principals and Heads of Institutions where the Intended research and interviews are to be conducted.
6. The period of investigation is limited to the period from 15 March 2022 to 02 March 2025.
7. Your research and interviews will be limited to the schools you have proposed and approved by the Head of Department. Please note that Principals, Educators, Departmental Officials and Learners are under no obligation to participate or assist you in your investigation.
8. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey at the school(s), please contact Miss Phindile Duma at the contact numbers above.
9. Upon completion of the research, a brief summary of the findings, recommendations or a full report/dissertation/thesis must be submitted to the research office of the Department. Please address it to The Office of the HOD, Private Bag X9137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200.
10. Please note that your research and interviews will be limited to schools and institutions in KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education.

UMZINYATHI DISTRICT

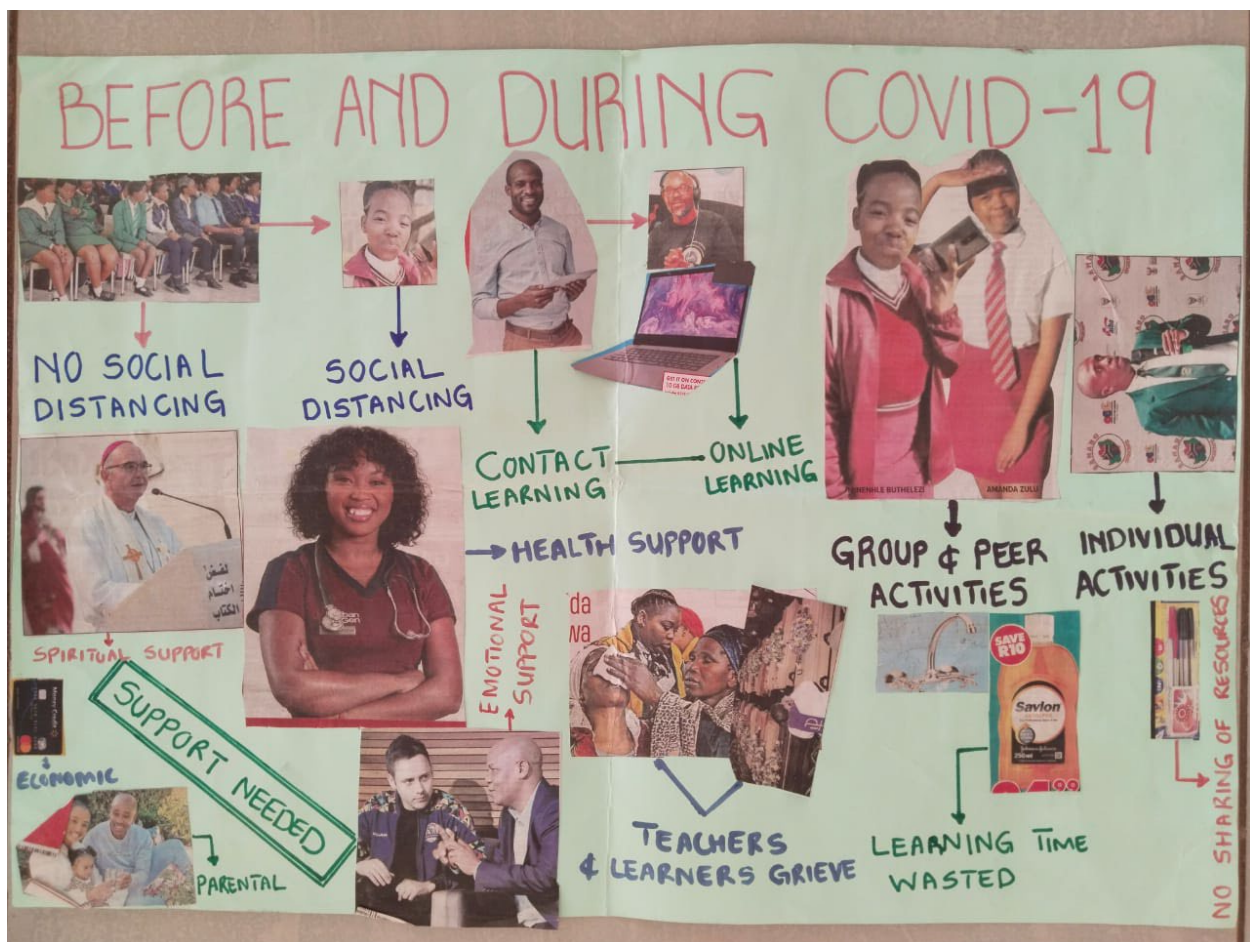


Mr GN Ngcobo
Head of Department: Education
Date: 31 March 2022

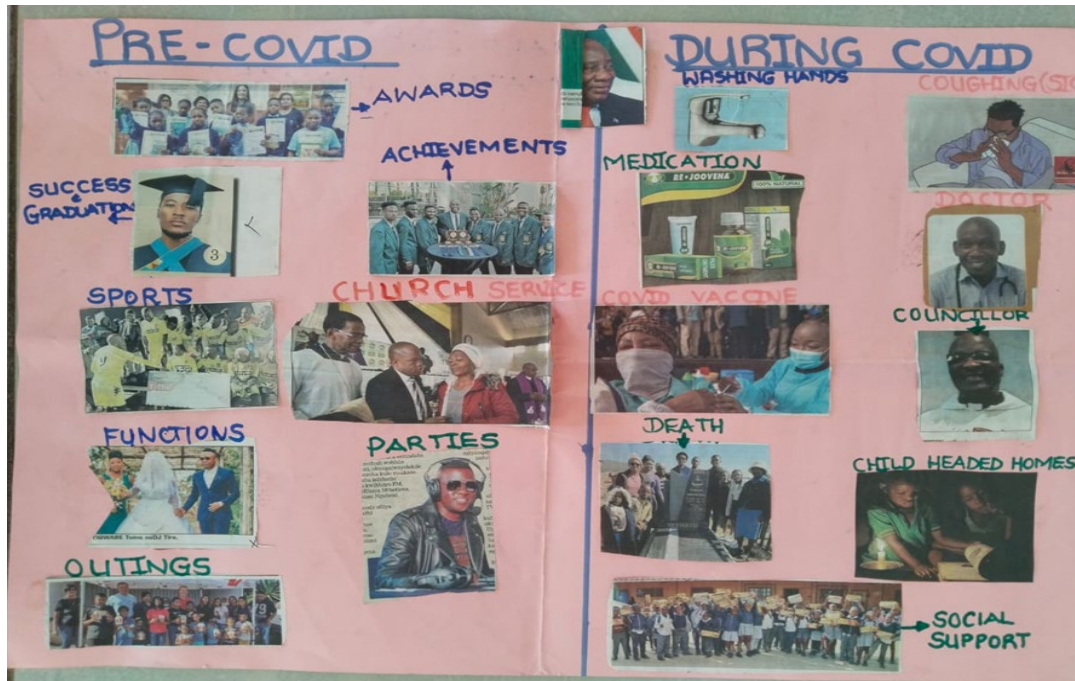
GROWING KWAZULU-NATAL TOGETHER

Appendix 5: Collages

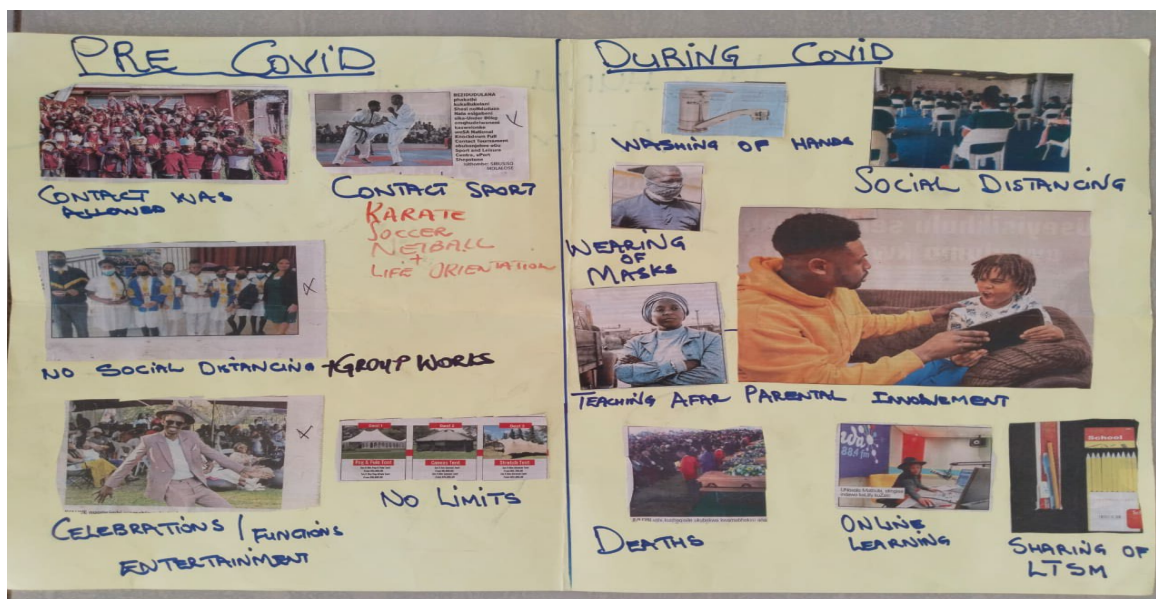
Mweli's Collage



Khumalo's Collage



Mchunu's Collage



Appendix 6: Turnitin Similarity Report

Mr E.N. Ndlovu TDS Thesis

ORIGINALITY REPORT

7 %	5 %	1 %	3 %
SIMILARITY INDEX	INTERNET SOURCES	PUBLICATIONS	STUDENT PAPERS

PRIMARY SOURCES

1	Submitted to University of KwaZulu-Natal Student Paper	2 %
2	researchspace.ukzn.ac.za Internet Source	2 %
3	uir.unisa.ac.za Internet Source	<1 %
