

**POSSIBILITIES FOR TEACHING SEXUALITY EDUCATION IN THE
FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING PHASE: A PERSONAL
HISTORY SELF-STUDY**

BY

Emmanuel Phumlani Nkwanyana

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
DEGREE

OF

MASTER OF EDUCATION: CURRICULUM STUDIES

IN THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL

EDGEWOOD CAMPUS

DATE : SEPTEMBER 2023

SUPERVISOR : DR LUNGILE REJOICE MASING

COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES
DECLARATION – PLAGIARISM

I, **EMMANUEL PHUMLANI NKWANYANA**, declare that:

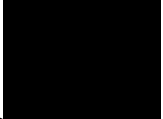
1. The research reported in this thesis, except where otherwise indicated, is my original research.
2. This thesis has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.
3. This thesis does not contain other persons' writing, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other researchers. Where other written sources have been quoted, then:
 - a. Their words have been re-written but the general information attributed to them has been referenced
 - b. Where their exact words have been used, then their writing has been placed in italics and inside quotation marks and referenced.
4. This thesis does not contain text, graphics or tables copied and pasted from the Internet, unless specifically acknowledged, and the source being detailed in the thesis and in the reference's sections.



Signed:

STATEMENT BY SUPERVISOR

This thesis is submitted with/without my approval.



.....

Dr Lungile Rejoice Masinga

ABSTRACT

This research study was undertaken with the aim of identifying discoveries and possibilities for teaching sexuality education in the Further Education and Training Phase (Grades 10-12) of school education. I adopted a personal history self-study approach because I wanted to explore my lived experiences and my teaching experiences to establish how my past experiences could have moulded me and shaped me to become the sexuality education teacher that I became. I also wanted to recognise any significant events and experiences in my past personal and professional history to reveal any discoveries and possibilities of teaching sexuality education that will contribute to the improvement of my practice. My two research questions were: *What can I learn from my personal history about how I learned about sexuality education? What new discoveries and possibilities can I learn for my practice when teaching sexuality education?* I was the main participant in this research study and I elicited the contribution of my two colleagues who I described as my critical friends because they provided encouragement and support during my research study. They also contributed to my study by helping me to view my study from different perspectives. I also invited my closest friend and my former learner as well as my sister into my research process to help me rekindle some of my past personal and professional experiences. This research study was situated with the sociocultural theoretical framework within an interpretive paradigm. To generate data for my research study I made use of artefacts, visual images, photographs, collage and memory drawings. My learnings from this research study were: *Understanding the impact of my religious influences when teaching sexuality education; Importance of learner-centred teaching to allow for learner voices to be heard during my teaching; Working with external experts to facilitate learning and Creating a supportive relationship with learners.*

Key words

Sexuality education, Life Orientation, personal history, sociocultural perspectives, enacted curriculum.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Embarking on this personal history self-study was not an easy journey. This was the most challenging academic task I ever done in my entire life. Without constant assistance and support from different people, this would have not been possible. I want to extend my deepest gratitude and appreciation to them:

- To God my heavenly Father, for giving me strength and courage to finish this academic task after many twists and turns of life.
- My loving wife Lindela Nkwanyana, for always believing and motivating me throughout this academic task. She has sacrificed her time and many other things to make sure this task is a success. Thank you for understanding when I could not spend quality time with you because of this research study.
- To my supervisor Dr Lungile Masinga, for your patience, motivation and always giving advice that made this study a success. Her dedication and constructive criticism helped to put all this work together.
- To Mega Grace Nation family, for supporting me with prayers and lifting up my spirit when I wanted to throw in the towel during my journey. Your words of encouragement have brought me thus far.
- To my participants, for always making time for our meetings during odd hours of the day. Your commitment and contribution to this study is highly appreciated.
- To my friend, Sphelele Ngubane for always coming up with helpful opinions that helped me to work hard throughout this research study. Thank you for always pushing me to become an independent and critical thinker.
- To my Master's critical friends, for always providing moral support and insightful comments.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Declaration.....	i
Statement by Supervisor.....	ii
Abstract.....	iii
Acknowledgements.....	iv
Table of Contents.....	v
List of Tables.....	vii
List of Figures.....	vii
List of Appendices.....	ix
List of Acronyms.....	x
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY.....	1
1.1 Introduction.....	1
1.2 Focus, purpose and rationale of the study.....	4
1.3 Context of the study.....	9
1.4 Objectives of the study.....	9
1.5 Research questions.....	9
1.6 Theoretical framework.....	10
1.7 Methodology.....	10
1.8 Key concepts.....	13
1.8.1 Sexuality education.....	13
1.8.2 Curriculum policy.....	13
1.8.3 Enacted curriculum.....	14
1.8.4 Teacher learning.....	14
1.9 Overview of the thesis.....	15
1.10 Summary of the chapter.....	15
CHAPTER TWO: RESEARCH PROCESS.....	18
2.1 Introduction.....	18
2.2 Research design.....	18
2.2.1 Research methodology.....	18
2.2.2 Research setting.....	20
2.2.3 Research participants.....	21
2.2.3.1 My sister.....	21
2.2.3.2 My friend of 10 years.....	21

2.2.3.3 My diligent learner.....	22
2.2.3.4 Critical friends.....	22
2.3 Data generation.....	25
2.4 Ethical considerations.....	25
2.5 Trustworthiness.....	26
2.6 Research challenges.....	27
2.7 Summary of the chapter.....	27
CHAPTER THREE: LEARNING FROM MY PERSONAL HISTORY TO IMPROVE MY TEACHING PRACTICE.....	29
3.1 Introduction.....	29
3.2 Lessons from my past.....	30
3.2.1 Family life.....	33
3.2.2 My father.....	36
3.2.3 My mother-our shield.....	36
3.2.4 My siblings-my support structure.....	38
3.2.5 My community life.....	40
3.2.6 Life at church.....	41
3.2.7 Life with my friends.....	42
3.2.8 Summary of the chapter.....	43
CHAPTER FOUR: LEARNING FROM MY JOURNEY OF SELF DISCOVERY.....	45
4.1 Introduction.....	45
4.2 UMuntu ngumuntu ngabantu: <i>“A person is a person through other people”</i>	46
4.3 My first meeting with participants.....	46
4.4 Meeting with my first participant, Smangele.....	49
4.5 Meeting with Mr Zaca.....	53
4.6 Meeting with my former learner, Nothando.....	57
4.7 Meeting with my sister.....	61
4.8 Summary of the chapter.....	65
CHAPTER FIVE: REFLECTING AND LEARNING FROM MY JOURNEY.....	66
5.1 Introduction.....	66
5.2 Overview of the thesis.....	66

5.3 Reflections of my self-study journey.....	68
5.4 My learnings.....	70
5.4.1 Understanding the impact of my religious influences when teaching sexuality education.....	69
5.4.2 Importance of learner-centred teaching to allow for learner voices to be heard.....	72
5.4.3 Working with external experts to facilitate learning.....	74
5.4.4 Creating a supportive relationship.....	76
5.4.5 Personal and professional learning.....	77
5.5 Methodological learning.....	78
5.6 Conceptual and theoretical learning.....	80
5.7 Recommendations for future study.....	81
5.8 Conclusion.....	81
References.....	82

LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.1 Data generation.....	25
--------------------------------	----

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 3.1 Collage representing my childhood experiences.....	32
Figure 3.2 Photograph of the blank book representing the start of my life.....	34
Figure 3.3 Photograph of a rondavel.....	35
Figure 3.4 A photograph of me at age 10 when I was in Grade 5 at the local primary school.....	35
Figure 3.5 Photograph of my mother (in blue) at my graduation for my first degree.....	38
Figure 4.1 Copy of the agenda of the first meeting with participants.....	47
Figure 4.2 Photograph of Smangele and myself at our first meeting.....	51

Figure 4.3 Photograph of the duster shared with Mr Zaca during our meeting.....	55
Figure 4.4 Photograph of the class register I shared with Nothando during our meeting.....	59
Figure 4.5 The memory drawing of a small boy playing under tree that I showed my sister.....	62
Figure 5.1 Collage representing my learnings.....	69
Figure 5.2 Image representing my first learning of understanding the impact of my religious beliefs on my teaching of sexuality education.....	70
Figure 5.3 Image representing the importance of learner-centred teaching to allow for learner voices to be heard.....	73
Figure 5.4 Image representing collaboration of stakeholders in the school.....	75
Figure 5.5 An image depicting creating a supportive environment.....	76

LIST OF APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Ethical Clearance.....	89
APPENDIX B: Informed Consent.....	90
APPENDIX C: Letter to Critical Friends.....	94
APPENDIX D: Turnitin Report.....	96
APPENDIX E: Editing Certificate.....	97

LIST OF ACRONYMS

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
CAPS	Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement
COVID-19	Corona Virus Disease 2019
DBE	Department of Basic Education
FET	Further Education and Training
HIV	Human Immune Virus
KZN	KwaZulu-Natal
LO	Life Orientation
SE	Sexuality Education
UKZN	University of KwaZulu-Natal
WHO	World Health Organization

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1. Introduction

Sexuality education is not an easy topic to talk about for most cultures, religions, classes and for both males and females in the South African context. Different cultures and religions have varying beliefs and attitudes toward sexuality, which can make discussions on the topic sensitive or taboo. Some religions believe that CSE defiles children. In addition, it is construed as taboo to talk about, especially to children who have not yet attained adolescence (Gudyanga et al., 2019; Mugweni et al., 2013), hence inappropriate for young children. Consequently, most Zimbabweans resisted attempts to teach the CSE content.

According to Alford (2016) this is because individuals may have deeply held beliefs and values about sexuality that make it difficult for them to discuss openly or accept differing viewpoints.

This viewpoint is supported by (Shefer et al., 2015), who noted that teachers are not comfortable talking openly with learners about the ‘taboo’ or ‘controversial’ aspects of sex, sexuality, and reproduction. According to Ashcraft and Murray (2017) parents and teachers have a significant influence on children’s decisions about sex, and however to Venketsamy (2018) argued that both teachers and parents are anxious about young children learning sexuality education (SE) content at school. There exist tensions between the sexual moralities forged during the colonial and apartheid era and the move to have more tolerant, open and sexually diverse cultures and experiences under democracy (Bhana, Crewe, & Aggleton, 2019).

In South Africa today, sexuality education remains constrained, with the emphasis currently being placed on disease, sexual danger, and rigid categorisations of gender—all preventing the understanding and elaboration of gender and sexual identities (Shefer & Macleod 2015).

As difficult as it may be, it is very important that we teach our learners at school about sexuality education. Statistics have revealed that in South Africa, 42% of females and 63% of males are sexually active by the age of 18 (Berry, 2009). Premature sexual activity has the potential of increasing teenage pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases. For such reasons and more, we have a task at hand to actively teach sexuality education to our learners as this will help them make better informed sexuality choices in life.

In an effort to make a positive contribution to the teaching of sexuality education and thereby improve my teaching practice, I have embarked on this self-study to identify the discoveries and possibilities of teaching sexuality education by reflecting on my teaching and learning experiences as a Life Orientation teacher at a deep rural school, in the province of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. Sexuality education was introduced in the year 2000 in the Life Orientation and Life Skills schools' curriculum. This was done to ensure that learners are not influenced by confusing and misleading information about issues of sex, sexuality, gender and relationships (DBE, 2021).

The South African education system has, through the years, undergone a serious transformation that is very important to our present education. In particular, Sexuality education has had a serious transformation in South Africa. During the apartheid period from 1948 to 1994 the education system in South Africa focused much on racial segregation. The education system was in favour of the whites and Africans were not given much attention. Critical topics like sexuality education were not given attention they deserve (Prinsloo, 2007).

Sexuality education in South Africa underwent significant changes around the turn of the millennium, particularly with the introduction of the Life Orientation curriculum in schools in 2000. Transformation led to the development of an innovative new learning area called Life Orientation. Life Orientation was a new learning area in C2005 (DoE, 1997), a learning area with new content and with new challenges to all stake holders that are involved in implementing the learning area.

Life Orientation was introduced with Curriculum 2005 (C2005). The implementation of Curriculum 2005 was regarded as the master plan to eradicate the inequalities of the apartheid education system. LO was set to bring together Civics, Guidance, Physical Education, and religious Education which were taught separately in South Africa (Van Deventer, 2009). Life Orientation was a relevant response to urgent concerns such as the health, environmental and safety issues to which learners were exposed to, the HIV and AIDS pandemic and youth risk behavior (Ngwena, 2003).

In 2000, C2005 was reviewed and changed and referred to as the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) (Jansen, 1998). This curriculum aimed to address various aspects of personal, social, and health education, including sexuality education. When Life Orientation (LO) curriculum was introduced in 2000 it was set to equip learners with the skills, knowledge, attitudes and values to face life's challenges in an informed, confident, and responsible way. Other researchers felt like

this Learning area was not going to achieve what it was intended for. A study by Prinsloo (2007) which was aimed to determine and understand the experiences and perspectives of LO teachers. In the study, teachers indicated that they were not fully trained to effectively implement this Learning area in schools Prinsloo (2007).

LO aims at equipping learners to engage on personal, psychological, neuro-cognitive, motor, physical, moral, spiritual, cultural, socio-economic and constitutional levels, to respond positively to the demands of the world and to make the most of life's opportunities (South African Department of Education, 2003:3). The LO curriculum is also aimed to provide learners with knowledge and skills to make informed decisions about their health and well-being, including issues related to sexuality, HIV/AIDS, gender equality, and personal development (South African Department of Education, 2003:3). Given the high prevalence of HIV/AIDS in South Africa, particularly among young people, sexuality education was seen as crucial for HIV prevention efforts. The inclusion of sexuality education in the LO curriculum aimed to address misconceptions about HIV/AIDS, promote safer sexual practices, and reduce stigma and discrimination associated with the disease.

In South Africa, sexuality education is taught as part of the Life Orientation (LO) learning in schools, with the goal of empowering learners with knowledge and life skills in diverse areas of human development including health promotion, human rights, culture, physical and psychological well-being, gender equality, sexual health and sexuality diversity (Rooth, 2005). Government policy describes LO as a learning area that adopts a 'holistic approach to the development of learners' (Department of Basic Education 2011, 8). Its significance is reflected in the subject being a compulsory learning area for all learners in South African schools.

LO sexuality education is viewed as a vital mechanism for responding to a myriad of social issues faced by many young people in South Africa, which include a high rate of HIV, gender violence and homophobia, unwanted early pregnancies, rape, and drug and alcohol abuse (Mvune, Bhana, and Mayeza 2018; Shefer et al. 2015). LO sexuality education is aimed at developing responsible, informed and health-conscious young people (Department of Basic Education (South Africa) 2011). The development and implementation of the LO curriculum involved collaboration between government agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), educators, health professionals, and community members. This multi-sectoral approach aimed to ensure that the curriculum was relevant, culturally sensitive, and responsive to the needs of learners and their communities.

As a Life Orientation teacher at a rural school, I wanted to recognise any discoveries and possibilities that may exist in teaching sexuality education. In order to procure these findings, I had to reflect on my lived experiences and my teaching experiences that may have shaped me and contributed to my understanding of teaching sexuality education. Also, Khoza (2018), states that when teachers reflect on their teaching experiences, they might be able to correct some of the mistakes they made in the past. Moreover, undertaking a personal history self-study, I wanted to explore and identify certain events and experiences from my life history that could have influenced my development as a teacher of Life Orientation (LO).

In this chapter, I outline the background of this study and I explain the focus and purpose of my self-study research. I further discuss why I decided to conduct this research study and what I was hoping to achieve out of the study. Moreover, I unpacked key concepts and the theoretical framework underpinning this study. In addition, I explain the methodological approach that I adopted in this study and I highlight the research questions that guided my study and how I addressed them.

1.2 Focus, purpose and rationale of the study

The focus of this personal history self-study was to identify opportunities and prospects for effectively teaching sexuality education as part of the Life Sciences curriculum. As indicated by Samaras (2011), self-study research is purposely conducted with the aim of improving teaching and learning. Hence, I intended to discover what I can learn from my personal history that can best assist me in improving my teaching and learning of sexuality content in my classes. Fentahun et al. (2012) define sexuality education as education about the human sexual anatomy, sexual reproduction, sexual intercourse, reproductive health, sexual pleasures and birth control methods. Some of these topics are also covered in the LO curriculum in schools.

According to the Department of Education (2011), Life Orientation is the study of the self in relation to others and society. The objectives of the LO programme as stipulated in the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements CAPS)¹ are that learners learn how to make informed decisions

¹ In South Africa, the National Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) is a single, comprehensive, and concise policy document introduced by the Department of Basic Education for all the subjects listed in the National Curriculum Statement for Grades R - 12. (DBE, 2011).

and make the correct choices with regard to their sexuality in this ever-changing world (Department of Education, 2011). The policy also states that the aim of LO is to:

Equip learners to interact optimally on a personal, psychological, cognitive, cultural and socio-economic level. All of these elements contribute in building responsible citizens that are independent thinkers when it comes to their sexuality and other choices of life (Department of Education, 2011, p. 8).

This was a result of high levels of social problems that exist in the country such as teenage pregnancy and HIV/AIDS. Thus, the Department of Basic Education developed a plan to integrate Sexuality Education into the LO curriculum in schools. According to Helleve et al. (2009), teachers' cultural perceptions often mean that basic education content such as safe sex, is not delivered effectively in the classroom environment as teachers tend to be more concerned about the fact that learners are sexually active rather than that they are practising unsafe sex.

Furthermore, the HIV and AIDS epidemic has affected many African countries since the early 90s (World Health Organisation [WHO], 2013; The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS [UNAIDS], 2014). It has been reported that at least one-third of all 19-year-olds, have been pregnant at some point in their lives (WHO, 2013; UNAIDS, 2014). Also, these factors have contributed to the government's decision to introduce sexuality education in the LO curriculum, to address issues of unplanned pregnancy, abortion, HIV and AIDS infections amongst the youth in South Africa. The subject, according to the CAPS Policy documents for LO (DBE, 2011), is compulsory for learners from grade seven to grade 12.

I have taught Life Orientation for three years in the Further Education and Training (FET) (Grades 10-12)² phase. I teach learners in the 13 to 17-year age group and sometimes even older. My school which caters to black learners only, is located in one of the most disadvantaged rural areas outside Durban. It is a non-fee-paying school, meaning that learners do not pay school fees and depends on government funding for its resources, maintenance, and daily functioning. As a male teacher Teaching Life Orientation which incorporates sexuality education in the Further Education and Training, I find myself interacting with sexuality related issues that I believe I did not have a social experience and education experience. These experiences could assist me in understanding how to positively speak on these matters making sure that I provide educative moments for my learners. I

² In South Africa, the schooling education system is divided into 4 different phase namely Foundation Phase (Grades R-3, Intermediate Phase (Grades 4-7), Senior Phase (Grades 7-9), Further Education and Training Phase (Grades 10 -12) (DBE, 2011)

have taught Life Orientation for three years in the Further Education and Training (FET) (Grades 10-12)³ phase. I teach learners in the 13 to 17-year age group and sometimes even older. My school which caters to black learners only, is located in one of the most disadvantaged rural areas outside Durban. It is a non-fee-paying school, meaning that learners do not pay school fees and depends on government funding for its resources, maintenance, and daily functioning.

The medium of instruction is English even though the learners are IsiZulu-speaking. Most learners come from single-parent families with that parent being the only one employed in the family while other learners come from homes where both parents are unemployed. The area in which the school is situated is exposed to a high crime rate, teenage pregnancy and drug abuse. Parents play a crucial role in the development of learners at the school and work closely with teachers to further improve the education of learners. Parents attend meetings scheduled by the school at least once every three months, to check on the progress of their children. These meetings offer teachers an opportunity to interact with parents and share responsibilities. While some parents diligently attend these meetings, there are others who rarely make time to attend.

I share the view by Robinson (2008), that great teachers should have the understanding that their real responsibility is not only to teach content but to teach and empower learners with skills that will help them make better informed and sound life choices when it comes to their sexuality and other critical life decisions. According to the Department of Education (2011), the LO teacher must guide learners to achieve their full physical, intellectual, personal, emotional and social potential, a task I deem difficult to achieve, more so as I am a novice teacher who entered the teaching fraternity fairly recently. As Helleve et al. (2009) found out, some teachers tend to avoid teaching difficult topics of the LO curriculum such as sexuality education, although the problems of teenage pregnancy, abortion, and high HIV/AIDS infections, are still a source of concern affecting the youth in South Africa.

The area in which my school is located has a high rate of teenage pregnancy partly due to parents who shy away from educating their children and other young people about sexuality. This can be attributed mostly to the fact that sexuality education is still viewed as a taboo topic by parents and some teachers at school, as it is believed that anyone who publicly addresses issues of sexuality is regarded as disrespectful and young people are not permitted to openly discuss issues of sexuality.

³ In South Africa, the schooling education system is divided into 4 different phase namely Foundation Phase (Grades R-3, Intermediate Phase (Grades 4-7), Senior Phase (Grades 7-9), Further Education and Training Phase (Grades 10 -12) (DBE, 2011)

The media and more recently, social media, has contributed to the youth engaging in sexual activities. These factors adversely contribute to the manner in which young people view sexuality and eventually make wrong sexual choices.

Social media is the platform on the internet that facilitates the sharing of content that is generated by users (Godwin, 2024). These platforms allow friends to connect and share ideas, pictures and files. Social media platforms include Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp and many other sites that people use to communicate. The impact of social media on youth engagement in sexual activities is a complex and multifaceted issue that has been explored in various studies and discussions.

