



UNIVERSITY OF  
KWAZULU-NATAL  

---

INYUVESI  
YAKWAZULU-NATALI

**EXAMINING LEARNERS' PERCEPTIONS OF FORMATIVE  
ASSESSMENT IN TOURISM AS A SUBJECT**

**By**

**SIZA NGIBA**

**This dissertation is submitted in fulfilment of the academic requirements  
for the Degree of Master of Education in the discipline of Tourism**

**Education,**

**School of Social Science Education,**

**Faculty of Education,**

**University of KwaZulu-Natal**

**SUPERVISOR: Dr Z DUBE-XABA**

**JANUARY 2020**

# DECLARATION

I, Siza Ngiba hereby declare that this dissertation is my own work, both in conception and execution and that all the sources used have been acknowledged by means of complete reference. In addition, this research study has not been previously submitted for a degree at any other university.

---

**Student's signature**

---

**Date**

I agree that the study can be submitted

---

**Supervisor' signature**

---

**Date**

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I thank God Almighty for His grace, mercies, favour, wisdom and understanding over my life and also for giving me the strength and resolve to complete this study. It is not always impossible to carry out a research of this nature without attracting reasonable support from various people. This work thus without doubt is a product of many ingenious brains to whom I owe unqualified indebtedness as I express my sincere gratitude and appreciation to the following individuals for their continued support and guidance throughout this study.

- My supervisor Dr Zanele Dube-Xaba for her guidance, support, encouragements, patience and expertise in this field of study.
- My family for their prayers, encouragements and unwavering belief in me, not forgetting my late parents Mthembeni Ngiba and Jabulile Mavis Shezi-Ngiba.
- To my principal and colleagues for their support, patience and assistance throughout this study.
- To the eight participants (Grade 11 learners) of my study, who trusted me enough to share their experiences with me and without whom this study would not have been possible.

## **ABSTRACT**

This study focuses on the learners' perspectives of formative assessment in Tourism as a subject in South African secondary school. This study, therefore, includes the voices of the learners in the Tourism classroom which has been missing and unheard. This study examines learner's perception and uses of formative assessment to enhance learning within their Tourism class by using the constructivist theory as it lens to guide the study. The study followed the qualitative approach and adopted the interpretive paradigm in conducting a case study research in one secondary school in the KwaZulu-Natal province. The semi structured interviews and focus group discussion were used to generate data from eight Grade 11 learners. The findings in this study revealed that learners perceive formative assessment in Tourism through its nature and purpose of formative assessment. The findings further revealed that learners use formative assessment for various reasons such as summative benefits; to monitor their ability and progress; use feedback from formative assessment; and that the learners use of formative assessment as a means to learn in different ways. The study concludes that the learners in Tourism are benefiting from formative assessment and that it has a great potential to enhance their learning.

# Table of Contents

DECLARATION .....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	iii
ABSTRACT.....	iv
LIST OF ACRONYMS .....	viii
LIST OF TABLES.....	ix
LIST OF APPENDICES.....	x
CHAPTER ONE .....	1
ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY .....	1
1.1 Introduction.....	1
1.2 Tourism as a School Subject in South Africa .....	2
1.3 Rationale for the Study .....	3
1.4 Statement of the Problem.....	4
1.5 Purpose of the Study .....	5
1.5.1 Research objectives.....	6
1.5.2 Research questions.....	6
1.6 Clarifications of Terms .....	6
1.7 Methodological Considerations .....	7
1.8 Outline of the Dissertation .....	8
1.9 Chapter Synthesis.....	9
CHAPTER TWO .....	10
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE .....	10
2.1 Introduction.....	10
2.2 Understanding assessment .....	10
2.3 Approaches to Assessment: Formative and Summative Assessment .....	12
2.3.1 Summative assessment .....	12
2.3.2 Formative Assessment .....	14
2.4 Feedback in Formative Assessment.....	17
2.5 The Role of Formative Assessment in Learning.....	20
2.6 Positive and Negative Factors Associated with Formative Assessment .....	22
2.7 International and National Perspectives on Formative Assessment.....	23
2.8 Assessment in Tourism .....	26
2.9 Research on Learners' Perceptions and Use of Formative Assessment.....	28
2.10 Theoretical Framework .....	30
2.11 Chapter Synthesis.....	33
CHAPTER THREE .....	35

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY .....	35
3.1. Introduction .....	35
3.2 The Qualitative Approach .....	35
3.3 The Interpretive Paradigm .....	36
3.4 Case Study Design.....	38
3.5 Sampling and Sampling Procedures .....	39
3.6 The Research Site .....	40
3.7 Profile of the Participants.....	42
3.8 Data Generation Methods .....	43
3.8.1 Focus group discussions.....	44
3.8.2 Semi-structured interviews .....	45
3.9 Data Analysis .....	46
3.10 Trustworthiness.....	47
3.10.1 Credibility .....	47
3.10.2 Transferability.....	48
3.10.3 Dependability.....	48
3.10.4 Confirmability.....	48
3.11 Ethical Considerations .....	49
3.12 Limitations of the Study.....	50
3.13 Chapter Synthesis.....	51
CHAPTER FOUR.....	52
DATA PRESENTATION AND INTEPRETATION.....	52
4.1 Introduction.....	52
4.2 Learners' Perceptions of Formative Assessment in Tourism .....	52
4.2.1 Perceptions regarding the nature of formative assessment.....	53
4.2.2 Perceptions regarding the purpose of formative assessment.....	56
4.3 Learners' Use of Formative Assessment .....	63
4.3.1 The use of formative assessment to benefit summative assessment outcomes .....	63
4.3.2 The use of formative assessment to monitor ability and progress .....	66
4.3.3 The use of feedback based on formative assessment to enhance learning.....	68
4.3.4 Formative assessment as a means of learning in different ways.....	73
4.3.4.1 <i>Self-regulated learning</i> .....	74
4.3.4.2 <i>Collaborative learning</i> .....	77
4.3.4.3 <i>The acquisition of various skills using formative assessment</i> .....	79
4.4 Chapter Synthesis.....	83

CHAPTER FIVE .....	84
DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS .....	84
5.1 Introduction.....	84
5.2 Summary of the Study .....	84
5.3 Discussion of the Findings and Emerging Insights.....	86
5.3.1 Learners’ perceptions of formative assessment .....	86
5.3.2 Learners’ use of formative assessment .....	87
5.4 Implications of the Study .....	90
5.5 Methodological Reflections .....	91
5.6 Recommendations.....	91
5.7 Conclusion .....	92
REFERENCES .....	93
APPENDICES .....	112

## LIST OF ACRONYMS

<b>NCS</b>	National Curriculum Statement
<b>DOE</b>	Department of Education
<b>DBE</b>	Department of Basic Education
<b>CAPS</b>	Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement
<b>GDP</b>	Gross Domestic Product
<b>FET</b>	Further Education and Training
<b>NQF</b>	National Qualification Framework
<b>PAT</b>	Practical Assessment Task
<b>QAA</b>	Quality Assurance Agency
<b>OECD</b>	Organisation of Economic Co-Operation and Development
<b>HOD</b>	Head of Department
<b>PAT</b>	Practical Assessment Task
<b>SBA</b>	School Based Assessment



**LIST OF TABLES**

Figure 1: Participants profile.....43

## **LIST OF APPENDICES**

Appendix A	Ethical Clearance Letter
Appendix B	KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education Permission Letter
Appendix C	Letter to the Principal
Appendix D	Letter to the Parents (English Version)
Appendix E	Letter to the Parents (IsiZulu Version)
Appendix F	Learner Information and Assent form

# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY**

### **1.1 Introduction**

The aim of this study was to examine learners' perceptions of formative assessment within the context of the subject Tourism. The post-apartheid South African curriculum has introduced many changes in assessment, especially in Tourism, which is a relatively new subject in the secondary school curriculum (Dube, 2014). Tourism as a secondary school subject in South Africa was first introduced in 1998 as one of the 25 elective subjects in the new National Curriculum Statement (NCS) in 2006 for Grades 10-12. Four subjects are compulsory: A Home Language, a First Additional Language, Life Orientations, and Mathematics or Mathematical Literacy. Tourism was introduced as an elective subject that would develop an awareness of the value that the Tourism industry brings to local areas and their economy. The subject is also intended to encourage learners to identify entrepreneurial opportunities for themselves and thus it should address the prevailing social problem of unemployment in the country (Department of Education, 2003). Assessment practices in Tourism became crucial in ensuring that high skills are developed in learners. As noted by Redfield, Roeber and Stiggins (2008), assessment plays a fundamental role in underpinning learners' learning in basic education and, as such, should be an integral part of any teaching and learning strategy. For this reason, one of the areas of the curriculum that has undergone considerable re-conceptualisation is assessment, as it is considered an integral part of the learning process (Kanjee, 2006). Change in assessment strategies and approaches became necessary as it became paramount to establish whether learners were being educated and assessed appropriately so that they would be equipped for the changing needs of society and workplaces.

Assessment underpins the processes of teaching and learning, especially in vocational subjects such as Tourism. Shepard (2000) points out that assessment is at the heart of teaching as it provides a necessary condition for judging success or failure of teaching and learning. It is a continuous and planned process of gathering information on learner performance. According to Sieborger and Macintosh (1998), the purpose of educational assessment is to improve teaching and learning because assessment is an integral part of the education process and is irrevocably bound up with the curriculum. Assessment happens daily in the classroom and could take different forms. Black (1998, p.13) identifies three purposes of assessment:

"Assessment is concerned respectively with the support of learning, with reporting the achievement of the individual learner and with satisfying demands for educational accountability".

Given that the subject, Tourism is meant to empower learners to be integrated into the labour-intensive tourism industry, assessment plays a major role in preparing learners to gain both the professional and practical skills required by this industry. Hence, the primary purpose of Tourism as outlined in the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) for the FET phase Grades 10-12 is to equip learners with knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that will enable their meaningful participation in the workplace and society (DoE, 2011). In this regard, it is undeniable that the nature of the assessment activities that learners are exposed to should provide them with opportunities to apply what they have learned in practice and to gain work related skills. Assessment in Tourism thus has both a formative and summative purpose. Summative assessment evaluates the performance of learners at the end of a learning program, whereas formative assessment incorporates all those processes by which teachers and learners use information about learners' achievement to improve their knowledge and understanding and to support their continued development. The National Curriculum Statement (NCS), as outlined in the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement for Tourism (CAPS), and the National Protocol on Assessment both stipulate that assessment in Grades 10-12 should be both formative and summative (Department of Basic Education, 2012); more specifically, in Tourism assessment should occur both formally and informally (Department of Basic Education, 2011). The emphasis on formative assessment indicates a clear shift from previous assessment practices that were driven by summative assessment (Reyneke, Meyer & Nel, 2010). Against this background, the purpose of this study was to examine learners' perceptions and use of formative assessment to enhance learning in Tourism and to establish how the learners translated their perceptions into practice.

## **1.2 Tourism as a School Subject in South Africa**

Tourism as a secondary school subject in the Further Education and Training (FET) phase was developed by South African curriculum developers as one of the strategies to advance job opportunities for young people in the country. It was assumed at its inception as a subject that it would benefit, amongst others, learners from previously disadvantaged communities by capacitating them with the knowledge and skills for employment in the Tourism industry

(Department of Education, 1996). According to Dube (2014), Tourism as subject in secondary schools is intended to aid learners to understand the rapid growth of the Tourism industry and its importance for the South African economy through its contribution to the gross domestic product (GDP). Tourism was thus introduced to meet the needs of businesses, to redress historical inequities by creating employment opportunities and, most saliently, to advance the national economy. Tourism was avowed as an elective school subject that learners could choose as one of their three elective subjects in the FET phase at the end of Grade 9. The subject is covered over three years (Grades 10–12) and is worth 20 credits at NQF Level 4, which is the FET exit level (Umalusi, 2014).

Tourism is offered by means of an integrated interdisciplinary curriculum which includes subjects such as Economics, Business Studies, Geography, History, and subjects in the sciences such as Physical Sciences and Life Sciences (Pawson, 2002, p.16). Tribe (1997) with Kunwar (2018) notes that Tourism education should incorporate a number of concepts that are not specific to the tourism industry but that may be contextualised to create a tourism perspective. The subject content of Tourism serves as a basis for the articulation of related fields in higher education (Saayman, 2005), and thus it prepares learners at school level and beyond for career opportunities (Chili, 2013). As noted by Dube (2014), Tourism as a subject provides learners with a broad knowledge base and a skill set that are needed to understand the tourism industry and that prepare them for further education. The compulsory practical assessment task (PAT) that is incorporated in the subject content underscores this purpose, as this task requires advanced and multiple skills that are informed by real-world problems and their solution in the tourism industry. Learners' understanding of assessment practices in Tourism is thus vital in informing their perceptions and use of their acquired skills in the real world. These processes are supported and enhanced through formative assessment tasks.

### **1.3 Rationale for the Study**

My interest in conducting a study that would focus on learners' perceptions and use of formative assessment to enhance their learning in Tourism was prompted by my personal and professional experiences in this field. As a Tourism teacher in a high school in the KwaMashu township of KwaZulu-Natal province, my personal observations and other anecdotal evidence (such as the experiences of my colleagues) implied that formative assessment was not clearly understood or applied. This was disturbing as formative assessment in Tourism should form a

large part of learning as reflected in the informal and formal assessment tasks that need to be completed in each year (Grade 10-12). Formative assessment is intended to allow educators to follow learners' progress while monitoring and supporting their learning (Wiliam, 2011). However, based on my experiences as an educator, limited guidance is provided in the curriculum policy and even less by the DOB on the specific requirements that are needed to implement formative assessment in the classroom (Dube-Xaba & Makae, 2018). In addition, teachers' lack of assessment skills to implement effective formative assessment is compounded by the large classes that they have to teach.

Despite NCS initiatives to propel the application of formative assessment, the most recent research in international and South African contexts has focused on teacher involvement in formative assessment and teacher implementation of formative assessment strategies (Kuze & Shumba, 2011; Haroldson, 2012; Restrepo & Nelson, 2013; Panchbhai, Vagha & Bhowale, 2014; Kangee & Moloi, 2014; Ngwenya, 2014). Learners' perspectives on formative assessment have been explored in subjects such as Mathematics (Bansilal, James & Naidoo, 2010) and Chemistry as a component of Physical Sciences (Haroldson, 2010). Scholars have also explored various aspects of students' perceptions of higher education (McSweeney, 2014; Javid & Umer, 2014). I was thus challenged by the dearth in literature that focuses on the way learners use and participate in formative assessment in South African secondary schools and in Tourism in particular. This motivated the need for a study that would focus on learners' perceptions and use of formative assessment. This study therefore gave recognition to the voices of learners in the Tourism classroom. As these learners' authentic perceptions and experiences were explored, the findings of the study will contribute to the body of knowledge in this field as gaps that existed in the literature on assessment in Tourism were addressed.

#### **1.4 Statement of the Problem**

The implementation of formative assessment in South Africa has been clouded by multiple challenges ranging from a lack of understanding formative assessment by teachers to inadequate resources, financial constraints and a lack of teacher training (Van Staden & Molebatsi, 2017). Spaul (2013) refers to well-publicised problems in this field such as the shortage of teachers, under qualified teachers, inadequate infrastructure, and poor teacher performance in terms of CAPS requirements. In the classroom, these problems result in poor learner achievement and standards, a lack of classroom discipline, and insufficient resources

(Vandeyar, 2005; Vandeyar & Killen, 2007; Kanjee, 2009; Ngwenya, 2014). More specifically, research has shown that some Tourism teachers in South African schools are not adequately trained and equipped (Chili, 2013; Dube, 2014), and the latter scholars exposed the fact that these teachers had not specialised in Tourism in their tertiary studies and that this caused serious challenges in implementing formative assessment in this subject (Chili, 2013; Dube, 2016).

In addition, Omorogiuwa (2008) poses that learner whose language of instruction is English but whose home language is one of the indigenous languages usually face challenges in completing their formative assessment tasks, especially when ambiguous or unfamiliar words and jargon are used to pose the task requirements. Teachers also experience difficulties in implementing formative assessment due to insufficient knowledge of and inexperience in formative assessment (Akhmedina, 2017). It is also argued that students' negative perceptions and attitudes create obstacles for teachers who need to implement formative assessment practices (Akhmedina, 2017).

A critical evaluation of the CAPS for Tourism revealed that the formative assessment requirements for Tourism had not been appropriately planned and developed as the emphasis is on a standardised and centralised rather than a formalised approach to assessment (Umalusi, 2014). This suggests that teachers do not take the different learning styles of learners or their knowledge and understanding into consideration when tasks are set. Given the challenges surrounding the implementation of formative assessment as indicated above, it was necessary to examine learners' perspectives of formative assessment in Tourism as a subject.

## **1.5 Purpose of the Study**

While research has revealed that formative assessment improves learner achievement (Black & Wiliam, 2018), it is unclear whether or not learners perceive formative assessment to be beneficial, particularly when they take Tourism as a subject. Therefore, this study involved South African secondary school learners to elicit and evaluate their perspectives of formative assessment in Tourism.

### 1.5.1 Research objectives

- To examine learners' perceptions of formative assessment in Tourism as a subject.
- To examine learners' use of formative assessment to enhance learning in Tourism as a subject.

### 1.5.2 Research questions

To pursue the above objectives, this study aimed to answer the following key questions:

- What are learners' perceptions of formative assessment in Tourism as a subject?
- How do learners use formative assessment to enhance learning in Tourism as a subject?

## 1.6 Clarifications of Terms

The aim of this section is to supply definitions of the key terms and concepts that are used in this dissertation.

**Assessment:** This concept is multifaceted and means different things to different people. According to Wylie and Lyon (2012, p.4), "...assessment is a term that can be used for many different contexts and purposes". Earle (2010, p. 2) asserts that assessment can be defined as "...a critical piece of differentiated instruction that helps to identify the most effective strategies and activities that will encourage learner learning". Assessment can take place throughout the course of learning when infused in the instruction (Earle, 2010). Therefore, assessment is understood in this study as a process of gathering and interpreting evidence about the performance of learners through the use of various forms of assessment (or assessment tools).

**Formative assessment:** Formative assessment in the context of this study is used interchangeably with the concept 'assessment for learning'. "Formative assessment or assessment for learning can be explained as the use of a task or an activity for determining learner progress during the lesson and to provide valuable feedback on their own learning"



(Earle, 2010, p.1). Wylie and Lyon (2012, p.1) concur with Earle and further add that formative assessment or assessment for learning is "...a classroom-based process in which learners and teachers collect evidence of learning in order to understand current learning progress and to make adjustments to learning or to teaching as necessary". This definition indicates that formative assessment in this study refers to any technique that is implemented to collect information about a learners' knowledge and understanding in order to guide learning and instruction. This includes, but is not limited to, the use of various strategies, the formative use of summative tests, and giving feedback to learners. These strategies can be informal or formal in nature.

**Tourism:** Tourism is a field of study that has evolved over the years and has incurred different names in different countries despite having the same nature. For example, in some countries the subject is known as Travel and Tourism Education or Tourism Education (Tribe, 2000; Goeldner, 2001; Gu, Kavanaugh, & Cong, 2007), while in the South African secondary schooling system it was first called Travel and Tourism (Earle, 2008) and later Tourism (Gadebe, 2005; Dube, 2016). The subject Tourism was introduced in the South African schooling system in 1998 in Grades 10-12 and is offered as an elective (i.e., a non-compulsory subject which a learner may or may not elect to study in school) in the NCS since 2006. The subject Tourism in South Africa originated as a result of the developments and growth in the tourism industry (Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, 2000). The subject is meant to empower learners with knowledge of different services and skills required by the tourism industry and the benefits they bring to the country's economy (Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, 2000). Formative assessment in this subject area was explored through the eyes of learners who had elected it as a subject in order to gain a deeper insight into their perspectives and use of formative assessment tasks.

## **1.7 Methodological Considerations**

The interpretive paradigm was employed in this study. Leedy and Ormrod (2010, p. 12) define an interpretive paradigm as "the way of looking at the world based on philosophical assumptions that direct thinking action". This paradigm thus allowed the researcher to consider multiple socially constructed realities as they emerged during the interpretation of the data (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). The interpretive paradigm was a relevant and appropriate choice as formative assessment was evaluated from the perspective of learners who had elected

and been involved in Tourism as a subject for more than a year. In line with the interpretive theory, the study adopted a qualitative approach to gain in-depth understanding of these learners' experiences of formative assessment in the Tourism classroom. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) assert that qualitative researchers study phenomena in their natural settings and thus attempt to make sense of and interpret them in terms of the meanings people bring to them. The qualitative approach thus assisted me in understanding the learners' perspectives and use of formative assessment in Tourism by exploring their authentic views and perceptions.

This qualitative case study was undertaken in one secondary school because I endeavoured to understand how Tourism learners perceived and used formative assessment in Tourism. Yin (2011) asserts that a case study design that is informed by the qualitative approach is an in-depth examination of a particular example of a phenomenon. In other words, the case study provides the researcher and the reader a unique example of real people in a real situation (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). The study used qualitative data generation methods in the form of three focus group discussions and individual semi-structured interviews and thus generated data from eight Grade 11 learners who were purposively selected from the Tourism class in one secondary school. The data that were obtained were analysed using thematic analysis.

## **1.8 Outline of the Dissertation**

**Chapter One:** This chapter introduces the study by providing the background to and the rationale of the study. It presents the statement of the problem and discusses the significance of the study as a scholarly endeavour. It also examines the purpose of the study and expounds the key objectives and the research questions that guided the study. A brief discussion on the research methodology is also provided and an overview of the dissertation is presented by chapter. The chapter is concluded with a short summary.

**Chapter Two:** This chapter presents a discussion of relevant findings in the literature. It provides a thorough comprehension of key concerns in the field of formative assessment and Tourism education. Relevant conceptual theories that underpin formative assessment were discussed in detail. In addition, the theoretical framework that was adopted to comprehend the learners' perceptions and uses of formative assessment to enhance learning in the Tourism subject is discussed which is the constructivist theory of learning. The most relevant theories

under the constructivist theory were deemed to be Piaget's cognitive constructivism theory and Vygotsky's social constructivism theory.

**Chapter Three:** The research methodology, paradigm, design and location are presented. The sampling methods, the methods of data generation, the triangulation principle, and the data analysis process are also explained. The issue of trustworthiness and the ethical considerations that were adhered to are outlined while the limitations of the study are also explicated. The chapter is concluded with a brief summary.

**Chapter Four:** In this chapter the data are presented, and the main findings are discussed. The analysis of that data is linked to findings in the literature and the theoretical framework.

**Chapter Five:** This chapter presents the conclusion of the study. The findings are summarised and discussed, and recommendations are offered.

## **1.9 Chapter Synthesis**

In this chapter I discussed the background to the study and explained the purpose for and rationale of the study. The significance of the study was discussed while the problem statement, the objectives of the study, the key research questions, and a clarification of key terms were presented. A brief overview of the dissertation chapters was also provided.

In the next chapter I shall present the literature review as well as the theoretical framework that underpinned the study.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

The previous chapter presented a discussion of the background to the study. In this chapter, I shall discuss the literature that was reviewed with particular reference to findings that were related to the study. The theoretical framework in which this research was embedded is also discussed. Hofstee (2011) argues that any successful research should be grounded on existing literature and that a review of related literature is a vital step in any research process. The information that was garnered from the literature thus informed and guided this study (Ndlovu, 2005). Unfortunately, there was a dearth of literature on Tourism as a subject in general and on assessment in Tourism specifically, and thus I had to draw broad information from assessment in other fields.

In the first section of this chapter I discuss different understandings of assessment and present various versions of both local and international definitions of assessment. The difference between formative assessment and summative assessment is examined and the purpose and nature of assessment are explored. The significance of feedback in formative assessment and learners' perceptions of formative assessment are explored while challenges experienced in terms of formative assessment are also highlighted. In the second section, the theoretical framework that was used as a lens to frame this study is discussed. Thus the cognitive constructivist theory of learning as posited by Piaget and Vygotsky's theory of social constructivism are examined and their benefits and relevance to the study are illuminated. The chapter is concluded with a concise summary.

#### **2.2 Understanding assessment**

Assessment practices are central to educational accountability. Assessment does not have a homogeneous definition because it means different things to different people. Hence, the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) (2007) opines that there is no collectively agreed upon definition of assessment. As was earlier noted by Blake and Hanley (1995), assessment is the judgement of learners' learning based on given tasks. Similarly, Kennedy, Hyland and Ryan (2007) state that academics have used the term assessment to describe processes of evaluating the effectiveness of sequences of teaching and learning. Assessment is defined by Conradie,

Kirsch and Moyce (2012, p. 6) as “a continuously planned process where various forms of assessment methods are used in order to gather and interpret information about the performance of learners”. Similarly, Harlen (2012, p. 87) argues that assessment in an educational context “involves deciding, collecting and making judgements about evidence relating to the goals of the learning being assessed”. Smith (2011, p. 57) defines assessment as “a process which is used when trying to understand and draw conclusions about learners’ achievement and progress of learning”. According to Black and Wiliam (2009), assessment can be regarded as all those exercises that are embraced by teachers and learners while evaluating themselves in order to generate evidence about learning; this evidence could be used to make decisions about teaching and learning. From the above definitions it is evident that the emphasis is on the measurement of performance which is done by means of various assessment methods.

In a nutshell, assessment is a range of methods that are used to measure learner’s performance in an educational context. This view is supported by Palomba and Banta (1999), who stipulate that assessment is a systematic process of grading learners’ achievement in a given assessment task. This product-oriented conception of assessment speaks to the after effects of the engagement process and it focuses on how the learner progresses based on the graded mark. This is in line with the view of Graue and Johnson (2011), who associate assessment with accountability and testing. They maintain that assessment is associated with accountability and that it is generally defined in terms of testing, which is a medium through which institutions have become answerable to a concerned public. This outlines the significance of testing in secondary education as it is perceived to determine equality and accountability.

Linked to this view is the understanding that assessment is required to determine certification and accreditation. According to Ewell (2001), assessment is linked to certification when it is used to certify any learner and to award grades. For accreditation purposes, it is the gathering and use of combined data on learner achievement in various tasks to determine the extent to which institutional programs, learning and teaching goals have been achieved. Hence assessment provides data that can benefit both teaching and learning processes (Bers, 2008). In addition, Bresciani (2006) opines that assessment is informed decisions for constant change and a process that provides confirmation and evidence of learners’ achievement levels. This definition tallies with that of Green and Johnson (2010, p. 388), who see assessment as “the variety of methods used to determine what learners know and are able to do before, during and after instruction” to make educational decisions about learners’ learning. In this regard,

assessment can be viewed as significant in determining learners' knowledge at all stages of the teaching and learning process and by means of the use of different strategies. A shift thus occurred from purely summative assessment to a combination of formative and summative assessment as the Department of Basic Education (2011, p. 36) states that assessment is "the process of collecting and interpreting evidence in order to determine learners' progress in learning and to make a judgment about [their] performance". This definition is consistent with that of Verhoeven and Devos (2005, p. 258), who state that assessment is "the collection and interpretation of data about the teaching and learning process in order to measure the progress of learners or to form a basis for making decisions about the progress of the teaching-learning process".

