

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL

**Exploring learners' experiences of meditative practices: a case study of
a primary school**

by

KELISHA PANDAY

2021

CURRICULUM STUDIES

within the

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the

DEGREE OF MASTER OF EDUCATION

SUPERVISOR: Dr. L. R Maharajh

TABLE OF CONTENT

| | |
|---|-----------|
| CHAPTER ONE | 8 |
| 1.1 Introduction | 8 |
| 1.2 Background, purpose and significance of the study | 10 |
| 1.3 Objectives and Research Questions..... | 13 |
| 1.4 Research Methodology | 13 |
| 1.4.1 Research design | 13 |
| 1.4.2 Research paradigm | 14 |
| 1.4.3 Research style | 14 |
| 1.4.4 Population and sample..... | 14 |
| 1.4.5 Data generation methods | 14 |
| 1.5 Location of the study | 15 |
| 1.6 Role of the researcher | 15 |
| 1.7 Researcher assumptions..... | 15 |
| 1.8 Organisation of the dissertation..... | 16 |
| 1.9 Conclusion..... | 17 |
| Chapter Two..... | 18 |
| 2.1 Introduction | 18 |
| 2.2 Experiences..... | 18 |
| 2.3 An Explanation of Meditation | 20 |
| 2.4 Benefits of meditation | 25 |
| 2.5 Shortcomings of meditation..... | 34 |
| 2.6 Meditation, Education and Learners..... | 36 |
| 2.7 Conclusion..... | 41 |
| Chapter Three | 42 |
| 3.1 Introduction | 42 |
| 3.2 The Research Design | 42 |

| | | |
|--------------------------|---|------------|
| 3.3 | Research paradigm | 43 |
| 3.4 | Research Style | 44 |
| 3.5 | Sampling Method | 45 |
| 3.6 | Data generation methods | 47 |
| 3.7 | Data analysis..... | 51 |
| 3.8 | Trustworthiness | 52 |
| 3.9 | Ethics | 54 |
| 3.10 | Limitations..... | 56 |
| 3.11 | Conclusion..... | 57 |
| Chapter Four..... | | 58 |
| 4.1 | Introduction | 58 |
| 4.2 | Description and discussion of Findings..... | 59 |
| 4.3 | Conclusion..... | 76 |
| Chapter Five..... | | 78 |
| 5.1 | Introduction | 78 |
| 5.2 | Objective 1: To explore learners' experiences of meditative practices | 78 |
| 5.2.1 | Less frustration and stress..... | 78 |
| 5.3 | Objective 2: To understand learners' feelings of meditative practices | 82 |
| 5.3.1 | Positive environment | 83 |
| 5.4 | Scope for further research..... | 85 |
| 5.5 | Conclusion..... | 85 |
| References..... | | 86 |
| Appendices..... | | 101 |

DECLARATION

I, Kelisha Panday, hereby declare that:

I have familiarised myself with the University's code of conduct and have fully adhered to it.

I undertake that this research study is my original work. Where the work of others has been used (in the form of electronic and printed source), it has been appropriately and accurately acknowledged with referencing that follows the requirements of the university. All text, diagrams, and tables adapted or used in their original form have been specifically acknowledged. The source is detailed in text and within the reference sections of this thesis.

Where research has been conducted in the form of data generation, it has met the university's ethical requirements.

This dissertation has not been submitted to any other university for another degree.

I have not handed over work that another person/s or student once produced to advance as my own.

I have not allowed, and will not allow, any other person/ student to duplicate my work with the intent to advance it as his/her work.

K Panday

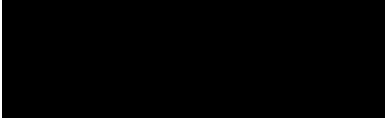
29 July 2021

Kelisha Panday

[Student]

DECLARATION BY SUPERVISOR

I agree to the submission of this dissertation.



29 July 2021

Dr. L. R Maharajh

[Supervisor]

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge the following persons who have supported me throughout this research study:

My supervisor Dr. L. R Maharajh, for his support and guidance in his personal and professional capacity and perseverance and constant motivation towards completing this study.

The learners and parents who allowed me access into their personal and professional space; without you this work would not have been successful.

The Principal and teachers of school: I am grateful for permitting me to use your staff and learners as my sources of information.

My parents, Pundit Basanth Panday and Mrs. Shamilla Panday, for trusting, believing, and having faith in me and my immediate and extended family.

My spouse Ashveer for support, patience, inspiration and co-operation through my studies.

ABSTRACT

An intriguing phenomenon that appears to be attracting the interest of schools and organisations, and agencies working with behaviour change is the practice of meditation. Given the growing popularity of meditation, I set out to learn about learners' meditation experiences in primary schools. The purpose of my study was to explore and understand learners' experiences of meditative practices whereby a qualitative approach was used in this research to gain a deep understanding of meditation. This study was located within an interpretive paradigm as it attempted to explore different learners' experiences of meditation. In my study, the population was all grade 6 learners in the school. Letters were sent to the parents of these grade 6 learners, requesting the voluntary participation of their children in the study. The sample consisted of 50 grade 6 learners keen to participate and their parents granted permission for them to participate in the study. Structured interviews were conducted with probing questions. I also made use of a pre-meditation questionnaire and a post meditation questionnaire.

The learners displayed positive attitudes and views towards meditation. They found meditation to be beneficial in the reduction of frustration and anger, in the improvement of concentration and academic performance and the reduction of anxiety. Learners had further experienced meditation as having the potential to make one productive. The post-meditation questionnaire confirmed the results obtained in the interviews and the impact of meditation on learners' lives. The use of meditation appears to have been beneficial to the school in which it was conducted. The learners have reported benefitting from engaging with the process of meditation, especially reporting positive impacts on the life of the learners. Many learners agreed that meditation should be incorporated within the school day. The data suggests that meditation as an educational tool and strategy to assist learners has been positively received and positively impacted many salient aspects of the educational endeavour and personal qualities of learners. Further research will inform the policy and practice on the implementation of meditation to the Department of Education and other educators, which will help them broaden the knowledge about the feasibility and pedagogical value of meditation in schools.

Keywords: meditation, learners, behaviour change, frustration, anger

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction: Context



A Cape Town initiative is offering mindfulness meditation and yoga to schools | MyCityByNight



1.1 Introduction

An intriguing phenomenon that appears to be attracting the interest of schools and organisations, and agencies working with behaviour change, as evident in the images above, is the practice of meditation. Sometimes misunderstood or criticised (Oman, 2020; Kreplin, Farias & Brazil, 2018) this ancient practice originating from the East, particularly Buddhism and Yoga practice, appears to have entered the mainstream in the West, and has attracted a wide range of practitioners from diverse cultures, races, and gender (Singla, 2011; Schmidt, 2011; Lau, 2020; Arat & Kołodziejska, 2017).

The images show how schools in the USA and South Africa resort to meditation and yoga to create positive environments and encourage positive behaviour among learners.

There are many forms of meditation (Manocha, 2000). Manocha (2000) refers to meditation as thoughtless awareness: "This is a state in which the excessive and stress producing activity of the mind is neutralised without reducing alertness and effectiveness (Manocha, 2000, p. 1136)." Cardoso, de Souza, Camano and Leite (2004) aver that meditation uses specific relaxation and self-focus techniques.

There has been much publicity about meditation (Shapiro, Welsh & Britton, 2003; Van Dam, Van Vugt, Vago, Saron, Olendzki & Fox, 2018; Bremer, 2019). The Art of Living foundation¹ had schools participate in meditative practices for Peace in South Africa (Art of living, 2017). International yoga day is celebrated each year on 21 June (Art of living, 2017). On this day, people from worldwide are encouraged and have also participated in International Yoga Day (Art of living, 2017).

The popularity of meditation has been on the increase for several years. Meditation in the USA has increased substantially among children from "1.6% in 2012 to 7.4% in 2017" (Wang, Li, & Gaylord, 2019). Rakicevic (2021) reports that worldwide an estimated "200 to 500 million" people meditate. In the USA, 66% of the Buddhists meditate at least once a week (Rakicevic, 2021). Fergusson, Cabrejos, and Bonshek (2021) report that school suspensions in the USA were reduced by "45%" due to meditation.

In view of the growing popularity of meditation (Lambert, van den Berg & Mendrek, 2021; Farias, Maraldi, Wallenkampf & Lucchetti, 2020; Burke & Gonzalez, 2011), I set out to find out about learners' experiences of meditation in primary schools. Some research has shown that schools in America have practiced meditation and advanced in behaving and acting (Butzer, Ebert, Telles & Khalsa, 2015).

¹ Founded in 1981 by Sri Sri Ravi Shankar. This is a non-profit non-governmental organisation engaged in stress management and service initiatives. It operates globally in 152 countries.

1.2 Background, purpose and significance of the study

Given that I am a teacher in a primary school in which I recognise the need for innovative strategies to help learners cope and behave positively, I was intrigued by the reports in the media of the increasing use of meditation in schools and the positive results reported. Therefore, this impelled my research of meditation in schools to understand the learners' experiences of meditative practices and why they feel the way they do about it. To accomplish the purpose of the study the following research questions were included, namely, 1) what are learners' experiences of meditative practices and 2) why do learners have such feelings of meditative practices?

Meditation, it seems, is the new *mantra*. Roizen and Oz (2007) have indicated the various physical benefits of meditation. Hoppes (2006) states that meditation reduces stress levels and promote confidence in people. Some scholars suggest that meditation leads to neurological changes in the brain, reducing stress and impacting emotions (Albright & Ashbrook, 2001; Newberg, D'Aquili, & Rause, 2001; Newberg & Waldman, 2006). Lutz, Dunne, and Davidson (2007), and Mascaro (2011) assert that meditation builds empathy and compassion. Beitel, Genova, Schuman-Olivier, Arnold, Avants & Margolin, (2007) suggest that the addiction of harmful substances such as alcohol and drugs may be reduced through meditation.

Nakpodia (2010) states that the increase in the number of learners enrolled at schools make greater demands on teachers to improve learner performance and behaviour. It is believed that people meditate to eliminate troubles in the mind and understand the meaning of life to positively change their consciousness (Sedlmeier, Eberth, Schwarz, Zimmermann, Haarig, Jaeger and Kunze, 2012). Learners may benefit from meditation by the elimination of inappropriate thoughts. They may begin to think positively and with open minds. According to Sumter, Monk-Turner and Turner (2009) meditation has the potential to control resentment and aggravation. When a learner is upset and annoyed, meditation may be the method to help the child be calm and peaceful.

Notwithstanding the scholars referred to above, there appears to be little attention given in the literature to examining the experiences of learners who practice meditation. By exploring the learners' experiences of meditation, primary classroom teachers may be better able to utilise

this practice within the broad educational programme within their schools. Certainly, teacher's anecdotal evidence from some schools where meditation has been introduced suggests that children's behaviour and concentration improve. Further, the quiet and stillness associated with the practice appears to be valued by children. It encourages self-knowledge and a sense of belonging and a raised consciousness about the world they live in. These are, indeed, important factors to consider in the rapidly-paced, media driven, pluralistic context within which children's lives unfold in contemporary society.

People have difficulty coping with life and what it sends their way (Kaugars, Shields, & Brosig, 2018; Gori, Topino & Di Fabio, 2020). Meditation may be helpful to many and it helps calm them. Meditation releases stress from individuals. In schools, there are stressful moments for teachers and learners. Meditation practice with learners may help the researcher gain knowledge on how learners feel but it may also help the learners and teachers during teaching and learning. In 2012, a study of about 13,000 pupils by the Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention found that 15.3% of children at primary and secondary schools had experienced some form of violence at school. There have been reports of pupils attacking other pupils, and also attacking teachers. The Sunday Times reported in 2018 that 1,473 pupils in Gauteng and Limpopo had been involved in serious misconduct. This included using and dealing in drugs, bullying fellow pupils, assaulting teachers and pupils, theft and carrying dangerous weapons.

According to Govender (2019), when principals are battling to cope with the battlegrounds their schools have become, yoga, dance, meditation, and self-esteem games appear to be the answer to restoring calm amid the violence brawls, bullying and incidence of corporal punishment.

The Art of Living foundation, headed by Sri Sri Ravi Shankar has been of help to many different organisations. According to Jordan (July 21, 2017), the Syrian war was the worst and many lives were taken, threatened and destroyed by this war. During the Syrian war the Art of Living foundation had developed yoga and meditation workshops to help those affected (Jordan, 2017). The victims of the war had explained how meditation and yoga helped them overcome their fears and release the thoughts of the war. They were able to forget what made them scared and what occurred during the war.

Studies have shown that meditation has psychological, physical and spiritual benefits. Roizen and Oz (2007) have indicated the various physical benefits of meditation. Hoppes (2006) states that meditation reduces stress levels and build confidence in people. The addiction of harmful substances such as alcohol and drugs can be reduced through meditation (Beitel, Genova, Schuman-Olivier, Arnold, Avants & Margolin, 2007). High stress levels, lack of confidence, and addiction to harmful substances are some of the challenges learners are faced with. If meditation can help reduce these challenges, it may prove to be an effective “intervention”. This research may not only help learners but also contribute to understanding what learners feel while in meditation.

Meditation also has medical benefits. A study was done and has shown that breathing practices in yoga and meditation have helped patients not fully respond to antidepressant tablets (Sharma, Barrett, Cucchiara, Gooneratne & Thase, 2016). The patients who had undergone the meditation known as "Sudarshan Kriya" appeared to be more easily relieved of depression and recovered faster than those who only took medication. Sharma et al (2016) state that this therapy did not require drugs, was not costly, and helped patients suffering from depression.

However, meditation is not supported by all. There are criticisms against meditation, especially on its use in schools. Newsweek in December 2018 reported that The American Centre for Law and Justice (ACLJ) (a Christian watchdog group) launched a petition to stop meditation in public schools across America. The ACLJ viewed the mindfulness-based stress reduction techniques used in some schools as a danger to children. Further criticisms against meditation assert that research on meditation is of low quality and of dubious rigour (The Atlantic, September 2018). Critics have also asserted that the research on meditation may have adverse effects on participants. From my own experience as an educator in a South African school there are no criticisms of meditation within the classroom from the Department of Education.

Lamberts, van den Berg and Mendriks (2021) have reported the possible detrimental effects of meditation on a person’s mental health and well-being. The literature review of thirty-nine studies of meditation shows some of the adverse effects of affective difficulties, distorted

senses of self, derealisation, hallucinations, delusions, interpersonal challenges, and susceptibility to false memory. They conclude that the community needs to be aware of the potential effects of meditation. A year before, Farias, Maraldi, Wallenkampf and Lucchetti (2020) reported that meditative practices are linked to adverse events such as anxiety and depression.

Given that I am a teacher in a primary school in which I recognise the need for innovative strategies to help learners cope and behave positively, I was intrigued by the reports in the media of the increasing use of meditation in schools and the positive results reported. Therefore, this impelled my research of meditation in schools to understand the learners' experiences of meditative practices and why they feel the way they do about it.

The aforementioned encouraged me to conduct a study on introducing meditative practices to learners in a primary school. I turn in the next section to presenting the objectives and research questions of my study.

1.3 Objectives and Research Questions

The objectives of this study were:

- To explore learners' experiences of meditative practices.
- To understand learners' feelings of meditative practices.

The research questions that guided this study were:

- What are learners' experiences of meditative practices?
- Why do learners have such experiences of meditative practices?

1.4 Research Methodology

1.4.1 Research design

According to Noor (2008, p.1602) qualitative research is when researchers are interested in "insight, discovery and interpretation, rather than hypothesis testing". A qualitative approach is used to produce non-numerical data. Yang and Le (2008) state that "qualitative research has special value for investigating complex and sensitive issues (p.3)." Thus, a qualitative approach was most suitable to use in this research. A qualitative approach was used in this

research to gain a deep understanding of meditation. The aim of this research was to understand learner's experiences of meditative practices.

1.4.2 Research paradigm

The interpretative paradigm was used. A characteristic of qualitative research is interpretive inquiry, which involves the researcher interpreting what she saw, heard and understood (Creswell, 2007). This study was located within an interpretive paradigm as it attempted to interpret the views of learner's experiences of meditation.

1.4.3 Research style

Case studies are often used in research in the interpretive paradigm (Bertram and Christiansen, 2014). According to Yin (2003, p.13) case studies are "an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomena and context are not evident." Case studies help researchers gain the truth of the respondents understanding and thoughts about the situation they are in (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2000).

1.4.4 Population and sample

In my study, the population was all grade 6 learners in the school. Letters were sent to the parents of the grade 6 learners, requesting the voluntary participation of their children in the study. The sample consisted of 50 grade 6 learners whose parents granted permission for them to participate in the study.

1.4.5 Data generation methods

According to Bertram and Christiansen (2014), the interview is a good method of gaining reliable information. They further state that interviews give more detail and descriptive data. Yin (2003) states that interviews are a good evidence for case studies as they greatly understand situations. Structured interviews were conducted with probing questions. For this study, interviews were conducted with only nine learners attending the meditation class as these were the only learners who volunteered to be interviewed. Five teachers were chosen to be interviewed as these were the teachers of the learners who meditated. I also made use of a pre-meditation questionnaire and a post meditation questionnaire.

A more detailed research methodology is provided in chapter three.

1.5 Location of the study

School Yoga (a pseudonym), situated in Chatsworth is a public school with approximately 590 learners. Chatsworth, formerly demarcated as an Indian area under apartheid, still dominantly consists of people of Indian origin, who make up 60 percent of the population, and the balance - 38 percent – or 75 004 residents – are black Africans.

1.6 Role of the researcher

For a qualitative researcher, much of the shield against bias that statistical methods, and standardized measures of quantitative methods, are absent, making qualitative research more open to scrutiny. As a qualitative researcher in a small-scale study is often involved in all aspects of the research, she will be at pains to prove her objectivity. Therefore, in this section, I provide an annotated description of how I was aware of my perspectives and knowledge that impinged the research, and how I controlled bias in this study.

During this research, I was involved in all aspects. I ensured that all forms of permission were sought from the relevant bodies, such as the Department of Education, school Yoga (pseudonym) where the research took place, the University (ethical clearance), and parents whose children participated in the study. As the learners are minors, extra care was taken and permission was sought from the parents.

I generated the data, transcribed the interviews and analysed the data to make the research ethical. The interviews and questionnaires were completed in my presence to ensure that no harm was brought about, the learners were the ones who had completed them and the process was fair and just to all.

1.7 Researcher assumptions

According to Wargho (2015) an assumption is something said that is supposedly believed to be true. During this research, I believed that learners completing the questionnaire and participating in the interview were doing so honestly. Children are usually innocent beings and speak the truth most of the time.

Participants for this research participated out of their genuine nature. The learners did not gain any incentive for the participation; however, they were willing to do so out of their own free will. The learners had no motive behind the participation. The teachers that were interviewed were also neutral as they had been asked to volunteer to participate. The teachers had also received no reward for participating in the research.

1.8 Organisation of the dissertation

Chapter One: This chapter provides insight on the introduction focusing on the background, significance, research questions, overview of methodology, role of the researcher and the researcher assumptions.

Chapter Two: In this chapter, phenomenology (experiences) as the theoretical framework is explained, the meaning of meditation is discussed, empirical research on meditative practices is reviewed, and the benefits and the shortcomings of meditative practices are explained. This chapter concludes with a review of the, research on meditation and its application to education and learners.

Chapter Three: The first part of this chapter discusses the qualitative research design of the study. In this section I discuss why the quantitative research design was not appropriate for a study on the meditative practices of learners at a primary school. Thereafter the research philosophy which is the interpretive paradigm is described. Here, I argue for the appropriateness of the interpretive paradigm instead of the post positivist and critical paradigms. I discuss the research strategies, sampling, data generation methods, and data analysis in keeping with the qualitative research design and interpretative paradigm. The concluding sections of this chapter cover issues of trustworthiness and ethics.

Chapter Four: This chapter presents the data generated from the pre- and post-meditation questionnaire, and interviews with learners. The first part presents the data obtained from the pre-meditation questionnaires. In this section, I share reasons why learners joined the meditation sessions, any medication that learners were on during the meditation and any bad experiences or challenges those learners were facing. In the second part of the chapter, I present the data generated from the interviews with learners. The direct words of the learners have been presented in italics. Several themes and sub-themes emerged in response to

questions on how mediation has improved learners' life; challenges experienced during meditation and whether learners will recommend meditation to others. The third part of the chapter deals with the data generated from the post-meditation questionnaire. I conclude the chapter with a summary of the data presented in this chapter.

Chapter Five: In this chapter, the conclusions and recommendations of the study are discussed. The two objectives are discussed separately, reflecting the findings from learners and teachers and conclusions of the research. Thereafter, the findings from previous research are discussed for each objective. I include a discussion from the relevant literature to give context to the findings in my study. Finally, the recommendations and conclusions for each objective are discussed.

1.9 Conclusion

This chapter described what meditation is and the research about its use as an intervention in the lives of primary school children. I outlined the basis of the study and why I felt a need for the study. The next chapter will discuss the literature on meditation that is appropriate particularly to this study. The literature review will give insight into past studies of meditation focusing on its advantages and disadvantages and meditation in schools.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

In recent years, the topic of mindfulness and meditative practices has increased drastically (Kirmayer, 2015). One of the organizations that have made meditation in schools popular is The Art of Living Foundation. The founder is Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, a spiritual teacher based in India, with many students and followers on all continents (Avdeeff, 2010; Sood, 2018).

Where experiences of participants are the focus of research, the researcher is involved in study of phenomenology, that is, an approach to qualitative research (Tuffour, 2017). Phenomenology focuses on the commonality of the lived experience within a particular group (Alase, 2017). The process of phenomenological research may lead to a universal meaning of an event, situation or experience (Miller Chan & Farmer, 2018).

In this chapter, phenomenology as the theory is explained, the meaning of meditation is discussed, empirical research on meditative practices is reviewed, and the benefits and the shortcomings of meditative practices are explained. This chapter concludes with a review of the, research on meditation and its application to education and learners.

2.2 Experiences

Phenomenology refers to the real experience a person is going through (Van Manen, 1990 (as cited in Quay, 2016). The understanding a person gets from the task they do must be from their practice. One cannot be forced to have an experience as there is a diverse group of human beings. Quay (2016) uses the example of swimming to describe phenomenology where he states that without going into the pool, a person will never know what it is like to swim as, he has not 'lived' the experience of swimming. He further states that by reading how to swim, you will never experience it.

The world is made up of diverse individuals with diverse perspectives on life. Marton (1981, p.178) indicates that when we try to find out "how people think about school success" we must explore the issue as our knowledge cannot determine it.

Several studies have used the phenomenon of experiences (Brymer and Schweitzer, 2017; Morgan, 2018, Maron, 1993; Koops, 2017; Nunez & Yoshimi, 2017); Field, Lauzon & Meldrum, 2016); Alloh, Tait & Taylor, 2018). Marton (1993) alerts us that different individuals do not have the same feelings and experiences in the same situation. Different individuals have different understanding and different experiences even if they are faced with the same problem. Due to the differences individuals have in nature and personalities, their feelings and experiences will not be the same. According to Marton, Watkins and Tang (1997) different learners come into the classroom or learning space with their rigid thinking. They discovered that learners viewed four different ways of experiencing learning, some felt learning is remembering, others felt learning is understanding, other students who viewed learning as to be able to do something, and others saw learning as obtaining something. The same question may be posed to learners, but different learners will administer different answers. In the same way these differences may cause learners' practices to be different.

A diverse group of individuals will have different experiences with similar activities they do, while in meditation and not all individuals will have the same experiences and feelings. There are different ways people "experience" or believe about different incidents (Marton, 1986).

Phenomenology focuses on the experience one has during something they are doing (Koops, 2017). The research on learners' experiences of meditative practices determines how the learners feel during the meditation and why they feel while meditating. Similarly, Dreher and Santos (2017) indicate phenomenology is the experience of people during a conscious task. When a person meditates they will have different feelings and experiences and it is a task in which they will be conscious doing.

In this section, phenomenology as a theory was introduced, focusing on participants' experience (feelings) as the research phenomenon. Several academic research studies were referred to emphasize that experience of participants are bona fide phenomena that can be researched and understood qualitatively. Since these studies focus on experiences of individuals as a bona fide phenomenon of research, phenomenology as a credible research theory for the understanding of learners' experiences of meditative practices is also asserted.