Risky sexual behavior by young people especially learners is increasing and social media use has been implicated as a measure contributing factor because of exposure of young people to sexual content online (Ajagunna, 2017). Social media allows anyone to upload content on these sites without placing proper control on the kind of information shared on social media (Godwin, 2024).. This content is consumed by young people to do wrong sexual decisions. Researchers debates about the impact of social media and its influence to young people. Online sexual activities have strong negative impact on young people (Doring, 2009). Social media are consequently regarded mainly as a risk factor in adolescent sexual socialization (e.g., Cookingham & Ryan, 2015; Randall & Langlais, 2020)

Social media platforms, particularly dating apps and websites, have transformed the landscape of dating and sexual relationships among young people. Studies have shown that adolescents and young adults use these platforms to meet potential partners and engage in casual sexual encounters, sometimes without adequate knowledge or protection (Sales & Fivush, 2017; Manigo et al., 2020).

Risky behaviors such as smoking, substance abuse, alcohol use and illicit sexual interactions carried out by adolescents may have a life-long effect on their entire health and social status. Since there is a rapid increase in the number of internet users, there is a possibility that these adolescents might engage in online events that could increase the likelihood of them involving themselves in sexual relations with the opposite sex. Media and internet access allow adolescents to obtain information about their sexuality and that of the people around them. In addition, the internet can also be used by them to find out various informational content about a wide range of topics and subjects that they may or may not be interested in. They open internet sites that offer pornography because they are driven by their curiosity to know certain things.

The community in which the school is found is made up of diverse religious groupings which have different understandings and beliefs when it comes to sexuality and sexuality education. Christianity is one religion dominating the area as most families are Christians. Their belief is to encourage young people to abstain from sex until they get married. Young people are reprimanded for talking freely about sexuality during church services, family gatherings and social events that take place in the community. Addressing issues of sexuality is regarded as going against the norms and cultural beliefs of Christianity. During Christian gatherings, young people who openly talk about sexuality and sexuality education are viewed as being possessed by demons or other evil spirits. These views and other beliefs, leave young people without a proper understanding of sexuality, which in the long-term, results in the young people engaging in sexual activities that eventually destroy their lives.

Teaching sexuality education has many opportunities and benefits for both the teacher and the learner in the classroom, as highlighted in the following studies. Studies in several European countries have shown that the introduction of long-term national sexuality education programmes has led to a reduction in teenage pregnancy and abortions (World Health Organization, 2013). However, teaching sexuality education in South African schools remains the most controversial phenomenon for many teachers. According to Chaka (2017), when it comes to sexuality education, teachers do not hold the same beliefs as to what exactly needs to be taught in the classroom. Chaka (2017) argues further, that there is still the unresolved predicament of the age at which learners should be introduced to sexuality education. Accordingly, the World Health Organization (1994) suggests that in order to prevent the spread of HIV and AIDS, it is essential to teach children about sexuality education before they are sexually active. Rocheron and Whyld (1983) state that children are naturally curious and sexual curiosity is awakened very early in the child's life.

While it has been claimed that some teachers are not comfortable with teaching sexuality education in schools, sexuality education plays a very important role in the development of a learner. Ahmed et al. (2009) state that the discomfort is caused by a conflict between content that teachers are expected to teach and the influence of a learner's personal beliefs and values as human beings. Chaka (2017) states that some teachers have a fear of losing their learners' respect when they teach sexuality education in their classrooms. Therefore, sexuality education has become a complex topic and difficult to explain in classrooms. Not all role players at school level agree with the topic being explained in detail as some feel the details of sexuality will influence learners to engage in sexual activities as viewed by Appalsamy (2015), who states that these beliefs can be imposed on learners

in their classrooms. However, this study helped me to identify my own beliefs about sexuality education and interrogate these beliefs to establish what led me to have these beliefs.

1.3 Context of the study

Due to the nature of the study, the location/s of this study was not pre-determined and restricted to one specific location as the study took place during the Covid-19 pandemic. This forced us to use different online meeting platforms to conduct our meetings. Since I worked with my participants and critical friends in my study, it was important that they had an input in deciding where we met. Hence, the location was jointly decided with them for our meetings, where I ensured the safety and comfort of my participants. I also made sure that the venue for our meetings was suitable for discussions to allow participants to have the freedom to express their views and opinions. With the help of my participants and critical friends, we met at different locations that were convenient for them. At times, we met at my school in different classrooms and offices. Meeting in the classroom assisted my participants to recall some of the experiences that we shared. We also met at coffee shops for our meetings. These places were easily accessible for my participants and the atmosphere allowed them to speak out about the events that happened in the past.

Every research study needs to have clear directions on what the researcher is trying to achieve and why you are pursuing it. Hence, I will do this next, by outlining the objectives of this study.

1.4 Objectives of the study

The objectives of this study are to:

- Explore my personal history to identify how I learned about sexuality education.
- Identify new discoveries and possibilities for my practice when teaching sexuality education.

1.5 Research questions

My first research question was:

What can I learn from my personal history about how I learned about sexuality education?

My second research question was:

What new discoveries and possibilities can I learn for my practice when teaching sexuality education?

1.6 Theoretical framework

A theoretical framework according to Huff (2009) are philosophical assumptions that underpin a research study and guide the formulation of the research questions and how data is sought to address these research questions. Every research study must be viewed through a particular philosophical assumption that draws its knowledge and understanding from a relevant research paradigm. The theoretical framework that will be adopted in this study is Vygotsky's sociocultural theory which is situated within the interpretive paradigm. The socio cultural theory was developed by a Soviet psychologist Lev Vygotsky who believed that a person's learning is a social process and that a child's learning ability and development is "guided and mediated by their social interactions" (Vygotsky (1978, p. 57). Furthermore, this theoretical framework views knowledge development as a social process where social interaction is a critical element for knowledge to be acquired and thus for learning to take place (Taber, 2017). Hence, this theory supports the assumption that an individual's development stems from several sources such as interactions with others as well as the culture they grew up in, better known as their social context. The social context is therefore seen as a significant aspect that will shape a person's knowledge and understandings. This means that the knowledge that researchers have is largely influenced by their social context and lived experiences. This theoretical framework fits in well with my study as I am trying to uncover how my lived experiences, my social context and my culture have shaped my beliefs and understandings of sexuality education. Pritchard & Woollard (2010) also believe that a person construct their own understandings of the world they live in, through observation or experiences within their social context and the culture they were inculcated into. Vygotsky (1978) reinforces this theoretical underpinning by stipulating that human development is a socially mediated process whereby children get their beliefs, cultural values and problem-solving strategies through constant interaction with other members of their society. Thus, the philosophical assumptions of the sociocultural theory align well with this research study because I am exploring my lived experiences to identify what may have influenced my beliefs and values concerning sexuality education. I am also exploring my personal history to unearth the possibilities and discoveries that may surface about the teaching of sexuality education.

1.7 Methodology

In an attempt to learn more about my understandings of sexuality education and what could have moulded and shaped my understandings, I explored my personal history. Studying my personal history by going back to my lived experiences, may give me an idea of why I have certain views about sexuality education. Through this study, I wanted to find out which experiences have

influenced my knowledge and perspective of sexuality education and how these experiences impacted on the way I teach sexuality education. Personal history self-study gave me an opportunity to journey back into my past personal and teaching experiences with the assistance of my participants to discover what I can learn from my past experiences to assist me to improve my practice by identifying the discoveries and possibilities of teaching sexuality education and thereby utilising this information to strive towards becoming an effective teacher of sexuality education.

Samaras, Hicks and Berger (2004) define personal history self-study as an essential methodology that helps the development and the growth of teachers in their teaching practice. In my study, I aimed to put together certain significant events and occurrences from my lived experiences and review them in order to give meaning to these events and experiences that may allow me the opportunity to view them from a different perspective. In so doing, I might be able to make certain new discoveries and pinpoint new innovative opportunities for teaching sexuality education. Samaras, Hicks & Berger (2004) also contends that personal history self-study enhances the manner in which teachers teach as they become more aware of how they teach in their classroom. This is so because self-study research is different from other research methodologies as it focuses on the investigator as the researcher and the researched where the investigator takes a more critical view of their teacher practice with the intention of improving that practice.

In addition, personal history self-study is referred to as those formative, contextualised experiences that have shaped teachers' thinking about their teaching practice. Personal history self-study research is aimed at the production of knowledge in order to improve education and the way in which teachers teach. Personal history self-study is increasingly becoming an essential methodology towards teachers' personal and professional growth and especially in improving the way in which they practice and impact their learners' learning (Samaras 2004).

Samaras (2011) explains that personal history self-study allows researchers like myself, to engage in soul-searching truth about who they are while also trying to understand the views and the beliefs of others. It places me at the center of my research study, where I reflect on my own professional practice as a LO teacher thus providing me with a chance to identify the gaps and limitations in my practice, addressing these gaps and limitations and emerging as a more productive teacher and thereby improving my practice and inspiring others to do the same (Samaras, 2011).

So , Eisner (1991), suggests that personal history self-study research makes it possible for individuals to experience and interpret the world from different perspectives. This helped me

understand meanings that were hidden in my lived experiences. Cole and Knowles (1996) view personal history self-study as a way to self-understanding and professional development which is useful to the improvement of the teaching practice. Likewise, this study may contribute to the way in which I understand myself as a teacher of sexuality education. This will happen as I interpret my lived experiences and try to make sense of these experiences.

Krall (1988) argues that thoughtful recovery of one's self through self-study research can be an effective method for identifying and understanding curriculum issues. When I fully understand myself through studying my experiences, I may be able to teach sexuality education as a better teacher by improving the manner in which I enact the sexuality education curriculum. In agreement is Magubane (2014), who indicates that self-study as a research methodology requires an individual to have deep introspection focusing on a particular area which in this study, is sexuality education. As a researcher, I wanted to understand the experiences that shaped the way I view sexuality education and learn from those experiences. This introspection will be done with the intention of growth in my practice as a Life Orientation teacher, teaching sexuality education.

Samaras (2011) indicated that self-study research seeks out new innovative and responsive ways of seeing and doing things in the teaching practice. With self-study research, I will be able to critically examine the way I teach sexuality education with the help of critical friends. This will help me understand where I need help in my teaching practice and develop ways of working on those areas. LaBoskey (2004) explained that self-study research allows teachers to learn from their experiences and formulate new experiences for themselves and learners. Personal history self-study will help me understand my identity better as I will go back to my past to make sense of what happened in my life which may have shaped the way I perceive the different components of the sexuality education curriculum. I will do this because Samaras (2011) advised that personal history self-study is useful to examine who you are as a teacher, your teacher identity, the motivation behind your teacher goals and the challenges that you have been through.

In this research study, I have used certain concepts that I believe needs to be explained, which is what follows next.

1.8 KEY CONCEPTS

The key concepts that this study paid attention to are sexuality education, curriculum policy, enacted curriculum and teacher learning. These concepts play a very crucial role in shaping how individuals view sexuality education.

1.8.1 Sexuality education

This study works on the definition by the Planned Parenthood Association of South Africa (1998) that defines sexuality as:

“...Part of the total person, including his or her sexual thoughts, emotions, experiences, relationships, learning, ideas, values and imaginings. There is the ethical component of sexuality which involves ideas, values and moral opinions about sex, gender and sexuality. The other is the biological including human reproduction fertility control, sexual arousal and response physiological cycles and changes in physical appearances. The third aspect is the psychological which involves emotions, experiences, self-concepts, motivation, learned attitudes and learned behaviour”.

Hence, in this study, when working with my participants, we based our discussions and our understandings on what is covered within this definition. As I was conducting personal-history self-study study, it was important that I understood the concept of sexuality education as it relates to this study.

1.8.2 Curriculum Policy

Curriculum is a term that has many different definitions that convey different messages and is a very complex phenomenon. This term is, in most cases influenced by thoughts and philosophies of individuals. Many decades ago, education theorist, John Kerr (1968) defined curriculum as all learning which is planned and guided by the school. These teachings can be carried out in groups or individually, inside or outside school premises (Kerr, 1968). Much later, Shao-Wen Su (2012) said that curriculum can be explained as what teachers are going to teach and what learners are going to learn. This concept can also be defined in a broader term as the total learning experience of individuals. This learning and experiences do not only take place within the school premises, but also involves the learning experiences that happen at home and in society at large. However, the latest definition of curriculum according to the Oxford Dictionary of Education (2023), the curriculum is defined as the total learning opportunities available in an institution.

Since I was studying the self in practice (LaBoskey, 2004) as one of the tenets of self-study research, it was of critical importance that I understood the meaning of the term 'curriculum'. This was so I could have a better understanding of the current Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS) because the CAPS policy document, requires teachers to implement sexuality education in schools in South Africa (DBE, 2011).

1.8.3 Enacted curriculum

According to Porter & Smithson (2001), enacted curriculum refers to the actual curricular content that learners engage with in the classroom. Bouck (2008) states that curriculum is comprised of three components, the written (intended), enacted and received curriculum. Bouck (2008) further states that the enacted curriculum is the operationalisation of the intended curriculum. It also encompasses the formal and informal lessons and activities, as well as behaviours of teachers and their beliefs. Most learning is expected to take place within the enacted curriculum. In this study, I was looking at the enactment of the curriculum of sexuality education in the classroom. Teachers play a very critical role in deciding which content learners will learn in the classroom setting. Enacted curriculum plays a very important role as it determines the content that learners will receive. The way in which learners engage with the curriculum of sexuality education in the classroom setting will have an influence on the manner in which they perceive sexuality education hence it was crucial for me to have a comprehensive understanding of the enacted curriculum.

1.8.4 Teacher learning

The concept of teacher learning refers to the development and empowerment of a teacher in order to successfully implement curriculum in the classroom context. Skerrett (2010, p. 648) defines teacher learning as the "process where teachers continually inquire into their practice and, as a result, discover, create, and negotiate new meanings that improve their practice". Teacher learning assisted me to learn many things about myself and sexuality education. During this study, I had a chance to learn about the way I have been teaching sexuality education and how I can improve myself when teaching sexuality education in the classroom. Lieberman (2009) indicated that teacher learning provides space to address issues of the teaching practice. He further highlights that it happens in different forms and it is not only intended for new teachers but for different stages in the teaching practice.

Lieberman (2009) further explains that the goal of teacher learning is for teachers at all stages of their careers to learn from one another. This research study will contribute to my learning as I was investigating my past experiences regarding sexuality education. While I study these experiences,

there will be lessons that will be of benefit to better improve my practice as a teacher. Samaras (2004) further explains that this self-knowing is a form of teacher learning and it happens when you have conversations with yourself and by getting critique from other scholars. In addition, the study certainly helped me learn things that I was not aware about myself and my practice. As teachers, we are lifelong learners, this learning will never end but will contribute to helping others in the same type of practice.

1.9 Overview of the thesis

Chapter One

In chapter one, I introduce my research study which is a self-study of my practice as a sexuality education teacher, to identify possible discoveries and opportunities of teaching sexuality education. I also provide a background to this study and the focus, purpose and rationale for the study. A brief introduction to the participants and the location of the study is also provided. I introduce the objectives of the study and my two research questions:

What can I learn from my personal history about how I learned about sexuality education?

What can I learn as new possibilities for my practice when teaching sexuality education?

I then explain how a socio-cultural theoretical framework underpinned this study. I provide a brief description of the research methodology adopted in this research study and the participants. I also clarify all the key concepts included in this study. I introduce all my participants in this research study. The chapter concludes with an overview of the entire thesis and a brief summary of the whole chapter.

Chapter Two

I commence chapter two with an introduction and then proceed to discuss the research design which included amongst other aspects, the research methodology adopted in this study. I also include under research design, a detailed description of the research setting and the participants in this study. Next, I provide a data generation table which outlines the data sources and methods that I will use to generate data for my study. Ethical considerations will be discussed next and I will explain how I established trustworthiness in this study. This will be followed by a description of the challenges I encountered in this study and how I overcame these challenges. I conclude this chapter with a summary of the chapter.

Chapter Three

In chapter three, I will respond to my first research question: *What can I learn from my personal history about opportunities and discoveries of teaching sexuality education in Senior and Further*

Education and Training Phase? I will begin this chapter with an introduction to lessons from my life and I will present my educational journey during the different stages in my life. I will first discuss my family life, then my life with my father and mother. I will then speak about life with my siblings and then describe my experiences with the church and then my friends. I will explain how these different people that I interacted with in my life's journey, will play a pivotal role in shaping my learning of sexuality education. I will narrate pleasant and unpleasant incidents that unfolded in my life growing up in the rural areas. I will use visuals such as memory drawings, photographs and collage to tell an evocative story about my life. Looking back at my lived experiences, will help me to get a better sense of why I taught sexuality education the way I do.

Chapter Four

In this chapter, I will respond to my second research question: *What can I learn from exploring my lived experiences to improve my practice?* In order to address this question, I have to plan and arrange meetings and discussions with my participants. To help me recall some of my teaching experiences, I will use artefacts, memory drawings, journal entries and discussions. These tools will help my participants and I to remember and share some of our experiences. Next, I will explain how I engaged my research participants throughout this research study. I will first describe how I met with all my participants together where I explained about my research study. Next, I will describe my meeting with my long-time friend Smangele and then I will narrate my experiences from my meeting with my colleague, Mr Zaca. I will describe how I used a chalkboard duster as an artefact to help Mr Zaca remember some of our experiences as teachers. I will follow this up with a narration of my meeting with my former learner Nothando, where I use the class register as an artefact to help her recall some of our classroom experiences. I will then discuss my meeting with my sister which did not make much of a contribution to my learnings about sexuality education when I was younger despite using a memory drawing to trigger her recollections of the past. I found that our upbringing and our religious and family beliefs still influenced any discussion about sexuality education. I conclude this chapter with a brief summary of the entire chapter.

Chapter Five

In this concluding chapter, I will discuss my reflections and learnings from my past experiences. I commence the chapter with a brief introduction then I provide an overview of the entire thesis. I next provide a reflection on my learnings from undertaking this study. I follow this up with a collage to express my learnings.

1.10 Summary of the chapter

In this chapter, I clarified in more detail, my reasons for embarking on this study. I clarified the focus together with the purpose of this self-study and the background of the research study. Moreover, I described the two research questions guiding this research study. In the end, I outlined the methodological approach and the theoretical framework used in this research study.

CHAPTER TWO

RESEARCH PROCESS

2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this research study is to recognise discoveries and possibilities of teaching sexuality education in the FET phase in an attempt to improve my teaching practice by reflecting on my past lived experiences through a personal history journey. In the preceding chapter, I clarified in more detail, the motives for embarking on this study. I explained the focus together with the purpose and rationale for this self-study and outlined the background of the research study. I briefly mentioned the context of this study and gave an introductory description of my participants. I highlighted the two research questions that guided this study. I introduced the methodological approach adopted in this study and the theoretical framework that framed this study. Lastly, I defined the key concepts included in this thesis and concluded with a brief summary of the chapter.

In this chapter, I explain in detail, the self-study research methodology adopted for this study and provide a detailed description of the research setting and my self-history. I also share detailed descriptions of my research participants. I talk about some of the challenges I experienced during the research process and the limitations of the study. I also look at how trustworthiness was established during my research process and I discuss the ethical considerations of this study. I conclude with a brief summary of this chapter.

2.2 Research design

2.2.1 Research methodology

This research study was guided by the personal history self-study methodological approach to explore my experiences from my past. Samaras (2011) maintains that self-study research largely assists teachers to reflect on and analyse their past teaching experiences with the intention of viewing these experiences from a different perspective and addressing challenges experienced in the past to make effective changes. The ultimate aim of addressing these challenges is to improve how I teach sexuality education and thereby improve my practice. Pithouse (2011) claimed that this methodological approach will allow me as the researcher and the researched, to go back to my past and critically examine my lived experiences. In the process of examining my past lived experiences, I may gain a better understanding of how I became the teacher I was prior to embarking on this self-study.

Samaras (2011) further explains that this approach is helpful in effectively questioning who you are as a teacher and further helps you understand the contributing factors that moulded and shaped you into the person you have become. In interpreting these lived experiences using the personal history self-study approach, I understood that I am the result of my past experiences. Posing such questions to myself gave me insight into concluding that all my past experiences are interconnected so that significant events that occurred in my past have had a multi-fold impact on my development, for example, prior to embarking on this research study, I would bring my church personality into my classroom. My church personality did not accommodate open discussions about sexuality education so that when I was teaching sexuality education, I was very guarded and I would avoid using any words and terms with a sexual connotation. I did not realise it at that time but this type of action in my teaching actually disadvantaged my learners in their learning of sexuality education. But undertaking this study using a self-study methodology, I was able to identify this gap and address it to improve my practice.

As Pithouse and Samaras (2015) suggested, when using a self-study methodology, professionals look for innovative and better ways of seeing and doing things. Likewise, studying my professional practice and trying to identify new opportunities in teaching sexuality education, I came to know that there is a great need to start engaging children about sexuality at a young age because, had I been exposed to sexuality education at a young age, I would not have had such difficulty in teaching the sensitive aspects of sexuality education. I would have had a broader perspective on sexuality and not a narrow view that if I talk about sexuality, then I am possessed by an evil spirit, a view that was adopted in my community and therefore also in my home. This is also true for other teachers of sexuality education who find it difficult to touch on the very intimate topics of sexuality in schools. This is because of the sociocultural influences of their communities and families.