In summary, assessment is a process that is undertaken for the purposes of measurement, curriculum evaluation and control, selection and placement, certification and accountability, and the interpretation of the successful outcomes of learners' learning. The definitions that were explored highlight two main approaches to assessment, namely formative and summative assessment.

### **2.3 Approaches to Assessment: Formative and Summative Assessment**

The purpose and execution of assessment is central to education and these are underpinned by the approach that is used for successful assessment outcomes. While the literature identifies four types of assessment (baseline, diagnostic, formative and summative assessment), for the purpose of this study I only explored two main approaches to assessment, namely formative and summative which are used extensively for assessing learners. This does not suggest that other types of assessment are not important. The focus of this study was on formative assessment, but it could not be detached from summative assessment as the one presupposes the other.

#### **2.3.1 Summative assessment**

Summative assessment, also known as *assessment of learning*, refers to strategies designed to confirm what learners know and demonstrate whether they have met the set outcomes. According to Daugherty, Black, Ecclestone, James and Newton (2010), summative assessment is used to certify proficiency and make decisions about learners' progress or placements. According to Shepard (2006, p. 627), summative assessment is "the assessments carried out at

the end of an instructional unit or course of study for the purpose of giving grades or otherwise certifying learner proficiency". It is used as a means of grading and making judgements regarding learners' achievements for purposes of selection and certification. Black (2013) contends that summative assessment elicits learners' knowledge and skills for the primary purposes of recording achievement and awarding grades.

According to Wiliam (2011) and Black (2013), summative assessment is used to plan future learning goals and pathways for learners and to provide a transparent interpretation of learning outcomes for all audiences. It is thus designed to provide evidence of achievement to parents, other educators, learners themselves, and sometimes outside groups such as employers and educational institutions. This implies that summative assessment outcomes are released in the public domain as it results in universal statements or symbols about how well learners performed at any given level in the education system. It often contributes to pivotal decisions that will affect learners' future (Handley et al., 2007).

Summative assessment is administered after a set learning programme has been completed and, as such, provides information that judges the success of that teaching and learning process. Fisher and Frey (2007) are of the view that summative assessment is meant to judge learners' competency after an instructional phase for the purpose of reporting, through universally accepted symbols, at what level success in that programmes has been achieved. Wiliam (2011) also argues that summative assessment provides a concluding picture of a learner's achievement and is usually administered at the end of a set point, such as at the end of a term to assess what has been learned and how well it was taught. This approach to assessment is linked to end-of-unit or end-of-term summative tasks which include traditional examinations, formal tests, and research projects. In other words, it involves assessment activities that are administered at the end of a learning phase and that are purposely assigned to collect information to be used in making summative judgments (Brookhart, 2001). Summative assessment is thus about determining the overall achievement of al earner in a learning area over a specific period of time (Moss, 2013).

Another understanding presents summative assessment as an approach that is adopted to serve certain purposes such as accountability, ranking, and certifying competence (Kennedy, Chan, Fok, & MingYu, 2008). In summative assessment, the focus is usually on awarding marks or grades to indicate whether the learner has an acceptable level of knowledge and can be

progressed to the next grade (Earl, 2003). One significant advantage of summative assessment is that it assists in assessing the attainment of learners' learning against the intended outcome(s). In addition, a report reflecting summative assessment symbols presents evidence of a learner's achievement (Burket, 2016). This suggests that the quality of a learner's achievement after the teaching and learning process is completed when assessed using summative assessment methods (Burket, 2016). Conversely, Havnes and McDowell (2008) argue that summative assessment fails to enhance or support high quality learning.

### **2.3.2 Formative Assessment**

In this study, the term formative assessment is used synonymously with *assessment for learning*. This is a process of continuously collecting evidence about learners' learning with the intention of identifying learners' knowledge in order to assist them in achieving educational outcomes (Heritage, 2007; Supovitz, 2012). The term formative assessment was first used by Scriven in 1967 in the context of program evaluation, and later by Bloom in 1971 in the context of education (Taras, 2009). It began as a distinct movement based on the principles of supporting learners through assessment. Although many researchers built on the development of the formative assessment theory, the most notable work was done by Black and Wiliam in their seminal work. Black and Wiliam (1998; 2009; 2018) opine that formative assessment involves the teacher's planning about teaching and learning in response to assessment results. They further argue that formative assessment is about learners receiving feedback about their learning and what they can improve. These researchers further argue that formative assessment is about learners' participation in the assessment process. Therefore, the purpose of formative assessment is to improve learning, and a critical component of formative evaluation involves the removal of the evaluative component.

Formative assessment is regarded as "any planned or spontaneous teaching strategy used to elicit learners' conceptual development during instruction (Higgins, Grant, & Thompson, 2010, p. 56). The latter authors also explain that formative assessment is an activity or task completed by learners during the learning process which provides feedback to enhance their learning. It involves continuously tasking learners with various assessment activities from which they construct new knowledge. Hence, du Toit (2008) refers to formative assessment as continuous tasks that should be assessed promptly in order to provide immediate feedback from which learners learn. According to Irons (2008), one of the important foci of formative assessment is



helping learners to recognise the level of learning they have acquired and to clarify educational expectations and standards. Formative assessment is therefore designed with the purpose of promoting learning as it becomes part of the instructional process and provides encouragement (Wiliam, 2011). Therefore, assessment for learning is a pedagogical framework that is designed to promote learning and learner engagement in their learning (Black & Wiliam, 2009). The key is that learners know that the assessment is directed towards providing information about how to improve their performance before the point where a final assessment of achievement (summative assessment) is conducted.

Wiliam and Thompson (2007) argue that formative assessment is related to evidence from formal and informal assessment tasks that are administered to inform instruction. These assessment practices focus on developing knowledge, skills and values in learners as outlined in CAPS (Van der Nest et al., 2018). Formal assessment typically means using a test that involves standardised administration. Examples of formal assessment include standardised tests or end of chapter tests. This type of assessment has a specific right or wrong answer based on a set of predetermined criteria and has been used on other learners. Informal assessment, on the other hand, requires the application of techniques that can easily be incorporated into classroom routines and learning activities (Oosterhof, 2009). Informal assessment techniques can be used during a lesson without interfering with instructional time. Their results are indicative of learners' performance in terms of skills or knowledge acquired in a subject or learning area of interest. In administering informal assessment tasks or activities, teachers need to have a clear understanding of the levels of ability the learners bring with them (Werquin, 2010).

Through the administration of informal tasks, formative assessment seeks to identify the strengths and needs of individual learners as learning progresses. Examples of informal assessment activities include projects, presentations, experiments, demonstrations, or performances. For instance, informal assessment can provide quick feedback to a teacher through the use of questioning. Teachers may use the learners' performance in these types of formative assessment tasks to provide verbal or written feedback to learners and to guide their own curriculum decision making processes (Supovitz, 2012). Formative assessment is thus the process of developing a learner by providing formative feedback pertaining to formal and informal assessment tasks rather than testing learned information at the end of learning. By using formative assessment, whether formal or informal, teachers might be able to determine

what knowledge and skills learners have already acquired and to what degree. However, in the South African curriculum (CAPS), and particularly in the FET phase, assessment practices that focus on knowledge, skills and values are prescribed (Kanjee, 2009; Van Staden & Motsamai, 2017), which suggests that teachers do not have a free hand in devising such assessment activities. This implies that this one-size-fits-all approach to formative assessment practices can have a profound effect on learner's experiences and perceptions of their capabilities.

Black and Wiliam (1998) argue that assessing learners' progress in the formative context entails a combination of the formal and informal assessment approaches to maximise the validity of assessment. Ramsey (2016) concurs that formative assessment is a fundamental teaching method which should be used to yield large and consistent achievement gains. However, when formative tasks are prescriptive across a national curriculum (as they are in the CAPS document for each grade and subject in the FET phase), this assessment process fails in acknowledging learners' diversity in terms of origin, circumstances, access to resources, and needs and abilities, to name a few. This point is explicated by the prescriptive nature of the assessment tasks in Tourism (type of task, term when it needs to be conducted and mark allocation). Teachers thus do not teach towards their learners' needs and proximal zone of development (Vygotsky, 1978), but towards a prescriptive curriculum. However, an investigation into the validity of this argument was beyond the scope of this study and will not be explored further. Suffice it to say that the required tasks in Tourism are related to formative assessment, which was the focus of this study.

The above discussion highlighted that the main aim of assessment is to determine learners' strengths and weaknesses in learning so that teachers can improve their teaching strategies and provide more opportunities for learners to achieve the desired learning outcomes and to progress to the next grade. Summative assessment is characterised by standardised tests about what learners have learned at the end of a learning period. In contrast, formative assessment is characterised by learners' active engagement in the assessment and feedback provided by the teacher to help them learn. Proponents of this type of assessment are against the use of summative assessment, as they argue that tests and examinations measure the achievement of the learner instead of helping them improve their work (Kellagha & Greaney, 2003; Mansor, Leng, Rasul, Raof, & Yusoff, 2013; Lund & Kirk, 2019).

Although formative and summative assessment were presented in the above discussion as two discrete approaches to assessment, there is considerable overlap. Black (2013) highlights that the formative and summative purposes of assessment are interwoven in that they are mutually supportive rather than exclusive. It can therefore be observed that these approaches to assessment take varying forms in terms of techniques applied; timing and objectives, and both have their place in the classroom. Selecting an assessment approach thus involves looking at the goals, use and benefits of each type of assessment, although a combination of these approaches would provide the best picture of a learner's achievement of the learning outcomes. Therefore, formative assessment is aimed at motivating learners to do better. It was against this background that the current study examined learners' perceptions and use of formative assessment to enhance their learning, with specific reference to the subject Tourism in the FET phase of schooling.

#### **2.4 Feedback in Formative Assessment**

Generally, feedback based on formative tasks in Tourism is delivered to encourage learners to enhance their performance in the future. Assessment should play a powerful role in conveying information clearly and directly to learners about their learning (Department of Education, 2005). According to Irons (2008, p. 7), formative feedback is described as "any information, process, or activity which affords or accelerates learners' learning based on comments relating to either formative assessment or summative assessment". Assessment becomes formative in nature only when learners are provided with feedback to support and enhance teaching and learning. Thus learners' actions and attitude to learning need to be informed by the teacher's assessment and feedback efforts. According to Black and Wiliam (1998), the information obtained through formative assessment should be used to modify and enhance learning activities. It is in this context that Wragg (2001, p. 35) argues that "if assessment is to be linked to learning, then feedback is an important part of this connection".

Most researchers view feedback as imparting information or knowledge about learners' performance and also to identify the gap between where learners are and where they need to be (Supovitz, 2012; McMillan, 2013; Talib, Kamsah, Naim, & Latif, 2014; Byabato & Kisamo, 2014). Feedback means receiving information or results based on one's efforts which focuses on specific outcomes and what the learner needs to do to improve (Supovitz, 2012). Providing

learners with continuous descriptive feedback shows them how to do better the next time and is a frame of reference from which to track their own progress.

The use of formative assessment as a means of improving learner performance has received renewed attention in the research literature in recent years (Higgins, Grant, & Thompson, 2010; Byabato & Kisamo, 2014; Black & Wiliam, 2018; Van der Nest, Lang, & Engelbrecht, 2018). The emphasis in formative assessment is on on-going learner support and providing timely feedback to increase learning by directly improving learning (Black & Wiliam, 1998, 2009). Formative assessment should thus be designed to provide rich feedback and support for learning and to inform learners of their current achievement (Ibid.). In essence; feedback should suggest the next steps in learners' learning or provide a basis for re-teaching and re-learning if the required knowledge and skills have not been mastered. Feedback provides opportunities for learners to adjust and improve towards mastering given assessment standards (Barry, 2008). Through descriptive and unambiguous feedback, learners' motivation and learning are enhanced and it encourages reflection and clarifies the path to progress (Crisp, 2007). Formative assessment should thus provide learners with opportunities to learn using the feedback that they received. The effectiveness of the formative component of school-based assessment (SBA) is determined by the quality of the feedback both teachers and learners receive. However, various authors such as Carless (2007) have expressed the concern that the feedback that learners receive prompts them to focus more on their scores rather than on the value of an assignment (Carless, 2007). Thus, in the feedback process the teacher should provide the opportunity for learners to engage with them in discussion about the assessment outcome, particularly if they under-performed.

Immediately after feedback, times should be provided to remediate what has not been achieved in order to improve performance in subsequent tasks. Research confirms the above assertion and urges that effective feedback should be given timeously during the teaching and learning process in order to help to improve learning (Clarke, 2008; Black & Wiliam, 2017).

According to Brookhart (2008), feedback is a core teaching activity that should support learning through providing information to learners that will enable them to acquire and demonstrate knowledge, skills and competencies and to identify pathways for improvement Das, Alsalthanies, Nauhria, Joshi and Khan (2017) concur, and indicate that feedback helps to fill learning gaps. Thus the principal purpose of formative assessment is to contribute through

feedback and feed forward towards learners' learning. An assessment activity can enhance learning if it entails feedback by teachers and reflection and review by learners. In this manner learning (and also teaching strategies) will be modified and improved. Such assessment becomes formative assessment when the evidence is actually used to adapt teaching on order to meet the needs of learners (Black et al., 2003).

When learners receive feedback in order to understand what they did wrong and how to improve their learning, they should not be compared to other learners. Feedback should be of high quality and should emphasise mastery rather than performance so that individual learners can advance their outcomes in specific areas of weakness (Wiliam, 2014). Feedback can also be connected developmentally to scores on summative evaluation to help learners know where they have to improve. Learners can also engage in self and companion evaluation to identify any gaps in their learning. Effective feedback based on formative assessment also informs learners about any gaps in their work that they might not have noticed themselves; they might then understand how it fits with what they are trying to learn and accomplish (Brookhart, 2011). According to Brookhart (2011), effective feedback needs to be timely; should focus on one or more strengths; should offer at least one suggestion for improvement or the next step; needs to focus on the learner's work and not the work process; is descriptive and not judgmental; and is positive, clear, and specific. In addition, Hughes (2011) argues that feedback needs to relate to a specific task and match the needs of learners.

Feedback strategies are numerous and can vary in terms of timing, volume, mode and audience (Brookhart, 2008). General principles for feedback should be adjusted depending on the learners' needs. Feedback to the struggling learner should include focusing on the process, selecting only one or just a few points, giving self-referenced feedback to describe progress or capability, be very clear, and should check for understanding (Brookhart, 2011). Torrance (2007) conducted a study on assessment in the United Kingdom and found that learning was retarded if feedback was supported by short-term rewards, praise, and 'incentives' such as 'smiley face' stickers rather than detailed comments on how to develop an idea further or how to solve a particular problem. The former external rewards encouraged competition among the learners without improving their understanding of the work.

The literature undeniably urges that formative assessment and feedback inform the entire process of teaching and learning and thus assists both teachers and learners in improving

academic performance. Feedback based on formative assessment tasks and activities is generally regarded as central in improving knowledge and skills acquisition. Therefore, if we presume that offering opportunities for learning should be the main focus in the Tourism context, then an intervention such as feedback will contribute significantly to learning. Current research on feedback has focused on explaining and extending teachers' feedback practices, but limited research has been conducted on how feedback in formative assessment is received, perceived, processed and used by learners, especially in Tourism in the secondary school. This study addressed this gap as it focused on learners' perceptions and use of formative assessment to enhance learning in Tourism.

## **2.5 The Role of Formative Assessment in Learning**

The relevance of formative assessment in the lives of learners cannot be overemphasised in classroom settings. Formative assessment is a vital tool in teaching and learning. This implies that formative assessment is a process used by teachers and learners as part of instruction to provide feedback to adjust ongoing teaching and learning to improve learners' achievement of core content (Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010). The literature reveals that formative assessment is vital for learning as it motivates learners, increases learner engagement, helps learners to check if their learning outcomes have been achieved, and enhances learning (Zou, 2008; Keefer, Wilson, Dankowicz, & Loui, 2014; Elmanhdi, Al-Hattami, & Fawzi, 2018). For example, a study by Moyosore (2015) that investigated the effect of formative assessment on learners' achievement in secondary school Mathematics revealed that learners who were exposed to formative assessment displayed a strong significant improvement in their performance. This implies that using formative assessment produces increased learner achievement.

The literature has thus shown that the use of formative assessment not only increases learners' achievement but closes achievement gaps amongst learners (Black & Wiliam, 2009, 2007; Economic Co-Operation and Development [OECD], 2005; Marshall, 2005). Black and Wiliam (2007; 2010) reviewed various articles and chapters on formative assessment research and found evidence that formative assessment is directly linked to significant and substantial gains in learning. Based on their research, they concluded that formative assessment helps low achievers more than other learners and so reduces the range among achievement levels while raising achievement overall (Black & Wiliam, 2009). In essence, formative assessment helps

learners develop their learning in order to acquire skills as it involves learners as partners in the learning process through emphasis on peer-assessment and self-assessment skills (OECD, 2005; Black & Wiliam, 2018).

The literature revealed that formative assessment advances learners' learning skills and helps them develop significant skills for lifelong learning (OECD, 2005; Dunn & Mulvenon, 2009; Diana, 2019). More specifically, Diana (2019) notes that formative assessment monitors learners' acquisition of knowledge and skills during educational preparation. Similarly, Lumadi (2013) suggests that learners will show greatest long-term gains in academic achievement after interventions using formative assessment. Assessment should allow learners to self-assess and monitor their progress throughout the year. It should also help them to make informed decisions about what to learn, how to learn it, and how best to evidence achievement in their learning. Therefore, knowing that learning is possible may go a long way towards motivating learners who think that achieving learning goals is out of their reach, and this could be achieved by using formative assessment.

Formative assessment in the classroom has the potential to assist teachers and learners to determine, monitor and improve their respective performances. Meador (2017) affirms that formative assessment increases learning and learners' engagements, is easy to create and use, and helps teachers to monitor learning goals and progress. This view is supported by Vingsle (2014), who states that formative assessment is used to meet learners' learning needs and to engage them in common learning activities while they take charge of their learning. This suggests that the effective administration of formative assessment by teachers might help learners to develop their potential, to be critical thinkers, and to become independent, life-long learners. When used effectively in the classroom, formative assessment can assist learners in identifying their own strengths and weaknesses (Cizek et al., 2019; Deane & Sparks, 2019). This suggests that the use of formative assessment is essential in the classroom as it might help learners to track and document their own progress on their journey to attaining the set learning outcomes. Learners are able to evaluate their own learning more effectively and to see how closely their own work matches the learning outcomes and this, in turn, enables them to understand and monitor their own learning.

Further to that, Heritage (2010) indicates that using formative assessment during the teaching and learning process assists learners and their teachers to become active participants, share

learning goals, and understand how their learning is progressing. They also understand what next steps they need to take and how to take them. Moss and Brookhart (2019) argue that using formative assessment is the best way to increase learners' engagement in their learning and to improve the quality of learning. Therefore, formative assessment, as a fundamental component of classroom instruction, has the potential to elicit active learner participation, and this is anticipated by CAPS.

The above discussion suggests that formative assessment is an essential feature of the teaching and learning process and should thus be effectively integrated into this process. Implementing formative assessment could be a powerful technique to support learners' learning but improving learning through formative assessment also depends on the active involvement of learners in their own assessment. For this reason, an investigation into the perceptions of learners on formative assessment and its use was deemed important.

In the next section, factors that impact the implementation of formative assessment are discussed.

## **2.6 Positive and Negative Factors Associated with Formative Assessment**

Although formative assessment is vital to learners' learning, the implementation of this assessment approach is impacted by some constraints. Various positive factors are also associated with formative assessment as revealed by various global and local perspectives (Black & Wiliam, 1998; Harlen, 2012; Reyneke, Meyer & Nel, 2010). According to Ozan and Kincal (2018), the use of formative assessment has a positive impact on learners as it helps the learners to record higher academic achievement levels, develop better learning attitudes, and gain self-regulated skills. It also increases the learning of low achievers (Hanover Research, 2015). Kondri (2015) suggests that formative assessment has a positive effect on learners' success as it helps them to understand better and thus improve their scores. Huisman (2018) concurs and proposes that formative assessment positively impacts learners' learning as it inspires students towards deep learning and regular study (Das et al., 2017).

On the other hand, several scholars have argued that a number of factors negatively impact formative assessment. For example, a study conducted by Gallagher and Worth (2008) in the USA found that formative assessment as an external measure did not assist teaching or help



the learners to learn. This was partly due to the fact that most teachers did not possess appropriate knowledge of their subject area or relevant assessment skills and did not have access to high quality teaching resources which affected their implementation of formative assessment negatively. These findings were later corroborated by various other authors such as Wiliam (2011) and Curry, Mwavita, Holter and Harris (2016). McMillan (2001) notes that teachers require formative assessment skills to enable them to effectively apply or develop appropriate assessment tools, to use assessment results to make decisions about individual learners to improve their learning, and to provide information to parents and other teachers. With regard to content knowledge, Gipps (1994) and Popham (2006) argue that teachers cannot assess subject matter that they do not understand well. Brown et al. (1995) also note that teachers have to ask the right questions to understand the constructs which they are assessing, and they should be able to develop appropriate assessment tasks to determine the learner's knowledge and understanding when using this assessment method. In addition, Hsu (2005) also acknowledges that class size may influence assessment practices.

In South Africa specifically, various studies have shown that factors such as inadequate teacher expertise and content knowledge, limited access to relevant teaching and learning resources, poor understanding of assessment and the new curriculum, high teacher workloads and large class sizes, continued reliance on traditional assessment practices, and the unwillingness and/or the inability of teachers to adapt their assessment practices to the changing demands of the new education system impacted formative assessment negatively (Combrinck, 2003; Pryor & Lubisi, 2002; Vandeyar, 2005; Vandeyar & Killen, 2007; Kanjee, 2009; Ngwenya, 2014). Vandeyar and Kilian (2007) argue that these challenges frequently occur as many teachers have limited experience and understanding of assessment.

The above discourse has identified contextual and pedagogical factors that may impact negatively on the implementation of formative assessment and thus affect learners' perceptions and use of formative assessment. This theme was the focus of this study.

## **2.7 International and National Perspectives on Formative Assessment**

In the global context, Taras's (2009) investigation into formative assessment in the United Kingdom showed that formative assessment focused on individualised learning. This implies that, in the United Kingdom, teachers need to know the strengths and weaknesses of each

learner, and this knowledge is elicited through the use of formative assessment. The potential of formative assessment to support learning has also been recognised in countries such as Hong Kong, Australia, New Zealand and the USA. In the USA there is a strong focus on formative assessment to raise educational standards (Brookhart, Moss & Long, 2010). Formative assessment was introduced under the “No Child Left behind” project of 2001. This project facilitated the allocation of funds by the state to allow the implementation of formative assessment in schools and for teachers’ professional training in the implementation of formative assessment (Law, 2002). Brookhart et al. (2010) report that, in many schools in the USA, formative assessment is utilised in order to give teachers and learners a clear idea of learners’ performance levels relative to the learning targets and how teachers might address challenges experienced by learners. A study by Canillo-dela-Pena, Bailles, Caseras, Martinez, Ortet and Perez (2009) in Spain examined formative assessment and academic achievement in pre-graduate learners in the health sciences and revealed that the learners viewed formative assessment as a method that helped them to get better marks and attain higher success rates in their final summative assessment tasks. The participants also argued that it enabled them to be greatly involved in their learning process. Similarly, Panchbhai and Shrivastva (2014) revealed that participants endorsed the impact of formative assessments on academic progression.

Dandekar (2015) argues that formative assessment is a vital aspect of the teaching and learning process and that it enables learners to track their learning progress and to achieve success. Brown (2017) reveals that formative assessment provides learners with the ability to synthesise and integrate information and ideas, develop the right study skills and methods, and attain problem solving and management skills. Devine, Harborne and McManus (2015) state that the British government strongly supports the use of formative assessment in this country’s schools. The latter authors also point out that the government authorised the use of high-stake tests as a strategy of formative assessment. Van der Nest, Lang and Engelbrecht (2018), whose study was conducted in South Africa, found that formative assessment helped learners to develop a strong sense of agency which was motivated by their need to excel academically. In a more subject specific study, Moyosore (2015), who investigated the effect of formative assessment on learners’ achievement in secondary school Mathematics, found that learners who had been exposed to formative assessment instruments achieved significantly better in Mathematics than their counterparts who had not been exposed to formative assessment. Lang, Stanley and Moore (2008) assert that formative assessment measures certify and report the level of learners’ learning in order to make informed decisions about their performance. This helps learners to

evaluate their own learning more effectively and to see how closely their own work matches a given goal and this, in turn, enables them to understand and monitor their own learning.

In South Africa there has been considerable reconceptualisation of the purpose and nature of assessment. The National Curriculum Statement Policy of this country clearly promotes a form of assessment that focuses on the development and growth of learners rather than on judgment and promotion. The basic assumption of this policy is that assessment should help learners to "reach their full potential successfully" (Department of Basic Education, 2002, p. 287). This required a shift from summative assessment, which was dominated by standardised tests and examinations, to formative assessment, which opens the door to alternative methods of assessment.

Assessment practices inform teachers about how learning might be improved in order to enhance a learner's individual growth and development (James & Van Laren, 2008). In this regard, Black and Wiliam (2009) opine that formative assessment might be used to actively involve learners as the owners of their learning. Involving learners during assessment involves altering the implicit contract between teacher and learners by creating shared responsibility for learning. In agreement with Black and Wiliam, Andrade and Du (2007) state that such assessment allows the learner to be engaged in self-reflection and encourages the learner to take responsibility for his/her own learning. Black and Wiliam (2009) further argue that learners can be actively involved as resources for one another through collaboration. While learners are working together in their assessment activities, they gain more insight.

Nieuwoudt and Reyneke (2011, p. 282) argue that "formative assessment serves to guide learner improvement, diagnose learning problems, enable learners to rectify mistakes, determine learners' prior knowledge, provide feedback on teachers' teaching, motivate learners, and add variety to teaching and learning". Mafenya (2016) concurs, and states that it also helps to ascertain learners' experiences and beliefs regarding formative and summative assessments. The latter study's findings revealed that formative assessment could be used to improve learning and motivation. Deane and Sparks (2019) assert that formative assessment is primarily used in the classroom by teachers and learners to determine, monitor and improve performance.

From the above discussion one can conclude that formative assessment is useful in guiding learners' performance and helping them to achieve the desired learning outcomes. In a nutshell, the literature suggests that formative assessment supports learning and provides more detailed information about a learner's progress in the learning environment.

## **2.8 Assessment in Tourism**

In the previous South African education system, there was excessive emphasis on written final examinations which were used almost exclusively for the purpose of promotion (i.e., advancement to the next grade) without formal consideration of other assessment possibilities as a component of the final examination mark in Grade 10 to Grade 12. With the introduction of the National Curriculum Statement policy, formative assessment became an important part of evaluation and assessment in South African secondary school subjects, including Tourism (Van der Berg & Shepherd, 2008). Offering Tourism in schools requires adherence to assessment policies that are expounded in the CAPS document and the Protocol on Assessment Grades R–12. SBA in South African secondary schools is a scheduled classroom based assessment process that is based on the collection of information on learners' learning and the manner in which teachers are teaching. Tourism was introduced as an elective subject in secondary schools with the aim of developing entrepreneurial skills and reducing unemployment (NBI, 2005; Dube, 2014), and this aim should be reflected in the assessment practices pertaining to Tourism. The formative assessment component in Tourism was thus interrogated and currently requires various forms of assessment conducted by the teacher who needs to devise tasks and administer them to learners (Poliah, 2009).

