Student Teachers Experiences of Teachers' Professional Identity within the context of Curriculum Change in a University in KwaZulu-Natal.

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SUPERVISOR'S STATEMENT

This dissertation has been submitted with my approval.

_____

Doctor Simon Bheki Khoza

November 2013

DECLARATION

I, **Kehdinga George Fomunyam**, do declare that this dissertation is original and it is mine and it has never been submitted in another institution for degree purposes or any purpose whatsoever. I have also acknowledged and clearly reference every source or borrowed idea engaged in this dissertation accordingly.

Kehdinga George Fomunyam _____

Student number (212558999) **sign**

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to the one and only King of my heart **Jesus Christ** who is my wisdom and who guided me every step of the way and empowered me to write it till the end. His indescribable and ever increasing love for me is the reason I am alive today.

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ABSTRACT

This study is an exploration of student teachers experiences of teachers' professional identity within the context of curriculum change in a University in KwaZulu-Natal. Exploring the experiences that student teachers have of teachers' professional identity gives the researcher an understanding of what it means to be a teacher, thereby giving teacher educators and stakeholders the understanding of what needs to be restructured in teacher education programs and the kind of challenges student teachers are facing. The study intended to answer the following questions; what experiences do student teachers have of teachers' professional identity within the context of changing curriculum? And how can these experiences shape or not shape their professional development as teachers of tomorrow?

In answering this question, the researcher used case study research which was situated within the qualitative framework and enshrined in the interpretive paradigm. Four student teachers were selected using non-probability purposive sampling were interviewed and two journal articles were analysed, also to generate data. The data generated from the interviews was analysed using the social constructionism theory as the theoretical framework.

The data generated indicated that experiencing teachers professional identity was all about four main themes; the complicated demand teaching places on the student teacher, the curriculum or the sum total of what happens in schools, the relationship between content and pedagogy and finally professional development. These four main themes were further broken into eight sub themes; the single self and the multiple self, the syllabus and lesson delivery, content, pedagogy, becoming a teacher and teaching skills. All these combine to give the student teacher the place, ideas and skills he or she needs to navigate through the teaching profession.

From the findings it was clear that experiencing teachers' professional identity provides the student teacher with an arsenal with which he or she can handle the teaching profession. It also helps to foster the professional development of the student teacher.

Recommendations for a quantitative study on the topic was made and stake holders were also admonished to take into consideration the challenges student teachers go through when experiencing teachers professional identity to improve teacher education programs and finally student teachers were admonished to take control of their learning.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1Introduction

This is the introductory chapter of the study which explains the structure of the study. The research is introduced with a background to the study and then goes further to justify the reasons for undertaking this research. The last part of this chapter outlines the organization of the study.

1.2 Background to the study

In 1997 the Minister of Education announced the launch of Curriculum 2005, which marked a breakaway from the apartheid curriculum to democracy. Curriculum 2005 emphasized the integration of education and training. It attempted to rid the education system of dogmatism and outmoded teaching practices and to put in place values and attitudes for democratic nation building (Bhana, 2002). The new curriculum brings with it an almost new educational process and language and a range of new (in terms of teaching and learning practice) demands which most teachers are not familiar with. The amalgamation of school subjects into eight learning areas and the introduction of the new forms of assessment have marred the implementation of the curriculum. In the new system teachers are expected to work collaboratively with one another and also promote such amongst the learners thereby encouraging a problem-solving and project approach to the curriculum. Teachers have reported (Chisholm, 2004) that the necessary teacher training and support to assist them in their new tasks have not been adequate to produce the needed changes in the schools. There is a danger that the effect of frustrated and confused teachers will no doubt be seen eventually in our learners. Hence, according to Parker (1999) OBE and the new curriculum have redefined teacher professional identity in the classroom. Singh (2001) agrees with this as he postulates that the large amount or number of policy ideas seeking to be implemented in South Africa is by and large conflicting with teachers' beliefs and as such brings controversy into the teaching and learning process. Cross and Teruvinga (2012) opine that every new minister of education in South Africa has brought a new curriculum: Curriculum 2005, National Curriculum Statements (NCS), Revised National Curriculum Statements (RNCS) and Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS). These changes also mean change

in the professional identity of teachers thereby creating multiple identities as the curriculum changes. This study therefore investigates the student teachers experiences of teachers' professional identity within the context of the changing curriculum.