Conversations with my critical friends, which the self-study methodology promotes, awakened my memories of my past school experiences. I was reminded of how as children, we were chastised and punished for speaking about sexuality because our teachers were also of the belief that talking about sexuality was a forbidden practice. This could have been the result of their sociocultural influences in their communities and their families because according to Vygotsky (1978), we internalise the knowledge that we observe, see and interact with. The more we're exposed to a certain way of thinking, the more we internalise those thought patterns.

Pithouse-Morgan, Deer-Standup and Ndaleneni (2019) believe that people learn through their lived experiences such as I did when undertaking this personal history self-study because my interactions between my thinking and beliefs and my actions became more visible to me and thus created an avenue for me to change my beliefs and my thinking which influenced my actions in the classroom when teaching sexuality education. Personal history self-study made me more aware that my social relationships from my lived history with my family, my community and my church which is collectively termed my sociocultural influences contributed to the development of my identity and my beliefs and values. In this way, I acquired the knowledge and capacity to respond to and reshape my ideological perspectives about sexuality education and thereby improve my practice.

2.2.2 Research Setting

The data collection process for this study took place during the Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdown therefore no fixed location for this study could be adhered to. The school where I teach was identified as one of the safest and most convenient locations to conduct my data collection process because it was where I spent most of my time. My critical friends and my other participants also found it a suitable venue hence a detailed description of my school will be provided. The school is located in the deep rural area of Ndwedwe, north of Durban, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. This is a quintile one rural school which means that learners do not pay school fees. and the Department of Basic Education subsidises the school to pay for essential expenses such as electricity and water, maintenance and other costs for the effective functioning of the school. Overall, the school is not well-resourced and has poor infrastructure. Although the language of Learning and Teaching (LOLT) is English, most of the learners and teachers are IsiZulu-speaking and all the staff are black African and there are more female than male teachers. Most of the female teachers have been teaching for more than 15 years at this school, in different phases.

Learners at the school come from very disadvantaged homes and some parents cannot afford to purchase school uniforms for their children. Most of the parents are unemployed and depend on the government social grant for their survival. Families around the area are mostly headed by single parents. Some children come from child-headed households and also rely on the government social grant for their survival. There have been reports of high crime rates around the school and also on the school property. There have been incidents where government officials visiting the school were hijacked and had their cars stolen. Also, at this school and other schools in the surrounding area, there have been reports of high incidents of teenage pregnancy. Most of these teenagers are impregnated by older men who promise them money as most of these young girls come from poor

homes. In some instances, children are forced to take over the roles of adults where both parents have passed on.

2.2.3 Research participants

In this self-study research, I am the main participant of the study as I am studying my own educational experiences. However, as Samaras, Hicks and Berger (2004) point out, the self-studier does not travel the road alone. Personal history self-study is interactive and requires other people to participate as you study your lived experiences. I also learned that through working with others, a researcher adopts socially shared experiences and associated effects and acquires useful strategies and knowledge (Scott & Palincsar, 2013). Therefore, I had 4 participants in this study. My sister and my close friend of 10 years who helped me recall some of the events that happened in my life, one educator that I worked very close with at school, the fourth participant was a learner whom I taught sexuality education to.

There are two colleagues who were also completing their master's degrees whom I met during the course work component of our qualification. I referred to my two colleagues as my critical friends. According to Samaras (2011), a critical friend is someone who not only supports a researcher during the study, but also provides constructive criticism to the researcher and asks the researcher provocative questions which encourages them to view their study from various perspectives.

2.2.3.1 My sister

I invited my sister to participate in my study. My sister took care of me from the age of five-years old. She was given this task by my mother, to look after me as my mother had two more children after me. My sister knows most of my childhood experiences and knows me better than anyone else. Conversations with her assisted me in reminiscing on some of my childhood incidents that shaped my identity. My sister is married with three children and although she lives at her own home, she still comes home when there are special family events. She still treats me as the child she had to care for and we keep in contact regularly. Bringing her into my study, helped me to understand and make sense of my past lived experiences at home.

2.2.3.2 My friend of 10 years

My friend Smangele (pseudonym) has been my very close friend for 10 years. We did a lot of things together and she understands me. We have attended church events, funeral services and community events together. Our friendship has strengthened over the years. She helped me recall some of the past experiences that we shared and we relived some of these experiences in our

discussions. Some of our shared experiences have shaped my identity and most of the characteristics I have as an individual.

2.2.3.3 My diligent learner

During my self-study research process, I also worked closely with Nothando (pseudonym). She was one of the learners that I taught Life Orientation and sexuality education to. She was one of the brightest learners in my class. Nothando was also my helper with most of my class activities as she understood how I function as a teacher. Also, Nothando easily understood all the sexuality education concepts. I did not only teach her, but there are some things that I also learned from her. There are lived experiences and memories that we created during my lessons. I taught Nothando for three years. She came from the local community and was a very diligent young person.

2.2.3.4 Critical friends

Throughout my self-study research process, I worked with my two critical friends to help me along my journey of self-study. Samaras (2011) points out that a critical friend is a trusted person who asks deep and provocative questions and views the data that is being analysed, through different lenses. Costa and Kallick (1993) state that critical friends are people that a researcher can feel comfortable with when they bring new ideas to the research process. They also give positive and constructive feedback for the study. Critical friends offer much needed support throughout the journey of self-study. This is done with good intentions of helping the researcher make progress. Likewise, in this study, my critical friends helped me to rethink, reframe and view my experiences from different angles. Critical friends listen to the researcher while the ideas related to the study is being presented and they also learn in the process. They can also direct the researcher's thoughts and perspectives to ideas that were not suggested or imagined before. This can lead to better ideas that can assist both critical friends and the researcher.

My critical friends were Zama and Bongani (pseudonyms). I met Zama when we were completing the modules focusing on Curriculum Development and Curriculum Studies which was part of the course work for our master's qualification. Zama is an African teacher in one of the schools in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal South Africa. She has been teaching for more than five years. Zama is a Zulu-speaking teacher as me and is in her early 30's. I met Zama several times during this research study. We had intense and rigorous conversations about my research study. We used to agree and also disagree on issues relating to the study. Those conversations helped in positively shaping my

research study on sexuality education. I recall an incident once when I could not decide on the proper artefact that I was supposed to use to stir the memory of my former learner, so that she could contribute to my data collection process. Zama came to my aid with a brilliant idea when she suggested that I use something familiar that will help the learner recall some of the experiences we shared in class. Zama asked me to think of one item that I used more frequently in class that involved my learners and I came up with the class register which I used every morning. I used to call out the names of all learners in my class to ascertain who was present or absent. Thereafter, I used to have conversations with learners regarding their names because in the African culture, it is believed that when a child is born and named, that child will have to fulfil their destiny based on the meaning of the name they carry (Mkhize & Muthuki, 2019a, p. 87). Therefore, I read out the names of the learners who were in the same class as my former learner to help her recall some of the class experiences. By reading out those names, many memories were triggered and she excitedly shared many of the experiences we had in our class. Hence, the presence of my critical friend was very significant in gathering much needed rich data for this study.

Bongani my other critical friend was completing his PhD in Education. We met when we were still doing our junior degrees and we have been friends ever since. We have walked the academic journey for the longest time. We have many things in common even outside our academic lives. Bongani is in his early 30's and is a Zulu speaking individual based in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. We have had very critical conversations in relation to my self-study and his comments and suggestions have immensely assisted me with the study.

Also, over the course of my study process, we have had group meetings with my critical friends together with our supervisors. The aim of these groups meetings was to share our work-in-progress and also provide feedback to each other on our work. These meetings provided a platform for us to share our thoughts in a safe comfortable space. These sessions helped in improving my research study in a positive manner. The groups meetings provided me with a better understanding of how to interpret my data for my study which posed a problem to me prior to engaging with my critical friends. This reinforces the view of Samaras (2011) who points out that critical friends can be useful in sharing different perspectives on the data collection and interpretation process to improve data validity for your study.

Samaras (2011) states that self-study requires working together for the exchange of ideas and new concepts throughout the study. This exchanging of ideas happened through interactive and critical

discussions with my critical friend Bongani, who gave me ideas and strategies to effectively work with my other participants. I remember a profound incident when I wanted to interview my former learner. The plan was to interview her at a restaurant. My critical friend suggested that I do the interview at my school and be in the very same classroom where I taught my former learner. This helped her to easily recall some of the classroom experiences after being in the familiar environment. The classroom environment triggered memories of some experiences that I had forgotten.

My critical friends did not only contribute to critical discussions, but they also offered emotional and moral support during the course of this study. There were instances where things did not go according to plan and they were constantly providing guidance and moral support such as when, in the midst of my research study, two of my close family members passed away within a space of three months of each other. The experiences were traumatic and really affected me emotionally. I could not cope with the study and wanted to abandon my studies. But, my critical friend provided me with a shoulder to cry on during the hard times. He offered me emotional support and pastoral care that helped me cope during my lowest times. He did not only comfort me emotionally, but there were incidents when he gave me ideas for my study, for example, I had a challenge with finding appropriate photographs to represent ideas that I wanted to share for my study. All my photographs as a child were burned in a fire at our home when I was still very young. My critical friend advised me that I can use memory drawings instead for my study. That is when I sat down and used my drawing skills that were not really great. He also gave me few basic tips that I needed to draw acceptable images. With his help, I eventually drew a small baby playing with toys under a tree. This memory drawing helped my sister and I recall some of our lived experiences.

My experiences of working with my critical friends unveiled lived experiences that I had not thought of previously as I was reminded by Samaras (2011), that personal history self-study provides an opportunity to critically engage with yourself and critical friends. These critical conversations help us in discovering some things about ourselves and our experiences that are sometimes hidden in the deep crevices of our memories. When unearthing these memories, new discoveries about ourselves emerge which help in our growth as individuals and thereby help us improve as professionals.

Throughout my self-study research process, I have worked with my two critical friends to help me along my journey. Samaras (2009) points out that a critical friend is a trusted person who asks deep and provocative questions about the data that is being analysed. They also will give positive and constructive feedback on the study. In this study, my critical friends helped me to rethink, reframe and view my experiences from different angles.

2.3 Data generation

My data generation process is outlined in Table 2.1

Table 2.1 Data generation

Research Question	Data generation activities	Data Sources
What can I learn from my personal history about sexuality education?	I wrote about my personal history of sexuality education.	Reflective journal entries
	I created memory drawings that reminded me of my lived experiences of sexuality education during my childhood	Memory drawings
	I collected objects that brought back memories of my childhood and reminded me of sexuality education experiences	Artefacts, objects and journal entries.
	I held conversations with my long-time friend, my sister, my colleagues and an ex-learner to whom I taught sexuality education.	Audio recordings and reflective journal.
What can I learn from exploring my teaching of sexuality education to improve my practice?	Collage making	Collage
	Audio recorded discussions with critical friends	Audio recordings

2.4 Ethical considerations

To ensure the ethical approval of my research study, I applied to the university ethical clearance committee for ethical clearance to conduct this study. The university ethical clearance committee granted me full ethical clearance (Appendix A). Samaras (2011) points out that the researcher must ensure that the privacy and confidentiality of the participants are maintained throughout the

research process. This means that all the participants in the study should be protected at all costs and must also be informed of their rights as participants. I made sure that all my participants were told of their rights and I assured them that any information they provided during the study, will be protected and treated with the strictest confidentiality.

I wrote to the Department of Education in the province of KwaZulu-Natal to obtain permission to conduct the study within the province. Permission was granted and I was able to conduct the study within the province. I also had to write to my principal to get permission to meet with my other participants at my school. I wrote informed consent letters for participants and letters asking participants to be part of the study (Appendix B and C). The letters outlined details about what will be required from the participants and stated their rights during the study and after the study is completed. I also indicated that it was not compulsory for them to participate in this study and they were free to withdraw from the study at any time without any consequences. My critical friends were asked to sign a letter giving me permission to use comments and any discussions for my study (Appendix C)

2.5 Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness is a very critical element of personal history self-study research, since this research is mainly about the researcher trying to understand and make meaning of their past experiences. Mishler (1990) points out that self-study research must be sufficiently trustworthy and meaningful. This can be done by ensuring that data is clearly presented and the method of transforming data into findings is set out properly. In this study, I reflected on and re-examined my perspective and understanding of sexuality education. Nieuwenhuis (2010) highlights that trustworthiness is one of the most important requirements in the qualitative research study especially for personal history self-study, therefore I ensured that the data I collected from participants was a true rendition of their own responses and was not influenced by any bias on my part as the researcher. Also, when interpreting my data, my personal perspectives and my own viewpoints were not forced in the interpretation so that my own beliefs were represented but the responses were directly from the lips of the participants. Moreover, I can provide an audit trail that highlights every step of the data collection and interpretation process.

Also, Feldman (2003) indicated that to ensure trustworthiness of a research study, researchers must ensure that they use multiple data sources to get different views. In this research study, I used multiple data sources such as artefacts, journal entries, audio recording, collage and memory drawings. In addition, Fieldman (2003) posits that the self-study researcher must produce evidence of the value of the change in their ways of teaching and viewing certain things. The change will

convince the reader that indeed, the study has made a difference and can be trusted. In this regard, my critical friends were part of every step of the research study especially during the data collection and analysis and they can vouch for the dependability of my study results. Also, my critical friends were beside me when I decided that I was going to make a change in my teaching of sexuality education and adopt a more open, adult perspective and not let my sociocultural influences cloud my judgement. In fact, my critical friends suggested that I make this change. In conclusion, I have provided sufficient evidence to claim that this research study is indeed trustworthy.

2.6 Research challenges

I experienced several challenges during my study process which delayed some of the processes. The first challenge was when I had to apply for my ethical clearance with the research office at the university. When I commenced my study, the university had just adopted a new process of applying for ethical clearance. The process was done online which was frustrating as I was not familiar with the whole process. I did not know how to edit my proposal online or to communicate with the research office on their website. I had to wait longer than I expected for my ethical clearance. To resolve this matter, I went to the research office personally with the help of my supervisor. They gave me proper step-by-step guidance and I was able to finally get my ethical clearance.

During my study, face-to-face meetings were stopped by the university due to the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic. I had to conduct most of my meetings with my critical friends and my supervisor online. This was something very new to me and I had no proper experience of using online platforms for meetings. I had to rapidly learn different ways of using Zoom for meetings and other applications such as Microsoft Teams. It was difficult at the beginning, but as time went on, I got used to all the new technology. I gave myself enough time to read about these new platforms with the help of my supervisor. These are some of the main challenges I faced during my study. However, these challenges came with lessons at the end. I was able to learn and use online platforms effectively thereafter which benefitted me tremendously as we have moved into the digital world very rapidly.

2.7 Summary of the chapter

I introduced this chapter by looking at the research methodology that I applied throughout this study. I further outlined the setting in which this study took place. I described my school and its surroundings as I met some of my participants at school. Furthermore, I described the participants involved in this study. I further outlined ethical issues of this study and narrated how I established

trustworthiness for my research study. Finally, I explained some of the challenges I encountered during the study and how I managed to overcome some of the challenges.

In the next chapter, I will describe my experiences when meeting with all my participants together and then individually. I will also address my first research question: *What can I learn from my personal history about opportunities and discoveries of teaching sexuality education in Senior and Further Education Phase*

CHAPTER THREE

Learning from my personal history to improve my teaching practice

3.1 Introduction

The focus of this personal history self-study is to identify opportunities and discoveries of teaching sexuality education in the Senior and Further Education and Training Phases of schooling. Personal history self-study, the methodological approach I adopted for this study, requires a person to go back and study their past experiences and look at their teaching practice with the intention of improving their practice. Samaras (2011) states that, self-study needs a researcher to develop questions that will examine their past experiences. Therefore, my study also seeks to examine my past experiences to maybe recognise opportunities and discoveries of teaching sexuality education. Understanding these opportunities and identifying discoveries that may exist, will contribute immensely to improving the different ways in which I teach sexuality education.

In the previous chapter, I focused on the research design and methodology used for this study. The chapter also outlined in detail, the strategies used in the study to generate data. The methods used to generate data included the use of reflective journals that were helpful before and after discussions with participants. I also detailed how I found the use of a collage helpful and how artefacts helped in triggering very important memories from the past. This chapter addresses the first research question for the study: *What can I learn from my personal history about opportunities and discoveries of teaching sexuality education in Senior and Further Education Phase?*

To answer this question appropriately, I visited my past experiences of growing up in a big family and I also studied how I have been teaching sexuality education. By going back to my past, I was able to explore my learning and teaching experiences. Studying my past teaching experiences allowed me to critically analyse my teaching practice and identify opportunities that exist for teaching sexuality education. While studying my past lived experiences, I used a collage and a book as an artefact to trigger some of my past experiences. LaBoskey (2004) maintains that using different strategies and metaphors to study past experiences, will allow you to study your lived experiences from different perspectives.

The purpose of my research study was to get a better understanding of my past experiences together with my current teaching practice in order to look for ways to improve my practice. As part of the

study, I intended to unearth more opportunities and discoveries that may exist in teaching sexuality education and some of the underlying aspects that have contributed to the way I viewed sexuality and how I teach sexuality education to my learners.

Sexuality education is one of the topics that are rarely discussed in black families. When you come from a poor background, in the rural areas, it is difficult to speak about such topics. What makes matters even worse, is when your parents are both not well-educated and one of them is unemployed. In this chapter, I go deep into my past and try to understand some of the experiences I went through in my childhood in relation to sexuality education. I unpack the experiences I had with my mother and siblings at home using a collage and the blank book as a medium to narrate my experiences. These are the experiences that contributed to the person that I am today and this teacher of sexuality education.

3.2 Lessons from the past

My family played a very important role in shaping the person that I am today in relation to sexuality education. The events that took place during my childhood also contributed significantly to the perceptions and views that I hold of sexuality education. To engage my past experiences, I journeyed back to my past and drew lessons from the past to improve my practice of teaching sexuality education. Samaras (2004) states that personal history study is the process of learning about yourself. and during this process, teachers make meaning of the experiences they went through to improve their way of teaching.

To respond to my first research question: *"What can I learn from my personal history about opportunities and discoveries of teaching sexuality education in the Senior and Further Education Phase?"*, I developed a collage. The process of putting together the collage helped me recall some of my past experiences of learning about sexuality in my childhood. It also assisted me in remembering some of my lived experiences of teaching sexuality education. According to Butler-Kisber and Poldma (2010), creating a collage is "the process of using fragments of found images or materials and gluing them to a flat surface to portray phenomena." Hence, I decided to get different pictures and glue them on a flat surface to enable me to recall my personal history of how I experienced learning and teaching sexuality education. Van Schalkwyk (2010) maintains that collage can be useful in telling personal history as it allows an individual to look back at their past learning and teaching experiences. In gathering these pictures, I had to engage with myself and ask

questions to recall some of the experiences and events from my past. These past experiences shaped the way I view and understand sexuality education.

This method helped me in creating accurate, helpful, and visually powerful representations of my past childhood memories. In creating my collage, I used my creative skills to put together existing materials to communicate my experiences regarding how I might have learned about sexuality education. Masinga (2012) states that stories are integral to our existence as they give meaning to our past. I collected different pictures that were a good representation of my past and put them together to make meaning of them. Collage provides an opportunity to produce an "internalized memory" of the world based on our experience of it (Butler-Kisber, 1999). One of the roles of the collage is that it provides a sense of deeper engagement while producing the message that will be communicated (Mitchell, 2011). It can force the viewer of the collage to think deeper than the representation presented at hand and at the same time push the creator to send a deeper message beyond the boundaries of what can be seen in general. Butler-Kisber (2008) further added that a collage is an important way to enhance analysis and representation in pursuing educational research. Figure 2.1 below is the collage that I created representing my childhood experiences and its relation to sexuality education.



Figure 3.1 Collage representing my childhood experiences

To construct the collage, I took random pictures from magazines and newspapers that I thought would be able to tell my story. During the process of putting together the collage, I presented it to a few other people to stimulate informal conversation on the issues of sexuality education. This helped me improve my collage with the aim of appropriately communicating my message. Allender and Manke (2004) maintain that the use of pictures can help to arouse memories and allow teachers to develop reflective practice. Consequently, I used a reflective journal to record my reflections on some of the memories from my past. This helped me analyse my past experiences to help improve my practice.

Initially, my collage was just a collection of different pictures put together. After online conversations with my critical friends and online meetings with my supervisor, four themes emerged from my collage. I also came up with the idea of using a blank book as part of my collage to represent me as I was growing up at home. These online meetings with my critical friends helped me to acquire a better idea of using the collage as a representation of my childhood experiences. They gave me constructive comments and advised me to unpack each theme adequately to give my personal history meaning and understand how all these experiences shaped my views. During the online meetings with critical friends, they advised me to illustrate carefully with images, moments that contributed to my learning which I write about next.

3.2.1 Family Life

My family played a profound role in how I view sexuality education today because according to the sociocultural theory, cultural groups dictate by their values and behaviour how one should act, learn, and participate with others. Individuals from different cultures will view behaviour differently based on their environment. For example, if someone is from a culture that is very religious such as my cultural community, they may not participate in premarital sex because the culture they belong to has values they learned as an individual living in that culture (Francis, 2010). Thus, I spent most of my time at home and I came to believe that our families shape our values, beliefs and views on many topics in life. In my reflective journal, I made the following entry:

Today I am the person that I am because of the contributions made by different people in my school, home and the society in general. They shaped the person that I am today. Their teachings and guidance are visible in my life. (Personal journal entry, 25 January, 2020)

In my collage, I used a blank book as a metaphor for my growing up and adapting to changes that occurred around me pertaining to sexuality education. With the process, I wanted to show how I situated my study within the sociocultural theoretical perspective. The blank book represents me when I was born. I came into the world as a blank book, untouched by any happenings of the outside world. However, as I journeyed through life, I interacted with different people and experiences, and then the writing in the pages of my life began. Along this journey of life, different writings became visible on the pages of my life. Different pages represent the different phases of my life for example, the home page, school page, society page and work page as I traversed through life interacting with the different experiences as explained by the sociocultural theoretical assumptions. Figure 3.2 below is a photograph of the blank book representing the start of my life.