4	core.ac.uk Internet Source	<1 %
5	Labby Ramrathan. "School curriculum in South Africa in the Covid-19 context: An	<1 %

Appendix 7: Ethical clearance certificate



10 August 2022

Eric Nkosiye Phana Ndlovu (9902748)
School Of Education
Pietermaritzburg Campus

Dear EN Ndlovu,

Protocol reference number: HSSREC/00004463/2022

Project title: Teaching practices and emotions of senior phase teachers during the coronavirus pandemic: A case study

Degree: Masters

Approval Notification – Expedited Application

This letter serves to notify you that your application received on 04 July 2022 in connection with the above, was reviewed by the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (HSSREC) and the protocol has been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

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 discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

This approval is valid until 10 August 2023.

To ensure uninterrupted approval of this study beyond the approval expiry date, a progress report must be submitted to the Research Office on the appropriate form 2 - 3 months before the expiry date. A close-out report to be submitted when study is finished.

HSSREC is registered with the South African National Research Ethics Council (REC-040414-040).

Yours sincerely,



Professor Dipane Hlalele (Chair)

/dd

Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

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

Telephone: +27 (0)31 260 8350/4557/3587 Email: hssrec@ukzn.ac.za Website: <http://research.ukzn.ac.za/Research-Ethics>

Founding Campuses:  Edgewood  Howard College  Medical School  Pietermaritzburg  Westville

INSPIRING GREATNESS