Curriculum2005 required that teachers should construct their own curriculum, manage learning in their classes and be learning mediators within the context of a framework which was unfamiliar, perhaps even unrecognizable. Cross and Teruvinga (2012) also articulated that Curriculum 2005 posited the notion of the 'disappearing' teacher or particular construction of 'the teacher'. He adds that in an OBE classroom, the teacher disappeared into a facilitative background role while the learners emerged as the initiators and creators of learning. Most educational reforms in South Africa are based on a particular perception of teachers. Policymakers generally assume that teachers are somewhere between workers and professionals. On the one hand, educational policymakers may regard teachers as closely supervised workers, bound to implement the prescribed curriculum (Popkewitz, 1987). On the other hand, policymakers may assume teachers have considerable autonomy, the notion of teachers as 'agents of transformation' (Davidoff & van der Berg, 1991). The majority of teachers in South Africa may or do not fit these assumed personalities. According to Seetal (2005) research in South Africa focusing on the teacher as an agent of teaching and learning is under-explored. Educational research has neglected to focus on how student teachers have to struggle with the new roles when experiencing teachers' professional identity within a changing South African curriculum.

1.3 Rationale of the study

This study aims at investigating the student teacher's experiences of teachers' professional identity within the context of changing curriculum at a university in Kwa-Zulu Natal. The teaching and learning process is a very complex one to both teachers and students at large. With every child having the right to basic education, the teachers must do all they can to pull through this complex process and endeavour that his or her learners get what they need as required by the curriculum (Pridmore, 2007). As Cross and Teruvinga (2012) puts it every new minister of education in South Africa has brought a new curriculum. These changes also mean change in the professional identity of teachers as meaning makers of the curriculum. De Clercq (1997) argues that most of these new policy proposals were actually borrowed from the international comparative experience and from the various policy literatures, which were

then interwoven in the local South African context to address issues of equity and redress. As such combining the global with the local creates a complex form of professional identity for teachers who are expected to implement these curriculums. Therefore policy makers and stake holders need to take cognisance of the effects of educational policy change on teachers' notion of their developing professional identity within the context of curriculum change. The student teachers who are the teachers of tomorrow are therefore trained in the context of whatever curriculum is in use. But the constant change of the curriculum means that the student teachers experiences of teacher' professional identity keep changing.

According to Feiman-Nemser (2000) becoming a teacher entails a development from student teacher to the teaching profession and this development results in the shift in task orientation and an epistemological move from learning to teach in teacher education programs to practically teaching in the classroom and fully engaging with the teaching and learning process. He adds that developing into a teacher also involves the construction of an identity and a professional approach. It is therefore important for student teachers experiences of teachers' professional identity to be explored and the findings used to aid their professional development.

According to Schwab (2012), South Africa's education system was graded 140th out of 144 countries that were graded. For there to be improvement, student teachers experiences of what it means to be a teacher needs to be investigated and necessary guidance provided such that when they become teachers they will be able to deal with the hurdles or challenges that come with it. Martinez (1994) postulated that teacher educators, policy makers, teachers, researchers, and beginning teachers themselves, all agree that teaching is a difficult and hectic task therefore those joining the profession initially need special support. He adds that due to the diverse shortcomings of teacher education programs, novice teachers face many challenges and resolving the challenges of novice teachers is often the question begging to be answered. The complex nature of teaching and the classroom where learning takes place and because teachers are more often than not under-equipped to face or resolve the various challenges and frustrations in the school, their confidence gradually dissipates especially since they are thrown into the proverbial deep end and encouraged to swim or sink (Danielson, 1999). Matters (2002) views assisting student teachers as the foundation for excellence in teaching and learning, and recognises that learning outcomes formulated as a result of experiences gained by mentors and those they are mentoring have often been

sidelined in schools. To be able to face such challenges and utilise the support provided, student teachers experiences of teachers' professional identity need to be explored and the results used to enhance their professional development. As such this study investigates student teachers experiences of teachers' professional identity within the context of changing curriculum.