2.3 An Explanation of Meditation

There are many forms of meditation (Manocha, 2000). Manocha (2000) refers to meditation as thoughtless awareness: “This is a state in which the excessive and stress producing activity of the mind is neutralised without reducing alertness and effectiveness (Manocha, 2000, p. 1136). Cardoso, de Souza, Camano and Leite (2004) aver that meditation uses specific relaxation and self-focus techniques.

There are increasing studies in clinical settings on the neutral correlates of meditation (Awasthi, 2013). In his article, Awasthi (2013) highlights the inability of neuroscience to understand the philosophical aspects of meditation and its implications. Awasthi (2013) asks if meditation be defined in scientific terms and if yes, why has it been neglected for so long? Meditation in the modern context has been defined variously. Kabat-Zinn (2003) defines meditation as attentional training to mindfulness.

The research on meditation also points to several mental training techniques as meditation. Harinath et al. (2004) refers to hatha yoga². Ospina et al. (2008) refers to mantra meditation, and Moss et al. (2012) refers to Kirtan Kriya³. Others, like Baijal and Srinivasan (2010), studied a concentrative form called Sahaj Samadhi meditation⁴, while Vago and Nakamura (2011) studied the Mindfulness-based Meditation Training (MMT) program involving a combination of concentrative and open monitoring (OM) types of meditation, breath and body awareness, light stretching, and relaxation exercises.

Meditation is the process of rising above all thoughts in the mind without thinking about what is in your mind but being aware (Boyer and Hensley, 2006). Likewise, Bilican (2016) states meditation is making the mind depart from its surroundings and focusing on the breathing. Meditative practices engage one while being aware of their thoughts to be free of all worry and stress in one's mind and just relax.

² Hatha yoga can be considered an umbrella term to describe many of the most common forms of yoga taught in the West today. With this type of yoga, you move your body slowly and deliberately into different poses that challenge your strength and flexibility, while at the same time focusing on relaxation and mindfulness.

³ Kirtan Kriya is a mediation technique used in Kundalini yoga, which is intended to stimulate the senses and parts of the brain. It involves a combination of chanting and finger movements.

⁴ Sahaj Samadhi Meditation is an effortless form of meditation that focuses on the breath and mantra during the meditation process. Sahaj means “effortless” in Sanskrit and Samadhi is a silent state of awareness.

Meditation is not a practice of one single religion, but it is practiced for inner peace (McLean, 2001). Meditation can be conducted with any race, gender, cast, religion and person. There is no specific individual that can engage in meditative practices. Any individual can do meditative practices.

Meditation is like any other talent, which one just needs to apply daily and they may eventually learn to relax themselves (Buchanan, 2017). The more a person does something, the better they become at it. Meditation is the same. When one meditates often, they begin to get good at focusing. Likewise, Sarath (2003) states that the more one does meditation, the better the feeling of their meditation becomes as they have practiced for a longer period. The meditative practice becomes more natural and easier for them.

Meditation is the process of focus and concentration without being judgmental and critical of the situation (Mars and Oliver, 2016). Meditation is teaching one just to be attentive on the surrounding and not condemn or become decisive about the situation rather accept it. Willis and Sharma (2017) have learned to become calm, get good practices, and pay attention to what they do by meditating.

Technology has also become part of meditative practices. "Virtual Reality Dialectical Behavioral Theory" is where meditation is done using modern technology by using computers and goggles to see computer-generated pictures. They feel like they are doing what they see on the computer (Navarro-Haro, Lopez-del-Hoyo, Campos, Linehan, Hoffman, Garcia-Palacios, Modrego-Alarcon, Borao and Garcia-Campayo, 2017). An example is if they see the ocean in the picture, they will feel like they are on the beach. In this way the person meditating will be fully attentive to what they are doing, and their attention is not lost.

Agarwal and Dixit (2017) state that meditation is when individuals forget about their surroundings and connect with the "universal consciousness". Meditative practices release your thoughts and ensure that you have a free mind- free of worry, pain, anxiety and stress. Similarly, Fasching (2008) indicates that meditation frees an individual from thoughts and an individual "let's go of themselves (ego)."

When meditating the environment and surrounding should be appropriate. There is a specific posture when meditating and this helps keep the focus and allows a person to engage fully in the meditation. Meditation is sitting with your legs crossed, back upright and straight, and eyes closed and focusing on your breathing (Barnes, 2001). Meditation should be done in a quiet place with no disturbance to allow for the best results. A peaceful and quiet environment will help the person meditating remain engrossed in the meditation. Likewise, Smith (2014) states meditation should be done in a quiet place; you should have no disturbance and distractions. This will allow your mind to be clear and you will receive maximum benefit from the meditation.

Meditation is done and focus is on breathing in and out. The concentration on the breaths helps relax the mind and body. By focusing on breathing the person meditating is able to experience the feelings within the body. Also, Maiti (2017) states that meditation can be done in many ways, and the surrounding is very important. When one meditates, they give attention to inhalation and exhalation, noises around them, and feelings in the body (Weare, 2014).

Meditative practices involve controlling the mind (Dundas, Thorsheim, Hjeltnes and Binder 2016). They further state that it is normal to think about other things when doing meditation, however an individual can be easily redirected to meditation by being asked to focus on the breathing. Likewise, Dominic Hosemans (2015) meditation is training the mind to be more attentive. He further states that meditative practices are being used in mainstream healthcare.

"It would seem that meditation can appropriately be incorporated in schools as part of provision for Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural development, and/or as a process-based practice for enhancing effective learning (McLean, 2001, p. 34)." McLean (2001) explains that meditation is beneficial to a learner as it develops the learners socially (being friendly), morals (virtues and values), spiritually (religious) and culturally. Meditation is used to help learners develop their moral and spiritual values within themselves.

Meditation ensures an individual intentionally pays attention with the focal point being the present moment (Brostoff, 2017). When individuals are put through meditation, their concentration is on the current situation and not an imagination. The person is made to think

of the present and not the past neither the future. The mind is fixed and should not deviate. Likewise, Hanley, Abell, Osborn, Roehrig and Canto (2016) indicate meditation ensures that the mind holds on to its thought without drifting away. Also, Crowley and Dunk (2017) state that meditative practices make a person more alert of the existing events.

Buchanan (2017) describes meditation as not living in the past and future but rather concentrate on the current. When one meditates, they focus on what they are doing and have the mind in control. They train the mind to deliberate on what they are doing. Likewise, Weare (2014) states that mindfulness makes one remain in the moment, the individual has no focus on the future or past but what happens in the present moment. She further indicates that meditative practices allow us to deliberate our thoughts on the current situation.

There are 3 types of well-known meditation "Mindful meditation", Transcendental meditation" and "Kundalini meditation" (Krishnakumar, Hamblin and Lakshmanan, 2015). Mindful meditation is engaging an individual to focus on a specific thing; Transcendental meditation involves recitation of mantras where an individual focus on a specific word or phrase and Kundalini meditation is when an individual uses a practice such as yoga, meditation or the recitation of mantras to alert the chakras in the body (Krishnakumar, Hamblin and Lakshmanan, 2015). Travis and Shear (2010) indicate that transcendental meditation is described as an "automatic self-transcending" method. My study focused on mindful meditation. Learners listened to guided meditation. The learners focused on their breathing and what the guide is saying during the meditation, for example "let go of the stresses, focus on your breathing, feel sensations in your legs."

DeUrquiza (2014) explains three ways in which meditation can be done with learners in the classroom. The first step she describes is the "mindfulness method" whereby you sit and focus on your breath. The second type of meditation is where there is focus on feelings on the different body parts. The third method uses learners' past feelings of how an individual had hurt them to understand their situation (a new family is adopting e.g. a child). Likewise, Sarath (2003) describes three ways meditation can be done: becoming conscious of your breathing, focusing your mind on an object or picture, and repeating a specific hymn. In my study I focused on using meditation in the classroom, mainly paying attention on breathing and being quiet with the eyes closed. Since I introduced meditation in the lives of the

learners, I wanted to keep it simple and manageable. I opted for simple breath meditation⁵ because it is an entry level meditation intended to release stress (Anālayo, 2019).

Meditation can be done with music or without music, and it can be done without direction from another person or with direction from another person (Csaszar and Buchanan, 2015). Meditating with music helps to relieve stress (Maiti, 2017). Meditation may be done through a voice guiding the person or using music and a voice, such as breathing in and out ocean waves playing in the background. Another example is meditating in total silence and just being quiet. In my study I focused on guided meditation with music.

Csaszar and Buchanan (2015) indicate that meditation should be done in a quiet and hygienic environment. Silence during meditation will ensure maximum benefits to the person meditating. Likewise, Navarro-Haro, Lopez-del-Hoyo, Campos, Linehan, Hoffman, Garcia-Palacios, Modrego-Alarcon, Borao and Garcia-Campayo (2017) state people who meditate should do so in a quiet environment or they can be easily distracted. My study was done in the classroom where all learners were quiet. They sat down and focused their attention on the guided meditation.

Meditation can become a habit for a person to do meditation whenever they feel needed (DeUrquiza, 2014). People can make meditation part of their daily lives. They can meditate whenever they want to. Sarath (2003) states mediation should be practised with an experienced person to allow for maximum benefits.

Russ, Maruyama, Sease and Jellema (2017) state that meditation must be thought of positively by those practicing and should realise the benefits. A person doing meditation should not doubt the effects before they even start, or they will end up being failures before they have started feeling the essence. An individual must be positive in whatever they endeavour to succeed in. This will help them recognise the benefits of what they are doing especially if the deed is good. They should not be negative at what they do or they will automatically reap bad results.

⁵ <https://www.health.harvard.edu/mind-and-mood/breath-meditation-a-great-way-to-relieve-stress>

Sharma (2015) describes meditation as exercising the "consciousness" to attain results just like how one exercises the muscles to strengthen. When one meditates there is no strategy to make the mind stay focused rather it creates focus on ones "conscious". In the same way if a person does physical activities to get strong, they do not tell the mind to make the body strong, it happens on its own.

The next section will outline the benefits of meditation.

2.4 Benefits of meditation

Meditative practices have proved to influence the lives of people positively. Kirmayer (2015) states meditation and mindfulness have become acknowledged methods to decrease stress levels, nervousness and depression. Learners may be stressed out and frantic most of the time (Rentzou, 2012). Learners deal with parents, peers, school, community and society (Csaszar and Buchanan, 2015). They have assessment demands, difficult learning hours and subjects, discipline problems, and being liable for everything around them. With this, they can become overwhelmed and meditative practices may help the learner (Csaszar and Buchanan, 2015).

According to Burns (2016), meditation has helped and assisted basketball players in thinking clearly about what they are doing and why they are doing it. It takes away tension about winning or losing the game. Basketball players that participated in meditative practices have become more aware. They have also learnt not to be anxious and worried about results of the game.

Maiti (2017) indicates that meditation helps people become more dynamic, engaging one to do more in a day and keeping one joyful and pleased. Likewise, Mars and Oliver (2016) state that meditation can help keep the mind attentive and this in turn helps people get more done in a day and remain in focus instead of allowing the mind to wander about. Meditative practices help an individual remain focused and they have more energy. This in turn allows them to get through a day by achieving more than they had set out to do. Oakland (2015) indicates that meditative practices have helped teachers and learners concentrate better. Mclean (2001, p. 33) suggests that meditation may be a "systematic reflection as a support for their learning". When an individual meditates it helps them become self-motivated and in turn they put more effort to have a fruitful day

People meditate to control the mind and understand the meaning of life to change their consciousness positively (Sedlmeier, Eberth, Schwarz, Zimmermann, Haarig, Jaeger and Kunze, 2012). Learners may benefit from meditation by eliminating bad thoughts and bad behaviour. They can begin to think positively and with open minds. According to Sumter, Monk-Turner and Turner (2009) meditation helps control resentment and aggravation. When a learner is upset and annoyed, meditation may be the method to help be calm and peaceful. Meditative practices have been helpful to people who get angry quickly to deal with the problem by simply asking ourselves why, which will stop us from taking action that we become regretful of later (Gregoire, 2018). For instance, if we feel upset with a person, we should think calmly before taking the next step.

Studies indicate that mental states may often affect physical states and may have a role in disease and poor health (Rodriguez-Ayllon, Cadenas-Sánchez, Estévez-López, Muñoz, Mora-Gonzalez, Migueles & Esteban-Cornejo, 2019). Psychologists and medical doctors describe known psychomatic disorders (such as high stress and anger) have been implicated in cardiac related issues, digestive disorders and stomach ulcers, body aches and pains. (Kiran and Ladha, 2017). Kiran and Ladha (2017) state meditation have positively helped these patients. Meditation is a calming process hence it has been beneficial. Similarly, Eliaz (2014) suggests that meditation and yoga have been beneficial in bringing down the pulse rate and blood pressure in people. He further states that meditation has helped people have a healthier heart. People who are easily agitated and frantic can have trouble and difficulty with increased blood pressure, which is unhealthy for the heart or people who have heart conditions. Meditation is said to keep these people less frantic and calmly deal with their issues.

Meditative practices assist with psychological problems to help develop nervous people, help overcome mood swings and other problems related to stress (Demarzo, Andreoni, Sanches, Perez, Fortes and Campayo, 2014). Similarly, Brostoff (2017) indicates that law students have been overwhelmed by stress and meditative practices have assisted these students eliminate stress. People may often become stressed out and may not deal with situations because of the uneasiness in the mind. This may cause them to become angry as they may not find a solution. By meditating one can eliminate the mind of anger, temperament and stress.

According to Sarath (2003) meditative practices have positively benefited her students with psychological and disturbing issues.

Pagnoni, Cekic and Zen (2008, p. 3082) states that "meditation affects the amount of gray matter found in the putamen of the brain, which is an area that helps with the processing of attention." Meditative practices can assist older people with Alzheimer's disease (Danucalov, Kozasa, Afonso, Galduroz, and Leite, 2017). When individuals get older, they start to develop loss of memory and tend to forget easily. Meditative practices help these individuals remember things and not forget as easily as they would.

Stress can be a great cause of diabetes (high sugar level in the body). Research done by Dredger, Mackenzie and McLeod (2015) show that mindfulness meditation is a way to assist people release their levels of stress and control their emotions. This could be an advantage to assist these people reduce their diabetes level.

According to Krishnakumar, Hamblin and Lakshmanan (2015) meditation has proven to be a risk-free method to help treat anxiety. They further state that it is a method that can stop a problem from occurring even before it starts; hence it does not stop any individual to begin meditation. Gregoire (2018) states meditative practices helps one become careful and wary of their decisions, making a person prevent a worse situation from occurring. For instance, if one is stuck in traffic, one should just learn to be patient and wait instead of using alternate methods that will not be feasible and may end up being an accident. Meditation has helped many people eliminate any stress that brings them down (Curriculum Review, 2013).

Meditative practices may benefit a learner and teacher. Meditation practiced before lectures with university students has shown how disciplined these students can be. These students no longer require to use a laptop during lectures and can manage by listening to the lecturer (Hartel, Nguyen and Guzik (2017). Meditative practices conducted by learners may lead to a friendly environment with limited tension. The learning space is friendly and pleasant, not only in the classroom but also out of the classroom (Goswamee and Dey, 2017). The learning environment must be conducive for teaching and learning to take place. Meditation helps the surrounding of the learning space to be conducive.

According to Condon, Desbordes, Miller and DeSteno (2013) people who meditate become and develop more compassion towards others. In this study 39 individuals underwent an eight-week meditative practice session. When the training was completed, participants were invited to take a test of their cognitive ability. When one participant arrived at the laboratory, only one chair was available (non-meditators occupied the other two chairs). A minute later, a fourth “sufferer” on crutches arrived in the waiting room, but no chair was available. The researchers measured whether the meditator offered her seat to the “sufferer” to assess the compassionate responding.

Likewise, Brostoff (2017) indicates that meditation helps individuals become compassionate, and other individuals will also become healthier. This is an important virtue for learners in schools to develop as it makes them better individuals. It will also be good for teachers as they spend lots of time with different children from different backgrounds. Some of these learners come from underprivileged homes; abusive families, and lack of parental love and care. A loving attitude towards these individuals should be maintained so they are able to get through a happy school day. Having done meditation can help the different stakeholders extend compassionate behaviour towards one another. Charoensukmongkol (2014) indicates that meditation helps people to be conscious of the next person's feelings.

Smith (2014) indicates that meditation assists individuals to be calm, compassionate and simple. She further states that meditation helps individuals understand that different people have different views on situations. When an individual engages with meditative practices, they can understand another individual. Likewise, a study conducted by Crowley and Munk (2017) indicates that meditation has helped people realize that every individual has their pain and suffering. Treating them in an ill manner will be of no benefit than being pleasant and welcoming to them is a positive decision. Meditative practices have made people more understanding and deal with others in a polite and good manner.

The addiction to drugs is a vice that has the potential to destroy lives. Varma (2018) research indicates meditation may eliminate of drug addiction easily. She further states that meditation helps individuals eliminate feelings (in this case craving) which can aid drug addicts that are healthy to stop their addiction. Prisoners who had been released from prison had shown fewer cravings for substances such as drugs and alcohol (Bowen, Witkiewitz, Dillworth, Chawla,

Simpson, Ostafin, & Marlatt, 2006). These individuals who had been released from prison had decreased their use of alcohol, marijuana and cocaine as they were introduced to meditation while in prison (Bowen, Witkiewitz, Dillworth, Chawla, Simpson, Ostafin, Larimer, Blume, Parks and Marlatt, 2006). These prisoners had been practicing mindfulness-based meditation that had helped them. It is easy to become addicted and meditation can help one remove being addicted in life.

Meditative practices help make individuals face situations rather than stay away from them or restraining one to deal with it (Weare, 2014; Graham, 2018)). When there is something, an individual does not like, they avoid it and try not to encounter experiencing it. They hesitate from what does not make them feel good. This makes one weak. Meditation allows an individual to take care of the situation and face the situation they are put into. They have a better way to deal with circumstances as they are calm and think carefully. Weare (2014) indicates that this can make a person release stress and become uncomfortable which can have detrimental effects on the body. Force upon an individual will cause them to be unhappy and this in turn can cause harm to their health and body.

According to Bauer (2018) meditation has helped dancers in different ways such as, having more control over their balance while dancing, the ability to control their levels of stress before performing, being capable of treating injuries on their own instead of seeing a doctor each time as well as it allows them to know their importance during dancing. Meditation has helped create more focus; controlling being overwhelmed as well as healing their injuries.

Meditation has helped woman in the United States deal trauma (Myers, Lewis and Dutton, 2015). The women have indicated that meditation has helped them deal with their trauma without making them talk about. It is a silent healer that has helped them become free of their stress and worry. In turn these women have immensely started to gain a greater self-esteem. These women have gathered more kindness and a caring nature because they received their pain and experiences (Myers, Lewis and Dutton, 2015). Meditation frees the mind from talking and over thinking. This helps a person deal with the stresses they have in a better way.

Psychotherapists treat people and determine treatments for their disorders. Research has shown that psychotherapists who attended "Zentatives" (a meditation retreat) have helped

the psychotherapists in their own lives (Goldberg and Sachter, 2018). The psychotherapists described their experience as "removing fog from the road and having a clear view (p.27)."

According to Zeidner (1998), students become overwhelmed during examination, which causes stress, bringing down the student's results (Wine, 1971). Research done by Dundas, Thorsheim, Hjeltnes and Binder (2016) indicates that mindfulness meditation practices with university students positively influence them to reduce anxiety and stress during examinations. Oaklander (2015) states meditation has helped more students become graduates. Meditation has been said to have positive influence over academics.

Duthely, Nunn and Avella (2017) demonstrated that learners who participated in meditation were cheerful, they had more commitment with school as well as they began to appreciate more. Learners become stressed in schools by work load, deadline and behaviour of other students; however, learners who conducted meditation have reduced their levels of stress in schools (Elder, Nidich, Colbert, et al., 2011). Charoensukmongkol (2014) indicates that meditation has helped people change their attitudes to certain situations as they control the mind.

A study done by Pagnoni, Cekic and Guo (2008, p. 3080) indicates that "Zen practitioners displayed a reduced duration of the neural response linked to conceptual processing in regions of the default network, suggesting that meditative training may foster the ability to control the automatic cascade of semantic associations triggered by a stimulus and, by extension, to voluntarily regulate the flow of spontaneous mentation."

From my experience as a university student in South Africa, students on campus do not eat healthily. Murphy, Mermelstein, Edwards and Gidycz (2012) state meditative practices integrated in training programmes have helped college girls in their physical health, with better sleeping routines as well as to consume better foods. Likewise, meditative practices have helped many people overcome physical illnesses they have been going through, e.g., irritable bowel syndrome (Bilican, 2016). Meditation has helped the safety of the health in these college girls. In a similar study conducted by Lauche, Langhorst, Paul, Dobos and Cramer (2014) found that people who meditated had been more content in life in general. Meditation makes a person happier with their life.

The study conducted by Griffiths, Shonin, Van Gordon (2016) indicates that people who experience gambling disorders are assisted by meditation. Individuals who are addicted by gambling eventually can control their gambling addictions by doing meditation. Apart from alcohol and drugs, gambling can be an addiction; however, these gamblers can use meditation to help them get eliminate of their addiction.

Smoking and depression have “a well-established relationship” (Vinci, Spears, Peltier, Copeland 2016). The research conducted by them indicates that meditation can protect one from becoming depressed as well as smoking. Meditative practices help an individual reduce stress and, in turn, those who smoke to reduce stress, eventually reducing smoking because of meditative practices.

When an individual is unwell and hospitalised, it can become stressful. According to Erian and Erian (2017), worry, trauma, tension, soreness, and recovery after being hospitalised could be fixed using meditative practices. Likewise, Smith (2014) states meditation helps an individual deal with stress levels. Meditation can help a person that is recovering in hospital.

Broome, Orme-Jonhson and Schmidt-Wilk (2005) experimented on the reduction of stress using Transcendental Meditation (TM) and Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR). The experiment consisted of pre-tests, assigning volunteers randomly to experimental and control conditions, administering widely used stress reduction treatments and post testing participants from a South African company. The experiment was supplemented with qualitative interviews which were conducted three years after the intervention. Their study showed that employees from this South African company have reduced their stress levels after transcendental meditation. They further state that these employees have begun to undertake tasks more responsibly thus the company and its people have gained tremendously.

Similarly, Mars and Oliver (2016) state that a "Google program entitled "Search inside yourself" (p.8) has helped more than 500 working people listen and work in harmony by doing meditation. Bostock, Crosswell, Prather and Steptoe (2018) indicate that workers have reduced their stress levels in the working environment after listening to meditation every day from a phone application. Meditation has helped make the lives of employees happy, which will make them want to go to work and like the jobs they do. When the workers of the

company are producing well, all stakeholders of the company become happy and the working environment becomes successful. Erbe and Lohrmann (2015) assert that parents' involvement in meditative practices has proven beneficial to learners by conducting meditative practices at school and home. It appears to help the family life as well, since stress levels of learners as well as parents will decrease once meditation is practiced in the home (Erbe and Lohrmann, 2015). Oakland (2015) indicates that stress levels of learners decreased once they did nine lessons of meditation.

After engaging in meditation, Massachusetts High School learners have portrayed friendlier behavior (Paperclip, 2017). Paperckip (2017) further indicates that shy learners have now become more actively involved in activities of the school and have taken on greater responsibilities upon themselves. Meditation shows it makes the confidence greater in children. Likewise, research that Singh and Kaur did (2008) with student-teachers studying a Bachelor of Education degree have positively changed personality after doing meditation. These students who meditated had portrayed a better personality trait in terms of having a higher self-confidence. They had developed more self-assurance once they began meditating.

According to Colbert (2013) students who have engaged in meditative practices have a less chance of dropping out of school than learners who do not engage in meditative practices. Their research showed that students in schools who meditate have a greater chance of not leaving their schooling careers in the midst. On the other hand, they found that learners who did not engage in meditation practices abandoned their school life easily. Meditation helped to guide learners to make informed decisions and deal with circumstances with a broad mind. Meditation has proven to help individuals deal with psychological agony and grief (Rempel, 2012). When a person meditates they may eliminate emotional pain like depression, uneasiness and stress and increase their psychological well-being. Likewise, Duthely, Nunn and Avella (2017) indicate that meditative practices assisted teenagers with their welfare and positively assisted their mind. Meditative practices develop a person mentally because they are not easily depressed, and they may appreciate the little they get in life (Crowley and Munk, 2017).

Christian students doing meditation have stated that meditation has helped them understand their religious customs while learning about Buddhist practices (Hickey and Yarbrough,

2013). Meditative practices help individuals not only on a personal level but on a spiritual level as well. These Christian students were able to see the purpose of their cultural needs by meditating.