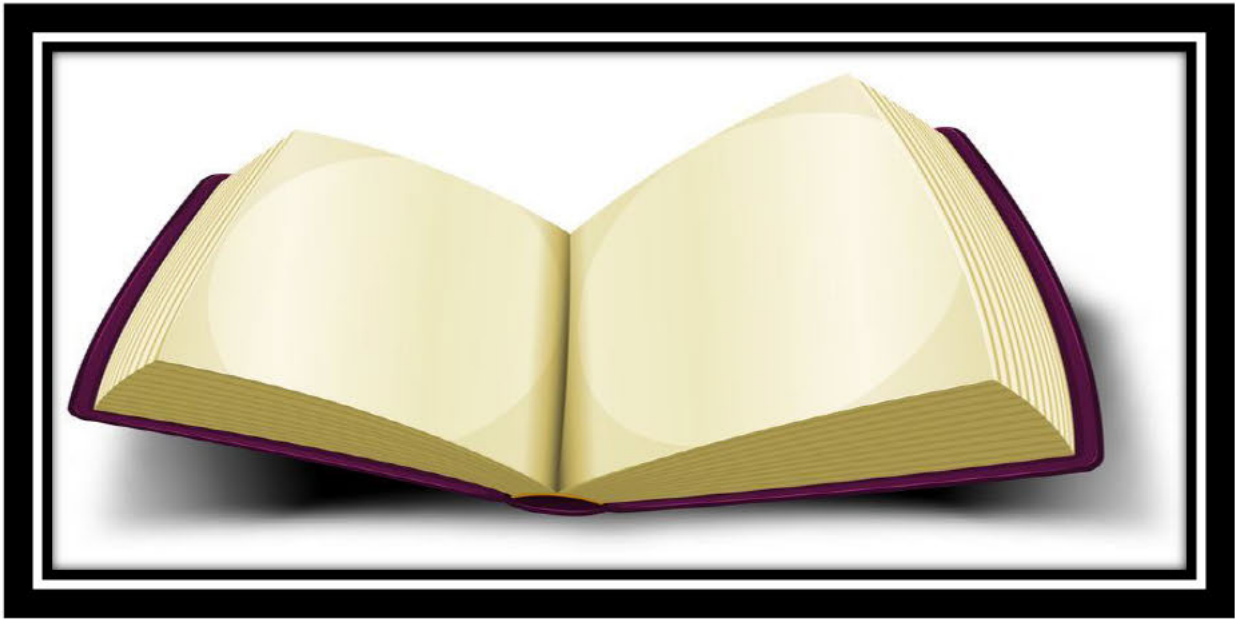


Figure 3.2 Photograph of the blank book representing the start of my life.

I come from a very big family of nine children and my father and mother. Our house was able to accommodate all of us. I slept with both my parents in the same bedroom when my father was home from his work in the mines. In total, we were 11 in our house and I was the seventh of the nine children. We stayed in the rural areas of Empangeni in the northern part of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. We had a five-roomed house that was shared with my parents and all my siblings. There were different rooms assigned to girls and others assigned to boys. The house was not made of any fancy material. It was just regular cement, blocks and corrugated iron. Although the roof sometimes leaked during rainy seasons, there was always love and warmth in the house even though we did not have everything. The house we had was good enough for us to sleep in and prepare our schoolwork for the next day. I did not see anything wrong with it because it was the only home I knew despite the fact that I saw much better houses than ours since our house was built with blocks.

The house was located on a piece of land owned by the Zulu king and we only had to pay a once-off fee to use that land. We could not afford to buy land or houses in suburbs or townships. We also had two rondavels outside that were used during special family gatherings and events. A rondavel is an African-style hut with a cone-shaped thatched roof. It is commonly used in rural areas because it does not cost much to build them compared to modern houses. We only used natural stones and other raw material like mud and grass to build these rondavels. Figure 3.3 is a photograph of a rondavel.



Figure 3.3 A photograph of a rondavel

I attended the local primary school and Figure 3.4 is a photograph of me at 10-years of age when I was in Grade 5 at the local primary school.



Figure 3.4 A photograph of me at age 10 when I was in Grade 5 at the local primary school

3.2.2 My Father

My father was the only child at his home and he grew up without any siblings. He spent most of his time with his grandfather. His mother never got married to his father and he was forced to stay with his grandmother when his mother went away to marry another man. He was raised by an old lady. When he got married, he had nine children because during his childhood, he was very lonely as he had no other siblings to play with and he did not wish the same for his children. As the only son at home, he had to take on the responsibility of working hard and look after his grandmother. He dropped out of school when he was in grade 3, to work in the gold mines in Johannesburg, one of the busiest cities in South Africa and where the majority of gold mines are located that provide lucrative job opportunities.

As was the practice in most black communities in South Africa, males around the age of 17 to 20 years-old, would leave school and move to Johannesburg to look for job opportunities to feed their families leaving the women at home to care for the children. These young men would work in mines and save money for their families after a few months. My father was also influenced by his community and did the same and came back to get married to my mother. They got married and started building their own family. He did not spend much time with us since he had to work very hard to feed his big family. He would come home once a month and go back to the mines. As children, we did not spend quality time with him and never had a chance to learn many things during our childhood. We never had a chance to sit around him and learn about life and other important things. There was never a time where he taught us about sexuality. This was a topic never spoken about at home. Growing up, we did not see anything wrong with that because it was accepted as part of our Christian way of life.

3.2.3 My Mother, our shield

My mother was a strong, hardworking woman who was a homekeeper. She did not work but looked after us and did everything in her power to ensure that we were well taken care of all the time. My mother ensured that there was enough food on the table every day and that we were protected. That is why I referred to my mother as our shield. My mother, Fundephi Nkwanyana, born in 1954, meant everything to us as her children. She was not a well-educated woman but managed to raise all of us. She was the only female of four males in her family. Growing up, she spent most of her time doing household chores for her brothers. My mother's life experiences were also in keeping with the sociocultural perspective of her community because when she was in grade three, her parents

decided to take her out of school. Her family adopted the views of their community which believed that girls must not go to school because they will start dating and eventually fall pregnant. Growing up, she had a dream of becoming a nurse but because of her background and her sociocultural beliefs, she was not able to fulfil her dream.



At home, we spent most of our time with our

unemployed mother who lived off growing vegetables in her garden. Her presence in the house always provided us with the daily love and care that children require during their development. My father only sent home a small amount of money to buy a few essentials. My mother had to depend on her vegetable garden to ensure that we had additional food that we could not buy. It was not a pleasant life, but we saw nothing wrong with it because it was part of our sociocultural heritage and the only lifestyle we knew after all, like many of the other families in our community. My other siblings had to learn this way of life and they also helped her with her vegetable garden after school and on weekends. She also sold some extra vegetable that she planted and we could buy clothes and other school essentials. This was the way of life in our rural communities for everybody, so my siblings and I adopted that way of life without questioning it.

My mother was a very devout Christian and everything revolved around the bible. The bible was like the manual to do anything in life and she insisted that we read the bible to become better people. Every Sunday, she led us all to church and every night we prayed together. At times, she read the bible to us. During these prayer sessions, she would share very important life lessons that shaped how we view many things in life today. My mother was a radical Christian and she ensured that everything revolved around religion at home. Every night before going to sleep, we used to sit around her bed and pray together as a family. After prayer sessions, she would tell us bible stories

and encourage us to pray. These prayers kept the family together as everyone was allowed to pray. At times, we were given a chance to preach to family members about the bible. This shaped me into becoming a preacher due to her spiritual teachings. I still use some bible stories she shared with us even today when I am preaching. During these prayer sessions, nothing was ever said regarding sexuality education. This was due to my mother's belief and perceptions and the views in the community, that talking about sexuality education would encourage children to engage in sexual acts at an early age. During my childhood, I have never had a moment with my mother, to discuss issues of sexuality. This led to everyone at home having their own perception of sexuality since there was no formal education of sexuality by parents. My mother had a belief, one that was practised by the entire community, that talking about sexuality education was a responsibility of teachers. The only chance I had to talk about sexuality, was when I was with my brothers and the discussion were very shallow and did not last long. Even those discussions had no solid content and some of what we spoke about was not true because none of us had much experience on issues of sexuality and made up stories that we heard from other children in our community. Below is a photograph in Figure 3.5, of my mother in blue, at my graduation for my first degree.

Figure 3.5 Photograph of my mother (in blue) at my graduation for my first degree

3.2.4 My siblings: my support structure

As indicated earlier, I come from a big family of nine children. Life was not easy for us due to so many of us at home. Despite this challenge, we learned to support each other and always looked out for each other from a young age. My older siblings ensured that the younger siblings were well taken care of all the time, in terms of food and other necessities. My mother delegated house duties to each child and we all knew and understood our daily duties and responsibilities. If we failed to carry out our responsibilities, there were consequences. My mother specified every duty that one had to do on a daily basis. Boys had to make sure that the yard was spotlessly clean and tidy all the time. It was also the boys' responsibility to look after our cattle. If one could not perform their duties, there were always other siblings who were willing to offer support and guidance throughout the day. All of this equipped us to be responsible and independent. I remember one incident, when I could not push the wheelbarrow with the containers when I went to fetch water and my older brother always came to my rescue. This was the environment at home and we managed to support each other most of the time. This support was visible even at school. There was a time when boys would bully me at school. When I could not take it anymore, I told my brother the whole story.

After sharing the story with him, he went to look for the boys that were bullying me. He punished them severely. This demonstrated that we supported and took care of each other while growing up.

Throughout my childhood, the females in my family seemed to be more in authority than males. This is due to the fact that the females in my family were older than the males. Each female was tasked to take care of the younger siblings. They prepared food for us when we were in the field looking after cattle. When we came back, there was always food readily prepared for us. My family was divided into two groups, the females and males. There were things that were only done by females but never done by males. This made us males feel more superior than females. When my mother reprimanded the male children, she would let them do females duties. That used to make the male siblings feel humiliated and less of a man. This view was also applied even when my mother was giving advice to my siblings. The female siblings were always advised that they should never start dating. However, nothing was ever said to boys that they must not start dating and engage in sexual activities at a tender age. My mother feared that if my sister fell pregnant, she will be a disappointment to the family and the community since she would be accused of not raising her children properly. On the other hand, the male siblings could go out and meet girls anytime. As much as my mother provided guidance and mentorship to everyone, nothing much was said at home to teach us about sexuality and sexuality education. She had the view that it was the teachers' responsibility to teach us about sexuality and sexuality education. It is only now that I realise, that this should not have been the case as education should start at home because that is where children spent most of their time before going to school. When children go to school, they should go with the background knowledge that they must acquire at home. School education should enhance and add to what they have already been taught at home. This will make it easier for both the children and the teachers at school.

My family was intensely grounded in the teachings and philosophies of Christianity. Everything had to be done according to the scriptures of the bible. Everything that we did, was supposed to be in line with biblical doctrines. My mother, as an ardent believer in the bible, sought to make sure that everybody had a Christian background so they could grow up to become better individuals in the years yet to come. I recollect that at some point, we would meet at night before going to bed, and sing hymns and pray. I had a very good relationship with my siblings. After school we would help each other with homework and teach each other. There were days where we would have disagreements and fights sometimes. But everything that happened, was built on the foundation of love, care and support for each other. As much as we had a very good bond as siblings, it was very

rare that we would deliberate on matters of sexuality. In case one of us mistakenly made a remark about sexually, they were severely reprimanded. This led to us having a phobia of talking about sexuality education. It was more challenging to speak about sexuality with my sisters or my mother than to talk about it with my brothers. There were occurrences where, as boys we would make jokes about sexuality but there were no serious educational conversations around the matter.

As my sisters grew up, they began dating boys and getting boyfriends, but my mother never knew anything about this. As children, we knew about their relationship with their boyfriends. This is because their boyfriends sometimes would come by our home and ask us young boys to call our sisters. In return, they would give us sweets. We called their boyfriends 'Osbari' loosely translated mean a brother-in-law. 'Osbari' would compensate us for calling our sisters every afternoon and we started to like them because of the gifts and money they gave us when they were around.

3.2.5 My community life

Growing up in a rural area in Empangeni, there was nothing much to do on weekends beside small community gatherings that brought our small community together. Most people in my community were unemployed and depended much on growing crops and cattle farming. They spent most of their time in their small gardens. Women collected firewood and prepared food for the whole family. Males spent most of their time away from home working in the mines or looking after family cattle. Children assisted their mothers with collecting water and other gardening activities when they came back from school or on weekends. People around my community were not very educated as education was not a priority for most of them. Children were sent to school only as this was a way of keeping children busy while their mothers worked in their gardens. As a small community, we all knew each other and understood each other's struggles. This helped to bring unity amongst the community members. Every elder was responsible for children in the community. The community had the belief that every child in this area is their child and they are responsible for their growth and development at different stages of their lives. This practice was based on the African belief that "It takes a village to raise a child" (Mugumbate & Chereni, 2019, p. 28) and, "your neighbour's child is your own [child]" (Mugumbate & Nyanguru, 2013, p. 86). This centres around the relationships between people in a community. This principle of relatedness is strongly embedded in the sociocultural beliefs that as human beings we are all embedded in societies and our behaviour and actions are the result of our social interactions within our communities. This reinforces my viewpoint that my behaviour and teaching actions regarding sexuality education are the result of my social interactions in my community.

As children, we also had that understanding that every father is my father around my community and every mother is my mother. This greatly helped in promoting respect and honour for every elder we came across. At social gatherings, adults were given respect. They had authority during these social events and young people followed their instructions. At social gatherings, it was easy for other parents to unpack issues of sexuality education and yet it was a very difficult task to address the matter with their biological children. During these social gatherings we did learn a few things about sexuality education, but it was not really in-depth and educational. They still held the view that teachers are paid at school to carry out that responsibility. As much as we appreciated the little knowledge about sexuality they shared with us, it was never enough.

At times, boys will be taken to the bush where they would be trained about manhood. We would have fighting competitions and the winner will be given a special piece of meat. We called the fight competition "*Iphaphu*". After the fight competition, the older men would seat us down and take us through the journey of adulthood. Their teachings gave us a sense of understanding of what is expected of us as men. We were told that we are the leaders and in charge of our families. As men, when life knocks us down, we have to press on and never give up easily because a man never gives up. We were told that giving up is a sign of weakness and of being a coward. Issues of sexuality was also touched on but there was no emphasis on sexuality education.

Growing up, I also spent time with my friends, playing soccer on weekends and after school. These were some of the activities that brought us together as young boys. I was not really good at soccer but I had to go out and play as the boy who stayed at home was ridiculed by others. He was called '*Umnqola ochoba izintwala zikanani*'. This is loosely translated as the 'Mamas' boy who never went out to play with other boys. I feared being called names so I would also go and join other boys and play soccer. This is where I was free to discuss many topics of sexuality education. It was easy to have conversation of sexuality education with my peers and yet the information shared during those conversations were not legitimate. It is during these conversations that we got to freely discuss about girls without fear of being punished. This was a very good platform for us as young boys.

3.2.6 Life at Church

During my childhood, we spent most of our Sundays attending church services since my mother was very into the Christian faith. We went to church even if we did not feel like going to church. My mother made us believe that if you do not go to church, nothing will ever go well in your life. We had to go to church since no one wanted to lead a bad life when they grow up. There were clothes that we wore only on Sundays. Even food that we had on Sundays was special. If you did

not go to church on a Sunday, that will mean you will not get a mouth-watering meal that was always prepared for lunch on Sundays.

We spent most of the time singing and preaching at church with our pastor reading the word of God. He would tell the congregants to always keep their faith with God even if things were not going well in their lives. Talking about sexuality or sexuality education was never mentioned about during Sunday services. The Pastor preached that homosexuality and lesbianism was not according to the will of God and anyone practising homosexuality will one day go to hell to burn forever. He insisted that gays and lesbians had a special kind of demon and they should not be allowed to participate in church activities until they were delivered from the spirit of homosexuality. I believed everything he claimed because I felt it was not him speaking but God was speaking through him. This was a typical example of my sociocultural influences because I learned that the main focus of sociocultural psychology is the influence of culture and groups on individual behaviour. Religious groups influence an individual's behaviour, as well as their thoughts about their behaviour (Francis, 2010). Learning religious norms and values helps the individual to make behaviour choices that will be acceptable to the culture because after the sermons against gays and lesbians, I developed a distaste for homosexuals and lesbians because I believed they were possessed by evil spirits according to my pastor.

The church also insisted that young people must avoid at all costs, to be sexually active because that is regarded as a sin and God does not approve of it. We were trained that we need to first get married before becoming sexually active. No one was allowed to even have a relationship with the opposite gender at church. The church had the rule that you need propose to a girl and get married to her in less than six months. This they assumed will prevent fornication amongst the youth. The youth was never taught about understanding their sexuality and how they should behave when they are sexually active. Consequently, my perspective on sexuality education was influenced by the perspective of my community and the church because I learned that one's culture refers to shared values, beliefs, norms, and more importantly, these shared ways of life, also dictates what behaviour is appropriate and inappropriate.

3.2.7 Life with my friends

As a young boy, I did not have many people I called my friends, rather I had a number of other boys that I knew and spent most of my time with. They were my neighbours and we went to the same school. This essentially led me to spend most of my time with them when I was not at home. Being around them was a good feeling since we could speak about anything without judging each other. We shared our hopes and aspirations for the future. Being around these boys was fulfilling because

I got to be myself without being mindful of what I would say. I remember one incident when we were talking about girls and how we were going to treat our wives when we grow up. Although we each had a different viewpoint, all of these were influenced by what happens in the community and what was said at church. My friends started their conversations by referring to what the pastor said in church and at that time it did not mean that much to me. But now, after embarking on this research study, I think back and realise that I was not the only one influenced by the community and the church. My friends were also behaving in accordance with our religious and cultural values and norms because I learned from reading about the sociocultural theory that individuals are social beings, and they do not behave without the influence of their environment (Vygotsky, 1973). Such conversations helped and encouraged us to grow up and become better individuals that will contribute positively to our communities. I am still close with some of the friends that I grew up with.

3.2.8 Summary of the chapter

In this chapter, I shared memories of my childhood growing up in a home with nine children. I explained how we were never talked about sexuality education and anyone found to have any kind of conversation in relation to sexuality was regarded as evil. I discussed my lived experiences at home, church and in my community.

In sharing my personal history, I used artefacts, collage and photographs to trigger memories from the past. The use of my photographs made me aware of the significant role that my mother played in raising me as a child. Studying my past experiences also made me realise that not talking about sexuality to children does not help them at all. All these experiences made me realise that I have a great task ahead to become a better teacher and use every platform to develop learners when it comes to sexuality education. I also learned in this chapter, that the sociocultural perspective proposes that individuals will behave and even learn differently based on their culture or way of life. In the next chapter, I discuss how I engaged my participants in helping me respond to my second research question: *What can I learn as new discoveries and opportunities when teaching sexuality education?*

CHAPTER FOUR

LEARNING FROM MY JOURNEY OF SELF DISCOVERY

4.1 Introduction

The aim of this study was to uncover discoveries and opportunities that may exist in teaching sexuality education through a personal history self-study. In the previous chapter, I responded to my first research question: “What can I learn from my personal history about sexuality education?”. In so doing, I revisited my past experiences in the hope of drawing some lessons from my experiences about teaching sexuality education more effectively. I studied my life experiences at home, at primary school and the church. I came to the realisation that all these lived experiences influenced the way I view the world and the way I have been teaching sexuality education. In order to recall and remember all these different life experiences, I had to use different tools such as a collage, artefacts, my reflective journal and audiotaped discussions with my participants. I analysed these experiences and drew certain lessons from them.

In this chapter, I explain how I responded to my second research question: *What can I learn from exploring my lived experiences to improve my practice?* In order to address this question, I had to plan and arrange meetings and discussions with my participants, especially, because in accordance with the sociocultural theory, learning is mostly a social process whereby an individual can grow and develop through interactions with people who possess more knowledge or insight than them (Vygotsky, 1973). Therefore, I was hoping that my participants may have more insight into my teaching experiences and will remind me about these significant occurrences. I used artefacts, memory drawings, journal entries and discussions as mechanisms to rekindle their memories. These tools helped my participants and I to remember and share some of our experiences. The first meeting with all the participants was arranged and since my study was conducted when South Africa was in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic, face-to-face meetings were limited and we were forced to conduct online meetings. Other meetings took place at the school where I teach and at selected restaurants. The meetings took place at times that were convenient to my participants and places that ensured their safety. During these discussions, I used an audio recorder to record all our discussions. All my participants signed a consent form where they agreed that I could record them during the discussions and they agreed that I could use the content of the discussions as data for this study. One of my participants was a minor and required the permission of a parent. The parent agreed to sign the consent form and allowed the learner to be part of the study. I also used a reflective journal to record my thoughts. This journal helped me to reflect on new ideas and

perspectives and I recorded my reflections in my journal. I also explained the expectations that I had before the discussions and also narrated my feelings and thoughts after the meetings. During the meetings, I presented some images to some of my participants which were aimed at triggering some memories of the participants. The images also helped to start some conversations with my participants. To protect the identity of my participants, I used pseudonyms instead of their actual names.