As outlined in the CAPS (Department of Basic Education, 2011), assessment in Tourism comprises two different but related activities: informal assessment and formal assessment. The informal assessment tasks are the planned teaching and learning activities that take place in the classroom. Learner progress should be monitored during learning activities. Teachers can use various methods such as oral questions and answers, short activities/written work completed during the lesson, open-book tests, homework exercises, and so on. Formal assessment in the subject Tourism comprises of six assessment tasks that are completed over a year. These include: a project, a March test, a May test, a midyear examination, an open book test, and the preparatory examination. All the marks that are attained are weighted to 25% of the final promotion mark. In addition to these tasks, learners who take Tourism have to complete a

practical assessment task (PAT) which is primarily completed in class. The PAT is weighted to 25% of the end-of-year examination mark. However, the PAT is conducted as a task in the SBA component although the marks are calculated as part of the final examination each year (Grades 10 – 12).

Assessment in the NCS is both formal and informal. Only the formal tasks or activities are recorded for the purposes of progression and promotion. According to the CAPS (Department of Basic Education, 2011), informal assessment is very important and should be implemented to support formal assessment. The informal tasks are part of the formative component while the formal tasks entail both formative and summative components of assessment. Therefore, assessment is embedded in the teaching and learning processes and Tourism learners should of necessity consider how they perceive and use formative assessment to enhance their learning in Tourism. In essence, formative assessment in Tourism provides learners with opportunities to participate in a unique way in the assessment process that leads to learning (Kanjee, 2009).

In Tourism, formative assessment appears to be the core part of teaching and learning as it is reflected in both informal and formal assessment practices (Punt, 2010). It monitors and supports the process of learning and is used to inform teachers and learners about a learner's progress so as to improve learning. The information should be of such a nature that it will enable the learner to grow through constructive feedback while it should also encourage and motivate learners. For example, a teacher might listen to a learner discussing or explaining a particular aspect of the work so as to know how to help or encourage him/her. Furthermore, formative assessment is seen as a self-reflective process that intends to encourage learners' attainment of the outcomes (Andrade, 2010). In this regard, Newton (2010) argues that teachers need to use formative assessment and concentrate on how learners plan, make decisions and solve problems rather than whether they receive good grades. Formative assessment dwells on informing teaching and learning. In essence, formative assessment supports the development of learners' understanding during a lesson. Against this background, the current study examined learners' perceptions and use of formative assessment to determine whether it enhanced learning in Tourism.

The next section focuses on what the literature revealed about learners' perceptions and use of formative assessment.

## **2.9 Research on Learners' Perceptions and Use of Formative Assessment**

Historically, learners' voices in school about formative assessment were mere whispers, if not silent (Smith & Smith, 2007). Much of learners' experiences of formative assessment was viewed through the perspective of others, such as their teachers and relatively limited research has reported learners' perspectives on formative assessment experiences directly, particularly with regard to Tourism. Roberts (2013) argues that relying on second persons' perceptions in research on educational matters can be problematic as learners themselves might present more straight forward and authentic views about a case in which they are involved. As was previously highlighted, there is a dearth of research on Tourism, and particularly assessment in Tourism, hence the perspectives of Tourism learners and their use of formative assessment had to be mostly compared with general findings on formative assessment in the literature. Generally, learners seem to perceive assessment with a formative intent as summative, and thus they do not take advantage of the benefits provided by formative assessment (Harrison & Wass, 2016; Harrison, Konings, Schuwirth, Wass, & Van der Vleuten, 2017).

As was discussed earlier, formative assessment is influential in learners' learning. In fact, the way learners think about learning determines the way in which they perceive and then use formative assessment (Struyven, Dochy, & Jansens, 2005). Perception refers to an understanding of something. In this study report, perception refers to the manner in which learners understood and interpreted information to create a meaningful understanding of formative assessment in Tourism (Borman & Janssen, 2013). This means, in the context of formative assessment, that learners' understanding and effective use of formative assessment methods in their classroom are vital. McMillan (2003), Hamidi (2010) and Alkharusi (2007) argue that learners need to understand and be familiar with a variety of essential assessment concepts, principles, techniques, tools, strategies and procedures to render assessment meaningful for them, yet relatively little emphasis has been placed on the challenges or factors that influence learners' support of classroom assessment practices. This is evident in the results of a study by Dochy and Gijbel (2006), who found that learners who adopted a deep approach to assessment preferred assessment procedures that allowed them to demonstrate their understanding. Clark (2011) indicates that formative assessment should be used to support teaching and learning processes. Pellegrino (2004) and Cizek, Andrade and Bennett (2019) support this view, and pose that assessment is an essential component of the teaching and learning process which could have significant impact on learners' achievement should more focus and effort be put into the development of quality academic programs. Chappuis and

Chappuis (2008) are also of the view that learners use assessment feedback and experiences to adjust and improve their own learning. In this regard, Birenbaum (2007) is of the view that the learning styles and instructional preferences of learners are linked to their assessment preference.

The results of a study by Brookhart and Bronowicz (2003) suggest that learners perceive formative assessment as pressurising them to get good grades, and these grades are considered the only indicator of learners' success or failure to achieve the set learning outcomes. In this regard, Ajogbeje (2013) argues that effective use of formative assessment enables adequate preparation of learners for summative tests and this, in turn, enables them to become more involved in and committed to the learning process, thereby enhancing their academic performance in a given subject. Positive encouragement due to high test scores and praise by teachers are also highly encouraging. For example, a study conducted by Al-Moamary et al. (2011) revealed that learners considered formative assessment fair and that it assisted them to engage in an in-depth approach to learning when it was aligned to curriculum objectives. Learners were more likely to collaborate or share their views with their peers or teachers when they were involved in formative assessment activities than when they were not.

Further to the above, learners also felt that formative assessment supported the development of self-regulated learning which is integral to formative assessment (Clark, 2011). A study by Allal (2016) revealed that self-regulated learning and formative assessment mutually influenced each other in a classroom environment. Wiliam (2014) notes that self-regulated learning allows learners to set goals that enhance their knowledge and thus allow them to measure and monitor their academic progress and engagement. The information learners receive from formative assessment also allows them to reflect on their work; thus they develop a sense of responsibility and ownership (Clark, 2011; Hattie & Timberly, 2017).

In light of the above discussion, one can conclude that learners are central in the formative assessment process and thus their views on this assessment approach must be considered in the quest to highlight positives and expose any gaps that still exist. The above discussion highlighted that, while engaging informative assessment tasks, learners actively construct knowledge through prior and current experiences and their interactions with one another. Improving learning through formative assessment also depends on the active involvement of learners in their own assessment.

Understanding learners' views/perceptions of formative assessment was important in this study as their experiences might have directly impacted their perceptions of and their use of formative assessment. This study was premised on the notion that learners interact while they engage in formative assessment tasks and that this influences their understanding and perceptions of assessment. Therefore, if the views and experiences of learners of assessment are ignored, this oversight may hamper the effectiveness of assessment. In my view it had become imperative to examine learners' perceptions and their use of formative assessment in a scholarly investigation as the findings would inform teachers, policy makers and educational authorities of the strengths and pitfalls associated with current formative assessment approaches in Tourism (Grade 10-12). This knowledge could in turn be applied to improve formative assessment requirements in the subject under study.

The next section presents a discussion on the theoretical framework that was used as the lens through which the data and findings of the study were viewed.

## **2.10 Theoretical Framework**

A theory or theoretical framework is the lens through which a researcher views the world and knowledge as these exist in a particular context. According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011), ontological assumptions give rise to epistemological assumptions that lead to methodological decisions. These decisions will inform researchers about which instruments to use for data generation. Thus, a theoretical framework helps the researcher to make explicit assumptions about how interrelated phenomena are connected in the world. The purpose of this study was to examine learners' perceptions and use of formative assessment to enhance learning in Tourism. To view the data and discuss the findings, the study was underpinned by the constructivist theory of learning.

Constructivism is a philosophy of learning founded on the premise that, by reflecting on our experiences, we construct our own understanding of the world we live in. Piaget is of the opinion that it is only through learners' own efforts that they will truly understand the world (Von Glasersfeld, 1989). Thus, constructivism refers to the idea that learners construct knowledge for themselves. Fundamentally, constructivism argues that people construct their own understanding and knowledge of the world through experiences and then by reflecting on those experiences (Christie, 2005). The constructivist theory of Piaget focuses on cognitive



development which explains that individuals are not able to comprehend and employ information successfully unless they have been exposed to it earlier. Thus, humans have to construct their personal knowledge through their prior experiences. The latest constructivist theories and practices go together with a shift from an evaluation culture to an assessment culture (Birenbaum, 1996).

The study was underpinned by the two branches of the constructivist theory, namely cognitive constructivism and social constructivism. This study thus assumed that learners' learning through formative assessment would be informed by both cognitively and socially constructed experiences. A brief discussion on cognitive and social constructivism is provided below; however, more emphasis is placed on the social constructivist theory as it applied to this study. Using the social constructivist theory allowed me to employ multiple data sources to explore and understand the individual and contextual factors involved in learners' perceptions and use of formative assessment in Tourism.

Cognitive constructivism as a theory is centred on the philosophical works of Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget who emphasised that all of our knowledge is a personal construction (Taber, 2011). Cognitive constructivism is all about a process of constructing mental structures rather than just reproducing products at hand (IranNejad, 2001). Piaget's theory focuses on the individual; more particularly on and how he/she is able to construct his/her knowledge (Katherine & Kalina, 2009). Cognitive constructivists hold the view that learning takes place in our minds as we create and adjust internal mental structures to accommodate our ever-growing and ever-changing stores of knowledge (Swan, 2005). Thus, according to constructivists, all learning is an active process and all knowledge is unique to the individual, whether acquired from lectures and texts or discovered through experiences. Therefore, the knowledge known by organisms is not just acquired, but is self-created. However, factors such as age, religion, gender, social class or race, according to Piaget, could affect the construction of knowledge (Katherine & Kalina, 2009).

The social constructivist theory views learners as active participants who construct their understanding as they participate in a variety of activities (such as assessment practices) while interacting with others (Adams, 2006). In this context, learner engagement is based on the premise that the more time learners invest in formative assessment, the better they are able to grasp the content of a target subject. Thus, more practice, coupled with constructive feedback,

enhances their learning (Moodley, 2014). The social constructivist theory is also premised on the notion that knowledge is not always transferred directly from teaching to learning in a form that can be immediately understood. Studies by researchers like Confrey (1990) have shown that learners' understanding of matter is always different in each teaching and learning context.

South African educational policy that is embedded in the principles as expounded by CAPS anticipates producing learners who are critical thinkers who actively participate in their learning. Learners should thus develop knowledge rather than knowledge being transferred to the learner. Vygotsky (1978) argues that the development of higher cognitive functions is launched from within the capacity of the learner that he refers to as 'the zone of proximal development' (ZPD). Most learning within the ZPD takes place when learners get involved with tasks or problems that go beyond their immediate individual capabilities. Thus, educators or adults assist their performance and learning occurs in collaboration with more knowledgeable peers or adults. Social constructivism thus views the development of knowledge as a social process where social interaction is an important and critical context for learning to take place (Thomas, Menon, Boruff, Rodriguez & Ahmed, 2014; Von Glasersfeld, 1989; Kozulin, 2003; Katherine & Kalina, 2010). Therefore, the constructivist model of teaching and learning identifies the role of the learner as one of "building and transforming knowledge" (Applefield, Huber & Moallem, 2001, p. 3). This role of the learner was relevant to this research study in that it explored learners' perceptions and use of assessment that might have led either to achievement or lack thereof in terms of expected educational outcomes.

Social constructivism proposes that "learner conceptions of knowledge are derived from a meaning-making search in which learners engage in a process of constructing individual interpretations of their experiences" (Applefield et al., 2001, p.3). Hence, it was deemed crucial to reveal learners' perceptions of formative assessment by exploring the way in which they viewed and used assessment tasks for learning in Tourism. For Vygotsky (1978), central to the process of learning is the role played by social interaction in the development of higher cognitive functions. In this regard, Harada (2012) opines that assessment becomes more constructive by shifting from a teacher-based to a learner-centred teaching approach where the teacher facilitates the work that needs to be accomplished by the learner. Learners' develop skills while they interact socially with people; this implies that social interaction is a significant feature of constructive learning (Katherine & Kalina, 2009). Pitchard and Woollard (2010) also argue that the construction of knowledge is effected by learners and should thus not be imposed

by the teacher. The social constructivist theory identifies the role of the learner as one of "building and transforming knowledge" (Applefield, Huber, & Moallem, 2001, p. 3). This role of the learner was highly relevant to the current research study in that I wanted to examine the perceptions and use of formative assessment by Tourism learners by exploring how they built and constructed knowledge. Social constructivism proposes that "learner conceptions of knowledge are derived from a meaning-making search in which learners engage in a process of constructing individual interpretations of their experiences" (Applefield et al., 2001, p. 3). Hence their perceptions and use of formative assessment were examined. Further to that, this research relates to this theory in that formative assessment allows for the use of multiple methods of assessment such as collaboration with peers in pair and group work. These methods of formative assessment are aimed at improving learners' knowledge and skills while learning in collaboration with others so that they are able to progress to a higher level of knowledge, understanding and skills (i.e., the development of higher cognitive functions). Tourism as an elective subject in the FET phase was the springboard for this investigation.

## **2.11 Chapter Synthesis**

In this chapter I explored and discussed the concept of assessment with reference to the literature review that had been conducted. The discussion highlighted various trends in assessment and illuminated different purposes and types of assessment. Two main approaches to assessment were elucidated, namely summative and formative assessment. The discussion on these approaches and assessment practices emphasised the need for a shift from a purely summative approach to a formative approach to assessment and urged a diversion from teacher-centred to learner-centred assessment practices. This was followed by an in-depth discussion on formative assessment and feedback and practices to operationalise these phenomena both internationally and locally. Literature that focuses on learners' perceptions of assessment and the use of assessment was also discussed. The literature suggests that learners' perceptions of formative assessment influence their approach to formative assessment tasks, and it was explicated that these perceptions impact successful (or unsuccessful) learning outcomes.

In the second part of the chapter the theoretical framework that guided the study and underpinned the analysis of the findings was discussed. This review helped to contextualise the research within existing relevant knowledge by describing and creating understanding of the

predominant debates on assessment and particularly formative assessment practices. Piaget's cognitive constructivist theory and Vygotsky's social constructivist theory were highlighted.

Although literature on assessment abounds, there is a dearth of research on Tourism learners' perceptions and practices. Gaps in the literature that focus on Tourism learners' experiences of formative assessment were identified. Therefore, the study will contribute to knowledge in this field as it addresses the gaps in existing literature on assessment in Tourism as a subject the FET phase in the South African secondary schooling system (Grades 10-12). The next chapter presents the research design and methodology that were employed to address the research questions.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1. Introduction**

In the previous chapter I reviewed relevant literature on formative assessment and discussed the theoretical framework that underpinned this study. In this chapter, I present the research methodology with special focus on the research approach, paradigm and design. The choice of the methodology used was guided by the paradigm chosen and the research questions that were examined in the study. The interpretive paradigm was adopted to give direction to the study and this paradigm, and its applicability are elucidated. I also discuss the sampling decisions and method that was employed to recruit appropriate study participants. The data generation methods as well as the procedures for data generation to examine learners' perceptions and use of formative assessment to enhance learning in Tourism are also discussed. The discourse underscores the point that the selection of the study participants and the choice of data collection methods were informed by the selected paradigm as proposed by Creswell et al. (2018). Achieving trustworthiness of the data, the ethical considerations that were adhered to, and the limitations of the study are also discussed.

#### **3.2 The Qualitative Approach**

I adopted a qualitative approach to data generation and analysis as the study aimed to understand the selected social world from the viewpoint of participants through the richness of meaning associated with observable behaviour (Naicker, 2013). Denzin and Lincoln (2013, p. 343) describe qualitative research as "an approach that presumes that the researcher will obtain an insider perspective on social action". This approach was found befitting as this study aimed to make sense and create meaning of selected learners' perceptions and use of formative assessment within the context of Tourism as a subject in Grades 10-12 (FET phase). McMillian and Schumacher (2010) assert that the qualitative research approach enables the reader to gain knowledge of the phenomenon under study while enhancing understanding of the phenomenon. I chose a qualitative approach for this study because qualitative research allows focused attention to the context of the data that have been gathered in order to enhance the value of the data and the findings that emerges from them. Against this background, this study intended to conduct an in-depth examination of secondary school learners' perspectives of formative assessment in the process of enhancing learning in Tourism. Johnson and Christensen (2010)

contend that qualitative research is used to acquire in-depth understanding of individuals' experiences and perspectives. Hence the qualitative approach was appropriate for this study.

Cohen et al. (2011) highlight that qualitative researchers study phenomena in their natural settings and that they attempt to make sense of, or to interpret, the phenomenon under study in terms of the meanings that people attach to it. MacMillan and Schumacher (2010) pose that the major characteristic of the qualitative research approach is that the researcher studies human behaviours in their natural settings while refraining from manipulating or controlling these behaviours or perceptions. According to Johnson and Christiansen (2010), the qualitative approach allows the researcher to become a medium through which authentic data are generated. Hence my interest focused on studying learners in their authentic, natural setting. To achieve this, focus group discussions and individual interviews were conducted with eight selected Grade 11 Tourism learners in the school environment. This approach is supported by Christiansen and Bertram (2014), who argue that the qualitative approach is subjective, and context driven.

In this qualitative research, my aim was to understand the participants' perspectives of formative assessment, and I thus made use of a qualitative paradigm as an obvious method to elicit the desired data (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Nieuwenhuis (2016b) highlights that a qualitative research approach employs diverse modes of data generating techniques such as semi-structured interviews, visual arts-based methods (such as drawings, photovoice images, posters, sculptures, collages, etc.), observations, life histories, focus group discussions, and interviews. All these methods, or some, may be used to seek insight through structured in-depth data analysis. This implies that the qualitative approach is flexible as it can use different research methods to generate data. I used the focus group discussion and semi-structured interview techniques to generate the qualitative data that I required to address the research questions.

### **3.3 The Interpretive Paradigm**

Research may employ different paradigms as Denzin and Lincoln (2000, p. 157) describe a paradigm as “a basic set of beliefs that guide action and comprises ethics, epistemology, ontology and methodology”. The paradigm is thus an outline of values, methods and beliefs in which a study is embedded (Joubish, Khurram, Ahmed, Fatima & Haider, 2011). The paradigm

that I employed is referred to as the interpretive paradigm as the emphasis of the study was on learners' experiences and interpretations of formative assessment. This paradigm focuses on how people make sense of their reality and is associated with qualitative research as it supports the view that there are many truths and multiple realities associated with people's lived experiences (Cohen et al., 2011). Utilising the interpretive paradigm elicited in-depth understanding of the learners' perceptions and use of formative assessment to enhance learning in Tourism. Grix (2010) argues that the interpretive paradigm focuses on gaining insight into a social phenomenon and illuminates participants' values associated with the world in which they live. This paradigm was thus useful as the study aimed to gain insight into learners' perceptions and experiences of formative assessment to enhance learning in Tourism.

Furthermore, according to the interpretive paradigm, the nature of reality (ontology) is socially constructed and the nature of knowledge (epistemology) is self-objective; this means it is built from experience and personal interpretations or meanings. This implies that knowledge is constructed in the mind of an individual. The interpretive paradigm focuses on people's perspectives and their different views about their world (O'Hara, Carter, Dewis, Kay, & Wainwright, 2011). This was relevant as this study focused on the knowledge and experiences of individual Tourism learners. This interpretive research approach was employed to probe the everyday experiences of formative assessment associated with Tourism as a subject in Grade 10-12. The interpretive paradigm was thus used to analyse the data and develop in-depth understanding of a single case, namely Tourism learners' perspectives and use of formative assessment in Tourism in a secondary school.

I was thus allowed to make interpretations with the aim of understanding human behaviour, attitudes, perspectives and experiences (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). Cohen et al. (2011) state that interpretive researchers "set out to understand the [subjects'] interpretations" (p. 23) of reality. Leedy and Ormrod (2010) also argue that an interpretive paradigm is a way of looking at the world based on philosophical assumptions that direct thinking to action. In this regard, Yin (2011) poses that the interpretive paradigm recognises various ways of understanding a phenomenon. It also embraces the belief that human behaviour and actions are intentional. This study was located within the interpretive paradigm as it argues that there are multiple socially constructed realities in which a researcher's perspectives are considered in the interpretation of data (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010; Creswell, 2014; Creswell & Clark, 2007). Locating this study within the interpretive paradigm thus helped me to make interpretations of the

phenomenon under study, which was Tourism learners' perceptions and use of formative assessment to enhance learning.

### **3.4 Case Study Design**

A case is "a single bounded system or an instance of a class of phenomena" (Yin, 2011, p. 153). My study was concerned with understanding an educational phenomenon in a specific context and therefore I chose the case study design. This design allowed for an in-depth of investigation into a phenomenon and was productive of rich interpretation through understanding (Swanborn, 2010; Yin, 2011). Because I sought to understand and interpret learners' perceptions and use of formative assessment to enhance learning in Tourism, a qualitative case study design was valuable. The reason for this was that a qualitative case study is characterised by "detailed descriptions of situations, events, people [and] interactions ... from people about their experiences, attitudes and thoughts" about a situation (Creswell, 2014, p. 20). The case study research design provides the researcher and the reader a unique example of real people in a real situation (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Cohen et al. (2011) pose that a case study involves looking at a case or phenomenon in its real-life context and it usually employs many types of data. Conversely, John and Rule (2011) argue that case studies are prone to the problems of observer bias despite attempts made to address reflexivity. Nevertheless, Gay et al. (2009) and Rule and John (2011) indicate that case studies are the appropriate design to use when trying to answer descriptive or exploratory questions and that such a design is flexible. In this study, the qualitative case study design provided me the opportunity to concentrate on the specific instance and situation under study as proposed by Cohen et al. (2011), and I could thus focus this scholarly examination of the perspectives of formative assessment by Tourism learners to enhance their learning. I chose to undertake a case study in order to gain an in depth understanding of the case of learners' perspectives of formative assessment in Tourism as a subject.

Different types of case study research may be employed such as a single case study, a multiple case study or a collective case study (Cohen et al., 2011; Rule & John, 2011). In the context of this study, I utilised a single case study to examine the learners' perceptions and use of formative assessment in Tourism as a subject in one secondary school. This study used a single case study design which involves a particular group, which is the learners in grade 11 learning tourism together at a selected secondary school. Case study was suitable for this study since



these learners are experts on their own learning and have insights into the ways in which they make meaning of their learning using formative assessment. The significance of a case study is further related to the researcher's flexibility of using various methods and provides platform for participants' voices to be heard (Cohen et al., 2011). Meanwhile, the investigation of the phenomenon of formative assessment explored the perceptions and use of the Tourism learners in a selected secondary school at KwaMashu Township in the KwaZulu-Natal province of South Africa. The use of a case study in this research facilitated in-depth understanding of the learners' perceptions and their use of formative assessment in the Tourism classroom under study. I found the qualitative case study design of great value. I selected this particular case rather than a variable through which an understanding of the phenomenon under study was elicited. Cohen et al. (2011) acknowledge the benefit of a case study as "taking place in a real context by recognizing that [such a] context is a powerful [source of data]" (p. 181). A case study approach therefore suited this research in that its 'real context' was that of an educator providing different tasks and forms of feedback based on formative assessment to learners.

### **3.5 Sampling and Sampling Procedures**

Sampling requires making decisions about which people, settings (such as schools), behaviours or experiences to observe (Christainsen & Bertram, 2014). According to Thomas (2005), the sample is a division of a greater population which is used in contexts where an investigation of the whole population is not achievable. In this study, one school, Multicolour (pseudonym for the school) was purposively selected because I intended to obtain detailed information from selected participants in this setting. Purposive sampling was also used to select the study participants for information-rich data from the selected context to address the research questions. Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling procedure that indicates that the researcher chooses the sample whose responses will be informative and relevant to the research questions (Creswell, 2014). Cohen et al. (2011) comment that the purposive sampling strategy is relevant to qualitative case studies. Cohen et al. (2007, p. 157) also state that "purposive sampling is used in order to access 'knowledgeable people' who have in-depth knowledge by virtue of their professional role, power, and access to networks, expertise or experience".

Based on the fact that this study employed a qualitative research approach, it required a small, purposively selected sample of learners to elicit rich and detailed data. This approach is supported by Martella, Nelson, Morgan and Marchland-Martella (2013) who argue that, by

utilising purposive sampling, the sample consists of a case that is rich in information from which the researcher can derive important data. According to Bryman (2012), purposive sampling is used when the researcher has an objective in mind and chooses a context that is significant to the research questions. Purposive sampling was thus used to select eight (8) learners from a Grade 11 Tourism class because they had been exposed to formative assessment practices in Tourism for more than a year as Tourism is offered in Grade 10 as well.

Of the 59 learners in the Grade 11 Tourism class, eight (8) learners participated voluntarily and with permission in the study. I requested the subject teacher to select learners from various categories of performance as follows: two highflyers, three average learners, and three learners who performed poorly in Tourism. I believed that participants with a range of performance levels would elicit rich data that would address the purpose of the study. I therefore limited the number of learners who participated in the study so that I could effectively manage the body of data that had to be analysed. In this regard, Cohen et al. (2011) argue that a qualitative study does not consider large numbers of participants but seeks informants that will produce rich and saturated data. Thus, a small sample was suitable as it allowed rich data due to my intensive engagement with the participants (Creswell, 2012).

### **3.6 The Research Site**

According to MacMillan and Schumacher (2010), the research context is the specific location of people who are involved in a crucial event. The research context of this study was thus one secondary school in KwaMashu Township in the KwaZulu-Natal Province of South Africa. This school was administered under the Pinetown Education District. The school was chosen because it is one of the secondary (or high) schools situated in the KwaMashu Township with large enrolment numbers of learners, particularly in Tourism. The school is also dominated by learners who come from the township and informal settlements surrounding the township. In these informal settlements basic amenities such as water and electricity are not readily available.

KwaMashu Township is one of the first townships created in 1959 by the apartheid government because of the implementation of the Group Areas Act. The Group Areas Act was used to separate races (Whites, Indians, Coloured, and Africans). This township on the outskirts of Durban becomes a home to many displaced Black African people. The school lies 30

kilometres from the city of Durban. The eThekweni Municipality is one of the Metro Municipalities in South Africa. Most of the people living in KwaMashu depend on social grants for their living and many women work as domestic workers in the nearby White and Indian communities. Some of them are also self-employed as street vendors while others work in various firms around the area. The township is plagued by high levels of crime, drug abuse and trafficking, sexual abuse and violence. The communities surrounding the school experience lack basic amenities such as potable water, roads and electricity.