According to Bloch, Farrell, Hook, Tongeren, Penberthy and Davis (2017) meditative practices have helped college students understand themselves and their "presence of meaning in life" as well as thoughts and feelings (p.109). University students have benefitted from meditation and have gained understanding. These college students developed the ability to see their need and purpose in this world.

When people become older, their health begins to deteriorate. This causes their medical expenses to increase. A study done by Herron and Cavanaugh (2005) states that people over the age of 65 who have done transcendental meditation have reduced doctor costs. This adjustment could be related to decreased stress levels and an increase in psychological and physiological stability (Herron and Cavanaugh, 2005). Meditation has helped the aged deal with their medical needs rather than visiting the doctor all the time.

According to Hartel, Nguyen and Guzik (2017) the University in Toronto created a happy learning environment to support the interest of students. One of their programmes to assist the students was meditation (Hartel, Nguyen and Guzik, 2017). These students have indicated that meditation has helped them by allowing them to concentrate and understand lectures; made them feel like they wanted to learn and appreciate that lecturers saw them as humans and assisted them whenever necessary.

Being cooperative is important. It allows an individual to gain from the task in which they engage. A study by Iwamoto, Alexander, Torres, Irwin, Christakis and Nishi, (2020) showed that people who meditated supported altruism more, and contributed more donations than those who did not meditate. When a person gives without expecting anything in return or benefiting from what they have given it is known as altruism. Meditation helps a person to give more without wanting to only gain from what they have given.

Meditation, though beneficial, as shown above, is also criticized for having adverse effects on those who practice it. The next section will discuss the shortcomings of meditation.

2.5 Shortcomings of meditation

In this section of the chapter, I discuss some shortcomings of meditation. Meditation may produce “unwanted effects”. Meditation could also have adverse effect if it is discontinued after practice it for a long time. Another shortcoming of meditation is the anxiety that it may cause on those that practice it. I also discuss in this section, how lack of knowledge about meditation may be a shortcoming. I conclude this section with reference to meditation with individuals who may have had a traumatic experience.

Cebolla, Demarzo, Martins, Soler and Garcia-Campayo (2017, p. 8) indicate there are "unwanted effects" of mediation, however not much research has been done on the topic. "Unwanted effects" of meditation are caused when meditation is done in groups whereas meditating alone can be difficult (Cebolla, Demarzo, Martins, Soler and Garcia-Campayo, 2017).

The duration one engages with meditation must not be too long as one tends to be disturbed and distracted. The human being cannot concentrate for a long period and should do meditation for 10 minutes to benefit. According to Cebolla, Demarzo, Martins, Soler and Garcia-Campoya (2017) meditation should be done for a short session or one can experience “unwanted effects”. Likewise, Cebolla, Demarzo, Martins, Soler and Garcia-Campayo (2017) state "unwanted effects" of meditation can occur when meditation sessions are too long. A person should begin meditating for a short while and as time goes by they can develop themselves to meditating for longer periods. If meditation is started for a longer duration, a person may not get its full benefit.

Bilican (2016) affirms the more a person meditates the better their lives become. This is a disadvantage because if a person discontinues their meditation practice, their assistance will not last for too long. They will benefit but only for the time they meditate. When a person becomes too dependent on something, they will want it all the time and can even become addicted to it.

Cebolla, Demarzo, Martins, Soler and Garcia-Campoya (2017) further state that meditation can cause a person to become panicky and anxious. When one begins to get into deep meditation, one can lose awareness of oneself. In this time an individual can lose thought, and

this could cause them to become nervous and uneasy. It is important for the person meditating to practice with good thoughts and control or the meditation may have adverse effects.

A great barrier that does not allow meditative practices to be understood by individuals is their lack of knowledge of meditation and its practices. Many people believe meditation is a prayer and it is not allowed by all religious groups. According to Russell, Orellana, Ugalde, Milne, Krishnasamy (2017), many people do not understand meditation, which is a great obstacle for meditation. Meditation is not a prayer as it is only a focus. There is no focus of any God or religion as such. You just relax and breathe during meditation. People have this misunderstanding as meditation comes from the East. However, people of different races and religions practice meditation as it is not a religion but rather a practice.

The person doing meditation with a traumatised individual should have some background knowledge on the individual or the meditation could have adverse effects (Rempel, 2016). When conducting meditation with a troubled person, prior knowledge on the individual must be gained as meditation can bring back flashbacks that could be anxiety-producing and cause harm to the person. In this study there was no focus on what the learner has experienced rather the focus was on breathing and relaxing. The guided meditation did not take learners back to their traumatised experience. Still, I was aware of those learners on any sort of medication or those that have had any traumatising and bad experiences that has caused harm in their lives.

Meditation is a process that helps an individual develop themselves and to be brave and face different situations (Charoensukmongkol, 2014). Meditation helps control the mind and emotions hence it enables individuals to deal with any circumstance that comes to them with full faith and fear. Willis and Sharma (2017) state meditation has helped them when life had become difficult to cope with. They have been through complex problems in life and meditation has helped them deal with it.

Meditative practices have shortcomings for which a solution may be easily found. The shortcomings of meditation are in my view minimal as discussed above. With this said,

precaution should be taken when engaging a person in meditation as there should be no harm. In the next section empirical research will be conversed.

2.6 Meditation, Education and Learners

According to Barnett, Shale, Elkins and Fisher (2014) meditative practices are not limited to religious and traditional practices. Still, they are used widely as contemplative practices and an alternative medicine in the USA.

Meditation is used in Catholic schools to help learners focus on God and learners should be awarded the opportunity to have 'God time' (de Souza, Hyde and Kehoe, 2014). De Souza et al. (2014) further state that meditative practices have positively influenced the learner's self-esteem to improve learning. Schlumpf (2017) states that meditative practices used among Catholic students in university have proved to change the lives of those students. The students have less stress; they are more attentive and happier at college (Schlumpf, 2017). The teachers have said they want to encourage the student by providing a "good and successful, not stressed and successful" (Schlumpf, 2017, p.8) education. When meditation is practiced with learners and students it positively reinforces the learners thus creating happiness and less stress.

Meditative practices have proven to help individuals between the ages of 9 and 19 regarding their feelings, minds, and personal lives (Duthely, Nunn and Avella, 2017). The way individuals think and behave can influence their school life and meditative practices have proven to curb them. Charoensukmongkol (2014) indicates that meditative practices help individuals use their feelings efficiently.

De Souza et al. (2014) indicates that meditation has assisted learners be more focused - even when they could not meditate, they would not cause any interruption to others around them. Learners have also become calmer and more attentive throughout the school day. They also found that learners had become more family orientated after meditation. (de Souza et al., 2014). In a study conducted by Oakland (2015) in which a meditation programme was introduced primary school learners, it was found that learners took control of their behaviour. Hence, the number of school suspensions has decreased.

Leoni (2006) states that meditation helped learners in her classroom be more open and less judgmental. She further indicated that while doing meditation with the learners, it has also helped her reduce her stress levels, resolve problems, and find solutions. She further states that a principal stated he used meditation as a "stress management programme", which engaged learners in attending school more often and learner conduct was easier to manage. In the same way, McKibben (2014) indicates that "meditation is becoming an antidote to stress and anxiety." Teachers and learners both benefit from meditation and in turn all stakeholders in the school are satisfied. If learners are good and happy at school, the school environment becomes better.

Meditation is an ideal method to help learners remain calm. It is a process which involves you to sit with your eyes closed and breathe. According to Buttle (2015) meditation helps with concentration. Similarly, Wisner, Jones and Gwin (2010) state that meditation will help learners become better individuals and when this occurs, the school will have a "better climate". Dundas, Thorsheim, Hjeltnes and Binder (2016) indicate that meditation helps reduce the mind from being troubled, allowing individuals to concentrate better.

Gonzalez (2012) states that the school can assure a better accomplishment in academics when a "restorative justice" approach is used. The restorative justice approach empowers all stakeholders of the school environment (Gonzalez, 2012). Schools should adopt a method to assist learners rather than punish them. Punitive methods will raise anger in learners which in turn will cause them to be rebellious. Mullet (2014) states that by punishing a child you create bitterness and fury in the child. By punishing a learner, we are developing frustration and annoyance in that individual. Doing something wrong, like punishing a learner, for the wrong they have done will not resolve the issue but create bitterness in the learner. Rather adopt a method to change and help learners which will make them better individuals.

People meditate to eliminate troubles in the mind and understand the meaning of life to change their consciousness positively (Sedlmeier, Eberth, Schwarz, Zimmermann, Haerig, Jaeger and Kunze, 2012). Learners can benefit from meditation by getting eliminate of bad thoughts and bad behaviour. Likewise, DeUrquiza (2014) indicates that learners can meditate for 10 minutes in the morning every day. This can be done as a routine. Meditation done by the learner and teacher in the morning will ensure the classroom is calm and peaceful from

the start of the day (DeUrquiza, 2014). By practicing meditation in the morning, learners and teachers will start their school day positively and calmly.

Meditative practices conducted twice a day with learners proved beneficial to their academic performance (Nidich, Mjasiri, Nidich, Rainforth, Grant, Valosek, Chang and Zigler, 2011). They further state that learners had improved their literacy skills. “Contemplative practices such as meditation” can assist learners with their school academic performance as well as their feelings (Shapiro, Lyons, Miller, Butler, Vieten, Zelazo, 2015). Oaklander (2015) states learners who conducted meditation had good ratings in Mathematics. The inclusion of a meditation class in the syllabus of university students can prove to benefit the learning done in class and help university students get better grades (Ching, Koo, Tsai and Chen, 2015). These learners had received better grades as they had more focus and they could remember more in the class (Ching, Koo, Tsai and Chen, 2015). Meditation helps with academics and allows an individual to produce better results. These students have indicated that the meditation has helped them as they could think and remain at focus.

Mentoring is a great task to accomplish and having the correct attitude is important. Foukal, Lawrence, Jennings (2016) state that mindfulness training has assisted mentors to become happier, develop more compassion within them, and decrease control of their dependency. Part of a teacher's job is to mentor, and meditative practices have eased the mentor’s task of dealing with students. A mentor needs to have a lot of patience as they do not want to hurt the feelings of the student. They want the student to learn happily and not be anxious and petrified. Meditation helps mentors do their best at their jobs.

The Nataki Talibah School are practising meditation and have seen extraordinary results (Pascopella, 2003). She states that learners have benefited from doing meditation by coping and dealing with issues such as stress. One of the learners stated that they have become more of themselves and don’t take themselves too "seriously".

Learners in a school for mentally disabled learners have done meditation and the results had proven positive. The learners had gained better short-term memory after doing meditation at school (Kunal, Krishnadasa, Pai, Shiva, Arunkumar, Anantharaya, Chatterjee, 2018). Similarly, Bilican (2016) states that meditative practices have assisted people who have

problems related to the mind, e.g. anxiety. Meditation is training the mind and what better natural method than meditation can help an individual with mental disabilities.

Learners with ADHD (attention deficit hyperactivity disorder) had shown fewer symptoms and less hyperactivity when doing meditation (Oakland, 2015). Learners who have the disorder are often disruptive and cannot concentrate for long, but meditation has helped them deal with their disorder. Likewise, a study that included meditation and yoga which was conducted with ADHD learners has shown improvements in terms of their performance in school in reading and the way these learners conducted themselves (Mehta, Shah, Shah, Mehta, Mehta, Mehta, Mehta, Mehta, Motiwala, Mehta and Mehta, 2012). Mehta et al (2012) state these learners' mannerisms have improved and these learners have a system in which their homework is completed. These studies show that meditation and yoga can assist teachers in keeping these learners with disorders in their classroom more relaxed and calmer and inclusivity can be achieved. Inclusive learners are not easy to deal with in the classroom and they require a lot of patience and care when being taught. Meditation has helped some of these learners and they are making progress.

Robert W. Coleman Elementary school in West Baltimore has started a meditation programme. They have stopped using punitive methods and have started using meditation to help learners with discipline problems. According to Albrecht, Albrecht and Cohen (2017), meditation can be adopted into any classroom setting, stimulating discipline to allow the learner to be calm after each lesson. He further states that by just allowing learners to breathe a sense of peace will be felt instead of chaos and noise. This is an important factor as learners become disruptive and lose focus when there is a change of lesson time. A method like meditation should be adopted to help learners and not cause unruly behaviour inside of them.

Lillard (2011) states that engaging learners in meditative practices helps them deal with social relationships, better concentration, and educational programs. Likewise, Chang, Koo, Tsai and Chen (2015) state meditation has helped students pay attention in class. Learners who participate in meditation will be able to communicate better with friends, teachers and parents. They will also think better and work well with the tasks given in class. Fourth and fifth grade learners who participated in meditation proved to be more affectionate towards others (Oaklander, 2015). Meditation helps with making social relations better and causes a

person to develop love and compassion within them. People who meditate are kinder and more sympathetic towards others.

Schools are now using meditative practices to help learners and teachers understand why individuals in the classroom behave in a particular manner and conduct themselves in a certain way (Cavazos, 2013). There are various reasons why students behave in a certain way. The schools are using meditative practices to help these learners distinguish why they behave in this manner. Once the school can identify why the learner behaves in a certain way they can try and rectify it by finding a good solution. It also helps teachers determine and understand the reason, so they could help the learner get eliminate of their behaviour. Likewise, Hartel, Nguyen and Guzik (2017) state that meditative practises have made students say that they appreciate the teacher treating them in a fair and good manner, instead of worrying merely about their brain power. Learners are more open after practicing meditation and were able to voice to the teacher that they are happy when the teachers treat them appropriately and are concerned about their intelligence capability.

Rempel (2012) indicates that schools are focusing on engaging learners in meditative practices. Not only academics as a learner can gain from meditation in many different ways to improve their lives. Meditative practices are done with learners to improve their lives as a whole. School should be a place for learning but should not only focus on academic learning, rather also make the learner improve in all aspects of life. Teachers should be doing academics and meditation as well with learners to develop the learner as a whole. Likewise, Mars and Oliver (2016) indicate that meditation helps learners "listen" better. By paying attention, learners will grasp more in the classroom, which will benefit them and the teacher. Once the teacher has the attention of the learner in the classroom, knowledge can easily be passed over.

Teachers should practise meditation as it benefits their welfare as well as their way and style of teaching (Weare, 2014). When a teacher can improve teaching practices, learners start to have better understanding and with that, the learner can gain more knowledge than before. The teacher needs to have good practices then automatically learners will achieve. A study conducted with teachers and learners has proven beneficial whereby teachers have indicated that they are able to teach in a better way; cascade information in a more meaningful way to

learners; they were less anxious about the syllabus and objectives to be met are completed (Albrecht, Albrecht and Cohen, 2017). In a school the teacher holds the greatest number of responsibilities with the learner being the greatest responsibility of them all. The teacher must ensure that the teaching and passing of knowledge are achieved to its fullest among all duties of the day. Meditation has said to help teachers and allow them to deliver accordingly.

Weare (2014) indicate that younger people who engage in meditative practices are getting pleasure from the practice and gaining from it. An educator in a public school in Texas is practicing yoga and meditation with her grade 3 learners and is seeing phenomenal results; she states that teachers must represent mindfulness in the classroom by ensuring learners understand and see the results of meditation (Yoga Freedom, 2011). The University of Toronto introduced 3 minutes meditation to students who enrolled for a library course and have discussed how these students had relayed that meditation played a positive role during their course (Hartel, Nguyen, Guzik, 2017). Meditation is assisting students and teachers positively and allowing them to gain from their respective institutions.

2.7 Conclusion

In this chapter I reviewed the literature on meditation. The objective of my study was to understand the experiences of learners who have been introduced to meditation. I reviewed the relevant literature on meditation, the benefits of meditation and the shortcomings of meditation. I also referred to studies on meditation, education and learners.

Chapter Three

Research Design and Methodology

3.1 Introduction

Researchers need to ensure their research design is done to build up and support the validity of the research as well as to make certain the research questions are being answered (Yin, 2011). This is a vital chapter as it is the foundation of the research study to ensure the aim and purpose of the research is done accordingly. The first part discusses the qualitative research design of the study. In this section I discuss why the quantitative research design was not appropriate for a study on the meditative practices of learners at a primary school. Thereafter the research philosophy, which is the interpretive paradigm, is described. Here, I argue for the appropriateness of the interpretive paradigm instead of the post positivist and critical paradigms. In keeping with the qualitative research design and interpretive paradigm, I discuss the research strategies, sampling, data generation methods, and data analysis. The concluding sections of this chapter cover issues of trustworthiness and ethics.

In this study I have explored learners' experiences of meditative practices. To accomplish the purpose of the study, the following research questions were answered (1) what are learners' experiences of meditative practices? (2) why do learners have such feelings of meditative practices?

3.2 The Research Design

The research on meditative practices of learners used a qualitative approach to generate the data. According to Patten and Newhart (2018) research can either be quantitative, qualitative or a mixed-method approach. They describe quantitative as raw data being collected and analysed whereas qualitative is explained as data collected to be analysed and expressed. Mixed method approach is the use of quantitative as well as qualitative approach. When using quantitative approach, hypotheses, tests and experiments are made (Bertram and Christiansen, 2014).

Pickard (2017) indicates that quantitative research uses numbers, statistics and figures where data is "quantified", whereas qualitative research uses the understandings of people to come

up with results. Quantitative research design was inappropriate for this study as the researchers aimed to develop a case and not numerical data.

Qualitative research presents data that comprises a description of the main aims of the research (Goodwin, 2010). Connaway and Powell (2010) state that a qualitative study attempts to study why an individual acts in a certain manner. Yin (2011) describes qualitative study as thorough research that allows one to do research about a variety of topics that can be to the liking of a person or a general topic. Qualitative research is to establish the reason for the individual to feel in a certain way (Yin, 2011). For these reasons, a qualitative approach was chosen, as this research aims to understand learners' feelings of meditative practices. The qualitative approach allowed the researcher to gain in depth understanding of the experiences of learners.

3.3 Research paradigm

Denzin and Lincoln (2005) state a paradigm is a basic set of beliefs that guide action. During the conduction of research, three different possible research designs can be used; namely post positivist; interpretative paradigm and critical paradigm.

Each of the paradigms mentioned above differ as far as their ontology, epistemology and methodology are concerned.

The aim of this research was to understand learner's experiences of meditative practices. To understand this, the interpretative paradigm was used. A characteristic of qualitative research is interpretive inquiry, which involves the researcher interpreting what she saw, heard and understood (Creswell, 2007). This study was located within an interpretive paradigm as it attempted to interpret the views of learner's experiences of meditation.

In the interpretive paradigm, researchers attempt to understand the world they live and work (Creswell, 2007). Denzin and Lincoln (2005) and Clarke (2005) contend that the interpretive paradigm is an approach to qualitative research that has become interwoven into the core characteristics of qualitative research. The goal of the interpretive research paradigm is to rely as much as possible on the participants' views of a situation (Henning, Van Rensburg and Smit, 2004). In general, one can say that the interpretive paradigm aims at interpreting or

understanding human behaviour, rather than explaining or predicting it (Babbie and Mouton, 2001). The interpretive paradigm fitted best with this study; hence this study used the interpretive paradigm.

In this study, I set out to understand the experiences of learners who were introduced to meditation. I, therefore, found the phenomenological (experiences) approach to be appropriate for this study. Phenomenology belongs to qualitative research. The phenomenological approach assists in focusing on the commonality of the experiences within a particular group. In my study, I wanted to explore the commonality in the experiences of grade 6 learners who are introduced to meditation. Creswell (2013) asserts that the phenomenological approach aims to describe the nature of a particular phenomenon (meditation in the case of my study).

Phenomenology involves a process of “bracketing”. According to Lester (1999, p. 1), “bracketing is used by the researcher to document personal experiences with the subject to help remove him or herself from the process”. While I was fully involved in data generation (having organised and conducted the meditation), I was cautious to remain as objective as possible.

One of the data generation methods common to the phenomenological approach is interviews (Creswell, 2013). I used interviews extensively in this study. The interview as an appropriate data generation method is confirmed by Lester (1999:2):

In the human sphere, this normally translates into gathering ‘deep’ information and perceptions through inductive, qualitative methods such as interviews, discussions, and participant observation and representing it from the research participant's perspective (s).

3.4 Research Style

Case studies are often used in research in the interpretive paradigm (Bertram and Christiansen, 2014). The case study was used as this research used the interpretive paradigm. The case study is most appropriate, as the research was to gain deep understanding of experiences learners had when meditating. I chose to use case study as my research style since like Patten and Newhart (2018), I consider case study to be a powerful method to explain complex phenomena such as meditation and make connections between learners’

meditation experiences. Mertens (2010) indicates that case studies are used to distinguish what happens in a particular case and understand that case. This research aimed and focused to determine the real-life experiences of learners during meditation. Connaway (2010) states that case studies are qualitative research that gains insight on an individual to learn more about a situation.

According to Yin (2003, p.13) asserts that case studies are empirical enquiries “that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomena and context are not evident”. Case studies help researchers gain the truth of the respondents understanding and thoughts about the situation they are in (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2000). During the conduct of this research, the real-life experiences of the learners were expressed by them.

In this research, the case study was most suitable as it was used to determine the in depth understanding and experiences learners had during meditation such as why did the learners meditate, how did they feel during meditation, did meditation help them and the challenges they faced the period when they were meditating.

3.5 Sampling Method

Sampling is the process whereby the researcher chooses the sources for data collection (Tracy, 2013). Sampling used during research is a procedure used to determine the person/people involved in the study and the role they play in the research (Mertens, 2010). This process is used to determine who will be the people to gain information from for the study.

There were two samples used for this research:

SAMPLE 1: The participant's (learners) who attended the meditation class.

SAMPLE 2: The teachers who had taught these learners

There are two methods of sampling, namely, probability sampling and non-probability sampling. Probability sampling is commonly used in quantitative research (Goodwin, 2010). According to Mertens (2010) post positivists use the approach of probability sampling whereby every individual has an equal chance of being part of the sample. Probability sampling "is used whenever the goal is to learn something specific about an identifiable

group of individuals" (Goodwin, 2010, p.466). This method of sampling was not suitable for this research as the study used the qualitative approach and wanted to build a case.

Non-probability sampling methods cannot be used to generalise a population (Connaway and Powell, 2010). Hence in this study non-probability sampling was used as facts and figures do not determine the data rather the case of "understanding" learners' feelings of meditation were determined. This research cannot be generalised because of the sampling method and a case being used.

Purposive sampling is when the researcher chooses participants based on his/her knowledge of the sample being chosen (Connaway and Powell, 2010). The sampling most commonly used in qualitative research is purposive (Connaway and Powell, 2010). This research was a qualitative study in the interpretive paradigm; therefore, it was an ideal method of sampling.

Yin (2011) states purposive sampling helps the researcher gain comprehensive data, as participants have the most appropriate information on hand. During this research, the learners and teachers who taught the learners who meditated had proper research required research. Goodwin (2010) states when researchers use purposive sampling, they can intentionally leave out people from a sample if they feel the sample does not have a wide variety of individuals.

This research used purposive sampling as it is was a small population of participants. A permission letter was sent out to parents with full details of the research. Parents were able to see and note the purpose of the research as well as understand why their child was asked to volunteer to participate in this research. A complete summary of the research and details pertaining to the research were outlined in the letter, for example, details of the researcher, supervisor of the study, and the university where the research would be published. Parents had an option to deny their child the rights to participate in this research without any explanation. Parents were allowed to stop their child from doing the meditation if they felt any dissatisfaction or harm caused to the child. They could have also withdrawn from the research without any reason or be questioned. The learners that were chosen were in the 11 - 13-year age group, as it was assumed that they were old enough to understand what research is and what is to be entailed during the research process. The researcher also felt data collected from the interview and questionnaire would be richer from this age of learners as

they understood compared to smaller children. The researcher was also able to observe learners during meditation time and meditate with the learners. Sample 1 was able to describe their experiences as they were chosen with a purpose.

3.6 Data generation methods

A vital aspect of research is the collection of data (Yin, 2011).

There are two sources of generation data namely primary sources of data and secondary sources of data. Primary sources of data include interviews, questionnaires, focus group discussion directly from the participants. Primary sources of data are more reliable as they are obtained by the researcher firsthand. This research used primary sources of data collection.

Secondary sources of data include data from previous studies, internet sources and older records (Mertens, 2010). Secondary data is data obtained from other sources that can be used for research purposes. I used interviews, observation and questionnaires to generate data.