Recent studies (Akkerman & Meijer, 2010; Soudien, 2001; Flores & Day, 2005; Carrim, 2001; Mattson & Harley, 2001; Cohen, 2009; Samuel, 2001; Chong, Ling & Chuan, 2011) at a more generic level attempt to 'get inside the minds' of teachers to understand how teachers develop conceptions of themselves (identity) and how they understand their actions, duties and responsibilities (roles). However, little or no research exists in South Africa on how student teachers experience or understand teacher professional identity as the curriculum changes. Hence, the present study provides an alternative vantage point from which to view teachers' professional identity. Teachers' professional identity in South Africa is problematic to a large degree because it is embedded within experiences accumulated from the days of apartheid to democracy. This study is quite significant and needs to be carried out because it may inform stakeholders, policy makers, teacher educators, teachers and all those who participate in the development of student teachers, of the experiences student teachers have of teachers' professional identity within the changing curriculum and may also serve as a springboard for the improvement of teacher education since it is the role of the teacher educators and teachers to guide, encourage and help develop student teachers by ensuring that they are prepared for their future profession.

1.4 Research question

The study intends to investigate student teachers experiences of teachers' professional identity within the context of changing curriculum. It will achieve this by examining the following key questions:

1. What experiences do student teachers have of teachers' professional identity within the context of a changing curriculum?
2. How can these experiences shape or not shape their professional development as teachers of tomorrow?

1.5Definition of key concepts

This part of the chapter delineates concepts and terms which have been used in the study. Some if not all of these concepts have been employed differently in other situations; this section provides their relevant usage in this study. The following concepts have been selected by the researcher as key to the study: teacher, student teacher, teachers' professional identity, curriculum and curriculum change.

Teacher

A teacher is a person who provides information and facilitates learning for students or learners(Nhlapo, 2012). The term is a universal term for educator, lecturer, and teacher educator. A teacher in South African schools is described as an educator and is a filter through which the curriculum mandate passes (Jansen, 1998). Amongst teachers there are the qualified and the unqualified ones (Johnson, 1970). Qualified teachers are those who possess a teachers' certificate and are certified by the state. Highly qualified teachers have a minimum of a bachelor's degree, and have passed or possess basic teaching skills and subject area tests (Selwyn, 2007). Morrow (2007) describes qualified teachers as professional teachers and argues that these are teachers with educated competences and abiding commitment to engage successfully in teaching. In this study 'teacher' refers to a person who is in charge of educating and guiding learners in schools. They are those people officially responsible for the design and delivery of the formal instructional programme required of learners seeking certification for elementary or secondary school teaching (Richardson, 2001).

Student Teacher

A student teacher is a part-time or full-time learner who is undergoing training in a teacher training institution with the aim of obtaining a teachers' certificate(Nhlapo, 2012). Another definition of a student teacher is that a student teacher is a teacher trainee engaged in teaching practice in schools aiming to become a qualified teacher (Mugabo, 2006).

Teachers Professional Identity

Teachers' professional identity refers to a set of meanings that an actor attributes to his or her self while taking the perspective of others (Wendt, 1994). He adds that teachers' professional identity is a cognitive schema that enables an actor to determine who he or she is in certain

situations and positions his or herself in a social role of shared understandings and expectations. Also Yilmaz (2011) defined teachers' professional identity as an on-going process of interpretation and re-interpretation of experiences of self. In this study teachers' professional identity will be defined as teacher's sense of self or what it means to be a teacher (Stenberg, 2010).