4.2 Umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu: “A person is a person through other people”

Samaras (2011) points out that researchers conducting self-study personal history, cannot travel the journey of the study alone. There are people that the researcher travels the journey with. The Zulu proverb which says “*Umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu*,” translated to mean “A person is a person through other people”, emphasises that we need each other in this life. This proverb when viewed in terms of the sociocultural perspective relates to the idea that a human being achieves humanity through his or her relations with other human beings in their society (Doma, 2021). In terms of this study, my personal history is inextricably entwined with other people in my life. Samaras (2004) is of the same view when she says that personal history self-study suggests that the main participant engage others who they are familiar with, when reflecting and reminiscing about their lived experiences. In this study, my participants contributed to experiences I lived through, during different phases of my life. Their role and presence in my life positively influenced the sexuality education teacher that I became.

4.3 My first meeting with participants

Prior to our first meeting, I had written in my reflective journal some of my expectations of the meetings as well as the feelings I had at the time, my fears and my trepidations regarding our first meeting as indicated below:

I am excited and nervous at the same time, this is because my first meeting with all my participants will eventually take place. I have not seen all my participants at the same time. I don't know if they will be able to accept each other since they all come from different backgrounds and they contributed to my lived experiences that I shared with them. I am excited that the meeting that I had postponed several times will finally take place.. Since we have decided to use Zoom as our platform of communication, I am not sure if all of my participants will be able to join the meeting at the stipulated time. Some of my participants are from the deep rural areas where network connection is poor. However, I gave all them basic knowledge of using this platform (Personal reflective journal entry, July 2021).

The meeting was scheduled to start exactly at five o' clock, but we ended up starting 30 minutes late. The delay was due to technical difficulties with the network connection. Other participants were not familiar with the use of Zoom. I had to educate them on how to download the application and showed them a few basic operational tools that they needed to be part of the meeting. My sister who is in the rural area, battled with a network signal. She had to move from her location to another place for a better connection. She also had a problem with login details to join the meeting. After the delays, we were able to start the meeting. Everyone was patient with my sister. After she finally joined the session, everyone made jokes about how technology can give us a headache. Making jokes about technology before the meeting helped everyone to relax and feel comfortable.

When everyone was present at the meeting, I welcomed everyone. I thanked them for taking part in this study and told them that I appreciated their presence and contribution to this study. I read out the agenda of the meeting to all participants. A copy of the agenda is provided below in Figure 4.1

Introduction meeting Agenda		
Date: 20 July 2021		
Time: 17:00		
Facilitator: Mr. E.P Nkwanyana		
Time	Item	Person responsible
17:00	Opening prayer	All
17:05	Welcoming	Researcher
17:10	Introduction of guests	All
17:15	Purpose of the meeting	Researcher
17:25	Background of the study	Researcher
17:40	Questions and discussion	All
17:45	Meeting times	All
18:00	Closing	All

Figure 4.1 Copy of the agenda of the first meeting with participants

As I was preparing for our first meeting, I ensured a proper agenda for the meeting. This was to ensure that we had a sense of direction throughout our meeting. This was also done to show that this meeting was important and they were all valued. When the participants realised that this was a proper meeting with an agenda, they became a bit uncomfortable. They felt as if the meeting would

be too formal. I explained that the agenda should not scare them, as we were just going to have a conversation. The agenda, as shown above, indicated specific points that were supposed to be covered. I also allocated specific times for each point. I did not want the meeting to end up uncontrollable. Drafting an agenda helped to minimise wasting time during the meeting.

The first meeting was conducted both in English and IsiZulu. All my participants are IsiZulu-speakers, but they also understand English. As the researcher, I wanted my participants to be comfortable to use a language suitable for them. Any phrases that were said in IsiZulu were documented and translated into English. When the meeting began, I greeted all the participants and formally introduced myself as a Life Orientation teacher who is currently doing research on discoveries and opportunities for teaching sexuality education. I explained how I became a teacher of sexuality education and explained what I admired the most about the subject. I further explained the background to the study and what inspired me to conduct this study. I clarified to my participants, that over the years of teaching sexuality education, there are concepts and terms that I had become familiar with and some other content that I learned from other teachers of sexuality education. I told my participants that some teachers find it difficult to teach or explain in detail, some of the intimate content of sexuality education which in the long run could have a negative impact on the life of a learner. I also said I felt the same as those educators because of our cultural background, religious teaching and lack of proper teacher professional development. I added that some teachers including myself are embarrassed to mention certain body parts when we teach sexuality education. Furthermore, I explained that teachers were worried about how learners would perceive them after the lesson. This is because educators have certain beliefs perspectives and respect they want to maintain at school and they feared that addressing such topics might end up giving learners a negative perception of them as teachers. I realised when saying this which I had not realised earlier, that the other teachers who are embarrassed about mentioning body parts were also acting in accordance with their beliefs and values of their socio-cultural influences.

After the formal introduction and the background to my research study, I asked if they had any questions. One participant asked if they would be getting any money for participating in the study. I explained that no money would be provided and participation in my study was totally voluntary and if they were not comfortable with my study, they could choose to excuse themselves from the study without any consequences. I reassured them that they do have rights as they had signed the consent form and as the researcher, I will protect their confidentiality. While reminding them about the

consent form, I also explained that in the study, I would not use their real names. This is done to protect their identities. My participants were then sufficiently reassured and began to relax.

I explained to participants that we will not always have our meetings with all participants together. Each participant was allocated a meeting time that suited their schedule. I mentioned that not all of our meetings will be online, but some will be face-to-face at different locations that will be convenient for each participant. I also encouraged my participants to seek clarity on any issue they were not clear about.

4.4 Meeting my first participant, Smangele

I scheduled a meeting with my participant Smangele, who had been my friend, for a long time. Smangele selected the time and location of the meeting that was convenient for her. Smangele agreed to meet at a restaurant in Durban. We had to reschedule several times since she was always busy with work commitments, and she lived in another province.

We finally met for our meeting after a very long time of planning and preparation. I was not really nervous about this meeting, since Smangele was my old friend and we spent lots of time together at university. I reflected in my journal as indicated below, that this was one of the meetings I was really looking forward to without feeling any anxiety.

Today is actually the day where I will be meeting Smangele. This is the first participant that I will meet alone. I am excited and looking forward to this meeting. This is more than just a meeting as the participant is my old friend from varsity. I see this meeting as another opportunity to recall and relive some of the things that we did back at varsity and at church. Smangele is also excited and looking forward to the meeting. I believe I have prepared all my pointers and artefacts. I'm expecting my friend to be open about most of the things as she is a very outspoken individual (Personal journal entry, July, 2020).

Smangele requested that we have our meeting in the afternoon as she had another commitment during the day. I agreed on the meeting time as during the day, I was at school as well. We went to the restaurant of her choice but unfortunately, the place that she had selected was not convenient for our meeting. We moved to another restaurant that did not have much noise and was safer. The

environment in the second restaurant was more calm, relaxed and conducive for our meeting. Before we started our discussion, I wanted to create an atmosphere of relaxation for the participants to ensure that we could have effective engagement. I made her comfortable by asking her about her travel to our meeting. This conversation made her comfortable, and she relaxed.

In order to start our engagement, I showed her a photograph when we were still at university. I asked Smangele to look at the picture and tell me anything she remembers about the picture. She said, *“When I look at this picture, it just reminds me how you used to be uncomfortable around females. Even if it was females that you knew from church, but you tried by all means to distance yourself from being associated to any females. When we took this photograph, I even tried to convince you to come a bit closer to me as there was a huge gap between us. You were even afraid of putting your hand around my waist when we took the photograph. You had the view that as a young born-again Christian male, you are not allowed to be at such close proximity with the opposite sex. You viewed such an act as a sign of committing sin or as the act of disrespecting your belief. This is because at church they preached much about the message of not associating yourself with the opposite sex as it will somehow lead to committing sin.”*

Listening to Smangele, I realised that my sociocultural influences from my childhood had crept into my adulthood without me actually realising it. Despite the fact that Smangele was like a sister to me, I found it difficult to even stand close to her let alone place my hand around her waist. This shook my resolve as I contemplated how I must have appeared to my learners in class when teaching sexuality education. This topic required a teacher who was not influenced by religious ideals because it can be a challenging topic because it’s a subject that touches on our privacy and our vulnerability. The teacher should be prepared to have open conversations and let learners express opinions and exchange information safely within the classroom.

The learners should be taught to have respect for other people’s feelings, asking questions when they feel vulnerable, or sharing their views. However, I realised my that most of my actions in the classroom were counter productive when teaching sexuality education as my actions and behaviour were mostly influenced by my teachings from my church. I unconsciously enacted these teachings in my classroom and also imposed them on my learners by not allowing them to express themselves freely but insisting that I would provide the knowledge.

The conversation was flowing as more memories kept on coming back while her eyes locked on the photograph. The photograph brought back many memories of the past just as Dhlula-Moruri,

Kortjass, Ndaleni and Pithouse-Morgan (2017) indicated, that one of the creative methods used for self-study research includes artefacts, which can be studied and understood as objects that carry particular personal, socio-cultural and historical significance. Artefacts are objects that can be used to bring back memories that happened in the past such as the photograph. Mitchell (2011) asserts that working with artefacts can serve as visual stimuli as most of these artefacts hold rich meanings. Some objects, when viewed, are able to bring back the memories of the past and remind you about all the incidents that happened in your past. Mitchell (2011) agrees that as human beings, we are collectors of things, these artefacts are collectors of significant meaning. Artefacts can bring back good and not so good memories of the past to any individual. Figure 4.2 below is a photograph of Smangele and myself during our first meeting.



Figure 4.2 Photograph of Smangele and myself at our first meeting

As the conversation progressed, I asked Smangele how we met since I was not a person who liked to be associated with females due to my upbringing. Smangele said, *“I still remember very clearly how we first met. It was on a Thursday night when I got to see you for the very first time. That night was my first time attending a church service and our mutual friend who was part of drama ministry had invited me to join drama and I gladly accepted her invite. It’s that night that I got to see you for*

the very first time. We were with a group of members of drama ministry and we all had a very good connection with each other. However, as time went by, we got to have more conversations with each other. From those conversations we used to have after our drama sessions, that's where our friendship was birthed. I remember after every drama rehearsal we used to accompany some of our members to their residential areas. During those trips, we would unintentionally single ourselves out and end up having very interesting conversations about our drama sessions and other life issues. Amongst other topics, we talked about our families and shared some of the bible stories. These conversations created the bond between us and they become the true basic pillars of our friendship.”

Our conversation proved to be very fruitful as we went down memory lane recalling some of the experiences we went through at church. My friend reminded me of one incident when the committee called a disciplinary meeting for us. They thought we were dating since we were always spotted together. The chairperson of the committee reprimanded us and indicated that what we were doing was wrong and that we were tainting the church's image. We were innocent friends and had no intention of dating. My friend reminded me that this incident made our friendship even stronger. During the years of our friendship, we never discussed issues of sexuality or sex education. We both knew that it was against the church regulations to have any conversations that were about sexuality.

During our conversation, my friend also indicated that even my sermons at church were totally against people who engaged in talks and acts related to sexuality and sex. This was deeply entrenched in my mind and heart, because of my sociocultural influences. that sexuality topics were the talk of the devil.

This comment from Smangele really affected me adversely because I wondered if I was saying the same things to my learners unconsciously. I realised that my ways of teaching sexuality totally went against the requirements for a teacher of sexuality education according to the CAPS document. As the teacher, I should have been developing a positive classroom climate which would have led to my learners taking a keener interest in their sexual health which would have made them feel more positive about themselves and the learning environment. I should have made learners feel that changes in their bodies are a natural occurrence (DBE, 2011). Instead, I was preaching to them that if they talk about sexuality, then they are possessed by the devil. I realised right there that I was going to change my attitude when teaching sexuality education.

Smangele added further, *“In our more than 10 years friendship, I cannot recall any moment where we both intentionally spoke about sexuality or sex. This was something that never popped up even*

by mistake in our conversations. This is due to the fact that you did not view me as person that you could open up to and freely speak about any sexually related matters. As much as we were friends, you treated me more like your very own sister. When it comes to your sisters, there are some of the matters that you cannot freely discuss. They make you uncomfortable and at times you resolve to just never engage them on such topics. Another contributing factor that made you not have any discussions that are in relation to sexuality is because you viewed yourself as this holy man of God. You also wanted other people to view you as this man of God that does not talk about worldly topics which include sexuality. All of this prevented you from openly addressing any issues which are related to sexuality.”

This made me realise that some of the things I say when I teach sexuality education in the classroom are influenced by my religious background. There are things that I cannot say or address because of my religion. This has the possibility of compromising the education of my learners in class. I realised that as a teacher, I must try to put aside my personal interests when I come into class and fully engage with the curriculum that has been set out for the subject. Some of the learners I teach are not Christians and they do not hold the same views as me when it comes to sexuality. I will have to teach all the topics in future, even if they make me feel uncomfortable.

After the meeting I reflected on some of the discussions that unfolded during the meeting.

This was a very fruitful meeting and it helped me realise some of the things that I did not take note about my life and my Christian faith. When I was preparing for this meeting, I only thought it was going to be more of a catch-up session with my old friend. But it ended up revealing some of the things I did not pay attention to. I came to a point of realising that there are certain words that I do not say in my teaching sessions because in my church it is not allowed to talk about these terms. This has robbed my learners of this knowledge (Personal journal entry, July 2021).

I came to the point of realisation that I have to separate my church self and my education self. This will help me to be effective when I teach sexuality education. For the past years, I have been allowing my church self to dominate all the spheres of my life. This has limited me from thinking critically and engaging productively with the sexuality education content.

4.5 Meeting Mr Zaca,

After several attempts to meet up with Mr Zaca who is my colleague, I was finally able to have a meeting with him. I decided to invite him to my classroom where we normally sit and talk about our

schoolwork. We met after school because I wanted to make sure that the classroom was quite and there was no one around to disturb our session. The place was safe and he felt comfortable to talk about anything since it was a space he was used to. I made the environment friendly and greeted him to start off our conversation.

He had been in my classroom during my sexuality education lessons. During my lessons, I allowed him to say a few words in case there were any points that he would have wanted to add. He has also attended my sexuality education classes just to observe. When we started our conversation, I gave him a duster and asked him to share what the duster means to us as teachers and any memories that could have been triggered when he looked at the duster. Mr Zaca spent a few minutes observing and analysing the duster which was on the table. He started smiling and said, *“Whenever I look at this duster, I see something that corrects mistakes. It can be mistakes done intentionally or unintentionally but the duster is associated with fixing and correcting mistakes.”*

He said this also applies in our lives when we have past mistakes, we must have a duster to correct our past mistakes. He recalled an incident when I nearly hit a learner with the duster because he was saying words that I thought were not appropriate during our sexuality education class. The aim of using the duster was to help him recall some of our experiences as teachers. His comments about rectifying mistakes made me realise that there are also mistakes I made when teaching sexuality education and I needed to rectify them. There are words that I did not want learners to talk about because they were not in line with my beliefs. Figure 4.3 below is a photograph of the duster.



Figure 4.3 Photograph of the duster shared with Mr Zaca during our meeting

During our conversation, Mr Zaca indicated that *“our school is deeply located in the rural areas and community members are still rooted into their cultural beliefs and practice. They still believe in practices of the past that are no longer practiced in some areas. They still believe in practices of educating young girls to keep them pure until they get married. There are other cultural practices that they still believe that needs to be done. This strong cultural values instilled by the community is also transferred to their children. These children come to school with these beliefs and as teachers we will have to teach learners to understand other concepts that culture failed to appropriately teach them.”*

All of this made me realise that learners come to school with this prior knowledge from home, the community, and even from their friends. It happens that some of the knowledge is not correct and they need to be taught the correct content. When I prepare my sexuality education lessons in the future, I will take cognisance of the cultural beliefs that are entrenched in the minds of the learners. My teaching methodology must also touch on other aspects of culture as the community priorities cultural beliefs and customs.

Mr Zaca also reminded me of the incident when we had parents coming to school complaining about the marks of their children. Mr Zaca said parents of learners that were not performing well, were invited to monitor the work of their children but did not show up to the meeting. Teachers

could not communicate with parents about the methods learners could use to improve their school performance. He said parents only came to school when there were serious problems and never came to check on the progress of their children. This had a negative impact on the way we are teaching. We are afraid that parents will come and storm the school if we ever say anything they did not like. Mr Zaca mentioned that parents believe that the teaching of their children is solely the responsibility of teachers and they have no role to play. They say teachers are paid to do this job so parents must not be involved. This applies even to teaching sexuality education.

Most parents do not talk about sexuality education to their children. They believe it's the duty of teachers at school to start the conversation. The only time parents start to converse with their children about sexuality education is when their child is already pregnant. On the other hand, as a teacher, I believed that the conversation on sexuality should start at home so learners come to school with prior knowledge from their parents. Mr Zaca said, *"There is something that you need to understand, some parents are really afraid to talk about issues of sexuality education with their children. They have the view that it is the responsibility of teachers to start the conversation. Most of the times when parents are asked if they do have engagements on this topic, they make statements that teachers are paid monthly to teach our children. On the other hand, teachers at school they are of the view that learning about such topics should start at home. Teachers should be confirming and putting a stamp on what learners already know from their parents It's unfortunate that most of these learners start to learn about sexuality education from people who do not have adequate information. They start to learn about sexuality education from their friends."*

During the meeting with Mr Zaca, I came to realise that in actual fact, parents are afraid to start conversations around this topic. When nothing is done by parents to address issues of sexuality education, matters get very difficult for teachers. Parents should be working with teachers to also educate children about sexuality education.

During our meeting, we spoke about how we have technological devices at school but some older teachers find it difficult to use these technological facilities. These devices such as computers and tablets are available at school but some of teachers cannot use them. Mr Zaca recalled one incident when I was struggling with the tablet and one learner effortlessly was able to diagnose the problem and fixed it. Mr Zaca indicated that technology must be used by teachers to teach sexuality. He said, *"Most of our learners are already ahead when it comes to using technological devices. They were born with all these devices readily accessible, and they do not have any problem with working with them. Some of us used computers at varsity and others started using computers at work. Since they*

are already using technology, let us come up with innovative ways to teach them using technological tools.”

From this meeting, I realised that I hardly use tablets or computers to teach my lessons. I write or print notes. One time, when I brought tablets in the classroom to do research on a particular topic, the whole class was over the moon. They even begged me to come back with the same topic that required tablets. Reflecting on these conversations, I realised that we have to come up with innovative and creative ways of teaching about sexuality. We use traditional teaching methods and yet these learners are technological savvy compared to older teachers. In my conversation with Mr Zaca mentioned that external stakeholders in the education sector like the Circuit and the district need to make sure that they suppo

After my meeting with Mr Zaca, I was curious to find out more about how I could use technology to teach sexuality education to my learners. I consulted some literature and found out that Jolly et al (2020) conducted a number of small studies on using technology for teaching sexuality education in classrooms that showed a positive effect on attitudes, skills, knowledge, and the creation of engaging learning environments. The combination of traditional classroom teaching and digital media encouraged learners and teachers to engage in discussions about sexuality. In a study by Decker et al. (2022), it was found despite a few implementation challenges, learners tended to be more involved when they actively interacted with the sexuality education content using technology. I thought about this very seriously and I decided that I would explore the use of technology in teaching some of the sexuality education content that I felt uncomfortable with. This must be done with the contribution of external stakeholders like subject advisors to empower teachers in school. Subject advisors have a huge role to bring innovative and creative technological methodologies of teaching sexuality education.

4.6 Meeting my former learner, Nothando

After days of planning the meeting with Nothando, we were able to meet for the first time face-to-face. Our last meeting was when I invited all the participants to the online meeting. I had been communicating with her parents to ensure that the meeting takes place and to make the parents aware of the meeting. I did not want to take my learner to the restaurant for our meeting. There is a perception at my school that male educators have love affairs with learners. I decided to have our meeting at school and I also invited her mother to be with us. I did not want the parent to be in the

meeting as the participant said she was not comfortable to speak in the presence of her mother. We had to have a private meeting and the parent waited outside. I reflected in my journal about this meeting before it started as indicated below:

I am a bit nervous about this meeting. I explained everything to the parent about the study, but I feel the parent does not trust me. This is not only her who does not trust male educators. Over the years I had invited some learners to come to school to assist with other schoolwork when it was not their time to be at school and my request was not accepted by parents. During the Covid 19 pandemic there was a rotation of grades and classes to make space for social distancing. Other grades would come twice a week and allow other grades to use the same space. This was government's attempt to fight the virus. This meant that other learners would stay at home. I requested learners that were at home to come to school and assist me with my other schoolwork. Parents came guns blazing that I had invited their children. They even said they suspect I have an affair with them. I ended up telling learners not to come and assist me. Going to this meeting, I had that in mind, however the parent was very understanding and agreed to stay outside while our meeting was in progress (Personal journal entry, July 2021).

I requested that we meet in one of the classrooms that I used to teach Life Orientation. I wanted her to recall some of the memories that happened in the classroom. When she got into the class she started smiling and said, *"It feels like I was here yesterday. I remember all the things that we did in this class and how we would make noise while the class was in progress. It is so sad that some of the learners we were with here are no more."*

When she said that, I jumped up to start the conversation and told her that I had the register for her class and I would like to read out some of the names as it would happen when we began our lessons. After reading out the names from the class register, I wanted her to share some of the memories when the names of her former classmates are called out from her class. I started reading out names and she started laughing when I called out some of her friends' names. I used the class register as my artefact to trigger some of the memories when the names of her classmates were called out. Samaras (2011) points out that artefacts are very helpful to trigger and bring back some memories of the past. The exercise brought back some memories. She started shouting out names of the learners that were disrespectful in class.