3.6.1 Interviews

Mertens (2010) states that interviews have a purpose of ensuring rich data is gathered during interviewing by the researcher. However, interviews can be costlier and time consuming (Mertens, 2010). A sample of the questions asked during the interview can be found in chapter 4 where the responses are discussed.

According to Bertram and Christiansen (2014), the interview is an efficient method of gaining reliable information required for the study. They further state that interviews give more detail and descriptive data. Patten and Newhart (2018) indicate that interviews are the most common method of gathering data in qualitative research. Similarly, Mertens (2010) states that interviews are an important data collection method for qualitative researchers.

Yin (2003) states interviews are a good source of evidence for case studies as they give a great understanding of situations. Interviews with probing were conducted with probing questions which were asked. For this study, interviews were conducted with ten learners that attended the meditation class. All learners that had attended the meditation class were called to a meeting. At this meeting they were thanked for their time and participation. During this

meeting it was explained to all learners that meditation classes for this research were completed. The researcher explained that 9 of the learners who meditated need to be interviewed (asked a few questions) about their experiences. I asked all the learners to make themselves available to be interviewed. Only 9 learners came forward to be interviewed.

Patten and Newhart (2018) state that interviews conducted face-to-face enable the researcher to view the participant's facial expressions and body movements during the interview. This allows the researcher to understand the participant's reactions or the true feelings of the participant. The interview was conducted face-to-face in a scheduled meeting. Mason (2002) states interviews are the most common data collection method in qualitative research.

The interviews were executed in the following way:

- Permission was sought from the Department of Basic Education and the school. Thereafter ethical clearance was requested and once permission was granted, the research began.
- The researcher asked participants (learners) who would voluntarily want to be interviewed based on the meditation classes. 9 of those learners volunteered and were chosen.
- The dates and time of the interview were discussed with each participant. Upon agreement of the date and time from the participant the date and time was finalised.
- The interviews were recorded and transcribed.

3.6.2 Observations

Goodwin (2010) describes observations as a method of viewing or watching the behaviors of individuals to gain data. When the researcher is known to the group and observes the behaviors, it is known as participant observation (Goodwin, 2010). He further states that qualitative research often uses participant observation. This enables the researcher to get first hand data from the observations made (Goodwin, 2010).

Mertens (2010) states observations gives the researcher an idea of how an activity takes place. Observations give us data or understandings of things that happen by chance or something the researcher was not looking for and has become aware of just by observation

(Goodwin, 2010). The advantage is the researcher views the activity as it happens and gets firsthand knowledge on the event taking place (Mertens, 2010).

Yin (2011) states that collecting primary data such as observations is much better than secondary data collected as it allows the study to generate meaningful findings. An observation is a primary method of collecting data from the sample, rather than using secondary data (data gained from another source e.g. internet).

Bertram and Christiansen (2014) state that the researcher's presence during the observation could create an unnatural setting as it might cause the people in the setting to act differently. During this research study, I informally observed the learners during every meditation class. I was able to establish new knowledge of the study by observing learners. Learners were not aware of the observation taking place as their eyes would be closed. Participants were under the impression that the researcher is also meditating. I conducted observations using the following method:

- After permission was sought from the relevant bodies, data collection began.
- I conducted observations once in two weeks during the ten-week meditation practice.
- A total of 5 observations were completed.
- Observations were noted roughly on a page (unstructured). The changes that occurred, learners' progress, and any new notification were made note of during the meditation. Another important note was those learners on medication and that had been through bad situations were observed very closely to ensure they were in good health during the meditation.

3.6.3 Questionnaires

Connaway and Powell (2010) state that questionnaires are the most detailed form of collecting data. The use of questionnaires gives the researcher in depth information from the participants. However, data collected from questionnaires is time consuming to analyse (Connaway and Powell, 2010).

Mertens (2010) states questionnaires are a quick way of gaining lots of data in a short space of time. Questionnaires are collected anonymously from participants, giving them confidence to write their true feelings (Mertens, 2010).

This research used questionnaires to gain data. A pre-meditation and post meditation questionnaire were completed. The pre-meditation questionnaire was given to all participants to complete before the meditation began. The questionnaire had open ended questions and close ended questions. Basic information such as gender and race were asked. Participants were also expected to fill out reasons as to why they wanted to meditate. The purpose of the pre-meditation questionnaire was for the researcher to determine if any of those learners had been on medication. If they had been on medication, they could be closely monitored. It would also enable the researcher to gain information if the participant had been through a tough situation.

Questionnaires were also handed out to some participants after the 10-week meditation program to understand how learners felt during the meditation. This questionnaire assisted the researcher to gain information on learners' experiences from those who opted to be omitted from the interview.

Two surveys were handed to learners, which were the pre-meditation questionnaire and post-meditation questionnaire. The pre-meditation questionnaire was compulsory, and all 50 learners completed them. Fifteen learners who volunteered had completed the post meditation questionnaire. These learners completed the ten-week meditation program and had opted not to be interviewed which means that another group of 9 from the 50 learners had been interviewed.

There were five questions for the learners to answer:

- *What is your gender and to which racial group do you belong?*
- *Why do you want to meditate?*
- *What prompted you to meditate?*
- *Are you on any medication? If yes, state for what.*
- *Is there any situation/ bad experience you are currently facing? If yes, state what.*

The questionnaires were conducted in the following manner:

- Permission was sought from the various bodies.
- Once permission was gained participants were all handed a pre-meditation questionnaire.

- After the ten-week meditation classes some participants were handed a post meditation questionnaire to complete. 15 of these learners opted to complete the questionnaire.
- The questionnaires were completed in the presence of the researcher.

3.7 Data analysis

There are two approaches for analysing qualitative data, namely, inductive analysis and deductive analysis. In an inductive approach the researcher generates data, analyses patterns in the data, and then theorises from the data to research.

To process the data, a commonly known qualitative approach of thematic analysis was used. Themes were generated and the data collected was put into themes. In accordance to advice given by Connaway and Powell (2010) as well as Yin (2011) the following steps were used to analyse the data:

Step 1: I familiarised myself with the data obtained from interviews transcripts. The interview transcripts were read and re-read.

Step 2: Codes were generated by obtaining patterns that are essential from the data.

Step 3: I generated themes from the data by analysing the codes and derive themes from the codes.

Step 4: All themes were re-evaluated.

Step 5: I then explained what the theme contained and gave each theme a name.

Step 6: The research report was written.

During the process of analysing the data, I used a table to insert all interview data generated. Once the table (please refer to Appendix 1) was completed, I read the data of all participants. The data from the table was read and re-read on many occasions and hence themes were derived from this process.

A similar approach was undertaken in completing the data analysis of the questionnaire:

Step 1: I engaged in reading data that was received from the questionnaires. The questionnaires were read and re-read.

Step 2: Patterns that were necessary from the data were gained and codes were formed.

Step 3: From the codes obtained, themes were generated.

Step 4: All themes were re-assessed.

Step 5: Each theme was given a name and explained.

Step 6: The research report was written.

A data table (refer to Appendix 2) was formed based on the analysis process. The table enabled me to easily read the data obtained from each participant.

During the analysis of the observations, the same approach of Connaway and Powell (2010) as well as Yin (2011) was used:

Step 1: I acquainted myself with the data obtained from the observations. The observation schedules were read and re-read.

Step 2: From the required data patterns were acquired and codes were formed.

Step 3: I created themes from the data by evaluating the codes and developing themes.

Step 4: All themes were re-checked.

Step 5: I explained what the theme included and named the theme.

Step 6: The research report was written.

Observations were analysed and a table (see appendix 3) was formed. This helped me see the data generated from a broader point of view.

3.8 Trustworthiness

Yin (2011) describes validity as the process where the researcher ensures the data is collected correctly and thoroughly understood. Hence, the findings of the study are precise and truthful. In this research study, the researcher had made certain data was collected correctly. In qualitative studies the terms reliability and validity are not used. Rather the concept of *trustworthiness* applies. The four concepts of trustworthiness will be discussed below:

3.8.1 Credibility

According to Bertram and Christiansen (2014), credibility can be improved during data collection and data analysis. In this study, data was generated through interviews, observations and questionnaires. Patten and Newhart (2018) state that interviews recorded allow the researcher to gain insightful information and not miss any opportunity to improve the results. Pickard (2017) states that data collected should be available to ensure the research was credible and reliable. The interviews were recorded instead of the researcher jotting down notes – later this was transcribed. The availability of the audio recording ensured that information as the participant spoke it was correctly captured, transcribed and analysed. Data was analysed from the transcribed document after reading and re-reading the transcript of the interview. The transcribed interview was then put into a table of results whereby the

researcher could easily access the data to derive themes. Questionnaires were all completed in the presence of the researcher. This ensured the participants completed the questionnaires according to their ability and own experiences.

According to Bertram and Christiansen (2014), respondents are more honest in answering when they know their opinions and responses will not be discovered by others. The names of respondents were not revealed. In this research, pseudonyms (another name) were used in the research report for the school as well as the participants. No information gathered was disclosed to the organisations.

3.8.2 Confirmability

According to Bertram and Christiansen (2014) triangulation is a method used to collect data through several sampling strategies, so that data is gained at different times from different people. Pickard (2017) indicates that research becomes more credible when more than one method of collecting data is used. This research gathered data from learners through interviews, and questionnaires, and observation, and from teachers through interviews. This enabled me to gain a deep, richer understanding on the data gathered from the different participants. Connaway and Powell (2010) state that triangulation is a good method of ensuring trustworthiness in research. Triangulation can occur when the researcher used different methods of generating data from different samples. For this research different samples (learners and teachers) were used to gain data. Teachers were interviewed and during this process information was sought of the changes seen in learners. From this the researchers were able to see if the responses from learners (one sample), teachers (another sample) and observations by the researchers were coherent.

Observations conducted should be done on more than one occasion to ensure the data is not "biased" in any way (Yin, 2011). I was always present during the meditation class and this enabled me to observe learners. Observations were done informally on most days; however once in two weeks I would make notes on the reactions of the participants during meditation.

3.8.3 Dependability

According to Bertram and Christiansen (2014) dependability is "when the researcher can account for why there may be variations in the study" (p.190). During this research there

were no variations in the data analysis. Data collected from the various participants had all reached a common or similar conclusion.

3.8.4 Transferability

Transferability refers to the degree to which the results of a qualitative study may be generalised or transferred to other contexts. "Researchers should be clear about the theoretical lens or perspective that they use to interpret the data, and ensure they have sufficient evidence to back up their interpretation"(Bertram and Christiansen, 2014, p. 191). During this research I had sufficient data to back up interpretations made in analysing the data. The researcher did not derive conclusions without backing up interpretations from the data collected from participants.

3.9 Ethics

Ethics is our actions that are right or wrong. Hence, the ethics in any research is vital. Denzin and Lincoln (2005) state that because participants being interviewed are humans the researcher should ensure no harm comes to them. Patten and Newhart (2018) state that ethics must be considered in any research as we dealt with humans. They further state that the researcher must ensure no physical and psychological harm come to the participant. Goodwin (2010) indicates that researchers must ensure humans are treated with utmost respect and their dignity is maintained during the research. During the process of this research, no participant was harmed in any way- physically and emotionally.

According to Bertram and Christiansen (2014), there are three ethical principles:

- Autonomy- respecting the autonomy of each individual participating in the research.
- Non-maleficence- the research should not harm the respondents.
- Beneficence- the study should benefit society.

In this research, the ethical principles were adhered to in the following ways:

3.9.1 Ensuring participants were given informed consent

Consent should be sought from all participants informing them of the study and they should be able to withdraw at any time (Bertram and Christiansen, 2014). All participants were given informed consent and were able to withdraw at any given time. As they were minors,

parents/guardians had signed the consent form. (Refer to Appendix 4 for consent information).

Patten and Newhart (2018) state that permission to participate and explaining the necessary pros and cons to participants is vital. The participation was voluntary and not forced upon any participant. In this research learners were given consent that was sought from parents as they were minors. Parents had permitted the conduction of meditation as well as for the participation during the interviews.

However, learners were thereafter explained how the study was to unfold in the manner that they understood. Mertens (2010) states that informed consent must be gained from adults for children but the child must be aware of the procedure used during the study. Goodwin (2010) explains that consent gained is important; however, it should be gained from the correct individual; a child cannot be expected to sign consent but they must know if they want to participate or not.

3.9.2 Ensuring no harm comes to the participant

According to Bertram and Christiansen (2014), there should be no physical, emotional, social, or other harm done to participants. This research ensured no harm came to the participants. Participants were always free to make their own decisions.

Goodwin (2010) indicates participants must be allowed to leave the study at any time without being questioned or defamed in any way. I always ensured the participants were comfortable during the meditation as well as during the interview process and if they were not, they were welcome to quit.

3.9.3 Ensuring confidentiality and anonymity

Participants need to know how their information will be made public as it could affect them negatively if their information is released (Bertram and Christiansen, 2014). In this research participant identities were always protected. No information of any participant was released to the organisation/s or any other individual.

The information of participants was not directly used in this research paper. Pseudonyms were used during the writing of the research report. According to Connaway and Powell (2010) researchers should take utmost safety ensuring participant's details are not revealed and no individual outside the study should be able to identify the participant by reading the research report.

3.9.4 Ensuring permission is obtained

Permission was obtained from the necessary gatekeepers. During the research the relevant gatekeepers were contacted timeously and permission was sought from them.

Permission was sought from the following individuals/ organisations:

- ✓ The Department of Basic Education- KZN. Refer to Appendix 5
- ✓ The school where the research (meditation and interviews) were taking place. Refer to Appendix 6
- ✓ The University of KwaZulu Natal (ethical clearance). Refer to Appendix 7

3.10 Limitations

The following limitations were experienced during the study:

- Learners were absent from school and missed meditation class; however, I needed 30 learners for my study and I had two classes of 25 learners who attended which was a total of 50.
- When absenteeism is high, the researcher ensured that time was extended to complete 10 weeks, even if it meant going into 11 weeks of meditation.
- Parents did not want to allow learners to attend meditation class as they felt some prayer during meditation. The researcher assured all parents there was no prayer involved. The guided meditation involved breathing and relaxation only. Appendix 8 is the audio clip of the meditation done and this was handed out to parents to listen to at home if required.
- Resources during meditation became a problem when there was no electricity to play the guided meditation; however, I used a battery-operated device and conducted the guided meditation.
- During examination and sporting events held at school, participants would be pre-occupied and could not complete meditation for the day. However, another day was added to the meditation class.

- The classroom size could not accommodate all participants; hence the meditation was done in two separate classrooms at different times.

3.11 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the research design and methodology used for the study and the rationale for its use. A phenomenological (qualitative) approach was used for this study and it was described that this research used this approach as it wanted to explore the experiences learners had. The research strategy used was a case study of participants. A non-probability sampling technique- purposive sampling was used. The primary data collection methods used was interviews of participants (learners) and teachers and pre-meditation and post meditation questionnaire from participants (learners). Thematic analysis was used to analyse the data collected from participants and the steps involved were discussed. For the researcher to portray the correct behaviour, the steps towards trustworthiness and ethics was dealt with in this chapter. Finally, the chapter ended with the limitations of the study.

The next chapter deals with results, discussion and interpretations of the findings.

Chapter Four

Findings and Interpretations

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the data generated from the pre- and post-meditation questionnaire, interviews with learners and teachers, and observations made by the researcher. In this study, I have explored learners' experiences of meditative practices. To accomplish the purpose of the study, I developed the following research questions: (1) what are learners' experiences of meditative practices. (2) Why do learners have such feelings of meditative practices?

This chapter is presented in three parts. The first part presents the data obtained from the pre-meditation questionnaires. This questionnaire was completed by all 50 learners who participated in the research. In this section, I share reasons why learners joined the meditation sessions, any medication that learners were on during the meditation and any bad experiences or challenges those learners were facing.

In the second part of the chapter, I present the data generated from the interviews with learners. There were 9 learners out of the 50 participants who were interviewed as these were the only volunteers of the interview. The direct words of the learners have been presented in italics. Several themes and sub-themes emerged in response to questions on how meditation has improved learners' life; challenges experienced during meditation and whether learners will recommend meditation to others.

The third part of the chapter deals with the data generated from the post-meditation questionnaire. A separate group of 15 learners from the 50 participants had volunteered to complete the post meditation questionnaire. I conclude the chapter with a summary of the data presented in this chapter.

4.2 Description and discussion of findings

4.2.1 Reasons why learners want to meditate

The responds to the question that asked learners to indicate the reasons for wanting to meditate. The question was closed-ended as learners were asked to choose from the responses provided. The results are as follows:

Table 4.1. Reasons for meditation

| REASON | No of learners |
|---|----------------|
| To remain calm and relaxed | 15 |
| Do better and focus at school | 20 |
| Eliminate anger | 03 |
| Other: Parents wanted them to meditate; improve behaviour and stop smoking; clear tension; put themselves first | 12 |
| Total | 50 |

Fifteen learners indicated that they wanted to meditate so that they may remain calm and relaxed. One learner elaborated that:

"I have heard that it calms and relaxes people, so I wanted to become calmed and relaxed."

De Souza *et al.* (2014) states that learners have also become calmer and more attentive throughout the school day due to meditation.

Twenty learners wished to meditate so that they could perform better at school and focus on their schoolwork. (Refer to Appendix 1 for the responses from the pre-meditation questionnaire). According to Elder, Nidich, Colbert, *et al.* (2011), learners become stressed in schools by workload, deadline, and behaviour of other students; however, learners who conducted meditation have reduced their stress levels in schools. Shapiro, Lyons, Miller, Butler, Vieten, Zelazo (2015) state, "Contemplative practices such as meditation" can assist learners with their school academic performance as well as their feelings (p.25).

Three learners wanted to meditate so that they may eliminate anger:

"I want to meditate because of my anger issues, I wanted to get eliminate of all my anger so that I would not hurt myself or my loved ones, my parents always fight on Saturdays, and I needed a calm atmosphere".

Condon, Desbordes, Miller, and DeSteno (2013) and Brostoff (2017) indicate that people who meditate become, and develop more compassion towards others and this, in turn, ensures relations with others become stronger.

The remaining twelve provided various reasons for wanting to meditate. Varma's (2018) research indicates meditation may get eliminate of drug addiction easily. She further states that meditation helps individuals get free of feelings (in this case, craving), which can aid drug addicts that are healthy to stop their addiction. Smith (2014) states meditation helps an individual deal with stress levels.

4.2.2 Reason learners were prompted to meditate

The learners were asked to indicate what it is that prompted them to meditate. The results are shown in the table below:

Table 4.2 Reasons that prompted learners to meditate

| REASON | No of learners |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| Family | 17 |
| Problem they had | 8 |
| Others had done it before | 25 |
| Total | 50 |

There were 17 learners who were encouraged by their parents and cousins to meditate. Erbe and Lohrmann (2015) state that research conducted by them shows that the involvement of parents in meditative practices has proven beneficial. These were the responses of the learners:

Learner C: *My mum prompted me to do this. She said it would help me concentrate.*

Learner S: *My cousin said it would be good to try it.*

4.2.3 Medication learners had been taking while meditating

It was important to know whether the learners participating in the study were under any treatment and taking medication. The literature on meditation (de Souza, Hyde & Kehoe, 2014; Waters, Barsky, Eliminated & Allen, 2015; Hartel, Nguyen & Guzik, 2017) indicates that it (meditation) has the potential to reduce dependence on medication.

Table 4.3 Medication taken by learners

| MEDICATION | No of learners |
|----------------------|----------------|
| None of the learners | 42 |
| Asthma pump | 5 |
| Ritalin | 1 |
| Blood | 1 |
| IBS | 1 |
| Total | 50 |

The above table indicates that the majority of the learners were not on any sort of medication. The remainder of the learners were on medicines for various other reasons such as asthma, irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), blood disorder, and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

4.2.4 Experiences of learners prior to meditating

I also wanted to know what kind of experiences learners were having prior to joining the meditation sessions.

Table 4.4 Bad experiences of learners

| BAD EXPERIENCES OF LEARNERS | No of learners |
|------------------------------------|----------------|
| None of the learners | 37 |
| Social issues | 2 |
| Financial | 2 |
| Abusive relationships | 3 |
| Emotional trauma | 6 |
| Total | 50 |

The above-mentioned data was necessary since the person doing meditation with a traumatised individual should have some background knowledge on the individual, or the meditation could have adverse effects (Rempel, 2016). Thirty-seven learners were not experiencing any traumatic stress in their lives. Two learners stated that they have social issues. Meditation has helped those that have practiced it eliminate of their trauma without making them talk about it. A silent healer has helped them become free of their stress and worry (Myers, Lewis, and Dutton, 2015).

Having generated the pre-meditation data, the learners then underwent a ten-week meditation programme in school (described in chapter three). In the next section of this chapter, I present the data generated from the interviews with learners. The interviews were conducted after the ten-week meditation. The data generated is presented in the form of themes and sub-themes.

4.2.5 Interview with learners

In this section, the effect of meditation as reported by the learners will be described. The discussion is in response to the questions posed to learners in the interview.

4.2.5.1 Questions asked in the interview with learners

The data presented here is from the interviews conducted with learners after the ten-week meditation that learners underwent. The learners were asked four questions:

- *Has meditation changed you, and in what way?*
- *Has meditation improved your life, and how?*
- *What were the challenges you faced while doing the meditation?*
- *Would you recommend meditation to others? Why?*

4.2.5.2 Meditation and change

The majority of the learners alluded to changes that meditation had on them. In particular, they referred to how meditation assisted in decreasing frustration and anger, improve concentration, and reduce trauma and illness. In the sections below, I discuss each of these sub-themes.

4.2.5.3 A decrease in frustration and anger

Several learners referred to changes in frustration and anger because of the meditation.

- L1: *It has changed me because I used to be so much focused on my studies, and with that, I easily got frustrated. I did not want to be disturbed. Now I did not like being in those situations when people make fun of me. I did not take it so well. It made me realise anger, and being frustrated is not the way and that I must always be positive and not let words keep me down.*
- L5: *Meditation has changed me. It helped me. I struggled with learning, but meditation helped me think and be calmer so I could learn my work and do better in my tests.*
- L8: *It had changed me regarding my anger issues because I used to get angry over simple issues like at home when my sister used to touch the things I used to burst out and get over aggressive and stuff. It also helped me regarding my leg problem because I suffer from leg problems, which keeps me calmer.*
- L7: *Yes, it has changed me. Usually, in class, I am disruptive, and nowadays, I am quiet. I would lose my focus, and now I am more focused. Those things changed.*

Sumter, Monk-Turner, and Turner (2009) writing on the effect of meditation, state that meditation helps control resentment and aggravation. Charoensukmongkol (2014) also indicates that meditative practices help individuals use their feelings efficiently. When a learner is upset and annoyed, meditation will be the method to help be calm and peaceful. Barrett (2016) states that meditation has helped people overcome rage and annoyance.

The learners also referred to how meditation helped them improve concentration, discussed in the next section.

4.2.5.4 Improvement in concentration

The responses from learners were:

- L2: *Meditation has changed me. It has changed me in my school, I concentrate more, it has helped me focus on the teachers, and it helped me in the exams. It helped me to do better than the last terms exams*
- L4: *It helped me focus on myself and helped me think and relax.*
- L6: *It has made me calmer and focuses while doing things that need concentration. It also helps me to concentrate on things I never used to do before, like while doing my homework. Other stuff distracts me.*

Schlumpf (2017), states that meditative practices used among Catholic students in university have proved to change the lives of those students. The students have less stress; they are more attentive and happier at college (Schlumpf, 2017). Mars and Oliver (2016) have averred that meditation helps learners "listen" better.

In addition to improving concentration, learners also felt that meditation helped to reduce trauma and illness.

4.2.5.5 Reduction in trauma and illness

The third sub-theme that emerged was the reduction in trauma and illness.

L3: *You know that I have eczema, and having a disease is tough because you hardly get sleep at night, and you only scratch. Therefore, when I started doing meditation, I do it every night before sleeping as you told us to do. It helped me. It makes me calmer. My brain relaxed; it has changed me.*

L9: *Yes, meditation has changed me. It helps me calm down. It helps me concentrate. It helps me do everything in a straight and right manner. It helps me be more concentrated than ever as if I have had bad experiences, but meditation has calmed my system down and lets me think more about school than what I have experienced. I have been traumatized for more than three years now from Grade 3. When my mother and father broke up, there was a big fight between them. My father started beating my mother up, so I have been traumatized since then. That is when I started losing my focus in Grade 4 and Grade 5 and badly in some of my subjects. However, since I have been doing meditation in Grade 6, I have improved my studies and am doing much better now.*

According to Sarath (2003) who encouraged students of Michigan State University in the United States to do meditation meditative practices positively benefits students with psychological and disturbing issues.