At the time of the study, the school had a learner enrolment of 900 with 30 teachers, one administrative assistant, and one caretaker. All the teachers were qualified for the subjects they taught and held higher certificates, diplomas or degrees in education. The school had a quintile 4 ranking<sup>1</sup>. Quintile ranking is based on the national poverty table prepared by Treasury which determines the poverty ranking of the area and is an indication of the socio-economic status of the school (Hall, 2009). Schools are ranked according to the level of poverty in the community where the school is located. A low quintile ranking determines the no-fee status of the school. Lower quintile schools are also determined by poor communities and smaller enrolment numbers. A quintile 3 school is a school that is located in mostly moderate-income communities with schools that have brick walls, fencing and a tarred road leading to the school. Although a quintile 4 school, the school in this study only partly met the criteria because it was located in a township but was attended by learners from low to poverty-stricken socio-economic backgrounds. This renders the issue of the criteria for quintile ranking questionable as low quintile ranked schools generally have limited learning and teaching resources due to financial constraints.

Upon visiting the school, it was evident that it was one of the older schools in the area and it was dilapidated and unkempt. I was informed that it had been victim to crimes and burglaries. There was electricity and running water in the school, but most of the lights in the classrooms

---

<sup>1</sup>Quintile ranking is an indication of the socio-economic status of a school. Schools are ranked according to the level of poverty in the community where they are located. This is according to the South African Schools Act as amended in 2005 to establish a quintile system. Quintile is based on the poverty-based categories to which public schools are allocated for purposes of non-personnel funding by provincial education departments. For example, quintile 1 schools are the poorest and quintile 5 schools are the most affluent schools (DOE, 2006). Quintile 1, 2 and 3 schools are no-fee paying schools and completely dependent on government funding, whereas quintile 4 and 5 schools are predominantly dependent on schools fees paid by parents and fund raising enterprises to ensure their functionality.

were not working and most of the windowpanes had been broken. There were no library facilities on the school premises.

This school was chosen based on its performance in Tourism since the inception of the CAPS policy in 2012. The Grade 12 results in Tourism could be described as ranging from average to good. The Grade 12 pass rate for Tourism in 2017 (the year of data generation) was 97%, which could be regarded as excellent considering the background of the learners. The school had a 100% pass rate for Tourism in the NSC examination for the five years prior to 2017. However, although the pass rate was good, most Grade 12 candidates achieved 30% to 40% with only a few performing at 60%.

### **3.7 Profile of the Participants**

The qualitative approach usually allows the researcher to focus on a few individuals who are likely to be informative because of who they are and thus the researcher anticipates the opportunity to interact with them extensively (Rayford, 2010). As was explained earlier, purposive sampling was used to identify individuals who would have in-depth knowledge and experience of formative assessment in Tourism. Learners in Grade 11 were selected because they have been exposed to formative assessment in Tourism for at least the second year in the FET phase (a full year in Grade 10 and a number of months in Grade 11). Although the eight participating learners comprised four girls and four boys, gender was not a variable in the study. The learners were between 16 to 18 years old and were all in grade 11, studying in the same secondary school but in different classes. The participating learners are referred to by pseudonyms in this study report. Each was given the opportunity to choose a colour which represented them. In cases where more than one learner chose a colour, they had to consider their second favourite choice of colour. The Home Language of all the learners was IsiZulu and the medium of instruction was English. Table 3.1 depicts the biographical data of the participants and also indicates the colour each respondent chose.

**Table 3.1: Participants' profiles**

Pseudonyms	Brief Profile of the Participants
Grey	He was a 16-year-old boy who lived with a single mother and two siblings and received a social grant. He started Tourism in Grade 10. He played soccer both at school and in the township.
Yellow	He was a 17-year-old boy who lived with the parents, siblings and nephews. He started Tourism in Grade 10 and was repeating Grade 11. He received a social grant.
Black	He was a 16-year-old boy who lived with his grandmother and four siblings. He received a social grant. He started Tourism in Grade 10.
Brown	He was a 17-year-old boy who lived with a single mother and one sibling. He received a social grant. He started Tourism in Grade 10 and liked swimming as an extra-curricular activity. (However, this was not offered at the school as there was no swimming pool.)
White	She was a 17-year-old girl who lived with her grandmother and grandfather and seven siblings as well as her own child. She started Tourism in Grade 10 and was repeating Grade 11. She received a social grant.
Pink	She was a 17-year-old girl who lived with both parents and three siblings. She started Tourism in Grade 10 and had never repeated a grade. She received a social grant. She did not do any extra-curricular activities at the school.
Green	She was an 18-year-old girl and lived with a single mother. She started Tourism in Grade 10 after failing Science in Grade 10 and repeating the grade. She received a social grant.
Blue	She was a 16-year-old girl who lived with her grandmother and six siblings. She started Tourism in Grade 10. She received a social grant. She liked soccer and netball and played netball at school.

### 3.8 Data Generation Methods

Different data generation methods are usually used in case study research due to the flexible nature of this approach and to ensure the validity of the data (Lewis, 2015). For the purpose of generating in-depth data for this study on learners' perceptions and use of formative assessment to enhance learning in Tourism, I conducted focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews. The focus group discussion approach was the main data generation method while the semi-structured interviews were used to augment and triangulate the focus group discussion data pertaining to formative assessment in Tourism.

### **3.8.1 Focus group discussions**

Conducting three focus group discussions was the main data generation method. I thus engaged in group discussions with the participants in order to elicit their shared accounts of their perceptions of formative assessment. A focus group discussion involves a group of people who have similar views or concerns and who discuss a specific issue (Kimu, 2012). According to Krueger and Casey (2014), focus group discussions allow the researcher to examine participants' feelings, experiences, behaviours and thoughts. Therefore, using focus group discussions allowed me to examine the learners' views in a conducive, non-threatening environment. Using the focus group discussion method to generate data facilitated debate on the topic and generated rich data. By posing open-ended questions to the participants, they were able to reflect, argue and produce rich and in-depth information (Cohen et al., 2011). Padgett (2016) notes that it is a very good interactive data generation method that enables researchers to derive complete information that is needed from a small number of people to produce valuable and inspiring data through discussion.

One advantage of using the focus group discussion method was that it was an inexpensive and a fast way of obtaining rich data as all the participants, including the researcher, had the opportunity to ask questions, as suggested by Flick (2015). However, Cohen et al. (2011) warn that the researcher might want to manage the debate and control the discussion process. To minimise this threat, I used pre-set statements and questions to prompt the discussions and ensured that the participants stayed focused on the points that would lead to answering the research questions. I stringently guarded against imposing any perceptions I might have of the topic onto the participants to avoid bias.

The focus group discussions were conducted with eight (8) selected learners. Although this seems a low number of participants, McQuarrie (2011) opines that a focus group can be relatively small and could include four to twelve participants. To ensure saturation of the data, a total of three focus group discussions were held with the same focus group. Each focus group discussion session lasted an hour with the consent of the principal of the school, the participants and their parents/guardians. A tape recorder was used to capture the conversations with the approval of all concerned. Recording the discussions helped me to replay them as often as was necessary for complete and objective transcriptions and analysis at a later stage. In consideration of the school timetable and the distances the learners had to travel to their

respective homes, the focus group discussions were scheduled and rescheduled several times before we reached an agreement to meet after school hours. During these sessions, I developed rapport with the learners and put them at their ease. I explained the ethical issues and assured the learners of the confidential and voluntary nature of their participation. I ensured that the participants would be comfortable and allowed them to discourse in the language they were most comfortable in, which was isiZulu, with the use of English at the participants' discretion (Cohen et al., 2011; 2013).

### **3.8.2 Semi-structured interviews**

The data that were generated by means of the focus group discussions were augmented by semi-structured interviews. Interviews are used in the interpretive paradigm with the aim of exploring and describing people's perceptions and understanding that might be unique to them and can be used to gain in-depth data from a small number of people (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014). A semi-structured interview is a one-on-one interview with open-ended questions that generate in-depth data. According to Cohen et al. (2011), semi-structured interviews give participants an opportunity to share their beliefs and perceptions about the topic under investigation. To structure the semi-structured interviews and to avoid bias and deviations, a schedule of pre-set questions was followed. Wilson (2013) argues that this schedule of questions is regarded as the interview guide. Responses to these questions can be examined and compared for thick data. However, Bertram and Christiansen (2014) state that the researcher may simply introduce the topic in a semi-structured interview and then let the participants respond in the way they would like. The semi-structured interviews were used in this study to elicit more data on pertinent issues that had been raised during the focus group discussions. In that sense, each participant was asked different questions pending on the issue that was being followed up.

Although each interview was scheduled for thirty-five minutes, the actual time taken differed per participant, as they were accorded the flexibility of reasonably more time to round up their interview responses. The individual interviews were conducted with the eight learners after school hours with the permission of the principal, teachers and parents/guardians. As was the case with the focus group discussions, the learners were free to respond to the interview questions in the language they were comfortable in, which was isiZulu. They could also use English if they wanted to. These interviews were also audio recorded and transcribed. The

advantage of audio recording was that the interviews could be replayed as often as was necessary for complete and objective analysis at a later stage (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). The next section explains the data analysis methodology.

### **3.9 Data Analysis**

Data analysis is the most important part of the research project as it is where the data generated from various sources through various methods are studied so that conclusions can be drawn about drawbacks and prospects regarding the topic at hand (Newton, 2010). In other words, data analysis is a body of methods that helps the researcher to describe facts, detect patterns, and develop themes. Thematic analysis was used to analyse the data that had been collected by means of focus group discussions and individual interviews, because it helped the researcher to manage, shape, and make sense of unstructured information.

Thematic analysis is the process of identifying patterns or themes that emerge from qualitative data. Using thematic analysis has been shown to be a flexible and effective data analysis method for qualitative data as it does not ascribe to any pre-existing theoretical framework (Braun & Clarke, 2013). The two main sources of data were focus group discussions and interview transcripts. The interview transcripts were used to complement the focus group discussion transcripts as the secondary source of data for the investigation. According to Braun and Clarke (2006, p. 77), the goal of thematic analysis is to identify themes (i.e., patterns) in the data that are important or interesting, and to use these themes to address the research questions. Guided by Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-step framework of thematic analysis, I ensured that I familiarised myself with the data by listening to the recordings and re-reading the transcripts a number of times. I then generated codes, searched for themes, reviewed the themes, defined and named the themes, and produced this report.

The first step I followed was to become familiar with the data. I started by reading and re-reading the transcripts and field notes. I then listened to the transcripts several times and re-read them many times to generate observational notes and memos for follow-up with the participants. These notes and memos formed a valuable addition to the interview data set. Notes and memos were also made of the official documents pertaining to assessment and Tourism that I had perused, and the data that were generated were triangulated across the data sources.



The second step was to generate initial codes. In this step, I started to organise the data in a meaningful and systematic way. Coding is about reducing a large body of data into small chunks of meaningful data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). I focused on addressing specific research questions and analysing data pertaining to them, and I thus coded each segment of data as relevant to or captured something interesting about a research question. In step three I began to search for subthemes. In this case, I examined the codes and some of them clearly fitted together into themes. In step four I reviewed the themes. I also modified and developed the preliminary themes that had been identified in the previous step. In step five, I defined the themes. This was the final refinement of the themes, and the aim here was to make sense of each theme that had been identified. In the last step, step six, I began to write up the narratives by presenting them under themes.

Data generation, analysis and reporting were not conducted in isolation, but as an “iterative process” (Neuman, 2011, p. 337). This means that data generation and data analyses were conducted concurrently so that I could obtain gradually growing understanding of how the findings addressed the research question. The data were therefore interpreted, and the findings are presented and discussed in Chapter Four.

### **3.10 Trustworthiness**

In qualitative research, Merriam and Tisdell (2015) assert that trustworthiness is an instrument that is used to check the correctness of the data and to validate the research results. According to Lincoln and Guba (1995), four issues of trustworthiness need to be considered, namely credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. The four principles were addressed to assure the trustworthiness of the study.

#### **3.10.1 Credibility**

Credibility is referred to as a factor that enables people to identify the ideas, views and understandings emerging from the study through interpretations of the participants’ perspectives (Cohen et al., 2013). According to Guba and Lincoln (2005), credibility is achieved by ensuring that the findings reflect the reality and views of the participants. Credibility is thus the confidence that can be placed in the findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). To ensure credibility of the data, triangulation was used. This was possible as two data

generation methods were used to illuminate different perspectives of what the study intended to examine (Creswell, 2014). The use of focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews allowed me to corroborate the findings from one method of data collection with the findings of the other, and in this way greater overall clarity on the research findings was achieved. I also ensured the credibility of the data by using voice recordings during the focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews to verify the data at every step of the analysis process.

### **3.10.2 Transferability**

Transferability is viewed as the capacity of transferring the findings in the research from one context or group to another (Flick, 2015). Transferability is used to establish the extent to which research findings from a specific piece of research can be generalised to other situations and people (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). This study was a case study which was not meant to be generalised; however, the findings are transferable to similar contexts (Christiansen et al., 2010). Transferability was thus achieved as I ensured that the purpose of the study was clearly explained to all the participants. I also provided a rich and detailed description of the participants and the context in which the study was conducted. This ensured that all the findings that were based on the data were well earmarked so that they would be easily transferable to other contexts.

### **3.10.3 Dependability**

Dependability is the extent of authenticity that the data can contain (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Dependability is seen in qualitative research as the degree to which the findings can be found again in another context (Wayhuni, 2012). Simply put, dependability means the stability of findings over time (Padgett, 2016). Dependability counts on providing truthful data, and that is why I made use of audio recordings and field notes so that the evidence of the data that I collected is easily retrievable. The authentic and unedited observations and comments of the participants are presented in this report, and this renders the findings dependable.

### **3.10.4 Confirmability**

Confirmability is achieved in a study as when the researcher remains neutral while collecting, analysing and interpreting the data (Major & Savin-Baden, 2010). In other words, it is vested in the impartiality of the researcher in quantitative research (Lewis, 2015). Therefore, to ensure

confirmability in qualitative research, Creswell (2014) poses that it must maintain a sense of awareness and openness in a reflective way to clarify the results. In the current study, confirmability was ensured by using two data generation tools (focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews) for triangulation purposes and to avoid personal bias. I also used the expertise of the supervisor of this study as well as that of other reputable postgraduate students in our cohort to scrutinise and verify the findings in order to ensure confirmability during the writing process. Writing retreat seminars were organised by my supervisor so peers could examine and interrogate one another's data and the findings.

The next section discusses the ethical issues that were adhered to in the research.

### **3.11 Ethical Considerations**

Ethics in research is regarded as regulations/instructions that the researcher needs to obey before, during and after the research process (Creswell, 2014). Mouton (2011) indicates that issues related to ethics should be adhered to in order to protect the people, other beings such as animals and the environment associated with the research, particularly when there is possible or tangible conflict of interest. The general aim of research ethics is described by Gibson and Brown (2009) as protecting the research participants and other parties of interest in the research. In this study, ethical considerations were rigorously adhered to. Ethical approval for the study was sought from and granted by the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethical Committee (Protocol Reference Number: HSS/1296/016M) of the University of KwaZulu-Natal (Appendix A). Further ethical considerations that were observed ranged from permission to gain access to the school and learners, obtaining the written informed consent from the participants and their parents, and maintaining the anonymity and confidentiality of the participants and the raw data.

To gain access to a research site, qualitative researchers must locate a setting in which the study will take place (Cohen, et al., 2011). I had to carefully negotiate with the gatekeepers of the school in order to gain access to the site and the participants. After I had identified the school as a research site, I started the process of negotiating access to the school. Access to a research site involves continuing negotiations and renegotiations until the field is exited (Creswell, 2012). I made an appointment to meet with the principal to negotiate access and explain the research process. I discussed my research idea with the principal of the school, which included

giving him full details of my proposed research and the processes that would include the learners. The principal allowed me to work with the learners in the school under certain obligations.

After securing my position in the school, I then had to obtain permission from the provincial Department of Basic Education to access the school as a research site. Once the sample school had been identified, I sent a proposal for the project to the Department for approval by the Head of Department (HOD) whose permission I obtained (Appendix B). I then did the formalities and sent a letter to the principal (Appendix C) which fully explained the nature of the study. It was also necessary to obtain written informed consent of the participants and their parents because the participants were minors. I also sought approval from the parents/guardians of the learners selected for participation (Appendix D & E). After the approval of the principal, subject teacher and parents/guardians had been received to the involve the learners, I then contacted all the participants (i.e., the learners) to obtain their assent (Appendix F) based on their understanding of the purpose of the study and their willingness to participate voluntarily in it, as suggested by Creswell (2014).

Confidentiality and anonymity mean that researchers must take steps to ensure that research data and their sources remain confidential, unless participants have consented to their disclosure (Creswell, 2009). This means that the researcher protects the anonymity of individuals' roles and events in the project. Offering anonymity also results in participants being more honest and saying what they believe without being concerned whether their views will in some way be used against them (Tracy, 2013). This encourages trust and openness and enables the research participants to express themselves freely in an enabling environment. To ensure confidentiality, pseudonyms are used for the participants and the school remains anonymous in this report. Only the researcher and supervisor have access to the raw data. Once the data were analysed, the transcriptions and recordings were stored and will be kept safely for five years and then discarded to avoid misappropriation.

### **3.12 Limitations of the Study**

Qualitative case studies are limited in the sense that the research cannot be generalised to other settings and participants (Flick, 2015). However, the study never intended to generalise the findings but to gain in-depth understanding of the meanings that individuals gave to their

experiences (Christiansen et al., 2010); in this case the study explored learners' perceptions and use of formative assessment to enhance learning in Tourism. Therefore, the findings of this study may not be generalised, and it cannot claim to be representative of all Tourism learners' perceptions and use of formative assessment.

The study was also limited in scope as only one school and eight learners were involved in this case study, but this approach allowed the elicitation of thick data that addressed the research questions and satisfied the purpose of the study.

Another limitation is that this study was conducted using Grade 11 learners' perceptions and use of formative assessment in Tourism. The study thus excluded Grade 10 and Grade 12 learners who also take Tourism as a subject.

The study was also delimited in terms of comparative data from previous studies. Most of the available literature on formative assessment refers to universities and other institutions of higher education, and where it refers to secondary schools, the studies interrogated subjects other than Tourism, particularly Mathematics. I thus had to rely on related literature on formative assessment without the benefit of comparative results pertaining to Tourism.

### **3.13 Chapter Synthesis**

This chapter presented an account of the research approach, design, paradigm and methods that I employed to conduct this study. I also described the sampling method used in selecting the research context and participants and described the data generation process and analysis methods. Ethical issues such as seeking permission to conduct the study, obtaining ethical clearance, avoiding the use of the names of the participants, and the protection of the rights of the participants were discussed. The limitations of the study were outlined, and it was explained how they were minimised to ensure progress. The next chapter presents analysis and discusses the findings as they emerged under identified themes from the data.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DATA PRESENTATION AND INTEPRETATION**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

The purpose of this study was to examine learners' perspectives of formative assessment to enhance learning in Tourism. The previous chapter presented a discussion of the research design and methodology that were employed in this study. In this chapter, I present the analysis of the data with the intention of answering the two research questions which underpinned this study, namely:

- What are learners' perceptions of formative assessment in Tourism as a subject?
- How do learners use formative assessment to enhance learning in Tourism as a subject?

This chapter focuses on the findings pertaining to the data that were generated by means of focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews. Prompts were used during the focus group discussions to guide the participants in responding to the research questions. An interview schedule with open-ended questions was used for the one-on-one interviews. The interviews and the focus group discussions were audio recorded and transcribed verbatim. Thematic analysis as proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006, 2013) was used to prepare, organise, reduce, analyse and report the emerging themes. The themes are highlighted by some of the participants' verbatim narratives. Pseudonyms are used in this study report to identify the participants.

Two broad themes that addressed the main research questions were identified: 1) Learners' perceptions of formative assessment in Tourism; and 2) Learners' use of formative assessment to enhance learning in Tourism. These themes enabled me to understand formative assessment from the perspective of the Tourism learners.

#### **4.2 Learners' Perceptions of Formative Assessment in Tourism**

In response to the research question: *What are learners' perceptions of formative assessment of Tourism in a secondary school?* Subthemes emerged that assisted me in answering this research question. The responses shed light on how they viewed formative assessment in

Tourism with particular reference to their understanding of the purpose and nature of formative assessment in this subject. The theme could be divided into two subthemes, namely (i) the nature of formative assessment; and (ii) the purpose of formative assessment.

#### **4.2.1 Perceptions regarding the nature of formative assessment**

The findings revealed that the learners had very similar perceptions of the nature of formative assessment. All the learners perceived that formative assessment comprised different assessment methods that they were required to do before the end-of-year examinations. Thus, their understanding of the nature of formative assessment was linked to the fact that various methods of assessment were used to measure their performance. This is corroborated in the literature by for example Black and Wiliam (2009) and Van der Nest et al. (2018). To illustrate, the learners in this study unanimously perceived formative assessment as a series of tasks, especially tests that are given to complete in class to obtain marks that are added to their year-end or final marks. This was evident in the comments by most of the learners during the focus group discussions:

Grey stated:

*“...class activities/task such as homework; classwork, presentations, tests, and the project that we do to develop a marketing tool for the PAT.”*

Brown argued as follows:

*“Formative assessment is meant to be a variety of activities/methods which include all the work given by the teacher to us in order to see our understanding of what he teaches us, but in Tourism the focus of our teacher is on the PAT project and the tests that we do. Sometimes we do worksheets and homework.”*

White added:

*“Activities such as class tests, a project, and worksheets are used by the teacher as formative assessment to test us whether we are prepared to do the exams”.*

Pink concurred:

*“The Tourism teacher gives us tests, classwork, worksheets, a practical assessment task, a project, and on few occasions homework to find whether we have understood what was taught in class during the lesson”.*

According to the learners' perceptions of the nature of formative assessment in Tourism, this form of assessment was dominated by tests with only one project and two phases of the PAT. Worksheets, occasional homework and presentations to assess their understanding of the lesson or topic were also mentioned, and this implies that a variety of tasks had been administered as part of the formative assessment process. However, the learners emphasised the focus on examinations and regarded this form of assessment, which is in fact a form of summative assessment, as the focus of formative assessment. This perception might have been influenced by the use of formative assessment tasks such as the PAT to contribute to their promotion marks, and it may have limited their understanding of the purposes of formative assessment. Moreover, the learners perceived formative assessment as linked to numerous paper-and-pencil assessment strategies. This was contrary to Black and Wiliam's (2009) argument that learners' understanding of a topic should be assessed or evaluated by using a variety of modes of assessment by the teacher. However, these learners engaged in formative assessment tasks by almost exclusively focusing on pen and paper activities which might have deprived them of the opportunity to develop other skills such as discussion and debate. However, although the learners admitted that they collaborated at times, this took the form of written tasks as well. They were thus deprived of the opportunity to learn verbally from one another as proposed by Vygotsky (1978) and they were uninformed of this important component of formative assessment.

Formative assessment was also perceived as limited and routine as they stated that the teacher gave them tests, homework, worksheets and class exercises to complete, which are all written assignments. While most of the learners perceived formative assessment as comprising of both formal and informal tasks conducted in class and sometimes at home, three of the participants' perceptions of formative assessment were linked to school-based assessment (SBA) only. Three learners were very critical of formative assessment as they viewed it as limited in nature. They linked formative assessment to school-based assessment (SBA) tasks as they referred to the tasks that are given by the teacher in each term as outlined in the Programme of Assessment. This finding suggests that the learners perceived formative assessment as only those tasks whose marks are incorporated into the end-of-the-year mark for promotion. This view equates formative assessment to traditional assessment methods that are limited measures and limited tasks to guide learners' learning. Clark (2008) argues that this approach is often inconsistent with increasing emphasis on the necessity for learners to acquire life-long skills and continuous adaptation to their environment.



According to their understanding, formative assessment was limited to the six tasks and the PAT that they were required to complete for SBA. To illustrate, Black stated:

*“We only get feedback from the tests because we revise the question paper when we return from holidays.”*

This view was supported by Green:

*“The teacher gives us feedback in the form of marks and sometimes she gives us oral feedback as a class from our tests but not homework, which is usually not marked.”*

These learners perceived formative assessment as only the formal tasks that were conducted in class during teaching and learning sessions. In this context, the learners seemed dissatisfied with the current practices of formative assessment in Tourism as they felt that assessment of activities such as homework was not used in an effective and formative way. Although some of the learners referred to various forms of assessment methods, they focused on formal tasks as the only ones that constituted formative assessment as a component of SBA (i.e., written tests or examinations, a project, and the PAT). The latter were the most recurring methods linked to formative assessment. Thus, not only the learners' but also the teacher's focus seemed to be shaped by the understanding that formative assessment is limited to formal assessment (particularly written) tasks. This finding corroborates that of earlier studies that showed that traditional summative assessment methods were predominantly used to assess learners (Struyven et al., 2005; Flores et al., 2015). The findings thus revealed that, although some informal formative assessment occurred in this classroom (such as worksheets and homework), the learners were required to focus on formal formative assessment tasks for the purpose of promotion.

In summary, the learners' perception of the nature of formative assessment was based on their understanding of the outcomes of summative assessment. According to them, formative assessment methods were dominated by tests that were similar to examinations and they linked assessment almost exclusively to paper-and-pencil tasks. There was some disagreement as some of the learner's viewed the nature of formative assessment as encompassing all the activities done in class, while others viewed it as another form of an examination where they should focus on formal tasks that are used for the purpose of promotion. The learners thus

seemed to perceive formative assessment as being dominated by traditional forms of assessing learners at the end of a term or year. For example, they made reference to the nature of SBA tasks and they centred on formative assessment as a set of tasks that are formally conducted at a specified time.

#### **4.2.2 Perceptions regarding the purpose of formative assessment**

This study assumed that learners' perceptions of formative assessment would be an important factor in understanding their use of formative assessment in Tourism. The findings revealed that formative assessment was an extension of or prelude to summative assessment as the participants argued that it focused on the grades and marks that learners received. For example, all eight participating learners regarded formative assessment as comprising mainly of tests done in class which they should pass in order to improve their final grade in Tourism for the purpose of promotion. To illustrate, the learners mentioned that, for them, formative assessment was part of an examination.

Blue stated:

*“The marks for most of the tasks we write for SBA are counted in the final mark.”*

Black agreed and said:

*“We are all aware that marks obtained for some of the formative assessment tasks done in class are used for promotion and progression.”*

In a similar vein, Green argued:

*“To get more marks for the tasks that we do as formative assessment is what we always strive for because we understand that these tasks that are done in class are important.”*

These comments revealed a limited understanding of formative assessment as they equated it to school-based assessment (SBA) tasks and argued that these tasks fulfilled both formative and summative roles (Mansor et al., 2013). The learners perceived that formative assessment tasks were no different from the summative tasks as they were all concerned with awarding marks. It was not surprising that, in this context, the learners perceived the purpose of formative assessment as similar to that of summative assessment, as the Department of Basic Education generally measures its educational success by the Grade 12 National Senior Certificate and

other end-of-year examinations (Poliah, 2010) in which the summative aspect of assessment is emphasised and endorsed as definitive in determining a ‘pass’ or ‘fail’ mark. What was disturbing about this perception was the fact that not only summative assessment, but also formative assessment engendered a focus on marks and grading among the learners.