Nothando started to share that some of her friends were not comfortable to talk to me about sensitive topics that were part of the lessons since I was this religious man. She said *“I really did not feel comfortable to talk to you as you would preach and pray at times in the morning assembly. Hearing you talking about menstruation and body changes for girls was really weird. I remember in our first lessons when we spoke about body changes that happens in boys and girls, some of the girls closed their ears and did not want to hear anything. Later we were able to adjust when we realised that we had no choice but we must listen to you. It was for the first time in our school to have someone religious like you teaching us about sexuality education. We always thought it’s the responsibility of female teachers to teach us about sexuality and sex.”*

Figure 4.4 is a photograph of the class register from which I called out names. I shared the register with Nothando during our meeting.

Boys or Girls: Girls				
No.	Admission Number	Surname	First Name	Week end
				08/04/16
				M T W
1	1341	DLAMINI	Anete	
2	1272	Hlongwa	Thandoiwethu	
3	1262	Khathi	Apumele	
4	1662	MADONDA	Nonjabulo	
5	1283	MBONAMBI	Luyanda	
6	1635	MCAMBI	Kwandokuhle	
7	1267	MCINERA	Lusanda	
8	367	MFEKA	Thobeka	
9	1280	MNGADI	Asemahle	
10	1426	MNGADI	Misenhle	
11	1417	NDIMISO	Sebale	
12	1335	NDLOVU		
13	1351	NKOMO		
14	1244	NKOMO		

Figure 4.4 Photograph of the class register I shared with Nothando during our meeting

This gave me another perspective of how these learners viewed me as a teacher. They associated me with religion and they thought sexuality education was something not godly. This was because whenever someone had any conversation in relation to sexuality and sexuality education, I preached about how that person was viewed as doing something wrong. In some instances, learners would come and report the learner to me, who was talking about topics of sexuality. This further made me realise that some of my learners could not separate me from my religious life and my teaching practice.

As the meeting progressed, Nothando said at times they did not take Life Orientation seriously. She said, *“We really thought Life Orientation was that subject that anyone can pass and it was very easy as it mostly touched on general life issues such as health, society, education and sexuality. We thought this subject was wasting our time. There were other subjects that we really took seriously. You also did not take this subject very serious Sir. There are times that you would come and teach other subjects during the Life Orientation period. All of this really confirmed to us that LO was a no big deal subject. I remember one day you came into our class for L.O, but you started to motivate us to be serious about life and start to have life goals. We spent about 45 minutes of the period listening to you preaching to the whole class. Some learners ended up shouting amen. All these incidents were just a confirmation that this subject is easy and it is not really important. We were so sure that no one will fail the subject.”*

When the meeting began, Nothando was very tense, but as the meeting progressed, she became calmer and opened up about some of the issues that we were talking about. The classroom that we used contributed to making her feel free to speak openly. The idea of allowing her parent to wait outside during the meeting was also a good move. There are other memories that were triggered by the environment we were in.

This meeting opened my eyes in very different ways that I was not even expecting, It brought in the idea of an unplanned curriculum. Beside the intended curriculum, there is also another curriculum that we are not intentional about but learners will pick up along the way. I had no idea that these learners were noticing when I began motivating them during my LO lessons. I had no idea that they were noticing even when I taught other subjects during the LO lesson. All these things they learnt from me when I was not aware that I was actually teaching them something. They even concluded that LO was not really important if the teacher of the subject sometimes used the lesson to teach other subject content. I came to realise that teachers need to be careful about the unplanned curriculum, it can lead to a negative perception for the learners. After the meeting, I reflected on some of the things that happened during the meeting as provided below.

The meeting took another direction that I was not expecting at all. My participant touched on very serious matters that I did not pay much attention to. I was shocked to learn that learners learn from us even if we are not aware that we are teaching them. They learn things that we did not plan to teach. The meeting was an eye-opener for me forcing me to review the way I do things going forward. I need to try, by all means, to separate my church self from my teaching practice self. In the past, I could not separate my two identities and they have been making my

learners uncomfortable and that will have a long-term negative impact on my learners (Personal journal entry, July 2021)

My meeting with Nothando made me realise that teaching Life Orientation to learners the way I was teaching, especially the sexuality education lessons was not contributing to my learners' knowledge advancement of their own sexuality. Apart from using the LO lesson to teach other subjects, learners were mindful of being open about sexuality issues as they saw me as this holy man who preached to them about the church. Learners are perceptive and associated me with the church and even reported learners who were speaking about sexuality to me. Literature has assured me that young people benefit from comprehensive, inclusive sexual education in school and sexuality education doesn't make children more likely to have sex, but it increases the odds of having safer sex (Boskey, 2023). I also realised that parents were not shying away from their responsibility of teaching their children about sexual issues. When they don't feel comfortable or confident about discussing sexuality education with their children, knowing this information will be provided in a safe space at school can be a relief. I also came to realise that I was influenced by my sociocultural environment, I am an influential adult in my learners' lives therefore I must support them and promote their sexual health and well-being. This should happen even if the learner does not conform to my standards of behaviour for example discussing sexuality issues at school. I also came to realise that teaching comprehensive sexuality education at school will not deter me from maintaining my own personal beliefs, moral views, and values provided I do not impose them on my learners.

4.7 Meeting with my sister

Meeting with my sister was not a problem. I called her to arrange our meeting and she indicated that I should come home for our face-to-face meeting. I am currently staying in Durban and my sister is in Empangeni in KwaZulu-Natal. Empangeni is located on the northern part of KwaZulu-Natal and it is more than 157 km away from Durban. When you are travelling to Empangeni, you must give yourself one and a half hour to get there. This small town is in the hilly countryside overlooking the flat coastal plain and is part of the major harbour town of Richards Bay. My home is situated in eMatshana, a rural area that is very close to Ngwelezane Township. We moved to eMatshana in the year 1999 from Mevamlhlophe where I was born.

I reflected on the meeting with my sister as included below.

I struggled to draft proper points that would focus on sexuality education for my sister. I did not have a proper way of starting our conversation. Bringing my sister into this study was a serious struggle on its own. I had to explain the study and it was really difficult. I am afraid that my sister will not want to answer some of the questions that I will bring during the interview. But I am looking forward to the meeting (Personal journal entry, August 2021).

I decided to come back home for a weekend so that we could have our first face-to-face meeting. I felt that we should sit outside for our meeting. I had prepared a memory drawing that was to help me start our conversation as illustrated in Figure 4.5 below.



Figure 4.5 The memory drawing of a small boy playing under tree that I showed to my sister

I shared the memory drawing with my sister, of a small boy playing outside because I did not have any photographs of myself as a young baby. All our photographs were burned in our house in 1992 during the political unrest in Empangeni. Our home was burned to ashes with all our possessions. We had to start our lives from scratch after we lost everything. Hence, I had to do a memory drawing to trigger some past memories. I showed my sister the drawing and asked her to recall some of the experiences of us growing up. When I was growing up, she was given the responsibility by my mother to look after me. Most of the times she would take care of me as her own child. My mother had so many children, so all my sisters ended up having one child assigned to their care.

When my sister had looked at the picture that I presented, I asked her to share any experiences of me growing up as a child. She started by laughing and narrated some of the events she remembers, *“Growing you were very shy and reserved. You spent much of your time sitting and playing alone in your corner. You did not like talking much with other kids and we even thought you struggled to speak. We did not have much when we were growing up because our parents could not afford to buy us toys. We ended up using whatever was available to play with. You would take bricks and play with them as if they were toy cars. You spent all your childhood at home till you went to grade one. We did not have day care facilities like how it is now. You were my responsibility, and I had to make sure that you had your breakfast early in the morning, I changed your nappies and I made sure you were well fed throughout the day”*.

As the conversation progressed, my sister could not touch on any topics or points that were in relation to sexuality education. I had explained my study to her but she did not feel comfortable to share any comments that are in line with sexuality or sex education. I was also not comfortable posing any questions. This is due to the fact that growing up at home, there was no time when we could openly talk about sexuality education or sex for that matter. Growing up, I would prefer to talk to my peers. I couldn't speak about any topics of sexuality with my brothers let alone my sisters and my parents. Even to this very day, I have never heard my father giving any of my siblings advice with regard to sexuality education. This was one topic that was never discussed. There was no reasons or any rule that was set down which prevented us from talking about sexuality education, it was just given that. it was wrong to talk about these issues but nobody explained why it was wrong. So strong were our sociocultural influences that it was an accepted fact that even in the privacy of our home, we did not break the rules and discuss matters of sexuality.

My sister continued to explain that while growing up, I spent most of my time going to church. She narrated my journey with church, *“Our family is grounded in a religious background and we spent most of our time going to church. Our upbringing was mostly inspired by church values. On Sundays, everyone would dress up and get ready to go to church. A proper meal was prepared and we would eat that special meal after church. On Sundays, we would dress in our formal clothes that were for Sundays only. This was one aspect that was really respected by everyone. Parents would always teach us that going to church is very important and we would be given lessons about why we should always pray and keep our trust in God. The preacher would tell us to stay away from anything that was against the will of God”*.

Listening to my sister sharing stories about how church was regarded as a crucial part of our lives and how the religious teachings were inculcated into our lives, made me realise that everything I did then and presently, was influenced by the teachings I got from church. At times I would be unconsciously say things that I heard from a preacher or any member of the church. That is how deep these teachings have been rooted in my mind and heart. They have shaped my view of the world and they control most of my decisions. As a result, these teachings infiltrate my lessons. I felt that if a person did not have the same view as mine, that person was wrong. At times, I wanted to impose my reality onto others and forgot that we have different realities and we interpret our realities differently. After the meeting with my sister, I reflected on some of the things that happened during the meeting.

This was a very different meeting from all the meetings I had with my participants. I did not expect it to be the way it unfolded. I was very uncomfortable to ask certain questions, I ended up appearing as if I was not fully prepared for the meeting. All of this was due to the fact that I was not comfortable to talk about sexuality issues with my sister. My background at home did not fully prepare me to be open about issues of sexuality. When I analysed our meeting I could tell that my sister was not comfortable to talk about sexuality education. I noticed this when I was explaining the research study topic. (Personal journal entry, August 2021).

During this meeting I came to the realisation that the issue of sexuality is still a problem to me and my family members. As much as we are all grown up, we still cannot have a proper conversation about these issues. My sister has three children and there is a high chance that she still cannot talk about sexuality education with them. I still find it hard as well to talk about these topics. Reflecting on my past lived experiences made me realise that I still need to work on myself and be able to open up on these issues. Moreover, church teachings have immensely contributed to how I view sexuality and sexuality education. I have certain beliefs about sexuality which I sometimes pass on to my learners during the lessons. At times, I do not fully explain those beliefs about sexuality education but I am working on that. Hopefully, I will be more open-minded about sexuality education in order to be a more effective teacher and improve my practice.

4.8 Summary of the chapter

In this chapter, I provided the detailed process that I followed to engage with all my participants for this study. The chapter was aimed at responding to my second question for this study. *“What can I learn from exploring my lived experiences to improve my practice?”*

Looking back at all the engagements, I was able to draw some learnings from studying my past lived experiences. These engagements made me realise that there are things that I can learn from my past to improve my practice and also contribute positively to the teaching sector. Studying and reviewing their comments made me conscious about the discoveries and opportunities that exist in teaching sexuality education. I discovered facts that made me sad and also other elements that required me to work on myself to become a better and empowered educator.

In the next chapter, which is the last chapter of the study, I provide a detailed explanation of some of my learnings by engaging in this self-study. In conclusion, I narrate some of the aspects that I would like to investigate further in the future.

CHAPTER FIVE

REFLECTING AND LEARNING FROM MY JOURNEY

5.1 Introduction

The purpose of my personal history self-study was to explore discoveries and opportunities of teaching sexuality education. I was of the view that exploring discoveries and opportunities that may exist in teaching sexuality education can assist me to improve my practice as a sexuality education teacher. In the previous chapter, I responded to my second research question: *What can I learn from exploring my lived experiences to improve my practice?* I narrated how I engaged my friend, colleague, sister and my former learner as my participants in this study. As I was conducting this research study, I had meetings and discussions with my participants. The aim of these engagements was to get ideas and suggestions of teaching sexuality education to improve how I teach.

In this chapter, I explain in detail some of my learning that emerged from this study. But first, I provide an overview of the thesis.

5.2 Overview of the thesis

Chapter One

In chapter one, I introduced my research study which is a self-study of my practice as a sexuality education teacher to identify possible discoveries and opportunities of teaching sexuality education. I also provided a background to this study and the focus, purpose and rationale for the study. A brief introduction to the participants and the location of the study was also provided. I introduced the objectives of this research study and my two research questions: *What can I learn from my personal history about how I learned about sexuality education? What can I learn as new possibilities for my practice when teaching sexuality education?* I then explained how a socio-cultural theoretical framework underpinned this study. I provided a brief description of the research methodology adopted in this research study and the participants. I also clarified all the key concepts included in this study and I introduced all my participants in this research study. The chapter concluded with an overview of the entire thesis and a brief summary of the whole chapter.

Chapter Two

I commenced chapter two with an introduction and then proceeded to discuss the research design which included amongst other aspects, the research methodology adopted in this study. I also included under research design, a detailed description of the research setting and the participants in this study. Next, I provided a data generation table which outlined the data sources and methods that I used to generate data for my study. Ethical considerations were discussed next and I explained how I established trustworthiness in this study. This was followed by a description of the challenges I encountered in this study and how I overcame these challenges. I concluded this chapter with a summary of the chapter.

Chapter Three

In chapter three, I responded to my first research question: *What can I learn from my personal history about opportunities and discoveries of teaching sexuality education in Senior and Further Education and Training Phase?* I began this chapter with an introduction to lessons from my life and I presented my educational journey during the different stages in my life. I first discussed my family life, then I went on to discuss my life with my father and mother. I then speak about life with my siblings and then describe my experiences with the church and then my friends. I explained how these different people that I interacted with in my life's journey, played a pivotal role in shaping my teaching of sexuality education. I narrated pleasant and unpleasant incidents that unfolded in my life growing up in the rural areas. I used visuals such as memory drawings, photographs and collage to tell a story about my life. Looking back at my lived experiences, helped me to get a better understanding why I taught sexuality education the way I did.

Chapter Four

In this chapter, I respond to my second research question: *What can I learn from exploring my lived experiences to improve my practice?* To address this question, I planned and arranged meetings and discussions with my participants. To help me recall some of my teaching experiences, I used artefacts, memory drawings, journal entries and discussions. These tools helped my participants and I to remember and share some of our experiences. Next, I explained how I engaged my research participants throughout this research study. I first describe how I met with all my participants together where I explained about my research study. Next, I describe my meeting with my long-time friend Smangele and then I narrate my experiences with my meeting with my colleague, Mr Zaca. I describe how I used a chalkboard duster as an artefact to help Mr Zaca remember some of

our experiences as teachers. I follow this up with a narration of my meeting with my learner Nothando where I used the class register as an artefact to help her recall some of our classroom experiences. I then discuss my meeting with my sister which did not make much of a contribution to learnings about sexuality education when I was younger despite using a memory drawing to trigger her recollections of the past. I found that our upbringing and our religious and family beliefs still influenced any discussion about sexuality education. I concluded this chapter with a brief summary of the entire chapter.

Chapter Five

In this concluding chapter, I discuss my reflections and learnings from my past experiences. I commenced the chapter with a brief introduction then I provided an overview of the entire thesis. I next provided a reflection on my learnings from undertaking this study. I follow this up with a collage to communicate my learnings.

5.3 Reflection of my self-study journey

In order to make sense of my learning from this research study, I developed a collage that helped me communicate my learnings. Creating a collage, helped me identify the following learnings from my past lived experiences.

1. *Understanding the impact of my religious influences when teaching sexuality education.*
2. *Importance of learner-centred teaching to allow for learner voices to be heard during my teaching.*
3. *Working with external experts to facilitate learning.*
4. *Creating a supportive relationship with learners.*

Putting together this collage helped me to respond to my research questions: *What can I learn from my personal history about opportunities and discoveries of teaching sexuality education in Senior and Further Education and Training Phase. What can I learn from my personal history about how I learned about sexuality education?*

In order to create this collage, I had to analyse all the responses from my research participants and critical friends. All the images that are included in the collage represent very significant learnings from my research study. After going through all the participants' responses, I had to think of images

that will best communicate what I had learned throughout my research study. Figure 5.1 below is the collage representing my learnings.



Figure 5.1 Collage representing my learnings

The collage has multiple images which communicates important messages of my learning. The images on the collage include the opened bible with praying hands, different hands holding each other, a circle with a learner in the centre, a laptop with few books on the keypad, a round sign with multiple signages pointing in different directions and a cartoon which is angry and not easy to approach and some text which are representative of different themes into which I divided my learnings. My different learnings and the images from my collage I used to represent my learning are discussed next.

5.4 My learnings

5.4.1 Understanding the impact of my religious influences when teaching sexuality education

Despite valid reasons for necessitating the teaching of sexuality education, it is a contested issue and has faced challenges in most cultures globally. Also, in some cultures in South Africa, discussions that are in relation to sexuality education are still regarded as taboo partly due to sociocultural influences (Munyai et. al, 2023,). Children born into religious families such as my Christian home, grow up with the perception that having conversations about sexuality is against the will of God. I also grew up with this understanding that we cannot casually talk about sexuality because of my sociocultural influences. So, studying the responses from my participants and analysing my past experiences, I came to realise that my teaching of sexuality education was mostly influenced by my family and the community I grew up in. My family and my community were steeped in Christian principles and I was taught at a very young age, to live according to Christian principles. These values played out in my classroom teaching. In order to communicate the sociocultural influences on my lived experiences, I used an image of the bible with praying hands in Figure 5.2 which is extracted from the collage of my learnings in Figure 5.1

Rogoff



Figure 5.2 Image representing my first learning of understanding the impact of my religious beliefs on my teaching of sexuality education.

The bible and the candle represents my teachings of my Christian faith. The closed hands in the image is representative of my closed-minded thinking about sexuality education. Going back to my

past lived experiences during my research study, I realised that my exposure to church activities and being active in the church contributed a lot to the person I have become. I spent most of my time studying and analysing the photographs of my church activities and I recalled sermons and teachings that were presented to us. Most of them were discouraging us from having any kind of conversation about sexuality education. As shared in chapter three, during sermons preachers were totally in disagreement with sexuality education and anything that was in relations to sex. The church insisted that young people must avoid at all costs, to be sexually active because that is regarded as a sin and God does not approve of it.

It was instilled in me that talking about sexuality education was against God and my family values. My view and thoughts about sexuality were deeply rooted in the teachings from church. This influenced me to view anyone discussing or talking freely about sexuality education as someone possessed by the evil spirit. These influences become evident during my lessons as I could not allow learners to openly ask or converse around issues of sexuality education. This led me to even leave out some of the topics that I felt were uncomfortable at times as pointed out by Alldred, David and Smith (2003, p. 95), “The sensitive nature of discussing sex and sexuality in the classroom is an issue amongst most educators”.

This revelation helped me to be consciously aware of these habits which have the potential to disturb the culture of teaching and learning. During a conversation with the participant who was my former learner (see chapter four), she reminded me of how in one class, I forced a boy to leave the classroom because he brought condoms to school. During our engagement, the participant reminded me how I started to preach to them when the condom was discovered. Sex and sexuality topics seemed to be very difficult and challenging topics for me. Teachers are a very important link when it comes to delivering content and when they are in the position of not being comfortable to freely share the content of the curriculum, they might compromise the right of learners to education. This study made me realise that, as a teacher, I need to ensure that my religion, culture, and beliefs do not infringe on and impede the proper delivery of the curriculum. I now believe that my teaching must be driven by the curriculum requirements. Teachers must not allow and or impose their beliefs and values on their learners. Sometimes, these beliefs might stand in the way of good rapport between a teacher and the learner.

After conducting the study, I become aware that I might have not covered certain important topics under the Life Orientation curriculum due to me not being comfortable with certain elements of the curriculum. I was taking away the opportunity for learners to gain new content knowledge and help them to develop their understating when it comes to sexuality education and thus contributing to

learners not making correct decisions about their sexual behaviours. This could more than likely, lead to actions that could destroy the rest of their lives.

5.4.2 Importance of learner-centred teaching to allow for learner voices to be heard

My former learner, Nothando, expressed during our meeting, that I did not allow learners to speak without me pointing at them first. She also reminded me of how I always told learners that they need to listen to me during the lesson and not their friends (see chapter four). This made me the only voice heard in the classroom and all other voices had to be silenced. She indicated that I always reminded the learners that I have the knowledge so they need to always come to school and receive proper knowledge from me. She shared that they had many things they wanted to share, but they were afraid of my judgement and how I discouraged them from sharing their ideas and even discussing issues of sexuality. In chapter three I alluded that I came to realise I was influenced by my sociocultural environment, I am the influential adult in my learners' life therefore I must support them and promote their sexual health and well-being. This should happen even if the learner does not conform to my standards of behaviour for example discussing sexuality issues at school.