The learners also spoke about how meditation influenced a change in their behaviour and attitude.

4.2.5.6 Change in behaviour and attitude

- L1: *It has improved my life because I was scared that with this problem, I can hurt all those who are around me, but with meditation, I realized that it could make me calmer so all those around me are safe.*
- L2: *Yes, it helped me to be a better person. It helps me to be calmer than before. It has helped me in many ways in school, and it has helped me concentrate on my teachers and concentrate on everything I supposed to be focusing on.*
- L4: *Not only did it help me concentrate on my work at school, but it also helped me not to always jump into conclusions when in a difficult situation.*
- L8: *It has improved my life because I can talk to people more calmly. I am not very good with people I don't like people, and people don't like me sometimes, so I've been able to open up and talk to them about personal things and other issues.*

Smith (2014) states meditation assisted individuals to be calm, compassionate, and simple. He encourages individuals to do the meditation and thereafter try it in their classrooms to feel ten minutes of bliss.

Meditation, it seems, also had an impact on academic performance.

4.2.5.7 Academic improvement

- L5: *Meditation has improved my life as I came in the top 10 at the end of the school year, and my family was very proud of me, and it made me very happy.*
- L9: *Yes, it helps me focus on my exams. It helped me concentrate at home, especially when I am doing my house chores. It helped me to mature up than I was before.*
- L7: *Yes, it has improved my life because now I can learn more without being disruptive, and now I can focus more on my work, and I can do much better than I used to.*

Oaklander (2015) conducted a study with children in school. In his study, he found that school students who engaged in meditation had greater results in Mathematics.

Academic performance may be positively influenced if learners are free from worry and anxiety. This is the sub-theme discussed in the next section.

4.2.5.8 Freedom from worry and anxiety

L3: *It has. My mum is very happy with my skin because it was much worse earlier. Having eczema is not easy, it is hard and with buying so much of creams, and it is not working and stuff. The meditation cools you; it gives you peace of mind; it is so calm.*

L6: *Yes, it has. I feel much better and more relaxed after doing it. I am not stressed as much. It is quite relaxing.*

Lilard (2011) states that engaging learners in meditative practices (mindfulness) helps them deal with social relationships. He states further that meditation assists in having better concentration on educational programs. According to Krishnakumar, Hamblin, and Lakshmanan (2015), who conducted a study on previous research related to stress and meditation on patients who had anxiety, meditation has proven to be a risk-free method to help treat anxiety.

In the above section I presented the data generated from two interview questions (*Has meditation changed you, and in what way? In addition, has meditation improved your life, and how?*). The data indicated that learners were influenced positively by the meditation that they engaged in. In the next section, I present some of the challenges that learners experienced during meditation.

4.2.6 Challenges while doing meditation

The data presented in this section shows that learners experienced challenges at the beginning of the meditation programme. However, they gradually overcame some of the challenges.

Initially learners found it difficult to focus in the meditation sessions. This challenge is presented in the next section.

4.2.6.1 Loss of focus

L1: *Well, sometimes, I thought meditation does not help; it does not do anything. After I did meditation, I realised certain areas allow me to live. Sometimes I easily lost my focus. I paid attention to those things around me. I could not focus on meditation.*

L4: *I was facing like when I was listening to the meditation. It was hard focusing because I am always fidgeting, and so after a while, I got used to it.*

L6: *While meditating, I felt that during the first few meditation sessions weren't as concentrating as the others, but I had to get the hang of it first, but while we were doing it, then it was quite nice.*

Human beings in general find it difficult to focus on a particular activity. The learners in this study are no different. Since meditation was a new experience for them, they found it difficult to focus. However, one needs to note the views of Boyer and Hensley (2006) who consider meditation as a process that helps the mind stop wandering. Similarly, Bilican (2007) reports that meditation helps the mind move away from the surroundings and focuses on breathing. Meditation has the potential to habituate learners to focus on not only schoolwork, but also other activities of life.

The lack of focus in meditation may also result from disturbance from other learners and the surrounding, as alluded to by the learners in this study.

4.2.6.2 Disturbances from other learners and the surrounding

L3: *There was silence, but there were a few children that were opening their eyes, laughing, and what not*

L5: *I found it difficult to be noisy in the classroom while meditating as some children would laugh, but I grew, and as going along, I began to ignore it, and there was more peace.*

From the above we can infer that the success of meditation requires like-minded people who are serious about making positive improvements in their life. The success of meditation also requires a disturbance-free surrounding. The school with all its dynamics may not always be a conducive environment for meditation. Special meditation spaces may be created away from the normal school activities like teaching, and movement of learners.

The learners, having shared their experiences and meditation challenges, were also asked to talk about whether they will recommend meditation to others. This is the topic of discussion in the next section.

4.2.6.3 Recommending meditation

The learners indicated that they would recommend meditation to other learners since it encourages one to be productive.

L2: *Yes. I would recommend it to everyone because it helps you be a better person, it enables you to be calmer, it helps you do well in whatever you need to do, it helps you be focused and have your day planned as the way you want it to.*

L3: *Yes, mam, to cool you, to calm your brain, to make you do more things, to make you active.*

Maiti (2017), who had undergone meditation wrote on her personal experiences. Mars and Oliver (2016), whose views are based on mindfulness (meditation) in the workplace and among students, share a common view that meditation helps one be dynamic and, in turn, allows one to do more in a day instead of being idle.

According to the learners, meditation brings you to a realisation of life. This is why they would recommend meditation to other learners.

L7: *Yes, because maybe it can help them in their lives, it can change the way they live and if they bad, they can become more successful in their life.*

L8: *I would recommend it to other people because meditation keeps you calm and it solves problems. At first, I was unsure it was not going to help, and it was only for the teacher, but then I realised it could help and it is good it is not just there it helps you. It helps because you can communicate with yourself better. You can find things that you do not know in your daily life like you feel you do everything- you know what is wrong, what is right with you, something that you can answer. However, when you do meditation, you can communicate with yourself. You can come into contact and realise what is going on.*

L9: *Yes, I would. To help them concentrate. To help them continue with their lives. To help them feel much more secure and help them go through with life without thinking about their experience.*

McLean (2001) who has done meditation with primary school learners and teachers asserts that meditation is practiced for inner peace and is not a practice of religion. Cavazos (2013)

who researched schools in the United States suggests that schools are now using meditative practices to help learners and teachers understand why behaviours of individuals in the classroom conduct themselves in a certain way.

In supporting their recommendation for meditation, the learners alluded to the fact that meditation may help one study more effectively.

L1: *Some of my friends have trouble studying; some have the same problem. There are other different problems. I am trying to show them that meditation is the way to cure your problems.*

L4: *I would recommend it because, for the people that jump to conclusions, it would help them know that you must first ask what is happening before you jump to conclusions. The wild children that are always hyperactive it would help them to calm down. Meditating is very good, and it helps you to focus much more than you used to if you are a person that is always fidgeting.*

L5: *Meditation helps you be calm. It enables you to remember more, and when you are stressed, it is very good for you. It helps you a lot. I would recommend it to more people*

L6: *Yes, I would recommend it to other people. It is very relaxing and helps to concentrate so I would recommend it to stressed people and need time to relax.*

Ching, Koo, Tsai and Chen (2015) support the inclusion of a meditation class in the syllabus of university students as they believe that it may benefit the learning done in class and help university students get better grades. In their study, Ching et al. (2015) found that the students who engage in meditation received better grades as they had more focus, and they could remember more in the class.

The learners in my study displayed a positive attitude and view of meditation in that they found to reduce frustration and anger, improve concentration, improve academic performance and reduce anxiety. They further experienced meditation as having the potential to make one productive. To corroborate the findings of the interview, I administered a post-meditation questionnaire. I needed to confirm the positive experiences, which came out of the interviews with learners. Questionnaires, in this case, may prove to be less intrusive than the interviews.

It may also yield more objective answers since the learners understood that I would not be able to identify them through the questionnaire. I do however acknowledge that there are advantages and disadvantages of both interviews and questionnaires.

I present the data from the post-meditation questionnaires in the next section.

4.2.7 Questions asked to learners in the post-meditation questionnaire

There were five questions for the learners to answer in the post-meditation questionnaire:

- *How did you feel during meditation?*
- *Did you find it easy to meditate? Explain.*
- *Did you enjoy meditating? Why?*
- *Has meditation helped you? How?*
- *Would you recommend meditation to others? Why?*

4.2.7.1 Feelings learners during meditation

The learners were given a close-ended question on their feelings during meditation. They were also asked to explain their responses to the closed-ended questions. One of the limitations of this post-meditation questionnaire is that only 15 out of the original 50 learners presented completed questionnaires. The responses to the closed-ended questions are summarised below.

Table 4.5 Learners feelings during meditation

| FEELINGS | No. of learners |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|
| Allowed me to be calm | 4 |
| Truly relaxing | 4 |
| Enhanced focus | 3 |
| Freed the mind from trouble | 4 |
| Total | 15 |

The above table shows that four learners experienced meditation as calming, four found it relaxing and three were able to better focus. Four found meditation to free their minds of trouble. Some of the comments that learners made to explain their responses to the above closed-ended questions were:

"I felt calm and relaxed. It was just really a feeling. I felt good because it was like relaxation for me. "

"I felt calm and relaxed. It made me feel good, and it helped me. After doing the meditation, I was feeling calmer and better."

"I felt relaxed and calm."

"I felt relaxed and calm and I felt cooled."

These students generally reported a sense of calm, which concurs with the results of a study by Dundas, Thorsheim, Hjeltnes, and Binder (2016) with Bachelors and Masters student's at a college, where they found that meditation helps reduce mental distress, and in turn allows an individual to concentrate better.

Wisner, Jones, and Gwin (2010) engaged with research on adolescents in school state that meditation may help learners become better individuals. They opine that this may contribute to a better climate in the school. McKibben (2014, p. 23) whose article is based on learners in a school in California indicate, "Meditation is becoming an antidote to stress and anxiety."

Below are more comments provided by learners in explaining feelings after meditation.

"At first, I wasn't focused, so I did not like to meditate. But it helped me feel relaxed, and it helped me to focus on my work."

"I felt relaxed and calm. I felt focused, and it was very peaceful. I felt comfortable."

"I felt relaxed and calm. I was focused, and nothing else. It gave me a safe kind of feeling."

Hosemans (2015) has done a study with meditators and non-meditators. After completing his study, he came to the agreement that meditation helps the mind pay attention.

"I felt relaxed, very calm. I had peace. Nice, relaxed sleep, it made me forget my problems."

"I feel calm and relaxed. All the worries go away, and I feel good. I feel I am in a field, and it is quiet, no worries, and no sound, just me clear-minded."

"Calm and relaxed. It made me feel good because my thoughts were all cleared and fresh."

"I felt more relaxed and calmer. Less anxious and nervous."

Meditative practices have proven to help individuals between the ages of 9 and 19 years old in terms of their feelings, mind, and personal lives in a study done in the United States (Duthely, Nunn and Avella, 2017). According to research done with adult meditators, people meditate to limit troubles in mind and understand the meaning of life to positively change their consciousness (Sedlmeier, Eberth, Schwarz, Zimmermann, Haarig, Jaeger and Kunze, 2012).

4.2.7.2 Comfort to meditate

Most learners had difficulty in meditating at first. They could not keep focused while others had trouble concentrating. These learners had trouble as the mind was wandering due to the problems/ situations. However, the views of the learners reveal indeed that practice made it easier. The responses below indicate the ease of meditation and the cause of the distractions.

"No, because it was hard at first, and then it became very easy to meditate. Now I enjoy it."

"No, it was not easy because I was not used to meditating. I found it difficult."

"Yes, I found it easy because I was stressed, and I was tired all the time. Therefore, it was easy. It was also easy because I am good when it comes to concentration."

"No. At first, it seemed silly, but I gradually got used to it."

"When I first started to meditate, it was very hard because I could not concentrate, but when I started to meditate every day, it became so much easier to meditate."

"Yes, it wasn't difficult; I just had to close my eyes and be calm. At first, I couldn't concentrate, but it got easier and easier day by day eventually."

"No. At first, it was hard because it was something new and I could not concentrate but gradually I got used to it and it was easy."

"No. At first, it was hard, and I couldn't concentrate, but then it got easier, and I was able to meditate properly."

"Yes, it was easy to let go of all the worries and let all the stress release. At first, it was a bit difficult to concentrate, close my eyes, and keep quiet."

"Yes, at first, it was hard because I could not concentrate, but as time went, it got easier."

"No. It was a bit boring at first to concentrate, and then it was a bit easy."

The above views are congruent to the views expressed in the interviews. During the interviews, the learners were asked to share some of the challenges they experienced during meditation. The position of the learners in this study (from both the interviews and the post-meditation questionnaire) correlate with Buchanan's (2017) view that most learners had become better after a week of meditation after a week of meditation.

4.2.7.3 Reasons learners enjoyed the meditation

I was interested to learn why learners enjoyed the meditation. Although this was already established in the interviews, I was keen to corroborate the findings generated in the interviews.

Five learners felt that meditation was helpful to them.

"Yes, I did enjoy meditating because it helped me a lot, and the class was very silent."

"Yes, I enjoyed it because it helped me a lot. It helped me relax. I loved it a lot."

"Yes, I enjoyed meditating. I enjoyed it because it gave me a calm mind. It changed my entire mind-set."

"Yes, it helped me to concentrate on my life."

"Yes. Meditating was very nice. It helped me to concentrate more."

Duthely, Nunn, and Avella (2017) indicate that meditative practices assisted teenagers with their welfare and positively assisted their mind.

Another five learners indicated meditation helps them reduce stress.

"Yes, it was quiet and relaxing. I enjoy it because it made me calm and stress-free."

"Yes, it made me feel so relaxed, and the music was so soothing."

"Yes. I had time to keep calm and relax. I was able to let all my worries go and be clear-minded."

"Yes, my mind was completely clear, and I was able to focus and understand more and pass in school work."

"Yes. It gives me a safe feeling. I like the idea of meditating because it took away all pains and stress from my mind."

The above data concurs with Kirmayer (2015) research at McGill University in Canada, where he found that meditation and mindfulness assist a person with stress, nervousness, and depression.

The other five learners felt that meditation maintains calmness. Their responses were as follows:

"Yes, I enjoy meditation. It calms the mind, and it cooled me down. Meditation is good. I loved it."

"Yes. It also helped me concentrate a lot better. I enjoyed meditating. It was like a break from all the noise and other stuff that I did."

"Yes. I could have quiet peace and calm. My mind would be set for the whole day. As I got used to it, I felt calm and sleepy. It was amazing."

"Yes. Everything felt easier, and I was calm and relaxed."

"Yes. It helped find calmer and easier solutions to my problems."

Gregoire (2018), using psychiatrists' references, discusses how meditative practices help people become more cheerful and joyful in life rather than focusing on the bad thoughts and being depressed.

4.2.7.4 Learners' views about how meditation assisted them

The learners were asked to choose from a list given of how meditation assisted them. The table below summarises the responses.

Table 4.6 Learners' views on how meditation assisted them

| ASSISTANCE OF MEDITATION | No. of learners |
|----------------------------------|------------------------|
| Awards academic support | 5 |
| Help find resolutions | 3 |
| Brings out the best in you | 4 |
| Boosts concentration | 3 |
| Be in charge of yourself | 4 |
| Helps one overlook complications | 5 |

Five learners have indicated meditation helped them academically as well as to overlook complications. Three learners indicated that meditation assists them resolve issues and boost

their concentration. Four learners selected it brings out the best in them and helps one to take charge. Six learners found meditation to impact positively on them.

The above information shows consistency between the interview and questionnaire data in learners' responses to meditation helped them. The literature too points similar impact of meditation. Duthely, Nunn, and Avella (2017) indicate that in their study learners who had done meditation were cheerful, they had more commitment with the school, and they began to appreciate more. De Souza et al. (2014) state that meditative practices have positively influenced the learner's self-esteem to improve learning. Meditative practices help make individuals face situations rather than stay away from them or restraining one to deal with it (Weare, 2014). Goswamee and Dey (2017) maintain that meditative practices conducted by learners give a friendly environment that has no tension, and the learning space is friendly and pleasant, not only in the classroom but also out of the classroom. Fourth and fifth-grade learners who participated in meditation proved to be more affectionate towards others (Oaklander, 2015). According to Colbert (2013), students who have engaged in meditative practices have less chance of dropping out of school than learners who do not participate in meditative practices.

4.2.8 Observation by the researcher

I had thoroughly scrutinised and noted down the observations of learners during meditation class every 2 weeks. During the meditation classes, I was personally present with learners that were meditating. However, they were unaware that I was observing them. I would observe the learners who were on medication and those who were undergoing bad situations very closely. Below are the observations I had noticed with the learners. These learners were put into one row in the classroom, although they were ignorant of the reasoning behind their places.

Some of the learners did find it amusing during the first week of meditation, while others would still giggle in the second week. I noticed this by being present with the learners in the class. After the second week, most of those learners were getting better at sitting still and were able to listen without laughing and giggling. Due to the noise and the students being disruptive, I noticed that the others would be easily distracted in class. This caused the

learners to open their eyes and lose focus while meditating. This triangulates with the data generated during the interview and the post-meditation questionnaire.

Once the fourth week passed, there was no learner within the environment, causing a commotion and making noise in the class. The meditation classes would be silent and peaceful. During these weeks learners settled down and understood, what they were doing was beneficial to them. Bilican (2016) who had researched with 30 adults in New York states meditative practices have assisted people who have problems concerning the mind, e.g., anxiety.

Through the fifth and sixth week, learners were enjoying the meditation. They would ask for meditation to be done. Whenever they had free periods, they would want to do meditation. Learners began to show enthusiasm towards the meditation classes. The surroundings would disturb them at times; for example, the grass was being cut. Mehta, Shah, Shah, Mehta, Mehta, Mehta, Mehta, Mehta, Motiwala, Mehta and Mehta (2012) state learners' mannerisms have improved, and learners have a system in which their homework is completed. These studies show that meditation and yoga can assist teachers in keeping these learners with disorders in their classrooms more relaxed and calmer, and inclusivity can be achieved.

Week seven and eight was easy going for the learners. They would know what to do during the meditation time. The learners' breathing was more natural, including the posture when sitting.

The final weeks of meditation had a great impact on the learners. They were so attentive, more focused, and change was seen in them outside the classroom. The teachers would commend their behaviour inside and outside the classroom. Meditation had become a way for teachers to get learners to be attentive. Hartel, Nguyen, and Guzik (2017) state that meditative practices have made students say that they appreciate the teacher treating them in a fair and good manner, instead of worrying merely about their brainpower.

4.3 Conclusion

This chapter presented the findings from the pre-meditation questionnaire, interviews and post-meditation questionnaire. The pre-meditation questionnaire established the gender and

race of each learner (although this was not allowed to have a bearing on the results). The learners' responses to the closed-ended questions and their elaboration of these closed-ended responses were presented. The pre-meditation data was necessary to understand each learner's background, since meditation may have negative effects on those practicing it. The chapter then presented data generated from the interviews. The data was presented in form of several themes. The learners displayed positive attitudes and views towards meditation. They found meditation to be beneficial in the reduction of frustration and anger, in the improvement of concentration and academic performance and the reduction of anxiety. They further experienced meditation as having the potential to make one productive. The third part of this chapter, the post-meditation questionnaire confirmed the results obtained in the interviews as far the impact of meditation on learners' lives. The chapter concluded with a short note on my observation of learners during the meditation. The different methods used to generate data provided a strong triangulation of the learners' experiences of meditative practices.

The next chapter will offer an analysis and synthesis of the results in the light of the study's research questions, literature review and theoretical framework.

Chapter Five

Conclusions and Discussions

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the conclusions and recommendations of the study are discussed. The two research objectives are discussed separately, with a reflection of the findings from learners as well as teachers and conclusions of the research. Thereafter, the findings from previous research are discussed for each objective. I include a discussion from the relevant literature to give context to the findings in my study. Finally, the recommendations and conclusions for each objective are discussed.

5.2 Objective 1: To explore learners' experiences of meditative practices

The first objective of the study was to understand how learners felt while they were meditating. Learners had various feelings while meditating. The learners felt positive, experienced good feelings during the meditation and after the meditation. The learners that meditated indicated feeling happy, less stressed, and having better concentration. None of the learners had negative vibrations, and none of the learners felt dreadful during the process of meditation and after doing meditation. The learners did not make mention of feeling unhappy, distressed, or miserable.

The feelings learners had during the meditation will be discussed below. Each feeling will be motivated by literature from previous research done. Thereafter, I will highlight the study's findings from learners and teachers, and a conclusion will be derived based on the findings from learners and teachers and literature.

5.2.1 Less frustration and stress

Based on these research findings in chapter 4, many learners have acknowledged their stress levels become less from meditating as they have said they can think calmly and remain calm. Children become overwhelmed with school tests, projects, and assignment deadlines. This can cause children to be frustrated and irritated. Meditation has helped them ease their frustration, which in turn has developed less stressful days. Teachers that were interviewed have expressed those learners conduct had changed after they had meditated. They also stated

that the learners portrayed a positive change in their behaviour after meditating. Previous studies have indicated meditation and yoga is stress reliever. People who meditate have no stress experience but have a better way of dealing with the stress. Kirmayer (2015) states that meditation and mindfulness are receptive methods to help individuals reduce stress, become nervous, and are depressed. In the same light, Brostoff (2017) indicates a study conducted with law students who are inundated to cope with their stress as they are practicing meditation.

Similarly, Dredger, Mackenzie, and McLeod (2015) discuss how meditation and mindfulness help people let go of their stress and develop the ability to control their emotions. Research done in the United States shows those women who have traumatic situations can deal with them because they meditate. These women feel that meditation is a soundless medication that has allowed them to eliminate stress and worry. The findings from my study resonate with the literature that meditation helps a person alleviate their stress as well as aggravation. Meditation may be an easy method to calm a person and keep their thoughts in line without being angry and irritated. Anger and irritation stress the body, and by meditating, one can eliminate themselves of stress.

A learner in school who experiences stress and frustration could meditate to help them remain calm. Meditation may be a useful resource for helping one become calm and serene in mind.

5.2.2 Able to concentrate better

Children have a wandering mind, and sometimes it is challenging to help them keep focused over some time. Learners have felt the meditation allowed them to concentrate, giving attention to the task on hand. This is an excellent skill for a learner to possess in class as they may grasp the necessary information when learning in the classroom, and out of the classroom.

Researchers from the past, as mentioned below, have agreed that meditation helps with concentration. By practicing meditation, teachers and learners have a better capacity to concentrate (Oakland, 2015). A similar discussion occurs whereby Maiti (2017) concurs that a person who meditates accomplishes more in a day can achieve their goals set out for the day. Maiti (2017) further indicates that meditation allows one to be happy and satisfied. This

feeling may be shown by someone who has done whatever needed to be done for the day. When a person is happy and satisfied, they may automatically think positively and be content. Mars and Oliver (2016) agree that meditation enables the mind to have more useful and happy ideas than bad and sad ideas.

Learners in my study have stated that meditation has helped them and allowed them to concentrate more in the classroom and when they would have homework and tests to study for. They were able to focus in the classroom and engage better. This allowed more control during lesson time, and teachers were happy to be in the classroom where there was the focus. Teachers that were interviewed had reiterated that learners were attentive and there was more focus in the classroom. This occurred as the learners had greater ability to concentrate during lesson time.

Meditation has shown that learners who practice meditation have a high level of concentration. The learners who meditated have spoken about how meditation has helped them concentrate and become aware of their present thoughts.

5.2.3 Helps with health issues

Meditation has been said to assist those that have health conditions. A health problem can be something simple or complex. The health issue may affect a person mentally and physically. Meditation may help a person deal with their condition through the mind. People with complex conditions like Alzheimer's and Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) use meditation to overcome their issues. Researchers state that meditation and mindfulness are ideal methods to help learners with ADHD as it helps with the mind (Evans, Ling, Hill, Rinehart, Austin and Sciberras, 2018). They further state that meditation deals with the calming and soothing effects of the mind and ADHD deals with the inability to control behaviour hence meditation is suitable. A study conducted with ADHD high school students in Texas has shown that yoga and meditation may be helpful to these students after practising (Saxena, Verico, Saxena, Kurian, Alexander, Kahlon, Avind, Goldberg, DeVito, Baig, Grieb, Bakhshaie, Simonetti, Storch, Williams & Gillan, 2020).