Most of the learners’ responses in the focus group discussions focused on issues related to marks, grading, test performance and rankings. Achievement that is evidenced by marks and grading appeared to be the key role of formative assessment for the participating learners. This perception may have been based on their understanding that SBA carries a larger summative weighting, which is generally 75%. The comments by the three learners below illustrate their focus on marks:

Black stated:

*“When we submit the assessment tasks and the teacher gives us scores for them and that is assessment.”*

White concurred, and stated:

*“The teacher ranks our class test scores which are used to contribute to the pass mark and thus measuring one’s level of progress.”*

Yellow added:

*“Formative assessment is no different to summative assessment because we are still graded and given low marks.”*

Brown argued:

*“With formative assessment tasks that we do such as the project and the PAT, we also get grading marks that are included in our final promotion mark.”*

The views expressed above revealed that the learners strongly perceived that marks obtained for formative assessment tasks were important because they contributed to their end-of-year marks, and for no other reason. All eight the participants concurred that the formative assessment marks were used by the teacher to contribute to their final promotion mark. However, Lund and Kirk (2019) argue that test and examinations measure the achievement of the learner instead of helping them improve their work. This finding suggests that learners of

Tourism perceived formative assessment as fundamentally about grading and marks and that the connection between formative assessment and their final examination marks for promotion was its sole purpose. A similar finding is noted by Black (2013), who states that the formative and summative purposes of assessment are interwoven in that they are mutually supportive rather than possessing diverse purposes.

Most of the participating learners shared similar perspectives about the purposes of assessment in Tourism. Five of the learners viewed assessment tasks as a primary means of collecting data by their teachers to determine what they [as learners] understood in class.

For example, Pink stated:

*“It is for the teacher to see if we learn and understand what she has taught us.”*

Blue argued as follows:

*“I think formative assessment is more of a checkpoint that our teacher uses to make sure we all learn and understand the content taught. So that we will be able to perform well in our exams.”*

Grey offered the following observation:

*“For me formative assessment is about all tasks and activities that teachers use in a class to see whether we will do well in the class.”*

The perception of formative assessment as a method of measuring learners' performance emerged strongly in the participants' remarks. Their views indicated that they perceived formative assessment as a method used by their teacher to measure their academic performance which is based on what is taught in the classroom concerning a certain topic, unit or chapter. However, none understood that the effective use of formative assessment is critical in helping learners to evaluate their own performance, as is noted by Andrade (2010).

The data also showed that the learners believed that when their Tourism teacher assessed them formatively, the task was administered with the intention of enhancing their academic progress and evaluating their knowledge of a certain chapter, topic or unit because they wanted to see improvement in their achievement in the subject. This view can be demonstrated by the following comments.

Blue stated:

*“Assessment is about testing what we as learners know... test how much we have learnt. What we are taught in the classroom is tested in the control tests or class tests.”*

Yellow suggested the following:

*“It is one of the methods that our teachers use to conduct the process of evaluation, to weigh our understanding of what they taught.”*

Black also said:

*“It is a method that helps teachers to check or measure if the learners understand what is being taught in the classroom.”*

Blue argued as follows:

*“Formative assessment is when the teacher collects information about the performance of learners in order to see how much learners have understood what has been taught.”*

In addition to using formative assessment to evaluate their learning, these learners felt that the teacher consulted other Tourism teachers to evaluate their understanding and knowledge of the content taught and learnt. They understood that formative assessment was used by teachers to evaluate their understanding of the content and concepts taught. The findings underscored the perception that formative assessment enabled the teacher to measure their performance. They further stated that formative assessment was when the teacher measured their performance to identify those who were doing well because they were likely to be promoted to the next grade. This finding is supported by Nieuwoudt and Reyneke (2011), who state that formative assessment serves to guide the teacher to diagnose learning problems and enable learners to rectify mistakes. In that sense, formative assessment was primarily used to identify areas that needed improvement.

In addition, some participants understood that formative assessment had a motivational purpose. For example, Green expressed this understanding as follows:

*“When we do formative assessment through doing the tasks in class and outside the classroom, such as the PAT and project, we get to be inspired.”*

The learners also understood that formative assessment is a means to stimulate and sustain learning. Some of the learners expressed this view as follows:

Brown stated:

*“Formative assessment is the strategy used by the teacher to force us to learn.”*

Blue concurred and said:

*“Formative assessment is really pushing because you have to learn consistently not only to study when preparing for the exams.”*

Yellow argued:

*“I think formative assessment is used by the teacher to motivate us to master the concepts even before the final examinations.”*

Black commented as follows:

*“Through formative assessment you are being pushed to learn and always write tests and that encourages me to learn.”*

These learners thus perceived formative assessment as a tool used by the teacher to motivate them to learn rather than a means of assessing their own learning and enhancing their development of skills. Clarke (2008) argues that formative assessments stresses synthesis and evaluation as tools used by teachers to identify gaps in learners' learning, and most of the learners felt that formative assessment was meant to help the teacher to identify concepts and skills that learners had difficulty in acquiring. This may be illustrated by some of the comments:

Grey stated:

*“Formative assessment helps teachers identify who is struggling with difficult concepts in Tourism.”*

Pink commented as follows:

*“Formative assessment provides the teacher with information to use and see where we are with our learning.”*

White stated:

*“Formative assessment is guiding teachers and learners in making decisions about how to move forward to reach their goals.”*

Extracts from a follow-up interview with Grey on the perception that formative assessment is a tool used by the teacher to identify learning gaps revealed the following perception:

Prompt: *You mentioned that formative assessment is used by teachers to identify who is struggling. Can you elaborate on that?*

Grey: *In Tourism there are many concepts that we sometimes struggle with so, for me formative assessment is that assessment that the teacher uses to check who has difficulty in understanding some of these concepts.*

Prompt: *Do you think this will help you?*

Grey: *Yes, I think so. Formative assessment gives the teacher an indication of who need support with certain concepts in order to maximise our chances of passing our term work.*

Similar findings are also discussed by Volante and Beckett (2011), who conclude that the speed of learners' learning can be doubled through the implementation of formative strategies. Moyosore (2015) states that formative testing aims for a diagnosis of learners' learning difficulties in order to improve their performance. Moreover, Marsh (2007) states that formative assessment is a method designed to correct the difficulties learners experience in terms of the content of a subject with the aim of enhancing the performance of learners in the subject.

In a nutshell, the above findings suggest that learners' perceptions were linked to some of the purposes of formative assessment. They were of the view that one purpose of formative assessment in Tourism was to award grades and thus they felt it was an extension of summative assessment. This was reflected in their perception of formative assessment in Tourism as a series of tasks, especially tests that are given to complete in class to obtain marks that are added to their year-end or final marks. However, the findings further revealed that formative assessment was used by the teacher to evaluate learners' understanding of and to identify gaps in their knowledge of subject content and the concepts taught.

The findings also revealed that the learners perceived formative assessment as a means of providing feedback to them in terms of their learning, which is an important and powerful purpose of formative assessment as suggested by the literature. Formative assessment is able to guide student learning through feedback which helps increase learners' interest in learning

(Black & Wiliam, 2009; Earle, 2010). Most of the learners in this study linked formative assessment to feedback, as was evident in their comments.

Green noted:

*“Formative assessment provides opportunities to communicate between the teacher and learners through the feedback.”*

White added:

*“Formative assessment is the assessment that gives you the feedback straightaway you can sort of get an idea of how much you have taken in.”*

Blue also stated:

*“I think formative assessment is that kind of assessment that provides feedback as to what is important to learn and how learning is proceeding.”*

Formative assessment was understood by the learners as a means of providing feedback to them when the teacher checked whether they were progressing in their work. As reflected in the statements above, the learners felt that formative assessment should be used to provide feedback on their performance in each task. They were of the view that formative assessment should be used by the teacher to give feedback from which learners may learn as it should highlight areas in their learning that they need to improve. These comments directly link feedback to formative assessment, which is one of its main purposes.

The learners also understood that, through formative assessment, communication opportunities were encouraged and added to their learning. This view was elaborated by Blue during an interview:

Prompt: *What makes you link formative assessment to feedback?*

Blue: *I say that because for me formative assessment should happen while learning is still in progress, so that the teacher could provide us [learners] with feedback that we can use to improve the quality of learning. Our teacher uses tests in class to give us general feedback on our learning. When I get a test back, I know where I made my mistake. In short, for me formative assessment is about learners*



*receiving feedback from the teacher about their learning with advice on what they can do to improve.*

Blue commented that formative assessment was a way of receiving feedback from the teacher in order to identify and rectify mistakes. This argument is supported by Supovitz (2012), who argues that it is used by teachers to draw conclusions and give feedback to learners about their work. Formative assessment tasks are used to check the understanding of learners and to make decisions about current and future instruction (Wiliam, 2011). In the current study formative assessment helped the learners to get relevant feedback from their teacher and to improve their learning. Giving feedback is very important in measuring performance so that individuals can advance in specific areas of weakness (Byabato & Kisamo, 2014). Furthermore, Black and Wiliam (1998) contend that assessment should provide relevant and brief feedback which identifies obstacles in order to create learning opportunities. The above responses thus underscored the subtheme that feedback is important in formative assessment.

### **4.3 Learners' Use of Formative Assessment**

In this section I present the findings that address the research question: *How do learners use formative assessment in Tourism?* In a nutshell, it was found that the learners' use of formative assessment was linked to three main themes: (i) the use of formative assessment to benefit summative assessment outcomes; (ii) the use of formative assessment by learners to monitor their ability and progress; and (iii) the use of feedback from formative assessment tasks as a means to learn in different ways. These themes and their subthemes are discussed in the following sections.

#### **4.3.1 The use of formative assessment to benefit summative assessment outcomes**

The findings revealed that the learners used formative assessment to improve their end-of-year examination mark, which is based on summative assessment. Generally, their responses were centred on examinations and the need to obtain marks for a pass. This was indicated by five of the participants who seemed to be concerned about the marks they obtained for tests and the project. The learners seemed to use the formative assessment marks to improve their opportunities of getting good grades at the end of the year. Obtaining good marks in formative assessment tasks was thus a primary driver for learners to pay attention to these tasks. This was evident in the following comments:

Brown asserted the following:

*“The project helped me to boost my marks as I did very badly in the test.”*

Yellow stated:

*“The teacher tells us to work hard on our PAT and tests during the year so that we get good marks.”*

Pink stated:

*“If my mark was lower in the first test, I need to improve in the second test otherwise I might not get a good score at the end of the year.”*

Black also stated:

*“Formative assessment gives me an idea of my marks and possibility of getting good marks at the end of the year if I did well in the formative assessment [tasks].”*

For these learners, marks were more important than the knowledge gained and what they could do with their knowledge. There was evidence that even the teacher put emphasis on marks, which caused the learners to understand that the main purpose of formative assessment was to get good marks rather than gaining knowledge and applying this knowing. This resonates with a finding by Burket (2016), who argues that the report received on summative assessment presents evidence of a learner’s achievement in formative assessment. Similarly, Byabato and Kisamo (2014) state that summative assessment is viewed by both teachers and learners as the purpose of assessment and that it is synonymous with the marks that need to be obtained.

This finding suggests that formative assessment was generally used by the learners in this class for summative gains. This could have been influenced by an overemphasis on summative assessment in Tourism which is encouraged by the Tourism CAPS document. As was explained in Chapter Two, Tourism learners have to complete SBA tasks that contribute 25% and a PAT that contributes another 25% to the final examination mark. The SBA and PAT form part of the formal aspect of the formative assessment component as these are completed over a period of time and are integrated into the teaching and learning process while they contribute to the promotion mark. The contribution of these formal formative assessment marks seemed crucial to the learners’ use of formative assessment. It was not surprising that these learners were focused on using formative assessment to generate marks for promotion rather

than for learning outcomes, as the education system places a high premium on quantitative results that determine success in terms of symbols such as an A (80%+) or a C (60%), or failure such as lower than an E (>40%) or an F (>30%). Outcome levels are also linked to these symbols and range from 1 – 7 where 1 denotes the least successful and 7 denotes the most successful outcome. These symbols indicate summative assessment outcomes in the examination system in South Africa and are particularly important to classify successful or under-performing schools based on the NSC results at the end of the FET phase (Grade 12) (Spaull, 2013). All eight participants concurred that they primarily used formative assessment tasks to increase their marks for the final promotion mark.

However, the findings also revealed that the learners used formative assessment results and feedback to prepare for their final examinations. Assessment tasks that had been completed for formative assessment were important as they used the experiences they gained to prepare for the final examination. The comments below are evidence of this approach:

Yellow said:

*“The formative assessment tasks that we do clearly prepare us for the examination because most of the questions are similar to those that we did in the class test that we took as formative assessment. So, if you do well and work hard in those formative assessments, you know you will get good marks.”*

Brown stated:

*“Teachers are forced to give us control tests so that by the time we write examinations we know exactly what we are writing.”*

Green also noted:

*“If you want good marks at the end [of the year] you have to use formative assessment well, like control tests, to revise for the examination.”*

The above comments suggest that formative assessment in the form of controlled tests were regarded as important because the learners used them to prepare for the final examination. The scores they attained in these control tests also contributed to their final examination results. The learners implied that they learnt a lot by doing the formative assessments tasks and that this resulted in higher marks in the summative assessment. They also felt good if they scored

a good mark after a period of hard work in preparation for the final examination (summative assessment). This focus on obtaining good marks was not surprising as the literature suggests that, in South Africa, educational success is primarily measured by summative results (Poliah, 2010; Mansor et al., 2013). The finding suggests that the learners were confident that they would do well if they worked hard in the formative assessment tasks in preparation for the final examination.

In summary, the learners revealed that they mainly used formative assessment as a means of improving their summative assessment marks. The former tasks were thus used to prepare for the final examinations (summative assessment). This finding suggests that formative assessment outcomes were important primarily as a springboard for success in the final examination. Moreover, the scores the learners attained in these control tests would contribute to their final examination results.

#### **4.3.2 The use of formative assessment to monitor ability and progress**

While the learners were concerned about using formative assessment for marks and grading, they also involved formative assessment in their learning as they highlighted that they used formative assessment to monitor their own abilities and progress. The majority of the participants revealed that formative assessment was useful to them as they were able to monitor their abilities and learning skills. To illustrate this point, some of the learners expressed themselves as follows:

Blue stated:

*After doing formative assessment you are able to tell whether you have the capability to learn a particular section of Tourism. For example, when you write a test on basic calculations, if you pass you know you are capable but if you fail you know you have to work hard in that section.*

Yellow said:

*“Formative assessment helps me to test how much I know about the content and what I am capable of answering. In most cases you do better in the second test.”*

Grey argued:

*“Formative assessment is used on daily basis in the evaluation process and to check our understanding. This includes all the work given by the teacher to us to test our understanding of what he/she has taught us in the Tourism classroom.”*

Brown said:

*“Formative assessment helps me to identify what I know and what I can do in Tourism so that I can improve in the future.”*

The above responses show that learners used formative assessment as a means of checking their competency in Tourism. These extracts demonstrate that formative assessment played a valuable diagnostic role in helping the learners to measure their abilities and capacity for understanding Tourism content and concepts. According to these learners, formative assessment was a tool that they used to monitor their academic activities from when they started at the beginning of the year to where they were at the time of the assessment. The literature asserts that formative assessment is primarily used in the classroom by teachers and learners to determine monitor and improve performance (Nieuwoudt & Reyneke, 2011; Deane & Sparks, 2019). These learners’ comments thus endorsed the findings of earlier studies as they claimed to use formative assessment to identify what they were capable of doing by assessing their ability to answer questions in Tourism tests and examinations. Self-assessment is highlighted as a primary purpose of formative assessment (DOE, 2011), and the fact that the learners embraced this opportunity should be commended.

Related to the learners’ diagnostic use of formative assessment was their use of formative assessment to monitor their progress. Most of the learners revealed that formative assessment allowed them to self-monitor their learning performances as it was used to track their progress throughout the year. They used formative assessment outcomes to identify what they knew or did not know and where they were in their learning. Two of the learners explained this self-monitoring process as follows:

Pink said:

*“By using formative assessment, you are able to see whether you are improving or not. I remember in the first test I did very well but the second test and third tests I did poorly, and I had to try some means to improve my performance.”*

Grey stated:

*“By using formative assessment, you are able to compare where you are to where you need to be because you know what outcomes you must achieve. For example, when we do the PAT, we get a rubric which helps us to monitor our performance in the task.”*

In corroboration of the above comments, five learners also stated that that they used formative assessment to keep track of their progress. However, progress appeared to be judged by the marks obtained and not necessarily whether the topics and content were understood or could be applied. The responses also indicated that the learners used formative assessment to monitor their performance over time. For example, Pink indicated that she had to use subsequent tests to improve when she had done badly in the first test. Curry et al. (2016) emphasise the use of formative assessment to collect data about learners' performance and to monitor if learners improved over time. They also suggest that learners use formative assessment to know where they are in their learning. This finding confirms Wiliam's (2011) assertion that formative assessment is highly appropriate for helping learners to learn.

#### **4.3.3 The use of feedback based on formative assessment to enhance learning**

Feedback from formative assessment is key to learning a sit continually regulates the learning process (Black & Wiliam, 2009). This point was acknowledged by the participants of this study as they regarded it as a tool they could use to improve their learning. One of the findings was that the learners used the feedback generated by formative assessment to improve their learning and achievement. Feedback is an integral part of formative assessment as it improves learning and thus learners' achievement (Saddler, 1989; Nichol & MacFarlane-Dick, 2006). Most of the participants indicated that formative assessment was useful because they got feedback from the teacher regarding their performance. However, Black and Wiliam (1998) argue that for assessment to be formative, the feedback information has to be rich and needs to support learning. Similarly, the current study found that some of the learners used feedback based on formative assessment to develop their understanding of the subject content and to guide their learning. The following excerpts illustrate this:

Grey commented:

*“I like formative assessment because I get a chance to be given feedback which helps me to know what I have to study.”*

Brown also stated:

*“Sometimes when teachers don’t put feedback in our formative tasks, it’s really hard to know what I have to study and what I don’t have to study.”*

Pink also commented on feedback as follows:

*“I just like feedback, as it’s kind of helping me to identify what I know and thus I focus on what I don’t know. With Tourism, the teacher kept on giving us feedback on the PAT as we worked on it in class so that we knew what to focus on and that was helpful as we used this feedback to make changes to our PATs.”*

Blue concurred by stating:

*“I use feedback from my formative assessment tasks to review and reinforce concepts and content to make sure I don’t miss out anything in the next assessment.”*

Black explained:

*“Feedback on my formative assessment work is very important for me because I use it to clarify things, I did not understand so that I know exactly how and where improvements can be made.”*

As is reflected by the statements above, the learners felt that feedback from formative assessment should be used to provide feedback on their performance in each task. The statements by these learners underscore the importance of effective and timely feedback on formative assessment tasks that are administered during the teaching and learning processes. The literature suggests that feedback on formative assessment should occur as soon as possible after a particular section or unit of work has been completed (Wylie & Lyon, 2012). For these learners, formative assessment provided information that helped them in their understanding and progression forward in the learning process. This finding implies that learners are able to adjust their learning and make corrections when they know what their mistakes are based on the feedback. In essence, learners use formative assessment to become aware of what they were learning and what they need to (un)learn.

The findings suggest that learners’ value and use feedback from formative assessment. The use of feedback from formative assessment came up strongly in a follow-up interview with Blue, as indicated below:

Prompt: *You said in the discussion you used feedback to reinforce the content and concepts. Can you elaborate on that?*

Blue: *Yes, like I said, it helps to reinforce content. In Tourism there are many topics which have too many concepts that one has to learn. Sometimes we don't get them right when we take our formative assessment tasks but when the teacher gives feedback on those formative assessments you are able to understand them.*

Prompt: *How do you understand them?*

Blue: *Once you get feedback from the teacher you are able to improve on those concepts by looking at how you did them incorrectly at the beginning. Feedback forces us to reread the concepts and they kind of stick in your mind. I noticed with classes that happens to me a lot if we're not getting feedback and reviewing the content from previous assessment and it helps keep it in your head; keeps you focused on it.*

The learners mention how feedback from formative assessment provided them with specific information about the areas where they were struggling, especially the terminology of Tourism. For these learners, feedback from formative assessment clarified which material they needed to review because they lacked understanding. This finding is consistent with a finding by Gibbs et al. (2005), who indicate that learners' views of formative assessment are positively influenced by the fact that it helps them to learn.

The learners in this study also argued that formative assessment was more useful if they received feedback immediately. In this regard, McKay (2007) opines that learners want to use feedback to know how well they were doing or have done and what they might do next to enhance their performance and improve their knowledge. Similarly, learners in this study believed that *immediate* results and feedback from formative assessment were useful and supported learning.

Yellow said:

*"The teacher marks our scripts within two weeks or so and this is helpful because I can see where I went wrong while I still remember what we wrote."*



Brown commented:

*“If the marks are not returned you get to worry more and get scared of failing.”*

Pink said:

*“It helps to get feedback quicker because I am able to know which tasks I did not do well, and I try to improve on the next one so that I don’t drop the marks.”*

Blue stated:

*“Formative assessment is very useful if I get feedback soon after we have written the test as I use it to see my strengths and weaknesses.”*

Grey concluded:

*“Getting immediate feedback from formative assessment I can see what I need to do to improve.”*

The reasons given by learners why they would prefer and use immediate feedback was that getting feedback soon stopped them from worrying about the result. They linked their use of feedback from formative assessment to maintaining or improving their marks. Bayerlein (2014) opines that learners often need immediate feedback for application in upcoming tasks. The data revealed that the Tourism learners could assess their performance once they had received feedback on the activities/tasks and they could view the marks they got for each question. They also highlighted that receiving immediate feedback on their formative assessment helped them to identify what they had done wrong while they could also identify areas for improvement while the task was still fresh in their minds. This finding is supported by Talib et al. (2014), who argue that formative assessment feedback can help to motivate learners to identify gaps in their learning. The learners also expressed that immediate feedback was useful as they understood where/how they went wrong while the assessment was fresh in their minds. They stated that regular feedback was very useful, which is confirmed by Dermo (2011) who argues that regular and immediate feedback on assessment allows learners to see straight away where they went wrong, and they use this information as a means to improve.

While most of the learners opined that they used feedback to improve their learning, two learners revealed that they recognised the value of feedback and used it to improve their learning, but their comments implied that feedback was not as effective as it could be. White

and Yellow had reservations about the use of feedback as they felt that sometimes they did not know how to improve as the feedback was too general. In this regard, Hughes (2011) argues that feedback needs to relate to the specific task and match the needs of the learners. In this study, some of the learners felt strongly that their needs were being met when they received individual feedback, while others claimed that such feedback was rare and that specific feedback would be more helpful to them.

White stated:

*“Informative feedback on formative assessment is occasionally given attention in Tourism. Our teacher does not set aside time to work with us on how to improve after feedback has been given.*

Yellow had the same problem:

*“So, I somehow got a thirty in the test out of 150 and got very little feedback even though I knew there was a lot I needed to improve – but I don’t understand how because the feedback was generalised for the whole class.”*

These learners felt that the use of formative assessment feedback was voluntary, and they claimed that they could not use previous feedback as it was specific to a previous formative assessment task that could not be resubmitted. This claim by the learners underscores the argument that feedback should be a means to enhance learning and it has to be integrated into the teaching and learning processes and given at the end of a relevant formative assessment task (Black & Wiliam, 2009; Sadler, 2010; Andrade, 2010). Supovitz (2012) emphasises that feedback focuses on specific assessment tasks and what the learner needs to do to improve. For learners, general feedback or feedback that is specific to a particular assessment task that cannot be repeated becomes just a message that is of little use in the learning process. This finding again underscores their understanding of assessment for achievement rather than for skills development.

In summary, the findings that were discussed in this section provided an overview of learners’ use of formative assessment and the importance of feedback. The learners valued and used feedback and appropriate feedback prepared them for future assessments, especially summative assessment, as it tended to clarify content and jargon and informed them about their

learning. However, some of the learners preferred individualised feedback which they felt could be more user-friendly. Surprisingly, the learners did not make reference to the feedback they might receive from other learners or by means of self-assessment. I cannot state that these learners did not value or use other types of formative assessment feedback but can only state that no reference was made of such feedback or learning strategies. This could have been due to the fact that formative assessment was dominated by formal tasks which were more oriented to teacher feedback, as was indicated earlier in this study. However, in a later section I discuss the learners' references to work together and collaborative learning, as is proposed by the social constructivism theory of Vygotsky (1978). This gap in feedback information may suggest a limitation in the discussion and interview schedules that could have probed more deeply to interrogate collaborative feedback. However, questions that probed a range of feedback strategies were deliberately not included in the discussion or interview schedules, as I wanted the responses to be authentic. I thus did not want to influence the learners' responses in any way by asking leading questions that might have elicited responses to please me as the researcher, and I thus avoided direct probing of responses related to feedback strategies.

#### **4.3.4 Formative assessment as a means of learning in different ways**

Formative assessment is regarded as the process that is classroom-based in which learners and teachers collect evidence of learning using various forms and strategies to support learners' conceptual development, to understand their learning progress, and to make adjustments to learning or to teaching, as and when necessary (Lyon, 2012). In essence, through formative assessment learners are able to learn in different ways while accessing knowledge on their own or in collaboration with others, as proposed by Vygotsky (1978). The findings revealed that formative assessment was used by the learners to learn in different ways. For instance, they claimed that they used formative assessment to learn new knowledge in different ways such as utilising feedback and by engaging in self-regulated learning as well as collaborative learning. This claim corroborates the argument by Birenbaum (2007) that the learning styles and instructional preferences of learners are linked to their assessment preference. The learners identified self-regulated learning and collaborative learning (which will be discussed later) as valuable strategies that were supported by formative assessment.

#### ***4.3.4.1 Self-regulated learning***

The findings revealed that formative assessment in Tourism improved autonomy and developed independent learning. Most of the learners' responses provided great insight into how they used formative assessment to impact their learning. They felt that when they engaged in formative assessment tasks, they were given the opportunity to personalise their own learning. Developing independence and autonomy was viewed as an important reward flowing from formative assessment and they used their engagement with formative assessment to develop a certain degree of freedom. To illustrate, some of the learners expressed the following views:

Blue stated:

*“We do most of the project on our own and the teacher only gave us instructions. Although the project was not much clearer to us, we managed to find our way.”*

Green agreed by stating the following:

*“The teacher gave us the practical assessment task (PAT) and we had to research cultures. Some of them in our groups did not know anything, but we managed to come up with different indigenous dances across the whole of South Africa on our own.”*

Yellow said:

*“We had to make sure that the information that we source for the PAT was correct and accurate.”*

The comments showed that the learners were using formative assessment to grow and learn independently. They were able to conduct research activities for both the project and the PAT on their own as they were doing these formal tasks in a formative way. This finding resonates well with the argument by Harrison and Wass (2016) that formative assessment supports learner autonomy and self-determining learning skills and helps learners to become more self-directed in their learning, planning and activities. Most of the learners stated that they had to go through their textbooks or other material in order to review the work before they engaged with the PAT. This is illustrated in the following excerpts:

Green stated:

*“We do the PAT once a week and you have to be up to date with the work.”*

White also commented:

*“I have to read the textbook because the PAT is done every week, so I need to review that work before the day.”*

Blue added the following:

*“You are forced to read and search for information on your own before the day of the PAT which is very demanding in terms of reading.”*

Grey explained:

*“I always read the Tourism textbook at least once a week because there is always a formative task that we do weekly such as the PAT.”*

In addition, Blue stated:

*“We attempted the PAT many times [on our own] until we got it right.”*

Most learners felt able to exercise some degree of control of their own learning when involved in formative assessment. They revealed that formative assessment tasks such as the PAT encouraged them to work consistently on their own. They also mentioned that, by engaging in the formative assessment project, they learned to search for information on their own without any assistance from the teacher. This finding resonates well with a finding by Ajogbeje (2013), who also found that engaging in formative assessment helped learners to learn and thereby to gain a sense of autonomy. Independent learning encourages interaction between what learners know and what they can do (William, 2011), and this was facilitated by formative assessment tasks that had to be tackled independently.