After engaging in this research study, I came to realise that I was behaving like “a sage on the stage and not the guide on the side (King, 2013) because I wanted them to be passive recipients of my knowledge. I treated them as empty vessels to be filled with my knowledge and my perspectives of sexuality education. This teaching methodology is characteristic of a teacher-centred approach where the teacher is the only one who has the power to share information and is at the centre of the learning process in the classroom.

After this analysis, I made a conscious decision to allow my learners to be active participants during my lessons by adopting a learner-centred teaching approach in my teaching where I view learners as active participants in the learning process and co-contributors of the knowledge. I realised that these learners come from homes that I have never lived in and they have parents that are different from mine. This means they may have experiences that I did not have and should be allowed to share their experiences. According to Meyers (2017), teaching actions that push the agenda of the learner-centred approach include allowing learners to exhibit their own knowledge, past lived experiences, ideas and thoughts. It allows everyone to be actively learning— even the teacher gets a chance to learn from learners. With this approach, the teacher serves as the facilitator of learning instead of being the instructor of everything in the classroom. Figure 5.3 is an image extracted from the collage in Figure 5.1 and represents a learner-centred approach to teaching.

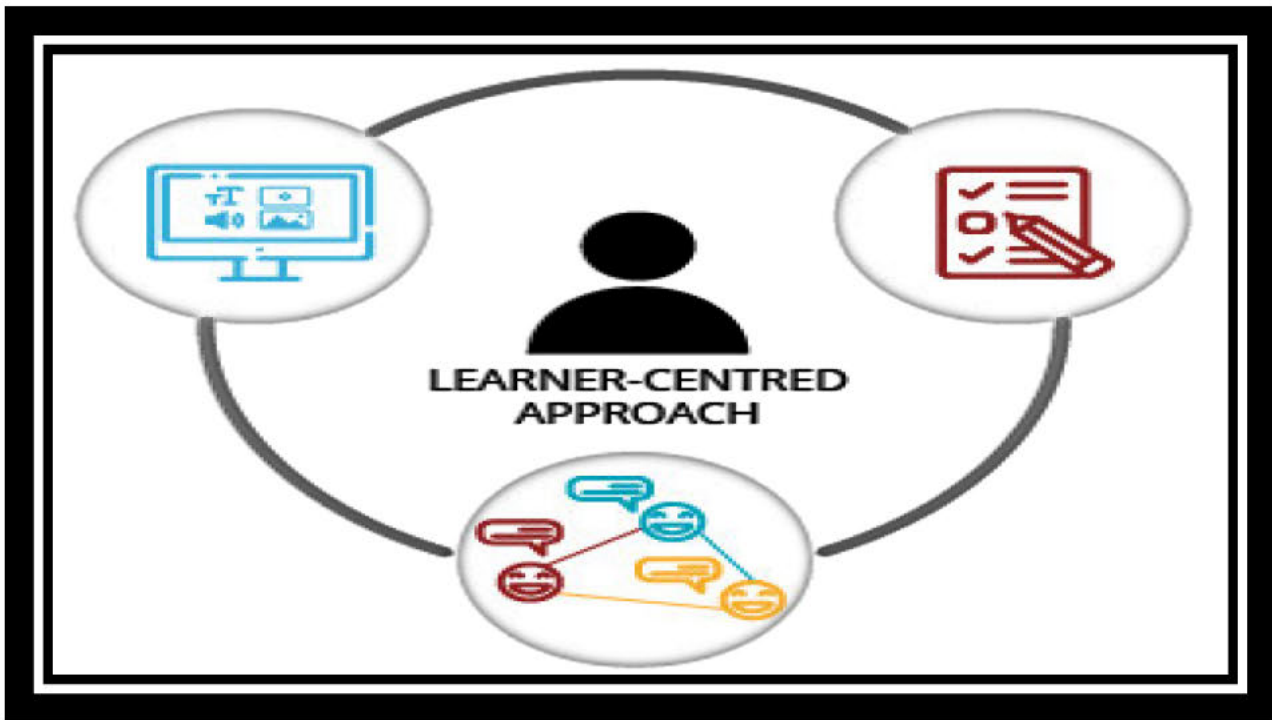


Figure 5.3 Image representing the importance of learner-centred teaching to allow for learner voices to be heard

This image indicates that learners also have knowledge and learners must be given the freedom to share this knowledge. Hence, going forward as the teacher, this is the approach that I will employ in my classroom to allow my learners to share their understanding and thoughts. This will improve my practice and greatly encourage my learners to express their thoughts which will motivate them to participate actively in class engagement and thereby improve my practice. It will help me to teach sexuality education better because I will be knowledge-sharing with learners and not be the only person to share information. Consequently, I will not be self-conscious about discussing intimate issues of sexuality education. I have come to recognise that my learners do not only learn from school, they also learn from their peers, family members and social media as the socio cultural theory stipulates. Moreover, we are living in the digital age where everyone has easy access to the internet. There are possibilities that learners might be in the position of knowing certain things that I might know as the teacher. In this case, as a teacher I will play a role of directing that knowing and thereby ensuring that the knowledge they have acquired is correct and helpful. This is part of the discoveries I became aware of as I was conducting this personal history self-study. Additionally, even though I will be allowing my learners to share their views and their past lived experiences, I will also have to ensure that their learnings are in line with the curriculum of sexuality education and the Curriculum and Assessment Policy (CAPS) document.

5.4.3 Working with external experts to facilitate learning

The culture of teaching and learning is not only the responsibility of a subject teacher; it is the role of different stake holders that have interest to see the positive development of the school. These stakeholders can be internal and even external. Internal stake holders include teachers and the school management team that controls and monitors the daily functioning of the school. There are also external stakeholders such as parents, DBE, traditional leaders and religious leaders.

At my school, I observed a trend that parents do not seem too interested in the daily operations of the school. Some indicate that teachers are paid monthly to carry out their responsibilities of teaching and complain about the extensive amount of homework given to learners daily. They view all schoolwork as the function of the teacher. My participant Mr Zaca also mentioned in chapter four that parents are not involved in the work of their children. Mr Zaca mentioned that parents believe that the teaching of their children is solely the responsibility of teachers and they have no role to play. They say teachers are paid to do this job so parents must not be involved. This applies even to teaching sexuality education. Most parents do not talk about sexuality education to their children. They believe it's the duty of teachers at school to start the conversation. The only time parents start to converse with their children about sexuality education is when their child is already pregnant.

However, parents have a huge responsibility to closely work with educators for the betterment of learners' performance but there is a gap that exist in the parent- teacher relationship. If this gap can be properly addressed, the culture of teaching and learning would be better managed.

In this personal history self-study of discoveries and opportunities of teaching sexuality education, I came to understand that teachers of sexuality education require ongoing professional development. This is because teachers come from different backgrounds with different sociocultural beliefs which may compromise the delivery of the curriculum. Sadly, the DBE does not play a significant role in the professional development of teachers that are teaching sexuality education at my school. The DBE should be conducting workshops with teachers on how to teach sexuality education effectively since it is a fairly new component of the LO curriculum, The Subject Advisors from the DBE should be taking an active role in enhancing sexuality education teaching skills to keep teachers up to date with new teaching methodologies that will help in improving the process of teaching and learning in schools. In chapter four indicated that subject advisors have huge responsibility to come up with more creative and technological methods of teaching. In a study by Decker et al. (2022), it was found despite a few implementation challenges, learners tended to be more involved when they

actively interacted with the sexuality education content using technology. I thought about this very seriously and I decided that I will explore the use of technology in teaching some of the sexuality education content that I felt uncomfortable with. This must be done with the contribution of external stake holders like subject advisors to empower teachers in school. Subject advisors have a huge role to bring innovative and creative technological methodologies of teaching sexuality education.

Figure 5.4 is an image extracted from the collage in Figure 5.1 and it represents the collaboration between stakeholders in the school.



Figure 5.4 Image representing collaboration of stakeholders in the school

The image represents the support that teachers should be receiving from various stakeholders such as subject advisors. They should provide a safe space for teachers to share their fears, frustrations and challenges in school. The involvement of other teachers from other schools will also play a very important role in assisting teachers with the same subject. After this research study, I started working closely with teachers from other schools to get support and inspiration from them. If one needs to improve the quality of teaching, it is important to improve the quality of support for teacher development. This support workshops must include support with improved content and pedagogical knowledge. As a teacher, I realised that to improve my teaching practice I will also need even more support with teaching methods and learning methods. This will contribute to improving the way in which curriculum content is delivered to learners by teachers.

5.4.4 Creating a supportive relationship

Conducting the personal history self-study, I came to the understanding that when learners are given support and guidance anything can be possible. At times they cannot achieve the outcomes that we set out for them. I got to learn from my former learner, that I did not care much about understanding their feelings and views on certain things. One of the learnings I had was that when teaching sexuality education, I need to set up a safe learning environment to ensure that all my learners engage and are ready to be active during the lesson. Providing a supportive space and comfort before the lesson will allow them to engage with the content regardless of their background and different beliefs. This will allow learners to respect differences they might have in class. Creating a supportive relationship for learners in school may include promoting norms and values that support them and allow them to feel respected in school, especially in the classroom. It also creates a feeling of being emotionally, physically and socially safe in the school environment.

In creating a supportive environment, I have to be mindful of the language that is used in the class. There are some words that might trigger past traumatic experiences to other learners. These learners have different experiences that we as teachers might have no knowledge of. In one of the classes I teach, I found out that one learner was a victim of rape in the community because she was lesbian. They called her "tomboy" and older men harassed and tried to rape her because they said she was a virgin. The word "tomboy" was uncomfortable for her therefore it is important that as teachers, we need to take cognisance of the choice of words that we use during our lesson. The choice of words we use must have the potential to build not destroy the child. Figure 5.5 is an image depicting creating a supportive environment.



Figure 5.5 An image depicting creating a supportive environment

During this study I learnt that I have to take note of the learners' behaviour during the lesson. Some learners, because of the painful experiences at home, when it comes to sexuality, might not want to engage on any issues of sexuality. Some may try to withdraw from the entire lesson simply because they do not want to engage on the content presented in class. I learnt that these learners must be counselled in private to better understand the reason for their uncommon behaviour during the lesson. Some show this behaviour because they have concerns or challenges that require additional urgent support. Therefore, I have created a program where every Wednesday, I sit down with boys and talk about challenges they are facing. This helps them to share all their worries and problems. Female learners are sent to female educators to share their concerns as well.

5.5 Personal and professional learning

I embarked on this research study to identify discoveries and possibilities for teaching sexuality education in the FET phase of schooling. In doing so, I have become more aware of who I am as a teacher of sexuality education so that I was able to move out of my comfort zone by thinking my own religious beliefs and morals were what my learners desperately needed. I have identified the discoveries and possibilities that my learners are their own people with their individual ideas and values and just tolerate me as their teacher but in actuality, as stated by Nothando, my former learner, they are not impressed with my religious preachings. Shulman (1991, 394) enlightened me that engaging in a self-study research project, "sheds light on the reality that is being examined". The reality in my study is my teaching practice and personally I have come to see through my participants, the reality of learners' true feelings about me and my religious viewpoints. Furthermore, Dewey (1966) said as teachers, we should not be afraid of making mistakes because making mistakes creates an avenue for learning and acquiring new knowledge. Likewise, I was terrified of being seen by my learners as someone lesser than the expert in the classroom. But now, I have been reassured by Dewey that it is okay to make mistakes as teachers and from making mistakes about enforcing my religious beliefs on my learners, I have now embarked on "something that is not there yet" (Engeström and Sannino, 2010, p.2) which is new ways of teaching my learners sexuality education without diluting the knowledge provided, with my lessons from the bible.

My professional development as a teacher of sexuality education, although not being fully realised as an effective teacher of sexuality education, is on the threshold of being improved because this research study has encouraged me to be more open and accept constructive criticism from others about my pedagogical practices. I am learning to put myself out there, be vulnerable and accept critical comments from others, namely, my colleagues and my learners and in this way, try out new ways of teaching sexuality education. Having the courage to put myself out there, is a sign that I am putting my personal ideologies under the microscope for scrutiny with the aim of improving my practice by taking a more reflective look at my own truths. This will ultimately contribute to my professional standing as a teacher of sexuality education.

5.5 Methodological learning

The methodological approach of self-study adopted in this research study helped me to intentionally and systematically explore and analyse my practice so that I could get a better understanding of my practice as a sexuality education teacher with the intention of improving myself and thus my practice. Hauge (2021, p. 2) posited that self-study research helps the research “identify the gap and contradictions between personal theory, own beliefs, thoughts, ideas and how own teaching is actually conducted”. This was exactly what occurred with my self-study which illuminated the difference between my normative religious beliefs which impeded my effective teaching of sexuality education and the actual proper way of teaching sexuality education. Using a self-study methodological approach increased my knowledge and understanding of teaching sexuality education and helped me to identify the challenges in my teaching by developing a reflective attitude to my teaching of sexuality education. Hauge (2021) state that through self-study, teachers can critically examine their own personal values and bring about positive changes in their practice by acknowledging that their personal values do not always bring about positive results in their teaching. This was so true for me because I was bringing my personal religious beliefs and morals into the classroom without realising the impact it had on my learners. It took a meeting with my former learner to open my eyes that my own religious beliefs and norms was being imposed on my learners. Through this self-study, I will in future be consciously aware not to impose my religious beliefs on my learners and teach sexuality education without letting my personal morals and values cloud my judgement.

Self-study also introduced me to not work in a silo but to interact with others in my context such as my colleagues and my learners. Previously, I was teaching as the expert provider of the knowledge on sexuality education. However, my self-study research study has encouraged me to engage with

others around me who may be more knowledgeable and therefore broaden my knowledge base. My research study also made me realise that I was treating my learners as if they came to my classroom without any prior knowledge of sexuality education. Engaging with my ex-learner widened my perspective into hearing that my learners may know more than I do. I may know the theoretical knowledge but I was too closed-minded because of being grounded in my religious teachings to accept the realities of the world such as the incident when I asked a learner to leave my classroom because he brought condoms into school. I now realise how contradictory my teaching was because I should have applauded that learner for having condoms which is practising safe sexual activity. Instead of just reminding the learner not to expose the condoms at school and respect the other learners, I chastised and humiliated him by removing him from my classroom. Self-study made me reflect on my actions and question myself on what message I was sending to the learner. On the one hand I was preaching about learners practising safe sexual activity and on the other hand, I was reprimanding a learner for having condoms.

Zeichner (1999) informed me that learners “mirror” (p. 37) their teachers and if I was behaving that discussions about sexuality education and sexual activity was a taboo topic and those who engage in such dialogue are possessed by an evil spirit, then learners will get the idea that sexuality education was a topic not to be discussed. Whilst I may have not been doing this explicitly, my behaviour and my religious preaching in the classroom to learners, implicitly gave my learners that idea. Teenagers are impressionable and I was teaching teenagers about a topic that almost all teenagers are curious about. My self-study research methodology encouraged me to be more mindful of how I behave in the classroom and what I say and more importantly, how I say it.

Hence, adopting a self-study methodological approach as had multiple benefits for me as a researcher because of the opportunities provided by self-study which other conventional research methodologies may not provide which was to look at myself critically. As Mc Niff (2007, p. 328) illuminated that self-study is about taking a “meta-perspective” about your teaching in that we need to take “a step back from personal experiences and examine our teaching in a free and detached way”.

5.6 Conceptual and theoretical learning

In this study, I have clarified certain concepts namely sexuality education, curriculum policy, enacted curriculum and teacher learning. These concepts play a very crucial role in shaping how individuals view sexuality. Clarifying these concepts allowed me to acquire an integrated understanding of these concepts and how to apply them in the various situations that arose during my research study. Having a conceptual understanding of these concepts gave me the opportunity to actively engage with my research study. This was possible because I had a deep understanding of these concepts and was able to interact with my participants effectively and explain to them about my study and gather data from them. Also, having a conceptual understanding of these significant concepts, reduced the possibility of misconceptions in my data gathering and analysis. Knowing exactly what I needed to complete my study also saved time and effort as when writing up my thesis, I did not focus on information that was irrelevant to my study.

Apart from my conceptual understanding of the significant concepts used in my study, I also situated my study within the theoretical framings of the socio-cultural theory. Through the theoretical assumptions of this theory, I learned that society, parents, family and others that a person interacts with, has a significant influence on their development into adulthood. Prior to embarking on this study, my knowledge of the socio-cultural theory was limited and now I learnt a very important fact that a person's cognitive development and functioning is greatly impacted by their interactions socially. I was initially confused about why I always wanted to preach about my religion and inculcate Christian lessons from the bible into everyone I meet. My friend Smangele also told me that growing up, I had very little interest in girls, parting and socialising. I used to think that I was weird but now I realise that my mother and her devotion to the church influenced how I grew up. Without much interaction with my father, my mother and older siblings were the dominant people in my life who influenced my development. Also, growing up in a tight-knit rural community steeped in Christian principles and bible teachings. I learnt that all these influences impacted on my development.

Another important learning that emerged from using the socio-cultural theory was Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). I heard about it and had a brief introduction to ZPD but never implemented its principles. But now that I have a deeper understanding of ZPD, I can take advantage of the ZPD by providing guidance and support to my learners to reach their goals. I have also come to realise through the socio-cultural theory that emphasise the importance of culture in

the learners' development, I will try to inform learners that their traditions and traditional customs play a very big role in their development without enforcing my own religious beliefs onto them.

5.7 Recommendations for future study

Although I have undertaken this self-study which has resulted in some positive learnings, there still exists room for further study on how to teach sexuality education effectively. Further study has become necessary on issues of teaching strategies that are relevant and engage learners in the classroom. Also, issues that have been avoided previously for example, identifying learners as gay, bisexual, lesbian, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) require more extensive investigation. Sexual health education and an age-appropriate curriculum with issues of sexually transmitted diseases and unintended pregnancy is another area that needs more investigation. Importantly, teacher reflection and collective conversations must be promoted. It is only when we start to look within, to find what it is that is preventing us from engaging fully with the LO content, can we start to see new possibilities for change.

5.8 Conclusion

This self-study of practice to identify the possibilities and discoveries of teaching sexuality education has allowed me to not only reflect on my own practice but has also given me the opportunity to develop both personally and professionally. In this research, I found that it was important for me to look back at my teaching to evaluate why and how I taught sexuality education in the FET Phase, the way I did, with the aim of improving my practice. I also narrated in this chapter five, my conceptual and theoretical learning and my methodological learning. I also gained in-depth understanding of the socio-cultural theoretical framework. I conclude this study by stating all these different learnings will contribute in their own way to improvement of my practice.

REFERENCES

- Ajagunna, j. A. And oladeji, d. (2017). *Media influence as predictors of adolescent's sexual risky behaviour in nigeria*. *Moj women's health*5(1): 00112
- Alford, a. (2016). "cultural sensitivity and sexuality education." *journal of multicultural counseling and development*, 44(3), 195-209.
- Allender J.S & Manke M.P (2004). Evoking Self in Self-Study: The Analysis of Artefacts. In D. Tidwell, L.M., Fitzgerald & M. L Heston (Eds). *Journeys Of Hope: Risking Self-Study In A Diverse World. Proceedings Of The Fifth International Conference On Self-Study of Teacher Education Practices*, Herstmonceux Castle, East Sussex, England, June 27 (July 1. Cedar Falls: University Of Northern Iowa
- Allred, P., David, M.E., & Smith, P. (2003). Teachers' view of teaching sex education: pedagogy and models of delivery. *Journal of Education Enquiry*, 4(1), 80-96
- Anderson, J. (2012). *Reflective journals as tools for auto-ethnographic learning: A case study of student experiences with individualized sustainability*. *Journal of Geography in higher education*, 36, 613-623. Doi:10.1080/03098265.2012.692157
- Appalsamy, S. (2015) *Educators' experiences of teaching sexuality education in the FET Phase*. Unpublished Master's Thesis. University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban, South Africa
- Berry L, Hall K. (2009) *Teenage pregnancy*. Children's Institute: University of Cape Town.
- Bhana, D., Crewe, M., & Aggleton, P. (2019). *Sex, sexuality and education in South Africa*. *Sex Education*, 19(4), pp.361-370.
- Boskey, E. 2023. The Benefits of Sexual Education in Schools. *Verywellhealth* [Online]. [Accessed 15 June 2023] Retrieved from <https://www.verywellhealth.com/support-comprehensive-education-schools-3133083>
- Bouck, E.C. (2008) Factors Impacting the Enactment of a Functional Curriculum in Self-Contained Cross-Categorical Programs. *Education and Training in Developmental Disabilities*.43 (3), 294-310
- Butler-Kisber, L. (2008). Collage as inquiry. In J.G. Knowles & A.L Coles (Eds.), *Handbook of the arts in qualitative research* (pp. 265-276). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Butler-Kisber, L. & Poldma, T. (2010). The power of visual approaches in qualitative inquiry: The use of collage making and concept mapping in experiential research. *Journal of Research Practice*, 6(2), M18-M18. Butler-Kisber, L. & Poldma, T., 2010, 'The power of visual approaches in qualitative inquiry: The use of collage making and concept mapping in experiential research', *Journal of Research Practice* 6, 1-16.
- Chaka, J.N. (2017). *A Critical analysis of sexuality education in School beyond the disciplinary*

boundaries of Life Orientation. Unpublished Master's Thesis. University of Free State,
South Africa.

Cole, A. L., & Knowles, J. G. (1996). Reform and "Being True to Oneself": Pedagogy, Professional Practice, and the Promotional Process. *Teacher Education Quarterly*, 23(3), 109–125. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23477789>.