Curriculum

Smith (1996) defines Curriculum as a statement of what students should know, be able to do, how it's taught, measured, and how the educational system is organized. While Marsh and Willis (2003) on their part provide alternative definitions by seeing curriculum as such "permanent" subjects like grammar, reading, logic, rhetoric, mathematics, and the greatest books of the Western world that best embody essential knowledge and as all the experiences that learners have in the course of living or schooling. Lunenburg (2011) describes the curriculum as a plan for instruction, specific to a particular school or student population. He adds that others advocate a wider conception of curriculum that is a non-technical and more philosophical, social, and personal in approach. In this study, the curriculum will be defined as the totality of all learning experiences provided to the learners so that they can attain general skills and knowledge at a variety of learning sites (Marsh, 2009).

Curriculum Change

UNESCO (2012) defines curriculum change as a dynamic process aimed at ensuring the relevance of learning. In this study curriculum change is defined as the process of developing the knowledge, skills and attitudes of individuals and groups engaged in curriculum reform and empowering them in such areas as policy formulation, curriculum design, subject content, textbook development and evaluation, piloting and innovation, implementation and curriculum monitoring and evaluation (UNESCO, 2012).

1.6 Outline of the study

This study is divided into six chapters. The first chapter is an introduction which describes the background information that informed the study. These include the introduction of the 'magnificent' set of education policies (Morrow, 2007) and its necessitating a complex professional identity for teachers. The chapter also introduces key terminologies used in the

whole study so that readers are acquainted with them. This is aimed at making reading easier and enjoyable for readers and to enhance understanding throughout the chapters.

The second chapter is a review of literature related to teachers' professional identity. Among other issues, this chapter identifies theories and factors contributing to the professional development of student teachers. The third chapter discusses the theoretical underpinnings of the study and also the research paradigm employed by the researcher. The fourth chapter describes methodologies employed in producing data for the study. As the study is qualitative, the approaches, styles, and methods used to generate data relate to the in-depth information finding procedures.

The fifth chapter will present and analyse data using different themes as obtained from student teachers' interviews. The sixth and last chapter concludes the research by looking at insights from findings and making recommendations. The next chapter, chapter 2, presents a review of literature.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This section of the study provides a discussion of what other researchers have said about student teachers experiencing teachers' professional identity within the context of changing curriculum. It provides the findings of such studies and also seeks out the lapses in the body of knowledge which led to the undertaking of this research. This discussion or review of literature will be done through the lens of the following themes; defining teachers professional identity, the nature of teachers professional identity, determinants of teachers professional identity, teacher education and teacher professional identity, student teachers and teachers professional identity.

2.2 Defining Teachers Professional Identity

Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) maintain that there is always a struggle to understand the link between identity and the self, the role of emotions and reflection in shaping identity, the power of stories and discourses in understanding identity, the link between identity and agency, the contextual factors that promote or hinder the construction of identity, and ultimately the responsibility of teacher education to create avenues for the exploration of new and developing teacher professional identity. In line with this, Janet (2004) asserts that teachers' professional identity is a set of characteristics that are imposed or brought upon the teaching profession either by outsiders or members of the teaching profession itself. It provides a shared set of elements and values which enables the differentiation of one group from another. From this perspective therefore teachers' professional identity is exclusive not inclusive, and it is conservative not radical in its intent.

Day (2007) postulates that teachers' professional identity is all about being an accountable and responsible teacher who exhibits compliance to externally imposed policy imperatives with consistently high quality teaching, which is measured by externally set performance indicators. This means that teachers' professional identity according to Day (2007) is all about being competent and producing results that are universally accepted. She adds that in this identity, teachers will be firmly concerned with creating and putting into place standards

and processes which give students democratic experiences. In this light, Yamin-Ali and Pooma (2012) opine that teachers' professional identity is basically about knowing oneself as a professional, setting standards of professionalism and performing one's duties using the same guiding principles. As such teachers' professional identity deals with the teacher's discharge of his or her duties and his or her perceptions of self.