Previous studies have shown that meditation has helped people with illnesses they had. The Kiran and Ladha (2017) research states that people diagnosed with problematic heart conditions are always cross or get irritable very quickly. They further state that meditation has proven to help these patients in the right way. Another research by Eliza (2014) indicates that meditation and yoga have been favourable to people who have a high pulse rate and blood pressure by allowing the pulse rate and blood pressure to reduce. Alzheimer's disease or memory loss is common among older adults. These older people have been helped (Danucalov, Kozasa, Afsono, Galduroz and Leite, 2017). Another research shows that meditation helps one give up smoking and become less depressed (Vinci, Spears, Peltier, Copeland, 2016).

During my research, an essential factor was identified from the interview where a learner stated that meditation has helped her deal with her eczema condition in a better way. She said that various creams and expensive medication did not help her with her eczema, as the way meditation did. Meditation has the potential to help an individual deal with their illnesses. The main factor that needs to be dealt with when you become sick is the mind. Teachers have indicated during their interviews that meditation should be done with learners daily as it helps the learners in the classroom. Meditation helps people calm the mind and get over the ailment from which people are suffering. When one develops strength in mind, then one can quickly deal with the surroundings. A simple disease like depression can cause death to a person; however, a simple practice like meditation may help a person become healthy in mind and overcome the illness from within them.

5.2.4 Better behaviour and attitude

Meditation helps one behave more consciously as they are aware of their thoughts and deeds. People become sensitive to what they do, how they act, and their actions. Meditation sets the mind free of negativity hence the positive results. An individual act responsibly and knows right from wrong.

The findings in my research resonate with the aforementioned literature in that it was found meditation helped the learners to develop better behaviour and attitude. Learners felt a change within themselves as humans after they had meditated and saw circumstances with a different view. They were able to distinguish between situations and positively see things. When

teachers were interviewed after the meditation classes, they would always say positive things about the learners. Teachers did mention that learners behaved after they had meditated. The learners would also be attentive, and they portrayed a positive attitude in the classroom.

5.2.5 Perform better in academics

The environment for teaching and learning to bear fruit must be conducive and happy. If the classroom's surroundings are disordered, it becomes difficult for the teacher to pass information. This, in turn, disadvantages the learner from performing. For a learner to do their best academically there should be minimal disruption. Meditative practices may benefit learners and help their mind be at ease. This allows learners to give off their best. Meditation is said to help in academics. This will happen as concentration increases and learners can manage their thought process.

5.2.6 Less anxious and troubles

Anxiety can be experienced by person regardless of meditating or not. However, meditation provides a tool for dealing with, alleviating, and coping with anxiety and problems they are facing. Practicing meditation helps the mind and dealing with problems related to the mind.

Learners have said during their interviews that meditation has made them less anxious when completing tasks. Many different things cause anxiety among children, like assignment deadlines, peer pressure, or even incomplete homework; however, learners felt that meditation freed their minds and created positivity. It has helped these learners overcome the terrible thought and implant positive ones. By engaging in meditation learners have shown that they are not restless, and their minds are not bewildered. They can deal with any situation they are put into if they meditate. Teachers that were interviewed mentioned that after meditation they had seen a positive change within the learners. The children who had meditated were not disruptive and were able to complete tasks given by the teacher. Teachers made mention that after meditation learners were much calmer in the classroom.

5.3 Objective 2: To understand learners' feelings of meditative practices

The second objective of this study was to determine what is making learners feel the way they had felt about meditation. There are many factors to display why learners felt the way they had while meditating. Children are sensitive individuals and can easily sense the good

around them. They feel good when good is being done, and they feel bad when wrong is done to them. When you scold a child without explaining the wrong, they have done, they tend to dislike the person; however, when you sit a child down and explain what they have done wrong, they will listen and understand. It's an important trait not to "vent out" then children will listen.

The different interpretations of why learners felt this way while meditating will be discussed below. Each interpretation will be accompanied by literature, findings from the study, and recommendations.

5.3.1 Positive environment

Meditation involved listening to soft, soothing sounds with instructions from an individual to relax the body. The background sounds of birds, oceans, and mesmerising music could have been a reason for learners to feel the way they did while meditating. This music allowed the learners to be drawn towards it and created the feeling within them. Research done by Barnes (2001) indicates that when a person meditates, they become aware of the sounds and remain focused. Quietness in the classroom may have been another reason learners could connect to themselves and just be engaged in what they were doing. The classroom's peaceful setting in which silence was maintained throughout the meditation process must have been another reason learners felt good while meditating. While learners were meditating, they sat upright with a good posture but not in a forced position. They would sit comfortably. The learners sat with their eyes closed. They were also told silence was to be maintained throughout the meditation. This could have all related to the feelings learners had as they were focused.

I observed all of the above while learners would meditate. I would watch the changes in learners' behaviour as the meditation progressed and kept a close eye on all details. As the music played, learners became mesmerised in listening and did not want the meditation to stop. This is confirmed by subject teachers who had conversations with after the weeks of meditation classes. They had indicated that learners would ask to practice meditation whenever they were done with the required tasks during lessons. These teachers had also mentioned that meditation should be incorporated into the school day for a few minutes and learners should practise meditation. Teachers felt that after learners had meditated, constructive teaching and learning took place in the classroom.

5.3.2 Give the body time to relax

Meditation allows you to relax and remain calm. You think about nothing, and your thoughts are minimised. This helps one to allow the body to relax and not do anything. Meditation gives a person alone time. The person meditating is helped not to think of anything and forget about everything around them. These positive thoughts allow a person to want more of it.

In the meditation conducted in this study, learners always wanted more of the meditation. The data indicates that learners felt that meditation helped them remain relaxed and calm. When they meditated, they would feel good about themselves. The relaxation they received from meditating has probably been a reason for them to want to do it. Teachers that were interviewed indicated that learners were less overwhelmed during lesson time. They were able to sit and work without disturbance and disruption. One teacher mentioned that learners would feel sleepy after they had meditated. This clearly shows that learners were physically and emotionally allowed to relax the body and rest.

5.3.3 The experience they had

When a person has good experiences, they want to live those experiences again and again. If the experience is bad, they do not want to live or speak of the experience again. The incidents learners had while meditating was helpful to them. Meditation helps one reminisce positive, encouraging thoughts; hence a person will have good experiences.

Many learners in this study indicated they had positive experiences while meditating, and after meditating. There were no learners that felt discouraged or depressed after meditating. They had all spoken about the good feelings they had experienced. This could have been another reason learners wanted to meditate. Teachers mentioned in the interview that there were no negative changes, except that some learners felt sleepy after the meditation exercise, but reported that their learners were more settled and focussed, and suggested that meditation be introduced as part of classroom time.

5.3.4 Changes brought about

The following section discusses the changes meditation brought about for learners' meditation has proved beneficial for learners who had meditated. All the learners had given positive feedback about meditation.

Some of the reasons reported were its calming nature; decrease in negative qualities, and supporting them academically. These changes encourage learners to practice meditation.

A learner who is made to breathe in and out before lessons may contribute to a classroom environment in which unwanted noisy behaviour is minimised. Meditation is said to assist teenagers in establishing an optimistic way of thinking and help them with their best interests (Duthely, Nunn and Avella, 2017).

5.4 Scope for further research

There is a significant scope for future research with the use of meditation in educational settings. A broader sample may be used to derive better results. It is also suggested that cross disciplinary research may more firmly establish meditation as a positive tool for education, e.g. longer-term quantitative studies with pre- and post-test design for academic results, and behaviour, or even clinical studies that measure the markers of stress, breathing, pulse rates, etc. These studies may produce valuable information, and richer data will be gained. Such studies will inform the decisions of the Department of Education, or school governing bodies about the nature and efficacy of meditation as well as their decisions to allow its use as an educational tool in the regular school schedule.

5.5 Conclusion

The use of meditation appears to have been beneficial to the school in which it was conducted. The learners have reported benefitting from engaging with meditation, especially reporting positive impacts on the lives of the learners and teachers. Many agreed that meditation should be incorporated within the school day.

The study aimed to understand learners' experiences of meditative practices at Yoga School in an urban area through qualitative methods using an interpretative design. Focussing on one school as a case study, and using a triangulation of methods, namely, questionnaires, observation and interviews the research objectives, 1) To explore learners' experiences of meditative practices and 2) To understand learners' feelings of meditative practices were discussed.

The data suggests that meditation as an educational tool and strategy to assist learners has been both positively received and had a positive impact on many salient aspects of the educational endeavour and personal qualities of learners. A consideration of further research in this regard will help the Department of Education and other educators broaden the knowledge about the feasibility and pedagogical value of meditation in schools.

References

- Agarwal, A. and Dixit, V. (2017). The role of meditation on mindful awareness and life satisfaction of adolescents. *Journal of Psychosocial Research*, 12(1), 59-70.
- Alase, A. (2017). The interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA): A guide to a good qualitative research approach. *International Journal of Education and Literacy Studies*, 5(2), 9-19.
- Albrecht, N.J., Albrecht, P.M. and Cohen, M. (2017). Mindfully teaching in the classroom: a literature review. *Australian Journal of Education*. 37(12), 1-14.
- Albright, C. R., and J. B. Ashbrook. 2001. Where god lives in the human brain. Naperville, IL: Sourcebooks.
- Aldahmash, A.H., Alshmrani, S.M. and Almufti, A.N. (2017). Secondary school science teachers' views about their reflective practices. *Journal of teacher education for sustainability*, 19(1), 43-53.
- Alloh, F.T., Tait, D. and Taylor, C. (2018). Away from home: A qualitative exploration of health experiences of Nigerian students in a U.K. University. *Journal of International Students*, 8(1), 1-20.
- Anālayo, B. (2019). Meditation on the breath: mindfulness and focused attention. *Mindfulness*, 10(8), 1684-1691.
- Anasiz, B.T. and Püsküllüoğlu, E.I. (2018). Phenomenological Analysis of Teachers' Organizational Deviance Experiences in rural primary in Turkey. *Journal of education and training studies*, 6(1), 70-79.
- Art of Living. (2017, May 27). I Meditate Africa- An art of living foundation peace initiative. Retrieved from <https://www.artofliving.org/za-en/i-million-meditate-peace-africa>.
- Arat, A., & Kołodziejska, M. (2017). "The conspiracy of silence": teaching mindfulness in Poland. *Kultūra ir visuomenė: socialinių tyrimų žurnalas*, 2017, nr. 8 (2), p. 115-134.
- Avdeeff, A. (2010, July). Internationalisation of a contemporary Hindu Movement. In *21th European Conference on Modern South Asian Studies (ECMSAS)-Panel 41-"Religious Reform Movements in South Asia from Nineteenth Century to the Present" convened by Professor Gwilym Beckerlegge (The Open University, Manchester)*.
- Awasthi, B. (2013). Issues and perspectives in meditation research: in search for a definition. *Frontiers in psychology*, 3, 613.

- Babbie, E. & Mouton, J. (2001). *The practice of social research*. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.
- Baijal, S., and Srinivasan, N. (2010). Theta activity and meditative states: spectral changes during concentrative meditation. *Cogn. Process* 11, 31–38.
- Barnes, J. (2001). The lived experience of meditation. *Indo-Pacific Journal of Phenomenology*, 1(2), 1-15.
- Barnette, J.E., Shale, A.J. Elkins, G. & Fisher, W. (2014). *Meditation*. Washington: American Psychological Association.
- Barrett, C.J. (2016). Mindfulness and Rehabilitation: Teaching Yoga and meditation to young men in an alternative to incarceration program. *International Journal of offender therapy and comparative criminology*, p.1-20.
- Bauer, C. (2018,). Find your Om, meditation has gained a foothold in popular culture. But can it offer dancers real benefits? *Dance magazine*, 1 January, 2018 Issue or Volume?
- Beitel, M., Genova, M., Schuman-Olivier, Z., Arnold, R., Avants, S. K., & Margolin, A. (2007). Reflections by inner city drug users on a Buddhist based spirituality focused therapy: A qualitative study. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 1, 1-9.
- Bertram, C. & Christiansen, I. (2014). *Understanding Research: An introduction to reading research* (1st edition). Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Bhaskar, S.B. & Manjuladevi, M. (2016). Methodology for research II. *Indian Journal of Anaesthesia*, 60(9), 646-651.
- Bilican, F.I. (2016). The relationship between focused attention meditation practice habits, psychological symptoms, and quality of life. *Journal of religion and health*, 50(6), 1980-1995.
- Bloch, J.B., Farrell, J.E., Hook, J.N., Tongeren, D.R.V., Penberthy, J.K. and Davis, D.E. (2017). The effectiveness of a meditation course on mindfulness and meaning in life. *Spirituality in clinical practice*, 4(2), 100-112.
- Bowen, S., Witkiewitz, K., Dillworth, T. M., Chawla, N., Simpson, T. L., Ostafin, B. D., ... & Marlatt, G. A. (2006). Mindfulness meditation and substance use in an incarcerated population. *Psychology of addictive behaviors*, 20(3), 343.
- Bowen, S., Witkiewitz, K., Dillworth, T.M., Chawla, N., Simpson, T.L., Ostafine, B.D., Larimer, M.E., Blume, A.W., Parks, G.A. and Marlatt, G.A. (2006). Mindfulness meditation and substance use in an incarcerated population. *Psychology of addictive behaviors*, 20(3), 343-347.

- Boyer, R.W. and Hensley, P. (2016). Meditation as transcending all thought. *NeuroQuantology*, 14(3), 535-543.
- Bremer, P. (2019). Reflecting on student mental health: Creating a meditation room in a small college library. *College & Research Libraries News*, 80(6), 339.
- Broome, J.R.N., Orme-Johnson, D.W. and Schmidt-Wilk, J. Worksite stress reduction through the transcendental meditation program. *Journal of social behaviour and personality*, 17(1), 235-273.
- Brostoff, T.K. (2017). Meditation for law students: Mindfulness practice as experiential learning. *Law and psychology review*, 41, 159-171.
- Brymer, E. and Schweitzer, R.D. (2017). Evoking the ineffable: The phenomenology of extreme sports. *Psychology of consciousness: Theory, research and practice*, 4(1), 63-74.
- Buchanan, T.K. (2017). Mindfulness and meditation in education. *Young children*, 69-74.
- Burke, A., & Gonzalez, A. (2011). Growing interest in meditation in the United States. *Biofeedback*, 39(2), 49-50.
- Burns, J.M.C. Getting to another level: Why basketball players use mindfulness meditation. *The International Journal of Health, Wellness and society*, 6(4), 81-95.
- Burns, J.M.C. Getting to another level: Why basketball players use mindfulness meditation. *The International Journal of Health, Wellness and society*, 6(4), 81-95.
- Buttle, H. (2015). Measuring a journey without goal: Meditation, spirituality and physiology. Biomed Research International.
- Butzer, B., Ebert, M., Telles, S. & Khalsa, S.B.S. (2015). School-based yoga programs in the United States: A survey. *NCBI*, 29(4), 18-26.
- Campion, J. and Rocco, S. (2009). Minding the Mind: The Effects and Potential of a School-Based Meditation Programme for Mental Health Promotion. *Advances in School Mental Health Promotion*. 2(1), 47-55.
- Cardoso, R., de Souza, E., Camano, L., & Leite, J. R. (2004). Meditation in health: an operational definition. *Brain research protocols*, 14(1), 58-60.
- Manocha, R. (2000). Why meditation? *Australian Family Physician*, 29(12), 1135-1138.
- Cavazos, S. (2016). Schools combine meditation and brain science to help combat discipline problems. *Education*, 82(1), 10-16.

- Cebolla, A., Demarzo, M., Martins, P., Soler, J. and Garcia-Campoya, J. (2017). Unwanted effects: Is there a negative side of meditation? A multicentre survey. *PLoS ONE*, *12*(9), 1-11.
- Charoensukmongkol, P. (2014). Benefits of mindfulness meditation of emotional intelligence, general self-efficacy and perceived stress: Evidence from Thailand. *Journal of spirituality in Mental Health*, *16*(3), 171-192.
- Clark, C. (2005). The structure of educational research. *British Educational Research Journal*, *31*(3), 289-308.
- Cobert, R.D. (2013). Effect of transcendental meditation program on graduation, college acceptance and dropout rates for students attending an urban public high school. *Education*, *133*(4), 495-501.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L. & Morrison, K. (2000). *Research methods in education* (6th Ed.). London/ New York: Routledge Falmer.
- Condon, P., Desbordes, G., Miller, W.B. and DeSteno, D. (2013). Meditation increases compassionate responses to suffering. *SAGE Journals*, *24*(10), 2125-2127.
- Connaway, L.S. and Powell, R.R. (2010). *Basic research methods for librarians* (5th Ed). California: Greenwood Publishers.
- Creswell, J.W. (2007). *Qualitative enquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (2nd Ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Creswell, J.W. (2013). *Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design: Choosing Among the Five Approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc. (pp. 77-83)
- Crowley, C. and Munk, D. (2017). An examination of the impact of a college level meditation course on college student well-being. *College student Journal*, *51*(1), 91-98.
- Csaszar, I. E. and Buchanan, T. (2015). Meditation and teacher stress. *Dimensions of early childhood*, *43*(1), 4-7.
- Curriculum Review. (2013). Handling stress through meditation. *55*(5), 9-10
- Danucalov, M., Kozasa, E.H., Afonso, R.F., Galduroz, J.C.F., and Leite, J.R. (2017). Yoga and compassion meditation program improve quality of life and self-compassion in family caregivers of Alzheimer's disease patients: A randomized controlled trial. *Geriatrics Gerontology*, *17*(1), 85-91.

- de Souza, M., Hyde, B. and Kehoe, T. (2014). An investigation into the effects of meditation with children in a Catholic primary school. *International Journal of Children's Spirituality*, 19(3-4), 197-212.
- Demarzo, M.M.P., Andreoni, S., Sanches, N., Perez, S., Fortes, S. and Garica-Campayo, J. (2014). Mindfulness-based stress reduction (mbsr) in perceived stress and quality of life: an open, uncontrolled study in a brazilian healthy sample. *PubMed-NCBI*, 10(2), 118-120.
- Denzin, N.K. & Lincoln, S. (2005). *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research* (3rd Ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- DeUrquiza, E.F. (2014). Mindfulness, body scan, narrative and mentalization in the New York City Schools. *Children and Schools*, 36(2), 125-127.
- Dredger, L.C., Mackenzie, C. and McLeod, B. (2015). Feasibility of a mindfulness-based intervention for Aboriginal Adults with Type 2 diabetes. *Mindfulness*, 6(2), 264-280.
- Dreher, J. and Santos, H. (2017). Sociology and Phenomenology. *Civitas - Revista de Ciências Sociais*, 17(3), 385-388.
- Dundas, I., Thorsheim, T., Hjeltnes, A. and Binder, P.E. (2016). Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction for Academic Evaluation Anxiety: A Naturalistic Longitudinal Study. *Journal of college student psychotherapy*, 30(2), 114-131.
- Duthely, L.M., Nunn, S.G. and Avella, J.T. (2017). A novel heart-centered, gratitude-meditation intervention to increase well-being among adolescents. *Education research international*, 1-12.
- Elder, C., Nidich, S., Colbert, R., Hagelin, J., Grayshield, L., Oviedo-Lim, D., Nidich, R., Rainforth, M., Jones, C. and Gerace, D. (2011). Reduced psychological distress in racial and ethnic minority students practicing the transcendental meditation program. *Journal of instructional psychology*, 38(2), 109-116.
- Eliaz, I. (2014). Mind, body, heart. *Better nutrition*, 76(2), 51-52.
- Erbe, R. and Lohrmann, D. (2015). Mindfulness meditation for adolescents' stress and well-being: A systematic review of the literature with implications for school health programmes. *Health Teacher*, 47(2), 12-19.
- Erian, C. and Erian, M. (2017). Meditate to medicate: mindfulness meditation as a complementary therapy for surgical patients. *Australian Medical Student Journal*, 8(1), 61-64.

- Evans, S., Ling, M., Hill, B., Rinehart, N., Austin, D., & Sciberras, E. (2018). Systematic review of meditation-based interventions for children with ADHD. *European child and adolescent psychiatry*, 27(1), 9-27.
- Farias, M., Maraldi, E., Wallenkampf, K. C., & Lucchetti, G. (2020). Adverse events in meditation practices and meditation-based therapies: a systematic review. *Acta Psychiatrica Scandinavica*, 142(5), 374-393.
- Fasching, W. (2008). Consciousness, self-consciousness, and meditation. *Phenomenology and the cognitive Sciences*, 7(4), 463-483.
- Fergusson, L., Cabrejos, J. O., & Bonshek, A. (2021). Aymara childrens' practice of transcendental meditation in Perú: A learning history model of parent and teacher perceptions. *Journal of Latinos and Education*, 1-18.
- Field, S.C., Lauzon, L.L. and Meldrum, J.T. (2016). A Phenomenology of outdoor education leader experiences. *Journal of experiential education*, 39(1), 31-44.
- Foukal, M.D., Lawrence, E.C. and Jennings, P.A. (2016). Mindfulness and mentoring satisfaction of college women mentoring youth: Implications for training. *Mindfulness*, 7(6), 1327-1338.
- Goldberg, S.B. and Sachter, L.D. (2018). The Zentensive: A psychodynamically orientated meditation retreat for psychotherapists. *Practice Innovations*, 3(1), 18-31.
- Gonzalez, T. (2012). Keeping kids in schools: Restorative Justice, Punitive Discipline, and the school to prison Pipeline. *Journal of Law and education*, 41(2), 1-57.
- Goodwin, C.J. (2010). *Research in psychology, methods and design* (6th Ed.). United States of America: Willey.
- Gori, A., Topino, E., & Di Fabio, A. (2020). The protective role of life satisfaction, coping strategies and defense mechanisms on perceived stress due to COVID-19 emergency: A chained mediation model. *Plos one*, 15(11), e0242402.
- Goswamee, G. and Dey, A, K. (2017). Effect of transcendental meditation on classroom management in Maharishi organization with special reference to Maharishi Vidya Mandir School. *International Multidisciplinary Journal*, 6(1), 60-63.
- Govender, S. (2019). Introducing yoga in schools may be the answer to ending violence: Yoga, dance and meditation taught at troubled schools. *Sunday Times*. 24 February 2019. <https://www.timeslive.co.za/sunday-times/news/2019-02-24-introducing-yoga-in-schools-may-be-the-answer-to-ending-violence/>

- Graham, J. O. (2018). Learning to be Mindful: An Exploratory Study into the Perceived Benefits of Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Training for a Music Therapy Student.
- Gregoire, C. (2018). 1-minute meditations. *Prevention, 70*(4), 72-77.
- Griffiths, M.D., Shonin, E. and Van Gordon, W. (2016). Mindfulness as a treatment for gambling disorder: current directions and issues. *Journal of Gambling and Commercial Gaming Research, 1*(1), 47-52.
- Hanley, A.W., Abell, N., Osborn, D.S., Roehrig, A.D. and Canto, A.I. (2016). Mind the gaps: Are conclusions about mindfulness entirely conclusive? *Journal of counselling and development, 94*(1), 103-113.
- Harinath, K., Malhotra, A. S., Pal, K., Prasad, R., Kumar, R., Kain, T. C., et al. (2004). Effects of hatha yoga and omkar meditation on cardiorespiratory performance, psychologic profile, and melatonin secretion. *J. Alternat. Complement. Med. 10*, 261–268.
- Hartel, J., Nguyen, A.T. and Guzik, E. (2017). Mindfulness meditation in the classroom. *Journal of education and for library and information science. 58*(2), 112-115.
- Henning, E., Van Rensburg, W. & Smit, B. (2004). *Finding your way in qualitative research*. Pretoria: Van Shaik.
- Herron, R.E. and Cavanaugh, K.L. (2005). Can the transcendental meditation program reduce the medical expenditures of older people? A longitudinal cost-reduction study in Canada. *Journal of Social Behaviour and personality, 17*(1), 415-442.
- Hickey, W.S. and Yarbrough, C.D. (2013). Deepening the heart of wisdom: A course in Buddhist and Christian Contemplative Practices and Dialogue. *Buddhist Christian Studies, 33*, 83-99.
- Hoppes, K. (2006). The application of mindfulness-based cognitive interventions in the treatment of co-occurring addictive and mood disorders. *CNS Spectrums, 11*, 829-851.
- Hosemans, D. (2015). Meditation: A process of cultivating enhanced well-being. *Mindfulness, 6*(2), 338-347.
- Iwamoto, S.K., Alexander, M., Torres, M.R., Nicholas, A.C. and Nishi, A. (2020). Mindfulness meditation activates altruism. *Science reports, 10*(6511), 1-7.
- Jordan. (2017, July 21). Syrian war survivors find healing and resilience through Art of Living. *The Art of Living*. Retrieved from

- <https://www.artofliving.org/badantogast-de/newsroom/press-release/syrian-war-survivors-find-healing-resilience-through-art-of-living>.
- Kabat-Zinn, J. (2003). Mindfulness-based interventions in context: past, present, and future. *Clin. psychol. Sci. Pract.* 10, 144–156.
- Kaugars, A., Shields, C., & Brosig, C. (2018). Stress and quality of life among parents of children with congenital heart disease referred for psychological services. *Congenital heart disease*, 13(1), 72-78.
- Kiran, U. and Ladha, S. (2017). Anger: An enemy of heart, raj yoga meditation is heart friendly. *Annals of cardiac Anaesthesia*, 20(2), 127-128.
- Kirmayer, L.J. (2015). Mindfulness in cultural context. *Transcultural psychiatry*, 52(4), 447-467.
- Koops, L.H. The enjoyment cycle: A Phenomenology of musical enjoyment of 4 to 7-year-olds during musical play. *Journal of research in music education*, 65(3), 1-21.
- Kreplin, U., Farias, M., & Brazil, I. A. (2018). The limited prosocial effects of meditation: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *Scientific reports*, 8(1), 1-10.
- Krishnakumar, D., Hamblin, M.R. and Lakshmanan, S. (2015). Meditation and Yoga can modulate brain mechanisms that affect behavior and anxiety. *Ancient Science*, 2(1), 13-19.
- Kunal, Subbalakshmi, N.K., Sheila, P.R., Shiva, R.K., Arunkumar, N., Pai, V. and Chatterjee, P.K. (2018). Impact of Regularly Supervised Training of Pranayama and Omkar Meditation on the Cardio-Respiratory Parameters and Short-Term Memory of Persons with Special Needs. *Pharmacognosy Journal*, 10(2):366-70.
- Lambert, D., van den Berg, N. H., & Mendrek, A. (2021). Adverse effects of meditation: A review of observational, experimental and case studies. *Current Psychology*, 1-14.
- Lau, N. S. (2020). Pilgrimage, traveling gurus and transnational networks: The lay meditation movement in contemporary Chinese societies. In *Routledge International Handbook of Religion in Global Society* (pp. 187-198). Routledge.
- Lauche, R., Langhorst, J., Paul, A., Dobos, G. and Cramer, H. (2014). Self-reported health and satisfaction of patients with chronic diseases who meditate: a case- control study. *Quality of life research*, 23(9), 2639-2644.
- Leoni, J. (2006). ‘Communicating Quietly: Supporting Personal Growth with Meditation and Listening in Schools’. *Support for Learning*, 21(3), 121-128.