Cookingham, L. M., & Ryan, G. L. (2015). The impact of social media on the sexual and social wellness of adolescents. *Journal of Pediatric and Adolescent Gynecology*, 28(1), 2–5. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j-jpag.2014.03.001>

Costa, A. L., and Kallick, B. (1993). Through the lens of a critical friend. *Educational Leadership*. 51, 49–49.

Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: choosing among five approaches*. (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA. Sage

Department of Education 2002c. *Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9 (Schools) Policy Life Orientation*. Pretoria: Government Printers

Department of Education (2011). *Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement Grades 7-9. Life Orientation*. Pretoria: Government Printers

Department of Basic Education (2021). *Comprehensive Sexuality Education. Curriculum*. Pretoria: Government Printers

Dewey (1966). *Democracy and Education: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Education*. New York: Free Press.

Dhlula-Moruri, M. N., Kortjass, M., Ndaleni, T., & Pithouse-Morgan, K. (2017). A stove, a flask, and a photograph: Learning together through object inquiry in self-study research. In D. Pillay, K. Pithouse-Morgan, & I. Naicker (Eds.), *Object Medleys: Interpretive possibilities for educational research* (pp. 81-98). Rotterdam, Netherlands: Sense.

Doma, J. 2021. On African Sources of Knowledge: Studies into the Instrumentality of Ubuntu. *E-International relations* [Online]. [Accessed 14 June 2023]. Retrieved from <https://www.e-ir.info/2021/05/03/on-african-sources-of-knowledge-studies-into-the-instrumentality-of-ubuntu-for-ir/>

Döring, N. (2020). Erotic fanfiction. In A. D. Lykins (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of sexuality and gender*. Cham, Switzerland: Springer International Publishing; Imprint: Springer.

Eisner, E. W. (1991). *The enlightened eye: Qualitative inquiry and the enhancement of educational practice*. New York, NY: Macmillan.

Feldman, A. (2003). Validity and Quality in Self-Study. *Educational Researcher*. 32 (3).

Fentahun, N., Assefa, T., Alemseged, F., & Ambaw, F. (2012). Parents' Perception, Students' and Teachers' Attitude Towards School Sex Education. *Ethiopian Journal of Health Science*, 22(2), 99–106.

- Francis, D. 2010. Sexuality education in South Africa: Three essential questions. *International Journal of Educational Development* 30, 314-319.
- Godwin Precious Ashata (2024). *Digital Dynamics: Investigating the Impact of Social Media on Sexual Behavior*. IDOSR JOURNAL OF COMMUNICATION AND ENGLISH 9(2) 1-6. <http://doi.org/10.59298/idosr/jce/92.16.202412>
- Hauge, K. 2021. Self-Study Research: Challenges and Opportunities in Teacher Education. In: Hernández-Serrano, M. J. (ed.) *Teacher Education in the 21st Century - Emerging Skills for a Changing World*. Netherlands: Sage.
- Helleve, A., Flisher, A., Onya, H., Mukoma, W. & Klepp, K. (2009). South African teachers' reflections on the impact of culture on their teaching of sexuality and HIV/AIDS. *Culture, Health & Sexuality*, 11, 189-204.
- Hudson, L. & Ozanne, J. (1998). Alternative ways of seeking knowledge in consumer research. *Journal Of Consumer Research*, 12, 237-249.
- Huff, A. (2009). *Philosophical Assumptions and Interpretive Frameworks*. Dordrecht, Netherlands. Sage Publications
- Jansen JD (1998). *Curriculum reform in South Africa: A critical analysis of outcomes-based education*. Cambridge Journal of Education, 28:321-331
- J. Public Health Sci. ISSN: 2252-8806 *Effects of social media exposure on adolescent sexual attitudes and... (Fransiska Imavike Fevriasanty)* 273
- Kerr, J.F. (1968) *Changing the curriculum*. London: University of London Press.
- Khoza, S. (2018). Can Teachers' Reflections on Digital and Curriculum Resources Generate Lessons? *Africa Education Review*, 15, 1-16.
- King, A. (1993). From Sage on the Stage to Guide on the Side. *College Teaching*, 41, 30-35.
- Krall, F., R. (1988). From the inside out . Personal history as educational researcher. *Education Theory*, 38(4), 467-479.
- LaBoskey, V. K. (2004). The methodology of self-study and its theoretical underpinnings. In J. J. Loughran, M. L. Hamilton, V. K. LaBoskey & T. Russell (Eds.), *International Handbook of Self-Study of Teaching and Teacher Education Practices* (Vol. 2, pp. 817-869). Dordrecht; Boston; London: Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- Lather, P. (1986). Research as praxis. *Harvard Educational Review*. 56(3). 257-277.
- Lieberman, J. (2009). Reinventing Teacher Professional Norms and Identities: The Role of Lesson

Study and Learning Communities. *Professional Development in Education*, 35, 83-99.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13674580802264688>

Macleod, C. (2016). "Why Sexuality Education in Schools Needs a Major Overhaul." *The Conversation*. <http://theconversation.com/why-sexuality-education-in-schools-needs-a-major-overhaul-58176>

Mac Naughton, G., Rolfe, S. A., & Siraj-Blatchford, I. (2001). *Doing early childhood research: International Perspective on theory and practice*. Australia: Allen & Unwin.

Madondo, S. (2014). *Nurturing learners' flair for written communication. A Teacher's Self-Study*. Unpublished Master's thesis, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban.

Magubane, S. (2014). *Cultivating intrinsic motivation for learning technology: A teachers' self-study*. Unpublished Master's thesis. University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban.

Mahoso, T., & Finestone, M. (2023). Teachers' perceptions on teaching comprehensive sexuality education in early grades in Chipinge, Zimbabwe. *Journal of Education (University of KwaZulu-Natal)*, (91), 52-69.

Manigo, L., Lee, J., Liu, C. H., Trinh, N. H., Sharif, I., & Vittengl, J. R. (2020). *Social media, body image, and sexual behavior among adolescents: A systematic review*. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 49(2), 391-414.

Maree, K. (Ed). (2007) *The first steps in research*. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.

Masinga, L. (2012). Journeys to self-knowledge: Methodological reflections on using memory-work in a participatory study of teachers as sexuality educator. *Journal of Education*, 54, 121 - 137

McNiff, J. (2007). Action research for cultural renewal. Paper presented at the Conference. Challenges and opportunities within practitioner research. Retrieved 23 January 2021, from <http://www.jeanmcniff.com/items.asp?id=21>

Merriam, S. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education*. San Francisco. Jossey-Bass

Meyers, R. (2017). A general inductive approach for analyzing qualitative evaluation data. *American Journal of Evaluation*, 27 (2), 237-246.

Mishler, E. (1990) Validation inquiry-guided research: The role of exemplars in narrative studies. *Harvard Educational Review* 60(4), 415-442.

Mitchell, C. (2011). *Doing visual research*. London, UK: Thousand Oaks: SAGE

- Mkhize, Z. & Muthuki, J. 2019a. Zulu names and their impact on gender identity construction of adults raised in polygynous families in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. *Nomina Africana*, 33, 87-98.
- Mugumbate, J., & Chereni, A. (2019). Using African Ubuntu Theory in Social Work with Children in Zimbabwe. *African Journals of Social Work*, 9, 27-34.
- Mugumbate, J. & Nyanguru, A. 2013. Exploring African Philosophy: The value of Ubuntu in social work. *African Journal of Social Work*, 3 (1), 82-100.
- Munyai, H. S., Makhado, L., Ramathuba, D. U. & Lebese, R. T. (2023). Challenges regarding sexual health communication with secondary school learners in Limpopo Province: Parents views. *Curationis*, 46, e1-e9.
- Mvune, N., D. Bhana, and E. Mayeza. (2018). "Umhlalaphansi and Inkwari: Teenage Men's Accounts on Becoming Fathers." *Culture, Health & Sexuality*. doi:10.1080/13691058.2018.1459843
- Nelson, T.H., Slavitt, D., Perkins, M., Hathorn, T. (2008). A culture of collaborative inquiry: Learning to develop and support professional learning communities. *Teachers College Record*, 110 (6), 1269-1303.
- Neuman, L. W. (2000) *Social Research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches* (4th Ed.) USA: Allyn and Bacon.
- Ngwena, C. (2003). *AIDS in schools: a human rights perspective on parameters for sexuality education*. *Acta Academica*, 35(2): 184-204.
- Nieuwenhuis, J. (2010). Analysing qualitative data. In K. Maree (Ed.), *First Steps in Research* (pp. 98-122). Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers
- Oxford Reference (2023) *A Dictionary of Education*. UK Oxford University Press.
- Phelps, R. (2005). The Potential of Reflective Journals in Studying Complexity 'In Action'. *Educational Action Research*. 10 (3):503-519.
- Pithouse, K. (2011). Picturing the Self. In: Theron, L., Mitchell, C., Mitchell, C., Smith, A., Smith, A., Stuart, J. (eds) *Picturing Research*. Sense Publishers
- Pithouse-Morgan, K., Deer-Standup, s. & Ndaleni, T. (2019). Stories blending, flowing out: connecting teacher professional learning, re-memembering, and storytelling. *Memory mosaics: researching teacher professional learning through artful memory-work*. 157-173
- Pithouse-Morgan, K., & Samaras, A. P. (Eds.). (2015). *Polyvocal professional learning through self-study research*. Rotterdam: Sense Publishers. Available ajjjt: <http://tinyurl.com/okaqlaq>

- Planned Parenthood Association of SA (1998). Responsible teenage sexuality: A manual for teachers, youth leaders and health professionals. In Greathead, E., Devenish, C. & Funell, G. (Eds). Pretoria: J. L. Schaik Publishers.
- Porter, A.C. & Smithson, A. L. (2001). Defining, Developing and Using Curriculum Indicators. *Consortium for Policy Research in Education*. Graduate School of Education. University of Pennsylvania.
- Prinsloo E. (2007). *Implementation of Life Orientation programmes in the new curriculum in South African schools: Perceptions of principals and Life Orientation teachers*. South African Journal of Education, 27:155.
- Pritchard, A., & Woollard, J. (2010). Psychology for the Classroom: Constructivism and Social Learning (1st ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203855171>
- Robinson, M. (2003). Teacher education policy in South Africa: The voice of the teacher educator. *Journal of Education for Teaching*, 29(1), 19-34.
- Rocheron, Y & Whyld, J. (1983). *Sex Education*. In: *Sexism in the Secondary Curriculum*. London: Harper & Row.
- Rooth, E. (2005). *An Investigation of the Status and Practice of Life Orientation in South African Schools in Two Provinces*. Cape Town, South Africa: University of the Western Cape.
- Samaras, A. P. (2011). Self-study teacher research: Improving your practice through collaborative inquiry. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- Samaras, A.P., Hicks, M.A., Berger, J.G. (2004). Self-Study Through Personal History. In: Loughran, J.J., Hamilton, M.L., LaBoskey, V.K., Russell, T. (eds) *International Handbook of Self-Study of Teaching and Teacher Education Practices*. Springer International Handbooks of Education, Vol 12. Springer, Dordrecht. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4020-6545-3_23
- Samaras, A., & Roberts, L. (2011) Flying solo: Teachers take charge of their learning through self-study research. *Learning Forward*. 32(5), 42-45.
- South African Department of Education (2003). *National Curriculum Statement Grades 10–12 Life Orientation*. Pretoria: Government Printer.
- Scott, S. & Palincsar, A. S. (2013) The Historical Roots Of Sociocultural Theory. Accessed 14 July Retrieved from- <http://www.education.com/reference/article/sociocultural-theory/>
- Shao - Wen Su (2012). The Various Concepts of Curriculum and The Factors Involved in Curricula-Making. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 3, (1) pp. 153-158.
- Shulman, L. S. (1991) Ways of seeing, ways of knowing: ways of teaching, ways of learning about teaching, *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 23 (5), 393-395,

- Skerrett, A. (2010). “There’s going to be community. There’s going to be knowledge”: Designs for learning in a standardized age. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 26, 648.
- Taber, K.S. (2017) Knowledge, beliefs and pedagogy: how the nature of science should inform the aims of science education (and not just when teaching evolution). *Cult Stud of Sci Educ* 12, 81–91
- The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS). (2014). (2014). *Adolescent girls and young women. The gap report 2014*. Accessed 25 July 2021. Retrieved from http://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media_asset/02_Adolescentgirlsandyoungwomen.pdf
- Van Deventer, K., (2009). *Perspectives of teachers to the implementation of Life Orientation in Grades R-11 in selected Western Cape schools*. South African Journal of Education, 29. pp.127-145
- Van Schalkwyk, G. J. (2010). Collage Life Story Elicitation Technique: A Representational Technique for Scaffolding Autobiographical Memories. *World Conference on Qualitative Research Special Issue*, 22 (13).TQR Publications.
- Varathaiah, B.A. (2010). *Exploring the relationship between teachers’ experiences and evolving teacher identities in post-apartheid South Africa: A narrative inquiry*. Unpublished Master’s thesis, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban.
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in Society: The Development of Higher Psychological Processes*. M. Cole, V. John-Steiner, S. Scribner, & E. Souberman (Eds.). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- West, C. and Zimmerman, D. (1987) *Doing Gender*. *Gender and Society*, 1:125-151
- Willies, J, W. (2007) *Foundations of qualitative research: Interpretative and critical approaches*. London: Sage.
- World Health Organisation (1994). *School Health Education to Prevent AIDS and STD*. Accessed 12 July 2020. Retrieved from https://applications.emro.who.int/aiecf/WHO_GPA_TCO_PRV_94_6c_en.pdf
- World Health Organisation (2013). *Adolescent Pregnancy*. Accessed 14 February 2020. Retrieved from <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/adolescent-pregnancy>
- Yanow, D., & Schwartz-Shea, P. (2011). *Interpretive Approaches to Research Design: Concepts and Processes*. Netherlands: Routledge.
- Zeichner, K. (1999). The new scholarship in teacher education. *Educational Researcher*, 28, 4-15

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Ethical Clearance



15 February 2021

Mr Emmanuel Phumlani Nkwanyana (218077809)
School Of Education
Edgewood Campus

Dear Mr Nkwanyana,

Protocol reference number: HSSREC/00002406/2021

Project title: Discoveries and possibilities for teaching sexuality education in the Further Education Training phase:
A personal history self-study.

Degree: Masters

Approval Notification – Expedited Application

This letter serves to notify you that your application received on 20 January 2021 in connection with the above, was reviewed by the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (HSSREC) and the protocol has been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

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

This approval is valid until 15 February 2022.

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

All research conducted during the COVID-19 period must adhere to the national and UKZN guidelines.

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

Yours sincerely,



Professor Dipane Hialele (Chair)

/dd

Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

Postal Address: Private Bag 854001, Durban, 4000, South Africa

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

Founding Campuses: Edgewood Howland College Medical School Pietermaritzburg Westville

INSPIRING GREATNESS

Appendix B: Informed Consent

UKZN HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (HSSREC)

INFORMED CONSENT

Informed Consent to Participate in Research

Date:

My name is Emmanuel Phumlani Nkwanyana, from the Department of Curriculum Studies, ,
University of KwaZulu-Natal. Cell number [REDACTED] e-mail epzikode@gmail.com

You are being invited to consider participating in a study that involves research where I study discoveries and opportunities of teaching sexuality education. The aim and purpose of this research is to understand what I can learn from my personal history of how I learnt sexuality education. It is also to understand what I can learn from experiences that can improve my teaching practice. The study is expected to involve five participants in total. It will involve the following procedures, discussions, reflective journals, memory drawings, and audio recordings. The duration of your participation, if you choose to participate in this study, is expected to be Three Months. There are no known physical, economic, social or psychological risks associated with participation in this research study. There are no monetary benefits offered for your participation, however you will have the opportunity to reflect on your own involvement in sharing information required by this study. This study has been ethically reviewed and approved by the UKZN Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (approval number_____). In the event of any problems or concerns/questions you may contact the researcher at ([REDACTED]) or the UKZN Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee, contact details as follows:

HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION

Research Office, Westville Campus
Govan Mbeki Building
Private Bag X 54001
Durban
4000
KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA
Tel: 27 31 2604557- Fax: 27 31 2604609
Email: HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za

Participation in this research is voluntary and you may withdraw your participation at any point. In the event of refusal/withdrawal of participation you will not incur penalty or loss of treatment or other benefit to which they are normally entitled.

The information gathered from this will be kept as confidential as possible. The participants' real name or any identifiable information will not be used in the reports and all files, but information will be used for academic research reports

DECLARATION

CONSENT

I..... (Full Name of participant) have been informed about the study entitled *Discoveries and possibilities for teaching sexuality education in the Further Education Training phase: A personal history self-study* by Emmanuel Phumlani Nkwanyana.

I understand the purpose and procedures of the study (add these again if appropriate).

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

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

I have been informed about any available compensation or medical treatment if injury occurs to me as a result of study-related procedures.

If I have any further questions/concerns or queries related to the study I understand that I may contact the researcher at (██████████).

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

HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION

Research Office, Westville Campus

Govan Mbeki Building

Private Bag X 54001

Durban

4000

KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA

Tel: 27 31 2604557 - Fax: 27 31 2604609

Email: HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za

I hereby provide consent to:

Audio-record my interview / focus group discussion YES / NO

Video-record my interview / focus group discussion YES / NO

Use of my photographs for research purposes YES / NO

Signature of Participant

Date

Signature of Witness
(Where applicable)

Date

Signature of Translator
(Where applicable)

Date

Appendix C: Letter to Critical Friends

03 Midgreen Close
Phoenix
4068

Tel: 031 8333 000
Cell: [REDACTED]
Email: epzikode@gmail.com
23 August 2021

Dear Critical friend

REQUEST FOR CONSENT TO USE FINDINGS FROM DISCUSSIONS IN CRITICAL FRIENDS' MEETING.

Discoveries and possibilities for teaching sexuality education in the Further Education Training phase: A personal history self-study.

The purpose of this study is to explore how I can learn from my lived experiences the discoveries and possibilities for teaching sexuality education in the Further Education Training phase. I reflect on my experiences since my primary school years, high school, and tertiary and as a post level one teacher. These memory journey experiences are very important for this study as they contribute in the data production process for this study. My data generation methods include reflective journal writing, my memory drawings and artifact retrieval of photographs.

By observing and re-examining my lived experiences I will explore how I can use this information and understanding to improve my teaching of sexuality education.

This study is supervised by Dr Lungile Masinga who is a Senior lecturer at the school of Education, UKZN. Dr Masinga can be contacted telephonically at 031 260 3439.

I hereby request permission from you to refer to our discussions in my study. I will only use this data if I receive written consent from you. If I receive consent, I will use this data in a way that respects your dignity and privacy. My notes on your input to the study will be securely stored and disposed of if no longer required for research purposes. Your name or information that might identify you will not be used in any presentation or publication that might come out of the study.

There are no direct benefits to you from this study. However, I hope that this study will make a significant contribution to research on teacher development.

I also wish to notify you that you have no binding commitment to the study and may withdraw your consent at any time if you feel the need to. If you withdraw your consent, you will not be prejudiced in any way.

If you have any questions relating to the rights of research participants, you can contact the University of KwaZulu-Natal Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics office.

Thank you for your assistance.

Yours sincerely

Emmanuel Phumlani Nkwanyana

INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT FOR PARTICIPANTS

TITLE OF THE STUDY: Discoveries and possibilities for teaching sexuality education in the Further Education Training phase: A personal history self-study.

I, -----

Hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of this study, and do consent to participate in the study.

I understand that I am free to leave/withdraw from the study at any time if I want to without any negative or undesirable consequences to myself.

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

	YES	NO
Critical friend's discussions		

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

	YES	NO
Audio recording		

.....

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT

DATE

Appendix D: Turnitin Report

Masters Thesis

by Phumlani Nkwanyana

ORIGINALITY REPORT

5%

%

5%

%

SIMILARITY INDEX

INTERNET SOURCES

PUBLICATIONS

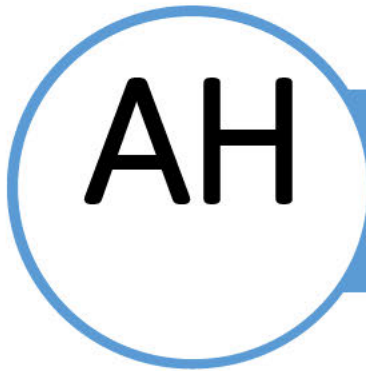
STUDENT PAPERS

Submission date: 24-Sep-2023 02:05AM (UTC+0200)

File name: Phumlani_Thesis.docx (5.25M)

Word count: 29074

Character count: 144688



Editing Certificate

Dr Anita Hiralaal

BA, HDE, B ED HONS, B COMM HONS, M ED, PH D,

CERTIFICATE IN COPY-EDITING AND

PROOFREADING (UCT), SOUTH AFRICAN

WRITER'S COLLEGE

17 Fairfield Avenue

Scottsville

Pietermaritzburg

Telephone: 0333864913


anitah0106@gmail.com



Guild of Copywriters



To: Emmanuel Phumlani Nkwanyana

25/09/2023

EDITING OF MASTERS THESIS

**DISCOVERIES AND POSSIBILITIES FOR TEACHING
SEXUALITY EDUCATION IN THE FURTHER
EDUCATION AND TRAINING PHASE: A PERSONAL
HISTORY SELF-STUDY**



THIS THESIS HAS BEEN EDITED TO ENSURE TECHNICALLY
ACCURATE AND CONTEXTUALLY APPROPRIATE USE OF
LANGUAGE, GRAMMAR, LOGICAL COHERENCY AND FORMATTED
PRESENTATI