All the participants expressed the view that formative assessment gave them the opportunity to personally engage and get more involved in what they were learning. They were of the view that they developed ownership of what they were learning during their engagement in formative assessment, which was of great use to them. They felt that when they did a formative assessment project, they were given the opportunity to personalise their learning. They felt that they developed ownership of their learning when they did the PAT and the project.

For instance, Blue asserted:

*“When we do the PAT, you get an opportunity to express learning in your own way. You have to be creative with the design and do the research yourself, so you know what you have to learn.”*

Brown stated:

*“I feel I am more in command of my learning than ever before when the teacher uses formative assessment.”*

Grey also added:

*“With the project I learn to work independently because I have to come up with my own design, for example of a logo or brochure and in that way, I begin to have that ownership of my assessment.”*

Pink stated:

*“For the PAT we had to do research with less help from the teacher, although it felt difficult, but I was able to learn from that and it felt good.”*

The above comments demonstrate that the learners used formative assessment to develop independence. It is evident that they acted with some degree of autonomy, especially when they were conducting research which was an effective and novel way of learning. This finding suggests that the learners valued formative assessment and develop a sense of ownership of their work. In this regard, Hattie and Timberly (2017) are of the view that learners learn key learning skills by owning the task and learning process and this ownership gives them a more significant role in their learning. In essence, this finding suggests that if learners take ownership of their learning, it is beneficial, and they may want to do more to move forward.

Further to developing independent learning, the learners’ responses revealed that they used formative assessment to develop a great sense of responsibility for their learning. They claimed that they became responsible by adhering to due dates and instructions. This is highlighted in the following responses:

Brown stated:

*“You have due dates for submissions and there is a lot of work to do. Tourism alone has got too many items which are topped up by the PAT.”*

Black also affirmed this point:

*“You have to ensure that you know when the due date for different phases of the PAT which is you get at the beginning of the year. So formative assessment tasks such as the PAT force you to learn to be responsible.”*

Grey stated:

*“If I get something wrong in the test, I would work to figure it out and work on it on my own, which has really made me responsible for my learning.”*

The learners’ comments suggest that they learnt how to use formative assessments to benefit themselves, especially when they engaged in practical assessment tasks. They used formative assessment to increase their engagement and accepted responsibility for their learning and they felt that formative assessment provided them with an opportunity to be in control of their learning. They found that they began to be responsible for reviewing the material which led to a strengthened understanding of the subject. This finding corroborates the literature that argues that learners use formative assessment to determine their own learning instead of the teacher always being the only source who knows how learners should learn (Clark, 2011; Wiliam, 2014; Hattie & Timberly, 2017). Similarly, the learners in this study commented that they used formative assessment to be involved in and to control their learning. This finding resonates well with Black and Wiliam (2009), who claim that learners share in the responsibility for their own learning when they engage in formative assessment.

#### ***4.3.4.2 Collaborative learning***

Despite the fact that most of the formative assessment tasks that were completed by the learners for Tourism were done individually, they still identified opportunities to engage in collaborative learning. Formative assessment was used to embrace opportunities to collaborate with peers and in small groups. Most of the learners commented that when they did formative assessment, they selected peers in the class who they could work with. They thus used formative assessment to work together, to learn from one another, and to exchange information. The learners were encouraged by their teacher to work together on certain aspects of the PAT, which partly focuses on group demonstrations. The following comments illustrate this point:

Green said:

*“For some of the tasks we work in groups which helps because we have to understand the instructions and the task expected of us.”*

Pink stated:

*“When we do case studies and role play, we have to work together and in that way we learn from each other.”*

Yellow stressed the following:

*“Although most of our formative assessment tasks are not group work because we do formative assessment during learning time, we use it to collaborate with other learners so that we can learn from each other. We work in groups and assist one another to complete tasks.”*

Blue concluded:

*“Part of the PAT in Grade 11 wants us to demonstrate cultural uniqueness and that you cannot do on your own and we have to work with others for that assessment task.”*

The learners used formative assessment to create spaces within which to work collaboratively, and this provided opportunities for learning from one another. The learners mentioned that formative assessment, especially the PAT, encouraged them to do their work in groups and thus they could help one another. This finding is supported by Talib et al. (2014), who argue that learners who work in small groups tend to learn more and retain information longer than when the same content is presented in other instructional formats. The learners believed that formative assessment benefited them because they were given opportunities to interact with one another while learning in a communal manner.

Furthermore, the learners embraced formative assessment as they used it to collaborate through sharing available resources and information. They felt that it was crucial to create opportunities through formative assessment to work together to build on their own and on one another's knowledge. In this manner they became resources and not merely consumers as they engaged collaboratively with some aspects of the formative assessment tasks.



For example, White stated:

*“Sometimes we do not understand the instructions given by the teacher but when we work with other learners, we begin to explain to each other what needs to be done.”*

Blue offered the following comment:

*“I worked with one of my classmates at my place one whole day because she did not understand the instructions for the PAT.”*

These comments demonstrated how the learners used formative assessment to get involved in class and to support one another, particularly if they needed more clarity on the instructions. Black and Wiliam (2009) argue that learners can be actively involved as resources for one another through collaboration. Similarly, Katherine and Kalina (2010) encourage learners to learn interactively in class to improve learning. This was evident as the learners in this study embraced the use of formative assessment as a way of interacting with one another. They stated that when they did some formative assessment tasks, they assisted one another to understand the instructions. Given that fact that the school was under resourced at the time of the study, it seemed a resourceful practice for learners to share. This assisted them to learn from one another while completing some formative assessment tasks.

Formative assessment tasks encourage learners to work together and share information, thereby increasing their social involvement and their learning. Working in groups to complete some of the formative assessment tasks emphasised the importance of developing the skill of working together. Abrahams (2011) argues that learners experience the pleasure of social interaction when they work together. The discourse in this section strongly resonated with the social constructivism theory that posits that learning occurs in socially constructed contexts and that it is enhanced through collaborative endeavours (Vygotsky, 1978).

#### ***4.3.4.3 The acquisition of various skills using formative assessment***

Formative assessment is regarded as an important educational strategy because learners use it to acquire various learning skills. Most learners in this study agreed that doing different formative assessment tasks enabled them to improve their learning abilities. This finding resonates with Piaget’s cognitive constructivism theory which proposes that learners must construct their own learning by building their knowledge through experience which enables them to acquire diverse skills. The following responses highlighted this point.

Yellow stated:

*“Formative assessment improves our learning skills in Tourism because if the teacher gives us some task and we fail, we start trying other methods or skills to improve our performance as well as our learning skills.”*

Grey concurred:

*“Those tests that we write in class before the final exam help me to see where I need to change and how I have learned certain concepts.”*

Black also stated:

*“Through formative assessment tasks such as the PAT projects and tests, I have started to learn the skill of analysing visuals and information because they use them a lot in Tourism.”*

This view that learners use formative assessment to develop and improve their learning skills was also supported by Green during an interview:

Prompt: *What skills are you now using?*

Green: *In most cases I would read the book for a long time and then fail in the exam. Now that we write many tests before the end of the year exam, I realised I need to change how I study, like writing summaries after reading.*

Prompt: *Have this helped you?*

Green: *I am not a fast learner, so I use formative assessment to see where I am and what I can change in my learning. Hence, I am saying formative assessment helps me to try out new learning skills.*

The responses above revealed that, by engaging learners in different class activities as forms of formative assessment, they were capacitated to improving their learning skills. These learners reported that they used formative assessment tasks to develop critical thinking. In particular, some of the learners affirmed that the different formative assessment methods used by the teacher helped to increase their level of thinking both in Tourism and in real-world situations. Green stated that she used formative assessment to improve her learning skills although she was not a fast learner. She believed that formative assessment helped her to develop new learning skills that she could apply in the future.

The learners stated that they used strategies that they were exposed to in formative assessment to develop critical thinking as they learnt in a relaxed environment that encouraged them to develop higher levels of thinking.

Black stated:

*“...the case we studied, and calculations force us to develop critical thinking.”*

Yellow concurred:

*“Those case studies that we get in the formative assessment tasks really make one to learn to think critically.”*

Green also noted:

*“The calculations demand that I am able to apply problem solving.”*

Pink also commented as follows:

*“You learn to think critically and solve problems that you read about in the case studies and such skills we could apply in real-life cases in the Tourism industry.”*

In an interview with Grey, he corroborated the perception that formative assessment tasks are very important in helping them to develop critical thinking skills.

Prompt: *Do you concur that formative assessment develops critical thinking skills?*

Grey: *Yes, I do.*

Prompt: *How do you use formative assessment to develop critical thinking skills?*

Grey: *You know, when we do tasks such as PAT, you begin to develop critical thinking because we have to develop things like brochures, reading and analysing case studies in tests, create an itinerary and you have to be very critical. These tasks usually do not want one-word answers, but you have to think and analyse information and motivate your answer. Especially with the PAT you have to think of activities that would appeal to different tourists and relate them to the tourist’s profile that you are given in the case study/scenario. Hence, I agree that formative assessment is very useful to us for promoting critical thinking.*

Like Grey, most of the learners' comments indicated that formative assessment was used by some learners to develop skills such as critical thinking and problem solving as they naturally engaged with cases that required them to analyse and provide possible solutions/actions. Diana (2019) argues that formative assessment monitors learners' acquisition of knowledge and skills. This suggests that formative assessment develops critical thinking skills as well as problem solving skills. This implies that, through formative assessment, learners develop a variety of skills and are thus enabled to actively build their understanding of concepts, rather than merely memorising information.

However, despite the claim by most of the learners of this study that the use of formative assessment developed their critical thinking skills, some remained less optimistic regarding the current/potential use of formative assessment in developing critical thinking skills. For example, White and Brown felt that they did not use formative assessment to develop any particularly important skills as they felt that the tasks were too difficult. They expressed the following concerns:

White said:

*“Well, I find formative assessment hard to do because I have to face situations which I mostly fail to solve.”*

*Brown shared a similar sentiment:*

*“It is difficult to put formative assessment tasks into practice and thus I don't benefit much in terms of [developing] skills.”*

These two learners felt that some of these tasks were too difficult for them to comprehend and thus they did not benefit from them. They also emphasised that the difficulty of formative assessment in Tourism hindered and limited their acquisition of various other skills. This finding contrasts with a finding by Brown (2017), who revealed that formative assessment tasks provided learners with the ability to synthesise and integrate information and ideas, develop and acquire the right study/learning skills, methods, problem solving skills and management skills. In addition, Dunn and Mulvenon (2009), Diana (2019), Brown (2017) and are port by the OECD (2005) also found that formative assessment tasks enabled learners to acquire skills during the teaching and learning process. However, some participants' responses in the current

study revealed a different perspective as some of the formative assessment tasks in Tourism inhibited them from acquiring the necessary learning skills needed in Tourism.

In summary, formative assessment seemed to stimulate various learning skills which developed as the learners engaged in formative assessment tasks. This finding also resonates with Surgenor (2010), who argues that formative assessment serves as a useful tool in helping learners develop course skills and strategies that help them to learn more, so another reason is to improve learning skills or strategies as they are assessed. This finding also resonates well with the literature on formative assessment (Black & Wiliam, 2009; Lumadi, 2013; Diana, 2019) that claims that formative assessment, when used effectively in the classroom, can provide information to learners on what they need to do to improve their understanding and even their learning skills.

#### **4.4 Chapter Synthesis**

This chapter presented the data analysis and provided in-depth interpretations and discussions of the findings in relation to relevant literature. The discourse was framed within the constructivist theories of Vygotsky and Piaget in order to answer the critical research questions that gave direction to this study. The next chapter presents a summary of the findings, highlights emerging insights, and concludes the study with salient recommendations.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

The study examined Grade 11 Tourism learners' perceptions and use of formative assessment in this subject. In the previous chapter I presented the data and my interpretations of the findings. In this chapter, I present the discussion and highlight my conclusions as they emerged from the findings. The chapter opens by presenting a summary of the study. The discourse continues with a discussion on the findings by exploring how the data responded to the research questions and elicited emerging insights. Reference is made of similar or contradictory findings in the literature and the theoretical framework that informed the study. The chapter concludes with the implications of the study, salient recommendations, and a final conclusion.

#### **5.2 Summary of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to examine learners' perspectives of formative assessment to enhance learning in Tourism. The study was driven by two research questions:

- What are learners' perceptions of formative assessment in Tourism as a subject?
- How do learners use formative assessment to enhance learning in Tourism as a subject?

To respond to these questions, I first reflected on the reasons why I was interested in the topic of the proposed study. My interest was stirred while I conducted observational assessments of teachers in secondary school classrooms as a Tourism teacher. My personal observations and other anecdotal evidence (such as the experiences of my colleagues) indicated that formative assessment was neither clearly understood nor applied. Formative assessment of Tourism is intended to form a significant part of learning as reflected in the informal and formal assessment tasks that need to be completed over a year for three years (Grade 10 – 12). The literature (as was reviewed in Chapter Two) suggests various challenges associated with formative assessment of school subjects, with the main challenge experienced in terms of the implementation of formative assessment and a dearth in the literature that focuses on the way learners use and participate in formative assessment in South African secondary schools. Given the challenges surrounding the teaching and implementation of formative assessment, and in

my view particularly of Tourism, it was therefore necessary to examine learners' perceptions and use of formative assessment to enhance learning in Tourism.

I first conducted an intensive literature review which focused on broad debates on assessment as a phenomenon that is conceptualised internationally and in the South African context. The discussion highlighted various trends in assessment and explored various purposes and the nature of assessment. Two main approaches to assessment are proposed, namely summative and formative assessment. The necessity to shift from a summative approach to a formative assessment approach was highlighted. This was followed by an in-depth discussion on formative assessment and its practices both internationally and locally. Literature that focuses on learners' perceptions of assessment was discussed and it was elucidated that learners' perceptions of formative assessment impact their learning.

The theoretical framework that guided the study and the analyses of the findings of the study were also discussed. This review helped to contextualise the research and embed it within existing and relevant knowledge through a discussion of predominant debates on assessment in general and formative assessment practices and purposes in particular. Although literature on assessment abounds, there is a dearth of research of Tourism learners' perceptions and practices. Gaps in the literature on learners' perceptions and use of formative assessment were identified by means of a scrutiny of relevant literature (Clark, 2011; Ajigbeje, 2013; Harrison & Wass, 2016; Hattie & Timberly, 2017; Harrison, et al., 2017).

Guided by the research questions, the study was located within an interpretive paradigm and a qualitative single case study was undertaken in one secondary school in the KwaZulu-Natal Province of South Africa. The qualitative case study provided me with the opportunity to recruit a unique and knowledgeable example of learners while I engaged with them in a real situation to elicit their authentic views on the topic under investigation. The study used qualitative data generation methods, namely focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews, to generate data from eight participating learners who were purposively selected from the Grade 11 class in one secondary school. The data generated from the focus group discussions and semi structured interviews were analysed using thematic analysis.

Chapter Four focused on the presentation and interpretation of the data. The main findings are discussed in the following section.

### **5.3 Discussion of the Findings and Emerging Insights**

The findings were presented according to themes and subthemes in Chapter Four. The two main research questions were addressed by the themes that emerged from the data, namely learners' perceptions of formative assessment in Tourism, and learners' use of formative assessment to enhance learning in Tourism.

#### **5.3.1 Learners' perceptions of formative assessment**

The overall perception of the learners of formative assessment was based on their understanding of the purpose and nature of formative assessment in Tourism. The findings revealed that formative assessment was perceived as an extension of or prelude to summative assessment as it was perceived to focus on grading and the marks that learners received. The learners unanimously perceived formative assessment as a series of tasks, especially tests that are given to complete in class to obtain marks which would count towards to their year-end or final marks for promotion. This narrow view of formative assessment determined their readiness for the year-end examination.

The learners clearly missed the point that formative assessment is broader than obtaining marks/grading, as is urged in the literature (see for example, Black & Wiliam, 1998; Daugherty et al., 2010; Moss, 2013; Lund & Kirk, 2019). In essence, the learners perceived formative assessment as linked to formal assessment tasks and they focused on the marks they obtained rather than on learning and skills development. This partly explains why they focused less on informal formative assessment such as homework, debates and presentations. The implication of this finding is that most of the learners were found to be 'surface learners' whose aim was to obtain adequate or good grades/marks to pass at the end of the year. Adams (2006) and Christie (2005) argue that learning is an active process when learners construct their own understanding as they participate in a variety of assessment practices while interacting with others. In addition, the constructivist theory posits that learners' engagement is based on the premise that the more time they invest in formative assessment tasks like homework, debates and presentations, the better they are able to grasp the content. Thus, practice coupled with constructive feedback enhances learning (see for example, Katherine & Kalina, 2009; Pitchard & Woollard, 2010; Moodley, 2014). In essence, social constructivism views learners as active participants who need to be central in teaching and learning practices (Pitchard & Woollard,



2010), which was partly demonstrated by the findings of this study as some learners perceived formative assessment as a process to learn in different ways.

Another finding that needs to be highlighted was that the learners perceived that formative assessment was administered by the teacher to evaluate their achievement levels and to identify any gaps in the content and concepts she taught. They were also quick to link this evaluation with feedback that most felt improved their learning if presented individually, timeously and appropriately. Feedback was viewed as a checking system to determine whether the learners were progressing adequately. Such feedback requires appropriate communication between the teacher and the learner in order for constructive interaction to take place, as is proposed by the social constructivism theory (Kozulin, 2003). Constructive feedback enhances learners' learning while clarifying what learners need to know and preparing them for the next test (Moodley, 2014).

The findings revealed that learners shared similar perceptions of formative assessment in terms of the nature of formative assessment. The findings revealed that the formative assessment methods that were predominantly used by the Tourism learners were dominated by tests that were similar to summative assessment practices. In essence, their activities seemed to be linked to a paper-and-pencil approach.

Formative assessment was perceived by some of the learners as encompassing all activities done in class while others viewed it as another form of an examination where they needed to focus on the formal tasks that would generate marks for promotion. The learners seemed to perceive formative assessment as still dominated by traditional forms of assessing learners at the end of the term or year. For example, they made reference to the requirement of completing SBA tasks and their centrality in formative assessment, which is a set of tasks that are formally conducted at a specified time in the year.

### **5.3.2 Learners' use of formative assessment**

The findings revealed that the contribution of formative assessment towards learning was crucial and depended on how learners made use of formative assessment to improve and enhance their learning. The learners revealed that formative assessment in the form of tests were

important as they used them to prepare for their final examinations. They understood that the marks they obtained for these controlled tests contributed to their final examination results.

The learners revealed that they mainly used formative assessment to improve their summative marks and to prepare for the final examination, which has a summative assessment focus. However, the majority also used formative assessment to enhance their learning and to monitor their own abilities and progress over time, as is encouraged by Harrison and Wass (2016). This finding suggests an emphasis on the purpose of formative assessment as a tool that prepares learners for examinations. Ajogbeje (2013) states that effective use of formative assessment enables learners to be adequately prepared for tests and examinations as they are more involved in their learning and this enhances their performance in any given subject.

Another important finding was that the learners used the teacher's feedback based on their performance in formative assessment tasks to improve their learning and encourage better achievement. Most of the participants indicated that formative assessment was useful in this regard. The literature also recognises that feedback serves to close or alter the gap in learners' knowledge. Several authors consider feedback in the form of spotting learners' mistakes as useful and helpful in directing precisely where learners' mistakes occurred (Hargreaves et al., 2000; Black & Wiliam, 2009; Supovitz, 2012; Wylie & Lyon, 2012). However, not all the learners agreed that the feedback they received was useful. Individual feedback was considered important by two of the learners as they felt that this would be more personalised and beneficial, which is a view that is supported by Byabato and Kisamo (2014). Most of the learners also appreciated immediate feedback as this would help them to correct their mistakes while the work was still fresh in their minds. This would also eradicate the reoccurrence of similar mistakes in subsequent assessments. This finding is corroborated by Wylie and Lyon (2012), who argue that if feedback is delayed, then learners may continue making the same mistake over and over again, which might be prevented by immediate feedback. It was noteworthy that there was no mention of how the learners used feedback from their peers despite the fact that they collaborated with them in parts of formative assessment projects.

The learners claimed that they used formative assessment tasks to learn new knowledge and skills in different ways. They identified self-regulated learning and collaborative learning as two learning styles that they applied in the execution of some formative assessment tasks. This suggests that formative assessment inculcated a sense of self-regulation in the learners. This

claim of using formative assessment to develop self-regulated learning is supported by Panadero, Andrade and Brookhart (2018), who argue that formative assessment helps students develop a higher understanding of their self-regulated learning. Self-regulated learning was achieved as the learners in this study used formative assessment as a means of becoming actively involved in their learning while searching for and accessing information independently. The findings thus revealed that engaging in formative assessment tasks helped these learners to learn, thereby increasing their sense of autonomy (Wiliam, 2014). Further to that, they developed ownership of what they were learning during their engagement in formative assessment tasks as they personalised their learning and thus developed a sense of responsibility. These learners evidently showed willingness and the ability to advance from an achieved ZPD to the next level, as proposed by Vygotsky (1978).

The study also revealed that the Tourism learners used formative assessment to collaborate with their peers. This use of formative assessment was important as it encouraged them to work together to exchange information and share resources, which were not readily available in the study setting. Black and Wiliam (2009) assert that assessment should be enjoyable and should help classmates to be more supportive of one another. In this sense, the learners felt they were resourceful and not mere consumers. This finding is underpinned by Vygotsky's (1978) social constructivism theory which argues that most learning occurs within the ZPD when learners get involved with tasks that go beyond their immediate individual capabilities and where peers assist them to enhance their performance. Social constructivism also suggests that there must be correspondence between the teacher and the learner in order for constructive interaction to occur (Katherine & Kalina, 2010). As the learners interacted with one another in pairs or groups, the teacher was not the only source of knowledge, and this enhanced learning (Vygotsky, 1978),

In addition, formative assessment was important as it allowed these learners to acquire learning skills. The constructivist theory of learning posits that a learner learns better by *actively* creating meaning out of new knowledge (Katherine & Kalina, 2010). This was evident in this study as most of the learners engaged in formative assessment tasks that enabled them to improve their learning abilities, which is associated with constructivism. Therefore, despite the learners' limited perception of formative assessment, they were able to use formative assessment to enhance their learning.

However, it must be reiterated that, despite the fact that formative assessment is regarded as a critical and integral part of teaching and learning in the South African school curriculum, assessment policies and practises are characterised by the domination of summative assessment. This results in the unfortunate fact that constructive learning remains a mere phrase on paper because a prescriptive curriculum, such as in the case of Tourism, demands specific one-size-fits-all tasks for promotion and progression purposes under the guise of ‘formative assessment’. With the exception of the more open nature of the project and the PAT, the compulsory and prescriptive nature of the other formal ‘formative assessment’ tasks for Tourism negates the lofty ideals of formative assessment. In this regard, note that these tasks include two formal tests- a March *test* and a May *test*—as well as a midyear *examination*, an open book *test*, and a preparatory *examination* for Gr 12. At the risk of generalising the results of this study, but in light of the learners’ clear focus on marks to augment the summative assessment component (the end-of-year examination) of their Tourism course for promotion purposes, it can be concluded that the South African secondary school system is not geared towards realising the ideals of a learner-centred, activity-based and achievement-oriented education system to nurture learners who are actively involved in learning and who should become critical thinkers.

#### **5.4 Implications of the Study**

The above discussion suggests several implications, not only for learners’ perceptions and use of formative assessment to enhance learning in Tourism, but also for teachers on how to enhance their learners learning using formative assessment in Tourism as a subject, the system as a whole and future research.

On a positive note, the data clearly demonstrated that learners took advantage of formative assessment to enhance their learning. However, the study found that learners’ views on the nature of formative assessment should be corrected. While learners are keen to use formative assessment, they are restricted by the reality of formative assessment as a marks generating tool to achieve a pass mark at the end of the year, which is what the CAPS document for Tourism prescribes in no uncertain terms. The NCS focuses on formal formative assessment, hence the learners disregard all other formative methods as learning and development tools and they only focus on those tasks that are part of the SBA. The emphasis on both formal and informal formative assessment practices should thus shift to avoid learners’ use of formative

assessment experiences as a mere extension of tests. To achieve this, the Tourism teacher needs to explain the intentions and goals of the assessment system in order to make the learners understand its usefulness and to encourage their active participation in all other classroom activities and methods of assessment.

## **5.5 Methodological Reflections**

I acknowledge a few concerns about the methodological approach that I adopted. First, the power dynamics between me as a teacher and the participants (Gr 11 learners) might have negatively impacted the quality of the data that I obtained through the interviews and focus group discussions, even though I had assured the participants that, as a researcher, I would play no part as a teacher. For example, while the participants were willing to participate in the interviews, I realised that some were rather cautious and appeared reluctant to disclose certain information concerning their Tourism teacher's practices of formative assessment in the classroom. Cohen et al. (2011) assert that one of the disadvantages of using interviews in research is that the interviewer needs to have some skills and to establish good rapport with participants. However, interviews grant participants the freedom to express their views in their own words (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014), and I endeavoured to put the participants at ease to achieve just that.

The second reflection relates to the availability of the participants. Some of the learners who agreed to participate in the study later withdrew and I had to recruit others who would consent to participate in the study. It was a hectic and draining experience as I also had my job as a teacher to attend to.

Limited time was a third factor that challenged the research process as I had to schedule and reschedule meetings (focus group discussions and interviews) with the participants. Offredy and Vickers (2010) concur that using interviews in research could be time consuming. Notwithstanding these challenges, the research will clearly contribute conceptually to the literature on learners' perceptions and use of formative assessment to enhance their learning in Tourism.

## **5.6 Recommendations**

The study made the following recommendations:

- The involvement of the learners in self- and peer assessment and feedback should be emphasised and appropriate practices should be implemented. In particular, teachers' feedback to learners should be individualised, timeous and appropriate to the task that was assessed.
- Moreover, to establish a real collaborative learning process, classroom formative assessment should not be restricted to incidental collaboration but must be planned, as it is advisable to go beyond the limits that restrict creative learner-centred assessment.
- Based on the findings of this study, further research is needed to address the identified gaps in formative assessment. For example, the nature of and practices in feedback to and among learners should be explored with the aim of eradicating ineffective practices and enhancing learning as the learners perceive formative assessment to be a series of task such as test as well using formative assessment to enhance and improve their learning in the Tourism.