- Lester, S. (1999). An introduction to phenomenological research. Stan Lester Developments, Taunton
- Lillard, A.S. (2011). Mindfulness practices in education: Montessori's approach. *Mindfulness*, 2(2), 1-12.
- Lin, J.W. and Mai, L.J. (2016) Impact of mindfulness meditation intervention academic performance. *Innovations in Education and Teaching International*. 55(3), 366-375.
- Maiti, R. (2017). Meditation, a powerful tool to enhance the productivity and happiness of life in modern world. *International Journal of Bio-resource and stress management*, 8(2), 360-368.
- Manocha, R. (2000). Why meditation?. *Australian Family Physician*, 29(12), 1135-1138.
- Mars. M. and Oliver, M. (2016). Mindfulness is more than a buzz word: Towards a sustainable model of health care. *Journal of Australian Traditional-Medicine Society*, 22(1), 7-10.
- Marton, F. (1981). Phenomenography- Describing conceptions of the world around us. *Instructional Science*, 10(2), 177-200.
- Marton, F. (1986). Phenomenography- A research approach to investigating different understandings of reality. *Journal of Thought*, 21(3), 28-49.
- Marton, F. (1993). Our experience of the physical world. *Cognition and instruction*, 10(2/3), 227-237.
- Marton, F., Watkins, D., and Tang, C. (1997). Discontinuities and continuities in the experience of learning: An interview study of high-school students in Hong Kong. *Learning and instruction*, 7(1), 21-48.
- Mason, J. (2002). *Qualitative Researching*. Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE publications.
- Maxwell, J.A. (2013). *Qualitative Research Design: An Interactive Approach*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc. (pp. 135-136)
- McKibben, S. (2014). The Mindful teacher. *Education update*, 56(11), 6-8.
- McLean, P. (2001). Perceptions of the impact of meditation on Learning. *Pastoral care in education*, 19(1), 31-35.
- Mehta, S., Shah, D., Shah, K., Mehta, S., Mehta, N., Mehta, V., Mehta, V., Mehta, V., Motiwala, S., Mehta, N. and Mehta, D. (2012). Peer-Mediated Multimodal Intervention Program for the Treatment of Children with ADHD in India: One-Year Follow-up. *International Scholarly Research Network*, 1-7.

- Mertens, D.M. (2010). *Research and evaluation in education and psychology* (3rd Ed.). Los Angeles: SAGE.
- Miller, R. M., Chan, C. D., & Farmer, L. B. (2018). Interpretative phenomenological analysis: A contemporary qualitative approach. *Counselor Education and Supervision, 57*(4), 240-254.
- Morgan, B.M. (2018). The lived experience: A study in teaching online. *Contemporary issues in education research, 11*(2), 81-86.
- Moss, A. S., Wintering, N., Roggenkamp, H., Khalsa, D. S., Waldman, M. R., Monti, D., et al. (2012). Effects of an 8-week meditation program on mood and anxiety in patients with memory loss. *J. Alternat. Complement. Med. 18*, 48–53.
- Mullet, J.H. (2014). Restorative discipline: From Getting Even to Getting Well. *Children and schools, 36*(3), 157-162.
- Murphy, M.J., Mermelstein, L.C., Edwards, K.M. and Gidycz, C.A. (2012). The benefits of dispositional mindfulness in physical health: A longitudinal study of female college students. *Journal of American college health, 60*(5), 341-348.
- Myers, N., Lewis, S. and Dutton, M.A. (2015). Open mind, open heart: An anthropological study of the therapeutics of meditation practice in the US. *Culture, medicine and psychiatry, 39*(3), 487-504.
- Nakpodia, E.D. (2010). Teachers' disciplinary approaches to students' discipline problems in Nigerian Secondary Schools. *International NGO Journal, 5*(6), 144-151.
- Navarro-Haro, M.V., Lopez-del-Hoyo, Y., Campos, D., Linehan, M.M., Hoffman, H.G., Garica-Palacios, A., Modrego-Alarcon, M., Borao, L. and Garcia-Campayo, J. (2017). Meditation experts try virtual reality mindfulness: A pilot study evaluation of the feasibility and acceptability of virtual reality to facilitate mindfulness practice in people attending a mindfulness conference. *PLoS, 12*(11), 1-14.
- Newberg, A., and M. R. Waldman. 2006. *Why We Believe What We Believe*. New York: Free Press.
- Newberg, A., E. D'Aquili, and V. Rause. 2001. *Why God Won't Go Away*. New York: Ballantyne Books.
- Nidich, S., Mjasiri, S., Nidich, R., Rainforth, M., Grant, J., Valosek, L., Chang, W. and Zigler, R.L. (2011). Academic Achievement and Transcendental Meditation: A Study with At-Risk Urban Middle School Students. *Education Journal, 131*(3), 556-564.

- Rempel, K.D. (2012). Mindfulness for children and Youth: A review of the literature with an argument for school-based implementation. *Canadian Journal of counselling and psychotherapy*, 46(3), 201-220.
- Rentzou, K. (2012). "Examination of Work Environment Factors Relating to Burnout Syndrome of Early Childhood Teachers in Greece." *Child Care in Practice*, 18(2), 165–181.
- Rodriguez-Ayllon, M., Cadenas-Sánchez, C., Estévez-López, F., Muñoz, N. E., Mora-Gonzalez, J., Migueles, J. H. & Esteban-Cornejo, I. (2019). Role of physical activity and sedentary behavior in the mental health of preschoolers, children and adolescents: a systematic review and meta-analysis. *Sports medicine*, 49(9), 1383-1410.
- Roizen, M. F., & Oz, M. C. (2007). *You: Staying young: The owner's manual for extending your warranty (you)*. New York: Free Press.
- Russ, S.L., Maruyama, G., Sease, T.B. and Jellema, S. (2017). Do early experiences matter? Development of an early meditation hindrances scale linked to novice mediators' intention to persist. *Psychology of consciousness: theory, research and practice*, 4(3), 274-287.
- Russell, L., Orellana, L., Ugalde, A., Milne, D. and Krishnasamy, M. (2017). Exploring knowledge, attitudes and practice associated with meditation among patients with Melanoma. *Integrative Cancer therapies*.
- Sarath, E. (2003). Meditation in higher education: The next wave. *Innovative Higher education*, 27(4), 215-233.
- Saxena, K., Verico, C.D., Saxena, J., Kurian, S., Alexander, S., Kahlon, R.S., Avind, R.P., Goldberg, A., DeVito, N., Baig, M., Grieb, A., Bakhshaie, J., Simonetti, A., Storch, E.A., Williams, L. & Gillan, L. (2020). An Evaluation of Yoga and Meditation to Improve Attention, Hyperactivity, and Stress in High-School Students. *Journal of alternative and complementary medicine*. 26, (8), 701-707.
- Schlumpf, H. (2017). Breathe in, breathe out, Contemplative practices in the classroom help increase learning, decreases stress. *National Catholic Reporter*, 54(5), 8.
- Schmidt, S. (2011). Mindfulness in east and west—is it the same?. In *Neuroscience, consciousness and spirituality* (pp. 23-38). Springer, Dordrecht.
- Sedlmeier, P., Eberth, J., Schwarz, M., Zimmermann, D., Haarig, F., Jaeger, S. and Kunze, S. (2012). The psychological effects of meditation: A meta-analysis. *American psychological association*, 138(6), 1139-1171.

- Shapiro, S.L., Lyons, K.E., Miller, R.C., Butler, B., Vieten, C. and Zelazo, P.D. (2015). Contemplation in the classroom: a new direction for improving childhood education. *Educational psychology reviewed*, 27(1), 1-30.
- Sharma, A., Barrett, M.S., Cucchiara, A.J., Gooneratne, N.S. & Thase, M.E. (2016). A Breathing-Based Meditation Intervention for Patients With Major Depressive Disorder Following Inadequate Response to Antidepressants. *The Journal of Clinical Psychiatry*, 78 (1), 59-63.
- Sharma, H. (2015). Meditation: process and effects. *An international journal of Research in Ayurveda*, 36(3), 233-237.
- Shonin, E., Gordon, W.V. and Griffiths, M.D. (2014). Practical tips for teaching mindfulness to children and adolescents in school-based settings. *Education and health*, 32(2), 69-72.
- Singh, T. and Kaur, P. (2008). Effect of meditation on self-confidence of student-teachers in relation to gender and religion. *Journal of exercise science and physiotherapy*, 4(1), 35-43.
- Singla, R. (2011). ORIGINS OF MINDFULNESS & MEDITATION INTERPLAY OF EASTERN & WESTERN PSYCHOLOGY. *Psyke & Logos*, 32(1), 20.
- Smith, O. (2014). 10 minutes of bliss. *Montessori Life: A publication of the American Montessori Society*, 26(1), 48-50.
- Sood, S. (2018). Cultivating a yogic theology of collective healing: A yogini's journey disrupting white supremacy, Hindu fundamentalism, and casteism. *Race and Yoga*, 3(1).
- Sumter, M.T., Monk-Turner, E. & Turner, C. (2009). The benefits of meditation practice in the correctional setting. *Journal of correctional health care*, 15(1), 47-57.
- Tan, R.Y. and Molinari, C. (2017). Being mindful may not make you a team player: does meditation help or hurt online group work? *Journal of teachers online*, 14(2), 1-11.
- their Modulation by Compassion Meditation.” PhD Dissertation. Accessed April 26, 2013. <https://etd.library.emory.edu/view/record/pid/emory:b3nm0>
- Tracy, S.J. (2013). *Qualitative Research Methods*. UK: Blackwell publishing.
- Travis, F., and Shear, J. (2010). Focused attention, open monitoring and automatic self-transcending: Categories to organize meditations from Vedic, Buddhist and Chinese traditions. *Consciousness and Cognition*, 19, 1110–1118.

- Tuffour, I. (2017). A critical overview of interpretative phenomenological analysis: A contemporary qualitative research approach. *Journal of Healthcare Communications, 2*(4), 52.
- Vago, D. R., and Nakamura, Y. (2011). Selective attentional bias towards pain-related threat in fibromyalgia: preliminary evidence for effects of mindfulness meditation training. *Cogn. Ther. Res. 35*, 581–594.
- Van Dam, N. T., van Vugt, M. K., Vago, D. R., Schmalzl, L., Saron, C. D., Olendzki, A., & Fox, K. C. (2018). Mind the hype: A critical evaluation and prescriptive agenda for research on mindfulness and meditation. *Perspectives on psychological science, 13*(1), 36-61.
- Varma, P. (2018). Mindful meditation for addiction disorders. *Indian Journal of positive psychology, 9*(1), 202-204.
- Wang, C., Li, K., & Gaylord, S. (2019). Prevalence, patterns, and predictors of meditation use among US children: Results from the National Health Interview Survey. *Complementary therapies in medicine, 43*, 271-276.
- Wargho, W.G. (2015). *Identifying Assumptions and Limitations for Your Dissertation*. Menifee, CA: Academic Information Center.
- Weare, K. (2014). Mindfulness in schools: A growing movement. *Prepschool, 80*, 12-15.
- Willis, B. and Sharma, C. (2017). Find calm amid the chaos. *Men's health, 32*(1), 125.
- Wine, J. (1971). Test anxiety and direction of attention. *Psychological bulletin, 76*(2), 92-104.
- Wisner, B.L., Jones, B & Gwin, D. (2010). School-based Meditation Practices for Adolescents: A Resource for Strengthening Self-Regulation, Emotional Coping, and Self-Esteem. *Children & Schools, 32*(3), 150-159.
- Wisner, B.L., Jones, B. and Gwin, D. (2010). School-based meditation practices for adolescents: A resource for strengthening self- regulation, emotional coping and self-esteem. *National association of social workers, 32*(3), 150-159.
- Yang, G. & Le, T. (2008). Cultural and political factors in conducting qualitative research in China. *Qualitative Research Journal, 8*(2), 1-11.
- Yin, R.K. (2003). *Case study research: design and methods* (3rd Ed.). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Yin, R.K. (2011). *Qualitative Research from start to finish*. United States of America: Guildford.

Yoga Freedom. (2011). *Mindfulness in the Middle school classroom*. Retrieved from <https://yogafreedom2010.wordpress.com/2011/01/20/mind-your-own-mind/>.

Zeidner, M. (1998). *Test anxiety. The state of the art*. New York, NY: Plenum Press.

APPENDIX 1- Interview data table

| LEARNER | Has meditation changed you and in what way? | Has meditation improved your life and how? | Would you recommend meditation to others? Why? | What were the challenges you faced while doing the meditation? |
|----------------|---|---|---|--|
| 1 | <p>Uhm.. yes mam it has changed me because I used to be so much focused on my studies and with that I easily got frustrated.. I didn't want to be disturbed. Now I didn't like being in those situations when people make fun of me and stuff like that, I didn't take it so well.</p> <p>it made me realise that uhm... anger and being frustrated is not the way and that I must always be positive and not let words keep me down.</p> | <p>Mam it has improved my life because I was scared that with this problem I can hurt all those who are around me but with meditation I realised that uhm... it can make me be more calm so all those around me are safe.</p> | <p>Yes mam.</p> <p>cos... some of my friends have trouble studying, some of them have the same problem as me, there are other different problems. I'm trying to show them that meditation is the way to cure your problems.</p> | <p>well, sometimes I thought that meditation doesn't help, doesn't actually do anything. After I did meditation, I realised there is certain areas that it helps me with in life.</p> <p>sometimes I easily lost my focus. I paid attention to those things around me, I couldn't focus on the meditation.</p> |
| 2 | <p>yes mam. Meditation has changed me. It has changed me in my school, I concentrate more</p> | <p>Yes it helped me to be a better person. It helps me to be calmer than before. It has helped me in</p> | <p>Yes I would recommend it to everyone because it helps you be a better person, it helps you be</p> | <p>At the start I could not concentrate, I could not close my eyes, I was not focusing on the</p> |

| | | | | |
|---|--|--|---|---|
| | and it has helped me concentrate on the teachers and it helped me in the exams. It helped me to do better than the last terms exams | lot ways in school and it has helped me concentrate on my teachers and concentrate on everything I supposed to be concentrating on. | calmer, it helps you to do good in whatever you need to do, it helps you to be focused and have your day planned as the way you want it to. | music and by the end of meditation it was better because I could concentrate, I could close my eyes, I could concentrate on the person that was doing the meditation. |
| 3 | Yes mam it has changed me. You know that I have eczema and having eczema is tough because you hardly get sleep at night and you only scratch. So when I started doing meditation, I do it every night before I sleep as you told us to do. It helped me. It makes me more calm, my brain calm, it has really changed me. | Yes mam. It has. My mum is very happy with my skin because it was much worse earlier. It has uhm.. having eczema is not easy mam and its hard and with buying so much of creams and it's not working and stuff. The meditation it cools you, it gives you peace of mind, it's so calm. | Yes mam, to cool you, to cool your brain, to make you do more things, to make you active. | mam there was silence but there were a few children that were opening their eyes and laughing and what not |
| 4 | it helped me focus on myself and helped me think and relax. | Yes mam uhm.. not only did it help me concentrate on my work at school but it also helped me to not always jump into | Yes mam I would recommend it because uhm for the people that jump to conclusions it would help them know that you | uhm.. I was facing uhm like when I was listening to the meditation I.. it was hard focusing because I'm always fidgeting and so |

| | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|--|
| | | conclusions when in a difficult situation. | <p>must first ask whats happening before you jump to conclusions.</p> <p>the wild children that are always hyperactive it would help them to calm down.</p> <p>Yes mam... meditating is very good and it helps you to focus much more than you used to if you're a person that's always fidgeting.</p> | after a while I got used to it. |
| 5 | Meditation has changed me uhm... it helped me.... I used to struggle with learning but meditation helped me think and be more calm so I could learn my work and do better in my tests. | meditation has improved my life as I came in the top 10 at the end of the school year and my family was very proud of me and it made me very happy. | Yesss. Meditation helps you be more calm... helps you remember more and when you're stressed its very good for you uhm.. it helps you a lot. I would recommend it to more people | I found it difficult... that it was abit noisy in the classroom while meditating as some children would laugh but I grew and as going along I began to ignore it and there was more peace. |
| 6 | It has made me calmer and focus while doing things that need concentration. It also helps me to | Yes it has. I feel much better and more relaxed after doing it. I'm not stressed as much. It's quiet | Yes I would recommend it to other people. It is very relaxing and helps to concentrate so I | while meditating I felt that during the first few meditation sessions weren't as concentrating |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|--|
| | concentrate on things I never used to do before like while doing my homework I get distracted by other stuff. | relaxing. | would recommend it to people that are stressed and need time to relax. | as the others.... but I had to get the hang of it first but while we were doing it then it was quiet nice |
| 7 | Yes it's changed me. Usually in class I am abit disruptive and nowadays I'm abit quiet. I would lose my focus and now I'm more focused. Those are things that changed. | Yes it has improved my life because now I can learn more without being disruptive and now I can focus more on my work and I can do way better than I used to. | Yes because maybe it can help them in their lives, it can change the way they live and if they bad they can become more successful in their life. | in the beginning it was hard to keep my eyes closed but as time went by it was alright. During meditation it was very hard to concentrate but as time went by I could concentrate. |
| 8 | It has changed me regarding my anger issues because before I used to get angry over simple issues like at home when my sister used to touch my things I used to burst out and get over aggressive and stuff. It also helped me regarding my leg problem because I suffer with leg problems and it keeps me more calm. | It has improved my life because I can talk to people in a more calmer way. I'm not very good with people like I don't like people and people don't like me sometimes so I've been able to open up and talk to them about like personal things and other issues. | I would recommend it to other people because meditation keeps you calm and it actually kind of solves problems because at first I was kind of unsure it wasn't going to help and it was only for the teacher but then I realised it can help and its actually something that it really good it's not just there it | When I first started I couldn't close my eyes because of my cornea there is something wrong so I found it hard to concentrate but later on within time it actually helped because I was being more attentive, I was listening carefully to what the instructor was saying on the meditation CD and it actually helped me and I |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|--|
| | | | <p>really helps you.</p> <p>it helps because you can communicate with yourself better. You can find things that you don't really know in your daily life like you feel you know everything- you know what's wrong, what's right with you, things that you can answer. But when you do meditation you can communicate with yourself like can come into contact and realise what's actually going on</p> | <p>could close my eyes fully and there was no pain in my eye.</p> |
| 9 | <p>Yes meditation has changed me. It helps me calm down. It helps me concentrate. It helps me do everything in a straight and right manner. It helps me be more concentrated than ever like if I've had</p> | <p>Yes it helps me focus on my exams. It helped me concentrate at home especially when I'm doing my house chores. It helped me to mature up than what I was before.</p> | <p>Yes I would. To help them concentrate. To help them continue with their lives. To help them feel much more secure and to help them go through with life without thinking</p> | <p>I had challenges about closing my eyes, not coping to think about what happened. I had challenges not concentrating and listening</p> |

| | | | | |
|--|--|--|----------------------------------|--|
| | <p>bad experiences but then meditation has calmed my system down and lets me think more about school than what I have experienced.</p> <p>I have been traumatized for more than 3 years now from Grade 3. When my mother and father broke up, there was a big fight between them. My father started beating my mother up so I've been traumatized since then. That's when I started losing my focus in Grade 4 and Grade 5 and doing bad in some of my subjects.</p> <p>But since I've been doing meditation in Grade 6 I have been improving in my studies and doing much better now.</p> | | <p>what their experience is.</p> | |
|--|--|--|----------------------------------|--|

APPENDIX 2- Data generated from the pre-meditation questionnaire

| | | | | | |
|---|---|--|---|---|-----|
| Gender | 21 male 29 female | 43 indian 7 black | | | |
| Why do you want to meditate? | Calm and relaxed- 14 "I have heard that it calms and relaxes people so I wanted to become calmed and relaxed." "To calm down and relieve my situation." "it helps me to keep calm because I'm short tempered and it helps me to concentrate on my work. it helps me to be more focused." | Do better at school- 20 Focus at school "It helps me to focus and to learn. It is calming. Meditating helps me with stress mostly during exam time." "I wanted to meditate because sometimes I find it hard to study or concentrate so when I meditate it helps me and calms me down." | OTHER Parents wanted them to meditate. Improve behaviour. Control my mind. To put myself first. Stop bad behaviour and smoking. Not get frustrated. To help me get over my father leaving me. To clear my tension. | ANGER "I want to meditate because of my anger issues. I wanted to get eliminate off all my anger so that I would not hurt myself or my loved ones. My parents always fight on Felimateays and Saturdays and I needed a calm atmosphere." "To help my anger problems." | |
| What prompted you to meditate? | FAMILYParentsCousins "my mum prompted me to do this. She said it will help me concentrate." "My cousin said it will be good to try it." | THE REASON FOR MEDITATIONThe problem being faced"It was for my illness. To keep calm." "The problem I was facing was quiet bad so I decided to give meditation a try and see the results." "I did it because I needed help in my school work." "I thought I could give it a try and I wanted to see if it could calm me down." | PEOPLE WHO DID IT BEFORE"I searched it on the internet and it said it calms you down." "It seemed to be very calming because people have told me that it helped them in problems with their life." "The experience that people have had." | "My curiosity to try new things prompted me to meditate I wanted to get eliminate of my temper." "I have done it before so I wanted to do it again." "The first time I tried it made me see how good it was." | |
| Are you on any medication? What? | No-42 | pump- breathing pump- asthma pump- asthma pump- asthma pump- asthma | hyperactivity ritlin | blood- anemia | IBS |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|----------------|--|------------------------------------|--|---|---|--|--|----------------------------|---|---|---|--|---|
| <p>Is there any situation/ bad experience you are currently facing? If yes, state what?</p> | <p>No - 37</p> | <p>Yes with me and my father that ill-treat me</p> | <p>My dad does not have a job.</p> | <p>We are struggling to buy a car which is very stressful.</p> | <p>There was this gang picking on kids. I was one of them. So I just ignored them. They eventually left. That is where medication helped.</p> | <p>A situation with my skin (eczema) it makes your body (skin) dry and itchy.</p> | <p>My life have been problems from the day my sister got a car accident.</p> | <p>I have traumatised after my mother and father had a fight and my father ended up beating my mother that I will never.</p> | <p>Studying for exams.</p> | <p>The loss of my 42 year old dad who died in a truck accident.</p> | <p>My grandfather died and my uncle keeps thinking about him.</p> | <p>My parents are getting divorced and we are facing many problems.</p> | <p>I have issues with my stepfather.</p> | <p>My father passed away a month ago.</p> |
|--|----------------|--|------------------------------------|--|---|---|--|--|----------------------------|---|---|---|--|---|