## **5.7 Conclusion**

The aim of the study was to examine learners' perspectives and use of formative assessment to enhance learning in Tourism. To achieve this aim, recognition was given to the voices and authentic narratives of Grade 11 Tourism learners in a selected secondary school. It was evident that these learners enjoyed the practical and collaborative components of the formative assessment tasks they had to perform, but their focus on the formal component as a means of augmenting their summative assessment marks for promotion purposes was a disconcerting finding. On reflection, this should not have come as a surprise given the prescriptive and formal nature of some of the assessment tasks that are compulsory in the SBA system in Tourism. Therefore, regardless of the positive use of formative assessment by the learners to use their results and mistakes as an opportunity to learn, to enhance their learning by collaborating with their peers, and to embrace the challenges associated with the more open-ended project and PAT in Tourism, their views on and use of formative assessment seemed to be hampered by prescriptive CAPS requirements. If these prescriptions could be reviewed and the challenges eradicated by all those who have the authority to do so, considerable improvement regarding formative assessment in the Tourism classroom could be achieved.

## REFERENCES

- Alkharusi, H. (2007). *Effects of teachers' assessment practices on ninth grade students' perceptions of classroom assessment environment and achievement goal orientations in Muscat Science classrooms in the Sultanate of Oman*. (Unpublished Doctoral thesis). Ohio: Ohio State University, Kent.
- Andrade, H. (2010). Students as the definitive source of formative assessment: Academic self-assessment and the self-regulation of learning. In H. Andrade & G. Cizek (Eds.). *Handbook of formative assessment*. New York: Routledge.
- Bansilal, S., James, A., & Naidoo, M. (2010). Whose voice matters? Learners. *South African Journal of Education*, 30(1), 153-165.
- Bertram, C., & Christiansen, I. (2014). *Understanding research: An introduction to reading research*. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.
- Birenbaum, M. (1996). Formative assessment: towards a pluralistic approach to assessment. In: *Alternatives in assessment of achievements, learning processes and prior knowledge: Evaluation in education and human services* (pp. 3-29). Boston, MA: Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- Black, P., & Harrison, C. (2001). Feedback in questioning and marking: The science teacher's role in formative assessment. *School Science Review*, 82(301), 55-61.
- Black, P., & Wiliam, D. (1998). Assessment and classroom learning. *Assessment in Education, Principles, Policy & Practice*, 5(1), 7-74.
- Black, P., & Wiliam, D. (2003). *A theoretical model for formative assessment?* Paper presented at the British Educational Research Association Annual Conference, 7–10 September. Cardiff.
- Black, P., & Wiliam, D. (2009). Developing the theory of formative assessment. *Educational Assessment, Evaluation and Accountability*, 21(1), 5-31. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11092-008-9068-5>.
- Black, P., & Wiliam, D. (2010). Inside the black box: Raising standards through classroom assessment. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 92(1), 81-90.
- Black, P., & Wiliam, D. (2018). Classroom assessment and pedagogy: Assessment in Education: *Principles, Policy & Practice*, 25(6) 551-575.
- Black, P., & Wiliam, D. (2007). *Assessment for learning in the classroom*. In: J. Gardner (Ed.). *Assessment and Learning* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). (pp. 11–32). London: SAGE.

- Black, P., Harrison, J., & Wiliam, D. (2004). Working inside the black box: Assessment for learning in the classroom. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 86(1), 8-21.
- Blake, D. & Hanley, V. (1995). *Dictionary of educational terms*. Aldershot: Arina.
- Boud, D., & Falchikov, N. (2006). Aligning assessment with long-term learning. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 31(4), 399-413.
- Boud, D., & Falchikov, N. (Eds.). (2007). *Rethinking assessment in higher education: Learning for the longer term*. London: Routledge.
- Box, C. (2019). The power of formative assessment. In: *Formative assessment in United States Classrooms* (pp. 25-48). Texas: Palgrave Macmillan, Cham.
- Brannick, M.T., & Levine, E. L. (2002). *Job analysis methods research and applications*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative research in psychology*, 3(2), 77-101.
- Bresciani, M. J. (2006). *Outcomes-based academic and co-curricular program review: A compilation of institutional good practices*. Sterling, VA: Stylus.
- Brink, M. K. (2017). *Teachers' perceived understanding of formative assessment and how this understanding impacts their own classroom instruction* (Unpublished Doctor of Philosophy Thesis). Illinois: Graduate School Southern Illinois University, Carbondale.
- Brookhart, S. M. (2001). Successful students' formative and summative uses of assessment information. *Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy & Practice*, 8(2), 153-169.
- Brookhart, S. M. (2011). Educational assessment knowledge and skills for teachers. *Educational Measurement: Issues and Practice*, 3(3) 3-12.
- Brookhart, S. M., Moss, C. M., & Long, B. A. (2010). Teacher inquiry into formative assessment practices in remedial reading classrooms. *Assessment in Education, Principles, Policy and Practices*, 17(1), 41-58.
- Brown, M., Gipps, C., McAlister, S., & McCallum, B. (1995). *Intuition or evidence: Teachers and national assessment of seven year olds*. Buckingham: Oxford University Press.
- Brown, S. (2005). Assessment for learning. *Journal of learning and teaching in higher education*, (1), 81-89.
- Bryman, A. (2012). *Social research methods*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.



- Burket, D. S. (2016). *The formative use of summative assessments at the US Army Command and General Staff School: A qualitative case study* (Unpublished Doctoral dissertation). Kansas City: Kansas State University.
- Burns, G. L. (2015). Animals as tourism objects: Ethically refocusing relationships between tourists and wildlife. *Animals and tourism: Understanding diverse relationships*, 67, 44-59.
- Byabato, S., & Kisamo, K. (2014). Implementation of school based continuous assessment (CA) in Tanzania ordinary secondary schools and its implications on the quality of education. *Developing Country Studies*, 4(6), 55-61.
- Carless, D. (2007). Learning-oriented assessment: Conceptual basis and practical implications. *Innovations in Education and Teaching International*, 44, 57–66.
- Cassell, C., Buehring, A., Symon, G., Johnson, P., & Bishop, V. (2005). Qualitative management research: A thematic analysis of interviews with stakeholders in the field. *Benchmarking good practices in qualitative management research: Final report*. Retrieved April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2017 from [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/27398614\\_Qualitative\\_Management\\_Research\\_A\\_Thematic\\_Analysis\\_of\\_Interviews\\_with\\_Stakeholders\\_in\\_the\\_Field/citation/download](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/27398614_Qualitative_Management_Research_A_Thematic_Analysis_of_Interviews_with_Stakeholders_in_the_Field/citation/download).
- Chili, N. (2013). Tourism education: Factors affecting effective teaching and learning of Tourism in township schools. *Journal of Human Ecology*, 4(1), 33-43.
- Christiansen, I., Bertram, C., & Land, S. (2010). *Understanding research*. Pietermaritzburg: UKZN Faculty of Education.
- Christie, A. (2005). *Constructivism and its implications for educators*. [Online]. Retrieved April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2013 from <http://alicechristie.com/edtech/learning/constructivism/index.htm>
- Cizek, G. J. (2010). An introduction to formative assessment: History, characteristics and challenges. In: H. L. Andrade & G. J. Cizek (Eds.). *Handbook of formative assessment* (pp. 3-17). New York: Routledge.
- Cizek, G. J., Andrade, H. L., & Bennett, R. E. (2019). Formative assessment. In: H. L. Andrade, R. E. Bennett & G. J. Cizek (Eds.). *Handbook of formative assessment in the disciplines* (pp. 67-89). New York: Routledge.
- Clark, I. (2011). The development of 'Project 1': Formative assessment strategies in UK schools. *Current Issues in Education*, 13(3), 1-15. [Online]. Retrieved May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2019 from, <http://cie.asu.edu/>

- Clarke, S. (2003). *Enriching feedback in the primary classroom: Oral and written feedback from teachers and children*. London: Hodder and Stoughton.
- Clarke, V., & Braun, V. (2013) Teaching thematic analysis: Overcoming challenges and developing strategies for effective learning. *The Psychologist*, 26(2), 120-123.
- Cohen, L., & Crabtree, B. (2006). *Qualitative research guidelines project*. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.quarles.org/HomeSemi-3629.html>. Retrieved April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2017.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2007). *Research methods in education*. New York: Routledge.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2011). *Research methods in education* (7<sup>th</sup>ed.). London: Routledge.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2013). The ethics of educational and social research. *Research Methods in Education*, 13(1), 99-128.
- Creswell, J. W. (2003). *Research design, qualitative, quantitative and mixed method*. Los Angeles: SAGE.
- Creswell, J. W. (2009). *Educational research: Planning, conducting and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research*. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Pearson Prentice Hall.
- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: International student's edition*. Los Angeles: SAGE.
- Creswell, J. W., & Clark, V. L. P. (2007). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research*. New York: SAGE.
- Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2017). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE.
- Cunha, L. (2014). The definition and scope of tourism: A necessary inquiry. *Cogitur, Journal of Tourism Studies*, 8(5), 91-114.
- Curry, K. A., Mwavita, M., Holter, A., & Harris, E. (2016). Getting assessment right at the classroom level: Using formative assessment for decision making. *Educational Assessment, Evaluation and Accountability*, 28(1), 89-104.
- Dalen, L., Sonuga-Barke, E. J., Hall, M., & Remington, B. (2004). Inhibitory deficits, delay aversion and preschool AD/HD: Implications for the dual pathway model. *Neural Plasticity*, 11(1-2), 1-11.
- Dandekar, P. D. (2015). Effect of formative assessment of students on their academic performance in Department of Kriya Sharir. *Journal of Education Technology in Health Sciences*, 2(2), 51-56.

- Das, S., Alsalhanie, K. M., Nauhria, S., Joshi, V. R., Khan, S., & Surender, V. (2017). Impact of formative assessment on the outcome of summative assessment: A feedback based cross-sectional study conducted among basic science medical students enrolled in MD program. *Asian Journal of Medical Sciences*, 8(4), 38-43.
- Daugherty, R., Black, P., Ecclestone, K., James, M., & Newton, P. (2011). Assessment of significant learning outcomes. In R. Berry & R. Adamson (Eds.), *Assessment reform in education* (pp. 165-183). Dordrecht: Springer,
- Deane, P., & Sparks, J. R. (2019). Scenario-based formative assessment of key practices in the English language arts. In: H. L. Andrade & G. J. Cizek (Eds.), *Handbook of formative assessment in the disciplines* (pp. 11-17). New York: Routledge.
- Denzin, N. K. & Lincoln, Y. S. (2005). *Handbook of qualitative research* (3<sup>rd</sup>ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2011). *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Department of Basic Education. (2010). *Curriculum and assessment policy statement for Tourism grade10-12*. Pretoria: Government Printers.
- Department of Basic Education. (2011). *Curriculum and assessment policy statement (CAPS) for Tourism grade 10-12*. Government Gazette, Pretoria: Government Printer.
- Department of Basic Education. (2012). *Curriculum assessment policy statement (CAPS) for Tourism grade 10-12*. Government Gazette, Pretoria: Government Printer.
- Department of Education. (2003a). *National curriculum statement grades 10-12 (Tourism)*. Pretoria: Government Printers.
- Department of Education. (2003b). *National curriculum statement grades 10-12 (General)*. Pretoria: Government Printers.
- Department of Education. (2005). *Minimum admission requirements for Higher Certificate*. Pretoria: Government printers.
- Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism. (1996). *White Paper on the development and promotion of tourism in South Africa*. Pretoria: Government Printers.
- Diana, W. (2019). *Portraying English teachers' problem in designing formative assessment based on the 2013 curriculum: Descriptive qualitative research conducted at secondary school in Sleman Regency* (Unpublished Doctoral dissertation). Dublin: Dublin Institute of Technology.

- Dube, Z. H. W. (2014). *Conceptions and misconceptions of Tourism as a subject in the South African school curriculum*. Travel and Tourism Education School of Education, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban.
- Dube, Z.H. W. (2016). *Curriculum decision-making in the selection of new subjects in schools: A qualitative study of the adoption of Tourism as an elective in selected KwaZulu-Natal high schools*. Travel and Tourism Education School of Education. University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban.
- Du Toit, J. S. (2008). South African Higher Education and Near Eastern Studies (1): Some issues in the assessment of student learning. *Journal for Semitics*, 17(2), 423-442.
- Earl, L. M. (2012). *Assessment as learning: Using classroom assessment to maximize student learning*. Thousand Oaks, California: Corwin Press.
- Earle, N. (2008). *Sector studies: Tourism*. Research commissioned by the Department of Labour. South Africa: HSRC.
- Efklides, A. (2011). Interactions of metacognition with motivation and affect in self-regulated learning: The MASRL model. *Educational Psychologist*, 46(1), 6-25.
- Ewell, P. T. (2001). An emerging scholarship: A brief history of assessment. *Building a scholarship of assessment*, 3-25.
- Fereday, J., & Muir-Cochrane, E. (2006). Demonstrating rigor using thematic analysis: A hybrid approach of inductive and deductive coding and theme development. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 5(1), 80-92.
- Fisher, D., & Frey, N. (2007). *Checking for understanding: Formative assessment techniques for your classroom*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Flick, U. (2015). *An introduction to qualitative research*. London: SAGE.
- Furtak, E. M. (2012). Linking a learning progression for natural selection to teachers' enactment of formative assessment. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching*, 49(9), 1181–1210.
- Furtak, E. M., & Ruiz-Primo, M. A. (2008). Making students' thinking explicit in writing and discussion: An analysis of formative assessment prompts. *Science Education*, 92(5), 799-824.
- Gajjar, D. (2013). Ethical consideration in research. *Education*, 2(7), 12-86.
- Gammill, D.M. (2006). Learning the 'write' way. *Reading Teacher*, 59(8), 754-762.
- Gattullo, F. (2000). Formative assessment in ELT primary classrooms: An Italian case study. *Language Testing*, 17(2), 278–288.

- Gay, L.R., Mills, G.E., & Airasian, P. (2009). *Educational research* (9<sup>th</sup> ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education.
- Gibbs, G. (2003). *Using assessment strategically to change the way students learn in assessment matters in higher education*. Buckingham: The Society for Research into Higher Education and Open University Press.
- Gibson, W., & Brown, A. (2009). *Working with qualitative data*. Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE.
- Gipps, C., McCallum, B., Hargreaves, E., & Pickering, A. (2005). From TA to assessment for learning: The impact of assessment policy on teachers' assessment practice. Paper presented at the British Educational Research Association Annual Conference (September 14–17). Glamorgan: University of Glamorgan.
- Giroux, H. (1992). *Border crossing: Cultural workers and the politics of education*. London: Routledge Publishers.
- Given, L. M. (2008). *The SAGE encyclopaedia of qualitative research methods*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE.
- Goeldner, C.R. (2001). Tourism education. *Journal of Teaching in Travel & Tourism*, 1(1), 97-107.
- Graue, E., & Johnson, E. (2011). *Reclaiming assessment through accountability that is just right*. Colombia: University of Wisconsin-Madison.
- Grix, J. (2010). *The foundations of research* (2<sup>nd</sup>ed.). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Gu, H., Kavanaugh, R. R., & Cong, Y. (2007). Empirical studies of tourism education in China. *Journal of Teaching in Travel & Tourism*, 7(1), 3–24.
- Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1995). Competing paradigms in qualitative research. In: *Handbook of qualitative research*, 105-117.
- Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2003). *Competing paradigms in social research: Second language writing*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Gultig, J., Hoadley, U., & Jansen, J. (Eds.). (2002). *Curriculum: From plans to practices: Reader*. Cape Town: South African Institute for Distance Education and Oxford University Press.
- Hagger, M. S. (2016). Non-conscious processes and dual process theories in health psychology. *Health Psychology Review*, 10(4), 375-380. DOI: 10.1080/17437199.2016.1244647

- Hamidi, E. (2010). Fundamental issues in L2 classroom assessment practices. *Academic leadership: The Online Journal*, 8(2), 1-12. Available at: <https://scholars.fhsu.edu/alj/vol8/iss2/21> Retrieved October 10<sup>th</sup>, 2011.
- Handley, K. Szwelnik, A., Ujma, D., Lawrance, L., Millar, J., & Price, M. (2007). *When less is more: Student's experiences of assessment feedback*. A paper presented at Higher Education Academy on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of July 2007.
- Hanover Research. (2015). *The impact of formative assessment and learning intentions on student achievement*. Washington DC: Hanover Research.
- Harlen, W. (2012). *On the relationship between assessment for formative and summative purposes, assessment and learning*. London: SAGE.
- Haroldson, R. A. (2012). *Student perceptions of formative assessment in the chemistry classroom*. Available at: <http://hdl.handle.net/11299/131744>. Retrieved August 12<sup>th</sup>, 2017, from the University of Minnesota Digital Conservancy.
- Havnes, A., & McDowell, L. (2008). Introduction: Assessment dilemmas in contemporary learning cultures. In: A. Havnes & L. McDowel (Eds.). *Balancing dilemmas in assessment and learning in contemporary education* (pp. 13-24). New York: Routledge.
- Hennin, E., Van Rensburg, W., & Smit, B. (2004). *Finding your way in qualitative research*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Heritage, M. (2007). Formative assessment: What do teachers need to know and do? *Phi Delta Kappan*, 89(2), 140-145.
- Heritage, M. (2010). *Formative assessment and next-generation assessment systems: Are we losing an opportunity?* Paper prepared for the Council of Chief State School Officers. Los Angeles, CA: University of California, National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards and Student Testing. Retrieved 5<sup>th</sup> May 2019 from [http://www.ccsso.org/Documents/2010/Formative\\_Assessment\\_Next\\_Generation\\_in\\_2010.pdf](http://www.ccsso.org/Documents/2010/Formative_Assessment_Next_Generation_in_2010.pdf).
- Heritage, M. (2011). *Formative assessment: An enabler of learning. Better Evidence-based Education*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University.
- Hesse-Biber, S.N., & Leavy, P. (2011). *The practice of qualitative research* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE.
- Higgins, M., Grant, F., & Thompson, P. (2010). Formative assessment: Balancing educational effectiveness and resource efficiency. *Journal for Education in the Built Environment*, 5(2), 4-24.

- Hogson, C., & Pyle, K. (2010). *A literature review of assessment for learning in science*. Slough Berk:National Foundation for Educational Research.
- Holloway, I., & Wheeler, S. (2002). *Qualitative research in nursing* (2<sup>nd</sup>ed.). Oxford: Blackwell.
- Hornstra, L., Kamsteeg, A., Pot, S., & Verheij, L. (2018). A dual pathway of student motivation: Combining an implicit and explicit measure of student motivation. *Frontline Learning Research*, 6(1), 1-18. Available at: <http://www.asha.org/about/credentialing/Rassi-Formative-Assess.htm>
- Huisman, M. (2018). *Formative assessment and the impact on student learning* (Unpublished Master's Thesis). Orange City: North-Western College.
- Irons, A. (2008). *Enhancing learning through formative assessment and feedback*. London; New York: Routledge.
- James, A., & Van Laren, L. (2006). *Implementation of the changed assessment policy in Grade 9 Mathematics and Natural Sciences Learning Areas*. Paper presented at the 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the Southern African Association for Research in Mathematics, Science and Technology Education.
- Jansen, J. (1998). Curriculum reform in South Africa: A critical analysis of outcomes-based education. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 28,321-331.
- Javid, C. Z., & Umer, M. (2014). *Saudi EFL learners' writing problems: A move towards solution*. Proceeding of the Global Summit on Education GSE 2014, 4-5 March 2014. Kuala Lumpur. Malasia. Retrieved November 5<sup>th</sup> 2017 from [http://worldconferences.net/proceedings/gse2014/toc/papers\\_gse2014/G%20078%20-%20CHOUNDHAR%20ZAHID%20JAVID\\_Saudi%20EFL%20Learners\\_%20Writing%20Problems%20A%20Move%20towards%20Solution\\_read.pdf](http://worldconferences.net/proceedings/gse2014/toc/papers_gse2014/G%20078%20-%20CHOUNDHAR%20ZAHID%20JAVID_Saudi%20EFL%20Learners_%20Writing%20Problems%20A%20Move%20towards%20Solution_read.pdf).
- Johnson, B., & Christiansen, I. (2010). *Educational research: Quantitative, qualitative and mixed approaches*. Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE.
- Johnson, E., & Jenkins, J. (2009). *Formative and summative assessment. Psychology of Classroom Learning: An Encyclopedia*. Detroit: Macmillan Reference.
- Joubish, M. F., Khurram, M. A., Ahmed, A., Fatima, S. T., & Haider, K. (2011). Paradigms and characteristics of a good qualitative research. *World Applied Sciences Journal*, 12(11), 2082-2087.
- Kanjee, A. (2009). Enhancing teacher assessment practices in South African schools: Evaluation of the assessment resource banks. *Education and Change*, 13(1), 67-83.

- Kanjee, A., & Moloi, Q. (2014). South African teachers' use of national assessment data. *South African Journal of Childhood Education*, 4(2), 90-113.
- Kanjee, A., & Sayed, Y. (2013). Assessment policy in post-apartheid South Africa: Challenges for improving education quality and learning. *Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy & Practice*, 20(4), 442-469.
- Katherine, C., & Kalina, C. J. (2009). Cognitive and social constructivism: Developing tools for an effective classroom. *Education*, 130(2), 241-250.
- Keefer, M. W., Wilson, S. E., Dankowicz, H., & Loui, M. C. (2014). The importance of formative assessment in science and engineering ethics education: Some evidence and practical advice. *Science and Engineering Ethics*, 20(1), 249-260.
- Kellaghan, T., & Greaney, V. (2003). *Monitoring performance: Assessment and examinations in Africa*. Paris: Association for the Development of Education in Africa. Washington DC: World Bank.
- Kennedy, D., Hyland, A., & Ryan, N. (2006). Writing and using learning outcomes: A practical guide. EUA Bologna Handbook. *Making Bologna Work*. Berlin: European University Association. Retrieved April 10<sup>th</sup> from, <http://www.eua.be/publications/bologna-handbook>.
- Kimu, A. M. (2012). *Parent involvement in public primary schools in Kenya* (Unpublished Doctoral dissertation). Pretoria: University of South Africa.
- King, N., & Horrocks, C. (2010). *Interviews in qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Kondri, B. Z. (2015). The effect of formative assessment on students' success. *European Journal of Social Science Education and Research*, 2(4), 245-253.
- Kotze, G. S. (2002). Issues related to adapting assessment practices. *South African Journal Education*, 22(1), 76–80.
- Krueger, R. A., & Casey, M. A. (2014). *Focus groups: A practical guide for applied research*. Chicago: SAGE.
- Kruss, G. (2009). *Opportunities and challenges for teacher education curriculum in South Africa: Teacher Education in South Africa Series*. Cape Town: HSRC Press.
- Kunwar, R. R. (2018). Tourism education, curriculum spaces, knowledge production, and disciplinary pluralism. *The Gaze: Journal of Tourism and Hospitality*, 9, 83-155.
- Kuze, M. W., & Shumba, A. (2011). An investigation into formative assessment practices of teachers in selected schools in Fort Beaufort in South Africa. *Journal of Social Sciences*, 29(2), 159-170.



- Lang, S., Stanely, T., & Moore, B. (2008). *Short cycle assessment: Improving student achievement through formative assessment*. Larchmont, New York: Eye on Education.
- Law, P. (2002). No child left behind Act of 2001. *Public Law*, 107, 110-122.
- Leedy, P. D., & Ormond, J. E. (2010). *Practical research: Planning and design* (9<sup>th</sup>ed.). New Jersey, Upper Saddle, River: Pearson Education.
- Leong, W. S., & Tan, K. (2014). What (more) can, and should, assessment do for learning? Observations from successful learning contexts in Singapore. *Curriculum Journal*, 25(4), 593-619.
- Levine, S. P. (2002). *The politics of the school curriculum: An introduction*. Harare: Jongwe Press.
- Lewis, S. (2015). Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches. *Health Promotion Practice*, 24(1), 5-21.
- Li, W. D., Schaubroeck, J. M., Xie, J. L., & Keller, A. C. (2018). Is being a leader a mixed blessing? A dual-pathway model linking leadership role occupancy to well-being. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 39(8), 971-989.
- Lincoln, Y. S., & Denzin, N. K. (Eds.). (2000). *The handbook of qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE.
- Lincoln, Y. S., Lynham, S. A., & Guba, E. G. (2011). Contractions and emerging confluences revisited. In: N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.). *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.) (pp. 97– 128). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Lubisi, C. (2000). *An investigation into mathematics teachers' perceptions and practices of classroom assessment in South African lower secondary schools*. (Unpublished Doctor of Philosophy thesis). Nottingham: University of Nottingham.
- Lumadi, M. W. (2013). Challenges besetting teachers in classroom assessment: An exploratory perspective. *Journal of Social Sciences*, 34(3), 211-221.
- Lund, J. L., & Kirk, M. F. (2019). *Performance-based assessment for middle and high school physical education*. Champaign, Illinois: Human Kinetics Publishers.
- MacLellan, E. (2001). Assessment for learning: The differing perceptions of tutors and learners. *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education*, 26 (4), 307-318.
- Major, C. H., & Savin-Baden, M. (2010). *An introduction to qualitative research synthesis: Managing the information explosion in social science research*. New York: Routledge.
- Mansor, A. N., Rasul, M.S., & Yusof, A.H. (2013). Effective classroom assessment management. *International Studies*, 5(5), 35-42.

- Maraldo, T. M., Zhou, W., Dowling, J., & Vander Wal, J. S. (2016). Replication and extension of the dual pathway model of disordered eating: The role of fear of negative evaluation, suggestibility, rumination, and self-compassion. *Eating Behaviors*, *23*, 187-194.
- Marshall, J. M. (2005). Formative assessment: Mapping the road to success. *A white paper prepared for the Princeton Review*. New York, NY: Princeton Review.
- Martella, R. C., Nelson, J. R., Morgan, R. L., & Marchand-Martella, N. E. (2013). *Understanding and interpreting educational research*. New York, NY: The Guilford Press.
- McClure, S. M., & Bickel, W. K. (2014). A dual-systems perspective on addiction: Contributions from neuroimaging and cognitive training. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, *1327*, 62-74.
- McMillan J. 2003. Understanding and improving teachers' classroom assessment decision making: Implications for theory and practice. *Educational Measurement: Issues and Practice*, *22*(4), 34–43.
- McMillian, J. H., & Schumacher, S. (2010). *Research in education: Evidence-based enquiry* (7<sup>th</sup>ed.). Boston: Pearson Education.
- Merriam, S. B., & Tisdell, E. J. (2015). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation*. San Francisco: John Wiley & Sons.
- Moletsane, R. (2015). Whose knowledge is it? Towards reordering knowledge production and dissemination in the global South. *Educational Research for Social Change (ERSC)*, *4*(2), 35-47.
- Moss, C. M., & Brookhart, S. M. (2019). *Advancing formative assessment in every classroom: A guide for instructional leaders* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). London: ASCD.
- Mouton, D. S. (2001). *Classroom assessment techniques: Handbook for college teachers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Mouton, J. (2011). *How to succeed in your master's and doctoral studies: A South African guide and resource book* (13<sup>th</sup> ed.). Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Moyosore, O. A. (2015). The effect of formative assessment on students' achievement in secondary school mathematics. *International Journal of Education and Research*, *3*(10), 481-490.

- Mussawy, S. A. J. (2009). *Assessment practices: Students' and teachers' perceptions of classroom assessment* (Unpublished Master of Education thesis). Massachusetts: University of Massachusetts.
- Musso, M. F., Boekaerts, M., Segers, M., & Cascallar, E. C. (2019). Individual differences in basic cognitive processes and self-regulated learning: Their interaction effects on math performance. *Learning and Individual Differences, 71*, 58-70.
- Mzizi, N. (2014). *Curriculum adaptations for learners with learning impairments in the foundation phase in Thabo Mofutsanyana Education* (Unpublished Doctoral dissertation). Welkom: Central University of Technology, Free State.
- Naicker, K. (2013). *The factors promoting parental involvement at a secondary school in KwaZulu-Natal* (Unpublished Master of Education thesis). University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban.
- Neuman, W.L. (2011). *Basics of social research: qualitative and quantitative approaches: international edition* (3rd ed.). Boston: Pearson Education
- Newby, P. (2010). *Research methods for education*. Harlow UK: Pearson Education.
- Newman, D., Griffin, P., & Cole, M. (1989). *The construction zone*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Newman, P. A., Logie, C., James, L., Charles, T., Maxwell, J., Salam, K., & Woodford, M. (2011). "Speaking the dialect": Understanding public discourse in the aftermath of an HIV vaccine trial shutdown. *American Journal of Public Health, 101*(9), 1749-1758.
- Newton, P. (2010). *Educational assessment – concepts and issues: The multiple purposes of assessment*. New York: Elsevier.
- Ngwenya, J. C. (2012). *Formative assessment in accounting: Exploring teachers' understanding and practices* (Unpublished Doctor of Philosophy dissertation). Pinetown: University of KwaZulu-Natal.
- Ngwenya, J.C. (2014). Accounting teachers' understandings and practices of teaching and assessment in a context of curriculum change. *Alternation, 21*(1), 171-190.
- Nieuwenhuis, J. (2016). Qualitative research designs and data gathering techniques. In K. Maree (Ed.), *First steps in research* (2nd Ed.) (pp.72-102). Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Nijstad, B. A., De Dreu, C. K., Rietzschel, E. F., & Baas, M. (2010). The dual pathway to the creativity model: Creative ideation as a function of flexibility and persistence. *European Review of Social Psychology, 21*(1), 34-77.
- O'Farrell, C. (2016). *Enhancing student learning through assessment: A toolkit approach*. Dublin: Dublin Institute of Technology.

- O'Hara, M., Carter, C., Dewis, P., Kay, J., & Wainwright, J. (2011). *Successful dissertations: The complete guide for education, childhood and early childhood studies*. London: Continuum.
- Offredy, M., & Vickers, P. (2010). *Developing a healthcare research proposal: An interactivestudent guide*. West Sussex, UK: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Oliver, P. (2008). *Writing your thesis*. Los Angeles: SAGE.
- Oosterhof, A. (2009). *Classroom applications of educational measurement* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). (2005). *Formative assessment: Improving learning in secondary classrooms*. Paris: OECD.
- Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). (2008). *Assessment for learning: The case for formative assessment*. Geneva: Centre for Educational Research and Innovation.
- Osman, M. (2004). An evaluation of dual-process theories of reasoning. *Psychonomic Bulletin & Review*, 11(6), 988-1010.
- Ozan, C., & Kincal, R. Y. (2018). The effects of formative assessment on academic achievement, attitudes toward the lesson, and self-regulation skills. *Educational Sciences: Theory and Practice*, 18(1), 85-118.
- Padgett, D. K. (2016). *Qualitative methods in social research*. London: SAGE.
- Panchbhai, A. S., & Shrivastva, T. (2014). Students' perceptions about formative assessment examinations. *JHSE*, 1(1), 48-51.
- Panchbhai, A. S., Vagha, S., & Bhowate, R. (2014). Perceptions of students and faculties regarding the formative assessment examinations in a dental college in India. *Journal of Education and Ethics in Dentistry*, 4(2), 47-53.
- Patton, M. Q. (1990). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE.
- Patton, M. Q. (2015). *Qualitative research and methods: Integrating theory and practice*. London: SAGE.
- Pawson, P. (2002). *A Travel and Tourism curriculum for the training of secondary school teachers*. (Unpublished thesis). Pretoria: University of South Africa.
- Pellegrino, J.W. (2013). *The evolution of educational assessment: Considering the past and imagining the future*. Princeton: Policy Evaluation and Research Center.

- Pla-Campas, G., Arumí-Prat, J., Senye-Mir, A. M., & Ramírez, E. (2016). Effect of using formative assessment techniques on students' grades. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 228, 190-195.
- Poliah, R. (2009). *The management of quality assurance of school-based assessment at national level in South Africa* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Johannesburg: University of Johannesburg.
- Pope, C., Mays, N., & Popay, J. (2007). *Synthesising qualitative research and quantitative health evidence: A guide to methods*. New York: McGraw-Hill Education.
- Popham, W. (2006). *Defining and Enhancing Formative Assessment*. Paper written for Texas meeting October 10-13, 2006, University of California
- Punch, K. F. (2013). *Introduction to social research: Quantitative and qualitative approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Punch, K. F., & Oancea, A. (2014). *Introduction to research methods in education*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Quitadamo, I. J., & Kurtz, M. J. (2007). Learning to improve: Using writing to increase critical thinking performance in general education biology. *CBELife Sciences Education*, 6(2), 140-154.
- Rassi, J.A. (1999). *Rationale for formative assessment component in new Audiology certification standards*. Retrieved, January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2017 from [http://www.asha.org/about/credentialing/Rassi\\_Formative-Assess.htm](http://www.asha.org/about/credentialing/Rassi_Formative-Assess.htm)
- Rayford, D. D. (2012). *A phenomenological case study of seventh-grade African American male students at the Afrocentric school in Columbus, Ohio* (Unpublished Doctoral dissertation). Columbus: Ohio University.
- Redfield, D., Roeber, E., Stiggins, R., & Philip, F. (2008). *Building balanced assessment systems to guide educational improvement*. A background paper for the keynote panel presentation at the National Conference on Student Assessment of the Council of Chief State School Officers, June 15, 2008, Orlando, Florida.
- Remler, D. K., & Van Ryzin, G. G. (2014). *Research methods in practice: Strategies for description and causation*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE.
- Restrepo, A., & Nelson, H. (2013). Role of systematic formative assessment on students' views of their learning. *Profile Issues in Teachers' Professional Development*, 15(2), 165-183.

- Reynek, M., Meyer, L., & Nel, C. (2010). School-based assessment: the leash needed to keep the poetic 'unruly pack of hounds' effectively in the hunt for learning outcomes. *South African Journal of Education*, 30(2), 277-292.
- Ruiz Primo, M. A., & Furtak, E. M. (2007). Exploring teachers' informal formative assessment practices and students' understanding in the context of scientific inquiry. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching*, 44(1), 57-84.
- Rule, P., & John, V. (2011). *Your guide to case study research*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Saayman, M. (2005). South Africa. In: D. Airey & J. Tribe (Eds.). *International handbook of tourism education*. London: Elsevier.
- Sadler, D. R. (1989). Formative assessment and the design of instructional systems. *Instructional Science*, 18(2), 119-144.
- Sadler, D. R. (2010). Beyond feedback: Developing student capability in complex appraisal. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 35(5), 535-550.
- Sato, M., Coffey, J., & Moorthy, S. (2005). Two teachers making assessment for learning their own. *Curriculum Journal*, 16(2), 177-191.
- Schutz, P. A., & Davis, H. A. (2000). Emotions and self-regulation during test taking. *Educational Psychologist*, 35(4), 243-256.
- Shepard, L. A. (2000). The role of assessment in a learning culture. *Educational Researcher*, 29(7), 4-14.
- Shepard, L.A. (2006). Classroom assessment. In: R. L. Brennan (Ed.). *Educational measurement* (pp. 623-646). Westport CT: Praeger.
- Shi, J., Hao, Z., Saeri, A. K., & Cui, L. (2015). The dual-pathway model of collective action: Impacts of types of collective action and social identity. *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations*, 18(1), 45-65.
- Sieborger, R., & Macintosh, H. (1998). *Transforming assessment: A guide for South African teachers*. Cape Town: Juta.
- Smith, J. A., Flowers, P., & Larkin, M. (2009). *Interpretative phenomenological analysis*. London, SAGE.
- Smith, J. K., & Smith, L. F. (2007). Listening to the student voice in learning and assessment. A paper presented at the NZARE Conference, Christchurch, 3-6.
- Sobral, F., Furtado, L., & Islam, G. (2017). The pathways that make new public employees committed: A dual-process model triggered by newcomer learning. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 27(4), 692-709.

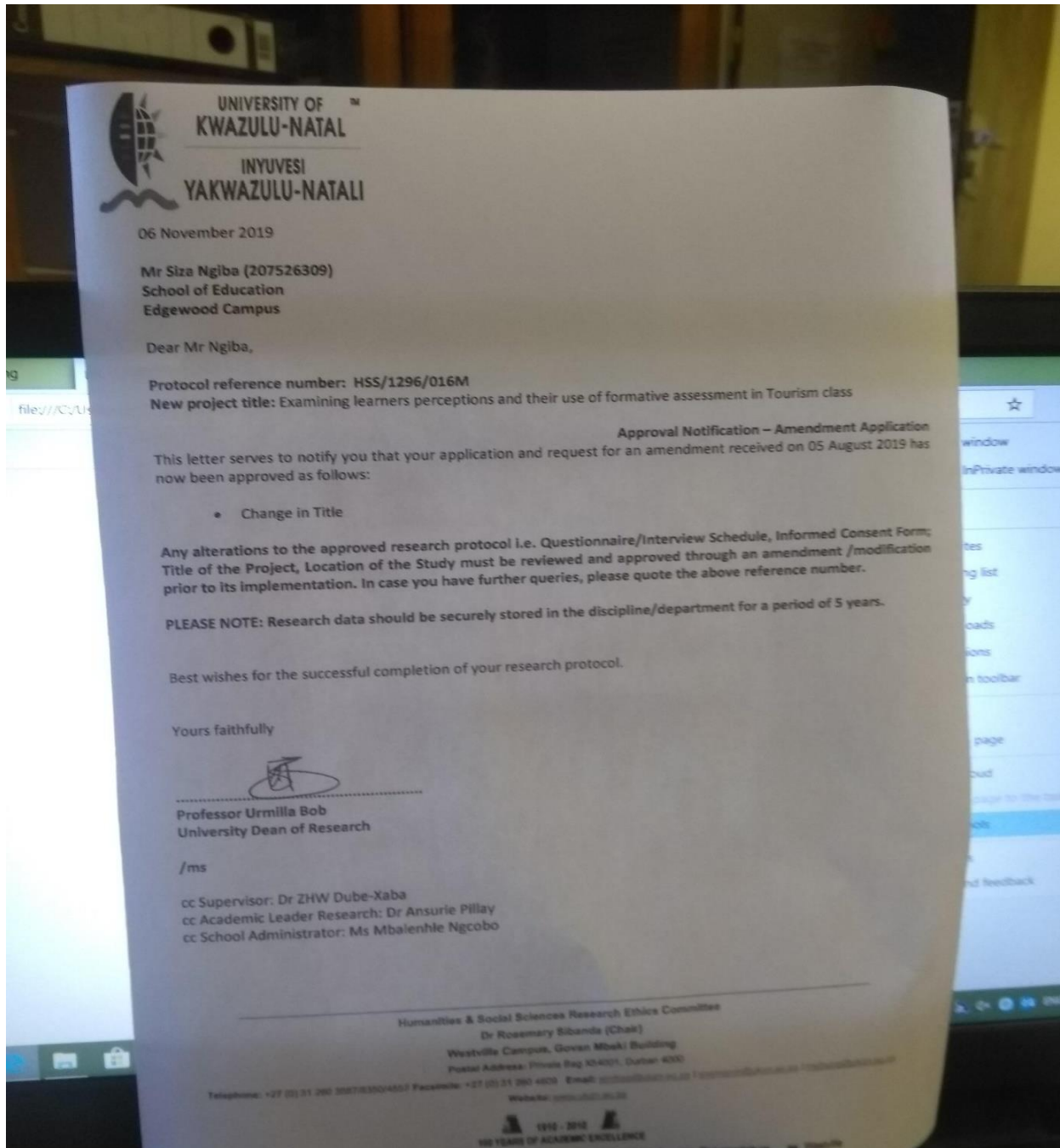
- South African Oxford Advanced Dictionary. (2002). *English Dictionary*. Cape Town: Oxford Publishers.
- Spaull, N. (2013). Poverty and privilege: Primary school inequality in South Africa. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 33(5), 436-447.
- Spiller, D. (2009). *Assessment feedback to promote students' learning*. Walkato: University of Walkato Teaching Development Unit.
- Stevenson, R. J. (1997). Deductive reasoning and the distinction between implicit and explicit processes. *Current Psychology of Cognition*, 16(1), 222-229.
- Stiggins, R. J. (2001). *Student-involved classroom assessment* (3<sup>rd</sup>ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Stiggins, R. J. (2004). New assessment beliefs for a new school mission. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 86(1), 22-27.
- Stiggins, R. J. (2005). From formative assessment to assessment for learning: A path to success in standards-based schools. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 87(4), 324-328.
- Stiggins, R.J., Arter, J.A., Chappuis, J., & Chappuis, S. (2008). *Classroom assessment for students' learning: Doing it right - using it well*. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Pearson Education.
- Stufflebeam, D. L., & Wingate L. A. (Eds.). *International handbook of educational evaluation* (pp. 533 – 548). Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- Stull, J., Varnum, S. J., Ducette, J., & Schiller, J. (2011). The many faces of formative assessment. *International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*, 23(1), 30-39.
- Supovitz, J., Sirinides, P., & May, H. (2010). How principals and peers influence teaching and learning. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 46(1), 31-56.
- Supovitz, J. A. (2012). Getting at student understanding: The key to teachers' use of test data. *Teachers College Record*, 114(11), 1-29.
- Surgenor, P. (2010). Teaching toolkit: Role of assessment. Retrieved January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2016 from <http://www.ucd.ie/teaching/t4media/UCDTLT0026.pdf>.
- Swanborn, P. (2010). *Case study research: What, why and how?* London: SAGE.
- Tellis, W. M. (1997). Application of a case study methodology. *The Qualitative Report*, 3(3), 1-19.
- Tesch, R. (1990). *Qualitative research*. New York: Falmer Press.

- Themane, M. J., & Mamabolo, J. M. (2011). *Diversity as a curricular challenge in South African schools*. Retrieved 5th May 2019, from <http://www.saqa.org.za/docs/promo/2011/themane.pdf>.
- Thomas, A., Menon, A., Boruff, J., Rodriguez, A. M., & Ahmed, S. (2014). Applications of social constructivist learning theories in knowledge translation for healthcare professionals: a scoping review. *Implementation Science*, 9(1), 54-92
- Torrance, H., & Pryor, J. (2002). *Investigating formative assessment: Teaching, learning and assessment in the classroom*. Philadelphia: Open University Press.
- Tribe, J. (2000). Balancing the vocational: The theory and practice of liberal education in Tourism. *The International Journal of Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 2, 9-26.
- Tuckman, B. W., & Harper, B. E. (2012). *Conducting educational research*. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers.
- Tunstall, P., & Gipps, C. (1996). Teacher feedback to young children in formative assessment: A typology. *British Educational Research Journal*, 22(4), 389-404.
- Udoukpong, B. E., & Okon, C. P. (2012). Perception of formative evaluation practices and students' academic performance in junior secondary certificate examination in social studies. *International Journal of Business and Social Science*, 3(15), 205-212.
- Uys, L., & Gwele, N. (2004). *Curriculum development in nursing: Process and innovation*. New York: Routledge.
- Van der Nest, A., Long, C., & Engelbrecht, J. (2018). The impact of formative assessment activities on the development of teacher agency in mathematics teachers. *South African Journal of Education*, 38(1), 1-11.
- Van der Watering, G. Gijbels, D., Dochy, F., & Van der Rijt, J. (2006). *Students' assessment preferences, perceptions of assessment and their relationship to study results*. Maastricht: Department of educational research University of Maastricht, Netherlands.
- Vandeyar, S., & Killen, R. (2003). Has curriculum in South Africa really changed assessment practices and what promises does the Revised National Curriculum Statement hold? *Perspectives in Education*, 21(1).
- Vanhove, N. (2017). *The Economics of Tourism Destinations: Theory and Practice* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). New York: Routledge.
- Varier, D. (2015). *A case study examining formative assessment in a postsecondary English language program*. (Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation). Richmond, Virginia: Virginia Commonwealth University.



- Wahyuni, D. (2012). The research design maze: Understanding paradigms, cases, methods and methodologies. *Journal of Applied Management Accounting Research*, 10(1), 69–80.
- Walliman, N. (2006). *Social research methods*. London: SAGE.
- Werquin, P. (2010). *Recognising non-formal and formal learning: Outcomes policies and practices*. Paris: OECD.
- Wiliam, D. (1999). Formative assessment in Mathematics Part 2: Feedback. Equals. *Mathematics and Special Educational Needs*, 5(3), 8-11.72
- Wiliam, D., & Black, P. (1996). Meanings and consequences: A basis for distinguishing formative and summative functions of assessment? *British Educational Research Journal*, 22(5), 537-548.
- Wiliam, D., & Leahy, S. (2007). *A theoretical foundation for formative assessment*. American Educational Research Association annual meeting, San Francisco, CA.
- Wiliam, D. (2011). What is assessment for learning? *Studies in Educational Evaluation*, 37, 3–14.
- Wiliam, D. (2014). Assessment: the bridge between teaching and learning. *Voices from the Middle*, 21(2), 15-20.
- Wilson, C. (2013). *Interview techniques for US practitioners: A user centred design method*. Waltham, Massachusetts: Elsevier Science.
- Wium, A. M., & Louw, B. (2015). The South African national school curriculum: Implications for collaboration between teachers and speech-language therapists working in Schools. *South African Journal of Childhood Education*, 5(1), 19-41.
- Wragg, T. (2001). *Assessment & learning: Primary and secondary*. New York: Routledge.
- Wren, D. G. (2008). Using formative assessment to increase learning. *Research Brief*, 1.
- Wylie, C., & Lyon, C. (2012). Formative assessment: Supporting students' learning. *ETS R&D Connections*, 19, 1-12.
- Yin, R. K. (1984). *Case study research design and methods*. Beverly Hills, California: SAGE.
- Yin, R. K. (2009). *Case study research design and methods* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). Thousand Oaks: SAGE.
- Yin, R. K. (2011). *Applications of case study research*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE.
- Zou, P. X. W. (2008). Designing effective assessment in postgraduate construction project management studies. *Journal for Education in the Built Environment*, 3(1), 80-94.

## APPENDIX A: ETHICAL CLEARANCE LETTER



## APPENDIX B: KwaZulu-Natal Department of Basic Education Permission Letter

— + ↺ ↗ ↔ Fit to width

 **education**  
Department:  
Education  
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

---

Enquiries: Phindile Duma      Tel: 033 392 1004      Ref: 214/8/216

Mr S Ngiba  
D10009 Ulangakazi Road  
KwaMashu  
4359

Dear Mr Ngiba

**PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE KZN DoE INSTITUTIONS**

Your application to conduct research entitled: "EXPLORING LEARNERS' PERCEPTIONS AND THEIR USE OF FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT IN TOURISM CLASSES", 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 03 October 2016 to 26 March 2016.
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 Connie Kehologile at the contact numbers below.
9. Upon completion of the research, a brief summary of the findings, recommendations or a full report/dissertation, these 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.

JG Zuma Secondary School

**NOKIA**  
Dr. EV Mzama  
Head of Department: Education  
Date: 05 October 2016

## APPENDIX C: Letter to the Principal

D 1009 Ulangakazi Road,  
KwaMashu.  
4359.

The Principal,

I, the undersigned, humbly request your permission to conduct a research on the Tourism subject, a subject done in Secondary schools in KwaZulu-Natal and South Africa as a whole. This research is part of my studies towards the Master of Education degree. The title of the study is **“Examining learners’ perceptions and their use of formative assessment in Tourism”**.

I wish to state that I subscribe to all research ethics of the Department of education, and would like you to note that:

- ✓ Participation in this study is voluntary. Participants are at liberty to withdraw from participating in the research at any time if they so wish.
- ✓ The participants are informed that there is no monetary or any other form of material gain attached to participation, however, the findings will to a large extent contribute to the body of knowledge as well as the field of Tourism teaching and learning.
- ✓ The research will not involve any form of physical contact but relies on sharing knowledge and experiences.

While waiting for your permission, thanks in anticipation.

S. Ngiba (Researcher)

I can be contacted at [Sizzzzaa@gmail.com](mailto:Sizzzzaa@gmail.com)/ or my supervisor Dr Z.H.W. Dube-Xaba at [dubez@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:dubez@ukzn.ac.za)

**DECLARATION BY THE PRINCIPAL**

This serves to confirm that \_\_\_\_\_ (*full names of the principal*) the principal of Multicolour High School grants/do not grant Mr. S Ngiba permission to do an empirical study in our school. I request that the identity of our school remain protected throughout the study and in the publications that will arise out of this study.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## Appendix D: Letter to the Parents (English Version)

D 1009 Ulangakazi Road,  
KwaMashu,  
4359

Dear Parents,

I, the undersigned, humbly request your permission to conduct a research on the Tourism subject, a subject done in Secondary schools in KwaZulu-Natal and South Africa as a whole. This research is part of my studies towards the Master of Education degree. The title of the study is: **Examine learners' perceptions of formative assessment in Tourism as a subject**

I wish to state that I would like your child to participate in this study by answering interview questions, I promise that there is no harmful or negative effect on participating in this study, so your child is safety. I would also like you to note that:

- ✓ Participation in this study is voluntary. Participants are at liberty to withdraw from participating in the research at any time if they so wish.
- ✓ The participants are informed that there is no monetary or any other form of material gain attached to participation, however, the findings will to a large extent contribute to the body of knowledge as well as the field of Tourism teaching and learning.
- ✓ The research will not involve any form of physical contact but relies on sharing knowledge and experiences.
- ✓ With your permission, the interviews will be audio-recorded to facilitate collection of accurate information and later transcribed for analysis.

While waiting for your permission, thanks in anticipation.

S.Ngiba (Researcher)

I can be contacted at [Sizzzzaa@gmail.com](mailto:Sizzzzaa@gmail.com)/ or my supervisor Dr Z.H. W. Dube-Xaba at [dubez@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:dubez@ukzn.ac.za)

## Parent's Declaration

This serves to confirm that I \_\_\_\_\_ the parent of  
\_\_\_\_\_ agree / do not agree for my child who is  
a learner in this school to participate in the empirical study that Mr S. Ngiba  
seeks to conduct in his/her school.

.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix E: Letter to the Parents' (IsiZulu Version)

D1009 Ulangakazi Road

KwaMashu, 4359

---

Ngiyakubingelela Mzali

Ngithi angithathe lelithuba ngikwazise ngocwaningo engihlose ukulwenza esikoleni lapho kufunda khona umntwana wakho. Ngokubhala lencwadi ngithi angicele invume kuwena mzali ukuzengiqhube ucwaningo nomntwana wakho abeyingxenywe yalolucwaningo. Lolucwaningo luyingxenywe yezifundo zami emabangeni aphakeme emfundo. Isihloko salolucwaningo sithi: **“Ukubheka ukuqonda kwabafundi kanye nokusetshenziswa kokuhlolwa ulwazi esifundweni sezokuvakasha.**

Ngifisa ukusho ukuthi ngithanda ukuthi umntwana wakho abambe iqhaza kulolucwaningo, ngokuthi aphenyule imibuzo kwinoxoxo ehleliwe. Ngiyathembisa ukuthi akukho bungozi ngokubamba kwakhe iqhaza kulolucwaningo, ngakho umntwana wakho uphephile. Ngithanda ukusho nalokhu okulandelayo:

- ✓ Ngokubamba iqhaza kulolucwaningo akukho mali etholakalayo, ngakho uvumelekile ukuyeka noma inini uma ethanda.
- ✓ Uyaziswa ukuthi ulwazi oluyotholakala kubafundi luyosiza kakhulu ekwelekeleleni ukufundwa kwesisifundo sezokuvakasha.
- ✓ Lolucwaningo lumayelana nokulekelela nangolwazi nokukhulisa nangokomqondo.
- ✓ Ngemvume yakho uhlelo lwenhlokhono nomntwana sizoluqopha ukwenzela ukuqoqa ulwazi olusezingeni elifanelekile

Ngalesisikhathi ngisalinde invume yakho mzali ngiyabonga:

S.Ngiba (UMcwaningi)

Ungangithinta kule-email: [207526309@stu.ukzn.ac.za/Sizzzaa@gmail.com](mailto:207526309@stu.ukzn.ac.za/Sizzzaa@gmail.com) noma uthinte umphithi wami u Dr Z.H. Dube, Xaba (Supervisor) [Dubez@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:Dubez@ukzn.ac.za)



**Isiqinisekiso Somzali**

Lencwadi iyisiqiniseko sokuthi mina \_\_\_\_\_  
ongumzali ka \_\_\_\_\_ ofunda kulesisikole ngiyavuma /  
angivumi ukuba umntanami abe yingxenye yocwaningo oluzokwenziwa u Mr  
Siza Ngiba ekilasini lakhe.

Igama: \_\_\_\_\_

Ukusayina: \_\_\_\_\_

Usuku: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix E: Learner Information and Assent Form

D 1009 Ulangakazi Road  
KwaMashu  
4359

Dear Learner,

Please ensure to read the following information before you indicate your interest of participating in this research project.

1. I am aware that Mr. S. Ngiba is conducting a research on Tourism assessment. He is trying to Explore through learners perceptions of formative assessment in tourism classes. He is also interested in learners' understanding of the approach to the use of assessment in the subject.
2. I have been requested to participate in the research and understand that I will be interviewed.
3. I accept that the result of this study will be used for the completion of a Masters' degree at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Also, the result can (in future) be used for writing papers for presentations at conferences or publication in academic journals.
4. I am aware that my real name will not be mentioned in the results of the research study.
5. I am also aware that there are no monetary benefits attached to my participation, but that the results will be used to address any lapses in knowing the experiences of tourism learners through assessment task.
6. I agree to participate in the study, and I am also aware that I have the right to withdraw my agreement to participate in the study at any time without any consequence if I so desire.

For further enquiries, contact the researcher on [207526309@stu.ukzn.ac.za](mailto:207526309@stu.ukzn.ac.za) or [sizzzzaa@gmail.com](mailto:sizzzzaa@gmail.com) or the research supervisor, [Dubez@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:Dubez@ukzn.ac.za).

**Learner Declaration**

This serves to confirm that I \_\_\_\_\_ agree / do not agree to participate in the empirical study that Mr S. Ngiba seeks to conduct in our school.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_