APPENDIX 3- Data generated from the post meditation questionnaire

| LEARNER | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
|---|--|--|---|--|---|--|
| How did you feel during the meditation? | It was very relaxing and it was very peaceful. | I felt relaxed very calm, I had peace and quiet. Nice, relaxed sleep, it made me forget my problems. | I felt calm and really relaxed. It was just really a feeling. I felt really good because it was like relaxation for me. | I felt relaxed and focused. It was a good feeling. It made me feel good about myself. | At first, I wasn't focused so I did not like to meditate. But it helped me feel relaxed and it helped me to focus on my work. | I felt calm and relaxed. It made me feel good and it really helped me. After doing the meditation I was feeling more calm and good. |
| Did you find it easy to meditate? Explain. | No, because it was hard at first and then it became very easy to meditate. Now I really enjoy it. | No it was not easy because I was not used to meditate I found it difficult. | Yes, I found it easy because I was really stressed and I was tired all the time. So it was easy. It was also easy because I am good when it comes to concentration. | No. At first it seemed silly but I gradually got used to it. | When I first started to meditate, it was very hard because I could not concentrate but when I started to meditate every day it became so much easier to meditate. | Yes, it wasn't difficult, I just has to close my eyes and be calm. At first I couldn't concentrate but it got easier and easier day by day eventually. |
| Did you enjoy meditating? Why? | Yes, I did enjoy meditating because it really helped me a lot and the class was very silent. | Yes, I enjoyed it because it helped me a lot. It helped me relax. I loved it a lot. | Yes, I really enjoy meditation. It calms the mind and it cooled me down. Meditation is really good. I really loved it. | yes it was quite and relaxing. I enjoy it because it made me calm and stress free. | Yes I really enjoyed meditating. I enjoyed it because it gave me a calm mind. It really changed my entire mindset. | Yes. It also helped me concentrate a lot better. I really enjoyed meditating. It was like a break from all the noise and other stuff that I did. |
| Has meditation helped you? How? | Yes, it helped me to be more quiet. Helped me to help other learners who are not coping up with the rest of the class. | It helped me focus on school and relax, forget and forgive myself and others about my problem. | Yes, meditation has helped me. I am really calm now, I don't get aggressive a lot. It has just helped me in my life. I am a much better person now. | It helped me focus better in my school. It helped me to do better academically. It made me feel better about myself. | Yes, it helped me a lot. After meditating I was really concentrating and studying I also felt relieved because I didn't need to worry about my projects. | yes, it helped me concentrate and made me feel relaxed. I could now focus on my school work and feel better, and more calm at school. |
| Would you recommend it to others? Why? | Yes I would. It is a very helpful to control yourself and to do better in your subjects. | Yes, it can help them about self-control and anger issues. | Yes I recommend meditation to everyone because no one has an easy life. Everyone is really busy and stressed out. Meditation will help them calm down and their | Yes, because helped me so it will help other people with their problems. | Yes, because it will help many people to have calm minds so that they wont be stressed out all the time. It has helped me a lot so it will have a big affect on other people. | Yes, I would because it will help others at school. I would give advice to all the people I know to try it and see how you feel afterwards. |

| | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|----------------------|--|--|--|
| | | | stress will go away. | | | |
|--|--|--|----------------------|--|--|--|

| 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
|---|--|--|---|--|--|
| I felt relaxed and calm. I felt focused and it was very peaceful. I felt comfortable. | I felt relaxed and calm. | I felt relaxed and calm and I felt cooled. | I feel calm and relaxed. All the worries go away and I feel good. I feel I am in a field and it is quiet no worries no sound just me clear minded. | I experienced a feeling of calmness and relaxation. Its an undescrivable feeling. | I felt very relaxed and calm. The sounds made me feel relaxed and calm. |
| No. At first it was hard because it was something new and I could not concentrate but gradually I got used to it and it was easy. | Yes. There were no disturbance and the meditation music was soothing and soft. | No. At first it was hard and I couldn't concentrate but then it got easier and I was able to meditate properly. | Yes it was easy to let go of all the worries and let all the stress release. At first it was abit difficult to concentrate, close my eyes and keep quiet. | Yes at first it was hard because I could not concentrate but as time went it got easier. | No. It was a bit bored at first to concentrate and then it was a bit easy. |
| Yes. I could have quiet peace and calm. My mind would be set for the whole day. As I got used to it I felt calm and sleepy. It was amazing. | Yes. Everything felt easier and I was calm and relaxed. | Yes, it made me feel so relaxed and the music was so soothing. | Yes. I had time to keep calm and relax. I was able to let all my worries go and be clear minded. | Yes, it helped me to concentrate with my life. | Yes. Meditating was very nice. It helped me to to concentrate more. |
| Yes. I was a very hyper and loud person after I did meditation I calmed down. I was quiet and relaxed. | Yes. I started to concentrate more on school work. | Yes whenever I study I meditate before studying and that cools me down and then I am able to think better. | Yes. In times of stress I remember to meditate and calm down that way I can analyse the problem and sort it out. | Yes, it helped me to concentrate and feel calm and relaxed it helped me connect with my mind, body and soul. | Yes. It helped me to concentrate more on my school work so I can get very good marks. |
| Yes, because it is very relaxing and you forget all your problems. You feel focused and your mind will be set or focused. | Yes. People who do not concentrate on things meditation can help them. | Yes it can help them get eliminate of all their worries and they will feel calm and relaxed. | Yes. It can help in times of crisis and to calm your mind a bit. It helps to take a problem and find a solution. | Yes it would help them to relax and to stop stressing. | Yes. It was very relaxing and it might help others with maybe school work or to concentrate. |
| 13 | 14 | 15 | | | |
| Calm and relaxed. It made me feel good because my thoughts were all cleared and fresh. | I felt more relaxed and calm. Less anxious and nervous. | I felt relaxed and calm. I was focused and nothing else. It gave me a safe kind of feeling. | | | |
| Yes because there was nothing to think and it was calm and nothing to fear. | Yes because it calms me down and helps me to concentrate. | Yes. All you have to do is focus on the sound and you would be meditating. It was a gradual thing as some people were disturbing us. | | | |

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| <p>Yes, my mind was completely clear and I was able to focus and understand more and pass in school work.</p> | <p>Yes . It helped find calmer and easier solutions to my problems.</p> | <p>Yes. It gives me a safe feeling. I like the idea of meditating because it took away all pains and stress from my mind.</p> |
| <p>It made me focus more on school and understand what's going to happen in the environment and kept me calm.</p> | <p>Yes. It has given calm ways to continue with life and easier solutions to control my anger issues.</p> | <p>Yes. It helps me to keep calm. It helps to control my anger issues. It has taken away my trouble and stress.</p> |
| <p>Yes , I would recommend it to my family and friend and to people who are short tempered so they can stay calm and relaxed.</p> | <p>Yes. Because it soothes a persons mood so that they can get better at controlling things they can't control.</p> | <p>Yes. It would help them to pass time. It would help them to feel safe, calm and relaxed. It takes away all forms of stress.</p> |

APPENDIX 4- Permission letter for learners

Dear Parent

INFORMED CONSENT LETTER

My name is Miss. Kelisha Panday. I am a Masters in Education student studying at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood campus, South Africa.

I am interested in exploring learner’s experiences of meditative practices. Your son/daughter is one of my participants. To gather the information, I am interested in asking your son/daughter some questions.

Please note that:

- Your child’s confidentiality is guaranteed as his/her inputs will not be attributed to him/her in person, but reported only as a population member opinion.
- The interview may last for about 1 hour and may be split depending on his/her preference.
- Any information given by your child cannot be used against him/her, and the collected data will be used for purposes of this research only.
- Data will be stored in secure storage and destroyed after 5 years.
- Your child has a choice to participate, not participate or stop participating in the research. She/he will not be penalised for taking such an action.
- The research aims at knowing the experiences of children who participate in meditative practices.
- Your child’s involvement is purely for academic purposes only, and there are no financial benefits involved.
- If you are willing to allow your child to be interviewed, please indicate (by ticking as applicable) whether or not you are willing to allow the interview to be recorded by the following equipment:

| | willing | Not willing |
|-----------------|---------|-------------|
| Audio equipment | | |

I can be contacted at:

Email: kelisha1@gmail.com

Phone Number: 031 409 2955

My supervisor is Dr L R Maharajh who is located at the School of Education, Edgewood campus of the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Contact details: email: maharajhr@ukzn.ac.za Phone number: 031 260 3829

You may also contact the Research Office through:

P. Mohun

HSSREC Research Office,

Tel: 031 260 4557 E-mail: mohunp@ukzn.ac.za

Thank you for your contribution to this research.

Kelisha Panday

DECLARATION

I..... (full names of parent) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to my child participating in the research project.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw my child from the project at any time, should I so desire.

APPENDIX 5- Permission from the Department of Education



education

Department:
Education
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

Enquiries: Phindile Duma

Tel: 033 392 1063

Ref.:2/4/8/1497

Miss K. Panday

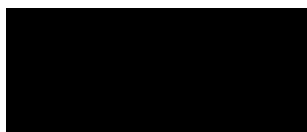
4 Kouga Street
Shalkcross
4093

Dear Miss Panday

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE KZN DoE INSTITUTIONS

Your application to conduct research entitled: **"EXPLORING LEARNER'S EXPERINCES OF MEDITATIVE PRACTICES: A CASE STUDY OF PRIMARY SCHOOL"**, 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 05 April 2018 to 09 July 2020.
7. Your research and interviews will be limited to the schools you have proposed and approved by the Head of Department. Please note that Principals, Educators, Departmental Officials and Learners are under no obligation to participate or assist you in your investigation.
8. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey at the school(s), please contact Miss Phindile Duma at the contact numbers below.
9. Upon completion of the research, a brief summary of the findings, recommendations or a full report/dissertation/thesis must be submitted to the research office of the Department. Please address it to The Office of the HOD, Private Bag X9137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200.
10. Please note that your research and interviews will be limited to schools and institutions in KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education.



Dr. EV Nzama
Head of Department: Education
Date: 05 April 2018

KWAZULU-NATAL DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Postal Address: Private Bag X9137 • Pietermaritzburg • 3200 • Republic of South Africa
Physical Address: 247 Burger Street • Anton Lembede Building • Pietermaritzburg • 3201
Tel.: +27 33 392 1063 • Fax.: +27 033 392 1203 • Email: Phindile.Duma@kzndoe.gov.za • Web: www.kzndoe.gov.za
Facebook: KZNDOE... Twitter: @DBE_KZN... Instagram: kzn_education... Youtube: kzndoe

...Championing Quality Education - Creating and Securing a Brighter Future

APPENDIX 6- Permission from the school where the research occurred



M PADAVATAN PRIMARY SCHOOL

P. O. BOX 56615
CROSSMOOR
CHATSWORTH
4092

TELE/FAX: 031 – 4092955
E-MAIL – padavatan@telkomsa.net

22 May 2018

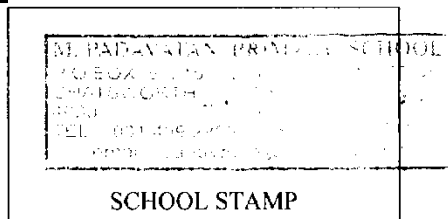
Re: Permission Letter for Masters Research project

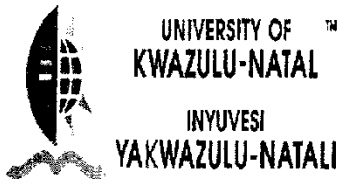
This letter serves to confirm that Miss Kelisha Panday, I.D. No: 901003 0126 080 is employed by the Department of Education and is based at M.Padavatan Primary School.

She has been granted permission to conduct her Masters in Education research at M.Padavatan Primary School.

I MUHAMMED SHAIR LAU YUNUS (full name of principal) hereby grant Miss Kelisha Panday of student number 209525835 permission to conduct research at M.Padavatan Primary School.

Me S.L. Yunus- Principal (ACT)





30 October 2018

Miss Kelisha Panday 209525835
School of Education
Edgewood Campus

Dear Miss Panday

Protocol reference number: HSS/1317/018M

Project title: Exploring learners' experiences of meditative practices: A case study of a primary school

Full Approval – Expedited Application

In response to your application received 21 August 2018, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol has been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment /modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.

PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

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

Yours faithfully



.....
Professor Shenuka Singh (Chair)
Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

/pm

cc Supervisor: Dr LR Maharaj
cc Academic Leader Research: Dr SB Khoza
cc School Administrator: Ms Sheryl Jeenarain

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee



Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)

Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building

Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban 4000

Telephone: +27 (0) 31 260 3587/8350/4657 Facsimile: +27 (0) 31 260 4609 Email: ethics@ukn.ac.za / ethics@hssc.ukn.ac.za

Website: www.ukn.ac.za

 1910 - 2010 
100 YEARS OF ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Founding Campuses:  Edgewood  Howard College  Medical School  Pietermaritzburg  Westville

APPENDIX 8- Meditation Sound track transcribed

This track included sounds of soothing water in the background.

Welcome to this guided meditation on relaxation. Listen to this meditation when you feel uptight, tense or just in need of some quiet peaceful time to totally relax. Once you have found a quiet, private place where you will not be disturbed get comfortable and we can begin..... I'd like you to get into a warm and comfortable position so you can relax easily. Settle down, relax and make yourself comfortable. Take a long deep breath into your belly and exhale slowly and as you breathe through your nose be aware of the rhythm of your breathing... taking deep breaths into your abdomen and exhaling slowly... that's right. And I want you to just listen to me and close your eyes when I ask you to just follow me. And close your eyes now. Thank you. And taking a slow deep breath... deep breath in, exhale...notice any tensions leaving through your breath... exhale. This time is for you to relax and allow yourself to have this time just for you. Bring your attention to your breath, focus on your breath and notice the breath go again and expanding your abdomen and then notice as your body releases the breath and your abdomen contracts. And as you listen to my soft soothing voice you feel relaxed and calm and as you continue to focus on your breath simply breathing at your natural pace you feel more and more relaxed. And now I'd like you to shift your attention to your body and the surface where you may be sitting or lying. Simply allow your body to relax completely into the surface and enjoy the support for your body that allows you to totally relax. And as you allow your body to relax simply take the time to notice how each part of your body feels. Notice how your head and neck feel... notice how your shoulders and arms let go and relax. Your hands and even your fingers relax. Simply notice how the sensation of calm and relaxation travels along your body from your scalp, down your neck, your shoulders and notice the tingle all the way down your spine. Notice how your breath allows your back and chest to relax, your abdomen and your hips to relax into the surface beneath you. Notice how your buttocks relax. You are relaxed and enjoying deep, belly breathing and as you continue to allow your body to relax, notice how your thighs and calves relax and let go. Notice how your feet and toes relax and notice the sounds around you now. These sounds are all adding to your relaxation and continue to breathe deeply through your nose and deeply into your belly... in and out.... deeper and deeper, more and more calm and happy. Deep healing, belly breathing, just let my voice and any other sounds help you to relax deeper. They're all part of the experience... And now bring your attention to your mind. Allow your mind to simply let go of any resistant thoughts that you may have. Allow any self

talk to gently disappear. Allow your mind to relax and allow any thoughts to simply pass and smile knowing how grateful you are to take time out to heal your body, mind and spirit

And as you allow your mind and body to let go just listen to my soft, soothing voice. Bring your awareness back to your breathing as you are now wonderfully deeply relaxed. Your mind is calm, your body is still and totally relaxed and as you shift your attention inside your body you feel the wonderful sense of deep relaxation and in your own time you can let go completely and relax. Breathing nice and deeply you can continue to enjoy this wonderful experience of relaxation

APPENDIX 9: Similarity Certificate

Microsoft Office Home | Mail - Lokesh Ramnath Mai | Launch Meeting - Zoom | Turnitin | Feedback Studio | Turnitin

turnitin.com/newreport_classic.asp?lang=en_us&oid=1595902961&ft=1&bypass_cv=1

Apps | DGHS GRADE 11 | Gmail | YouTube | Maps

Document Viewer

Turnitin Originality Report

Processed on: 28-May-2021 10:45 AM CAT
 ID: 1595902961
 Word Count: 30553
 Submitted: 1

| Similarity by Source | |
|----------------------|----|
| Similarity Index | 4% |
| Internet Sources: | 3% |
| Publications: | 1% |
| Student Papers: | 2% |

Meditative Practices of Learners By Kelisha Panday

include quoted | include bibliography | excluding matches < 4 words | mode: quickview (classic) report | Change mode | print | refresh | download

| | |
|--|---|
| 1% match (student papers from 10-Sep-2010) Class: PhD Bhagavad Gita Assignment: The Bhagavad Gita: A Grand Pedagogical Strategy for Value Education in Life Orientation Paper ID: 147911973 | X |
| <1% match (student papers from 29-Mar-2019) Submitted to University of KwaZulu-Natal on 2019-03-29 | X |
| <1% match (student papers from 16-Nov-2015) Submitted to University of KwaZulu-Natal on 2015-11-16 | X |
| <1% match (student papers from 02-Aug-2020) Submitted to University of KwaZulu-Natal on 2020-08-02 | X |
| <1% match (Internet from 13-Oct-2020) https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/1364436X.2014.960914 | X |
| <1% match (Internet from 08-Jan-2020) https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chatsworth,_KwaZulu-Natal | X |
| <1% match (Internet from 09-Jul-2020) https://www.floraniche.co.za/south-africa/flower-delivery-to-chatsworth | X |
| <1% match (student papers from 24-Apr-2020) Submitted to Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education on 2020-04-24 | X |
| <1% match (Internet from 23-Jul-2020) https://d-nb.info/1214376908/34 | X |

APPENDIX 10: Editors' Letter



ACARA

Academic Consulting and Research Advisory

T/A Smiling King Events Management and Multimedia Solutions Cc

Dr S. Ramson

PhD, MA, Hons (Psych), UHDE, BA

Coaching for Academic Excellence

Email: acara.academic.consulting@gmail.com Tel: 031 7083508. Mobile: +2784 4020251

EDITOR'S NOTE

31/01/2019

Editing Work undertaken for: **Student of Dr L Maharajh**. School of Education, UKZN Edgewood, thesis titled:

TOPIC: NOT STATED. DRAFT CHAPTER ONE TO FIVE SUBMITTED + REFERENCES AND APPENDICES

| |
|--|
| Editing Services were provided according to Mandate given Dr L Maharajh as per email. |
| “Please find attached dissertation for critical reading and editing” (8/06/2021) |
| For the purposes of CRITICAL READING and TECHNICAL EDITING, the following was undertaken |
| The entire dissertation was read for the following Technical aspects : |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The usage of SA language, spelling, grammar and usage• sentence construction, logic• referencing according to APA6th standards and for alphabetical sequence.• coherence and continuity• formatting of text font according to requirements• correct use of in-text references• standardization of Contents, and Chapter Titles, as well as layout.• Use of the MS Word auto headings feature in digital document• overall neatness of layout, presentation and design. |
| The Critical reading included: evaluating the purpose of the study, the strength of the arguments for the need for this research; the appropriateness and strength of the research questions to the study; the relevance and how comprehensively the literature was reviewed and critiqued; the research methodology, arguments for its use and critique; coherence of research design; analysis and interpretation of data; key findings, strengths and weaknesses of the study, validity and trustworthiness and ethics, and the overall coherence and continuity of chapters. Suggestions and recommendations for improvement were made throughout the document using Tracking notes and Comments. |
| Specific suggestions/actions |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The entire dissertation was read. Editing has been done in accordance with SA language, spelling, grammar and usage.• Language usage, grammar, sentence construction errors were highlighted. Where language and sentence construction were problematic, changes were suggested to the student for the purposes |

of clarity, fluency, and coherence. This included shifting paragraphs for correct sequencing and coherence. The student is advised to re-examine the thesis for colloquialism.

- Text was reformatted to Times New Roman, 12 point, 1.5 line spacing.
- Chapter Titles were standardized in terms of formatting. Chapter headings were centralized. Numbering was inserted and/or corrected.
- The student IS advised to **INCLUDE** the Table of Contents table and re-check numbering and cross-referencing of pages. **The cover, title page, initial pages, declaration were not included.** The student is advised to correctly insert these keeping in mind the proper pagination. As this was not under my ambit, I cannot be held responsible for this.
- The student IS advised to neaten page layout and design, especially where tables may overlap onto two pages.
- Where clarification was needed in the interrogation of the literature and student's arguments in the document, these have been pointed out in comments.
- The Research Methodology was checked for strength of argument/motivation, and issues of ethics. My in-text comments will indicate where the student was asked to discuss add more detail
- It was suggested that clear signposting be inserted at the beginning and end of chapters and paragraphs, for continuity between subsections and chapters.
- Discussion and data analysis chapters were read to check whether constructed arguments were logical and based on the data emanating from the study.
- Referencing was checked against APA6th standards, and for alphabetical sequence. Some errors were detected in in-text referencing and Reference, and pointed out. The student IS requested to conduct a thorough, manual check on the REFERENCE and correct any errors and omissions.
- The student IS advised to check layout and design again before printing as this could become scrambled when posted on email due to different formats and settings. Th student IS advised to save the final document as a PDF file and use that for printing, and ensuring the printers have the appropriate fonts on their systems.
- Suggestions for restructuring sections, reorganizing information has been given. In particular, Chapter 5 – there is much repetition of literature sources and this is unnecessary.
- The student IS encouraged to develop a more academic language register, but the voice and particular stylistic nuances of the student have not been adjusted or interfered with.
- The objectives and research questions indicate that only learners will form the sample. However, in the RM chapter, the sample includes teachers too. This is not aligned and needs adjustment – either the student adjusts the objectives to include the teachers, or the teachers be left out of the study. What is the title of your study, problem statement, research question and purpose?

Terms and Conditions: WAIVER

The student has engaged my services as editor for the purposes of examining and correcting the technical aspects of the work and providing a critical reading.

- Any substantive changes made, were only to CLARIFY the meaning, NOT to change the meaning of the student's work or the student's voice.

- It is assumed that when the student requested my services, the student's supervisor(s) had sufficiently examined the thesis and advised the student with reference to research, research methodology, data generation, reporting, knowledge production and content.
- It is also assumed that the student is sufficiently proficient in these matters (as per statement above).
- The editor waives any claim of responsibility regarding the student's type of research, research process, research methodology, data generation, reporting of data, knowledge production and content as these are the arrangements between the student and supervisor.
- The editor cannot be held accountable for any plagiarism by the student. No TURNITIN report was supplied by the student, and it is not the responsibility of this editor to pursue any investigation as to the originality of the student's submission.
- The document was reviewed and edited by me using the Track Changes feature of Word. The edited document returned to the student remains fully editable and the student reserves the right to accept, reject or modify my suggestions and changes. **It can be thus accepted that the final version of this document submitted for examination by the author/researcher/student may differ from the document returned by me.**
- The editor cannot be held responsible for any erroneous layout, design and scrambling of tables and diagrams as the student has been advised to monitor this in the final submission as well as convert the document to a PDF file for printing and ensuring that the printers have the appropriate fonts on their computer systems.
- The evaluation of the readiness of the thesis for examination and the decision for submission is the responsibility of the supervisor(s).
- The editor cannot be held responsible for the examiner's final assessment.

S.M. Ramson

ACCEPTANCE OF THE EDITOR'S NOTE

I, _____, number _____, declare that the above has been done / not been done, and therefore accept/do not accept the EDITOR's NOTE as stated.

SIGNED: _____

WITNESS: _____ (Print name and sign)

DATED: _____