Beijaard, Meijer, and Verloop (2004) see teachers' professional identity as a complex and dynamic equilibrium where professional self-image is scaled with a variety of roles teachers feel that they have to play, while Timostsuk and Ugaste (2010) see teachers professional identity as a continues process of interpretation and re-interpretation of experiences which is a notion that corresponds with the idea that teachers professional development never stops and can best be seen as a process of lifelong learning. As such each teacher negotiates his own individual identity in the course of teaching and renegotiates it as the teaching process continues. Ruohotie-Lyhty (2013) asserts that teachers' professional identity implies both person and context. This is not entirely unique as a teacher's professional identity is made up of diverse identities that more or less harmonize. The idea of diverse identities relates to teachers' different contexts and relationships, some of which may be broadly linked and can be seen as the core of teachers' professional identity, while others may be more peripheral. Teachers' professional identity can also be seen as an organizing characteristics in teachers' professional lives, or as a resource that teachers use to explain, justify and make sense of themselves in relation to others, and the world at large (Beauchamp & Thomas 2009).

Stenberg (2010) asserts that teacher professional identity can be considered a fruitful path for understanding the teaching and learning process and how and why teachers make decisions in their practice. This means that teachers cannot have a successful teaching career without a professional identity. Since identity is a path to follow, teachers need to follow it for the rest of their life. She continues that teachers' professional identity can also be viewed as a powerful factor in teacher commitment, satisfaction and motivation for continuing in the changing educational, political and social environments at work. Hollin (2011) on her part argues that teachers' professional identity can be referred to as a dynamic and changeable relation or relationship spanning over their entire life situation, including the negotiation and renegotiation of personally and socially designed imperatives within the educational system. As such identity is negotiated by the teacher and certain factors determine the direction of the negotiation. Furthermore she also defines teacher professional identity as an ongoing process

of integrating educational knowledge, experience and practices within the concept of self. This identity therefore is not static but keeps changing as the content of educational knowledge keeps changing due to changes in curriculum.

Cattley (2007)also agrees with this as she postulates that teachers' professional identity can be defined as the fostering of self-descriptions but which is guided and confirmed by the social, cultural and educational norms within his or her context. This idea of a socially constructed identity is what particularly gives the teacher a sense of belonging and value, since the context within which professional identity emerges, changes from one teaching and learning environment to another. Teachers' professional identity can therefore be seen as a complex and dynamic concept, which requires an ongoing creative process and also engulfs frequent examination and negotiation on the part of all teachers in the context of professional development (Hollin, 2011). Concurringly, Lamote and Engels (2010) opine that the teaching profession is an occupation where who an individual is as a person is deeply interwoven with how one acts as a professional, and both sides cannot be separated.

It is therefore clear that teachers' professional identity differ from one person to another and also from one context to another. It isn't a unique identity stated for all teachers: rather it is cultivated by individuals depending on their context and the curriculum policy in place at the time. With this knowledge of what teachers professional identity is, it is necessary to look at the nature of teachers' professional identity.

2.3 The Nature of Teachers Professional Identity

Teachers' professional identity is central to a teacher's belief system that guides his actions and practices in and outside the school environment. Sutherland, Howard, and Markauskaite (2010) assert that teachers' professional identity can be considered one facet of a multiple belonging to an individual which comes as a result of his position within the society and his understanding of self. To this effect, teachers' professional identity is constructed by individuals under the influence of society. Geijsel and Meijers (2005) articulated that teachers' professional identity is a continuous learning process, in which each professional experience is reflected upon against a background of mutual interaction of emotions and knowledge. And such experiences can be both a deeply individualistic one and or that which is experienced with colleagues or peers. We can therefore see the nature of teacher

professional identity as a continuous learning and evolving process where not only behavior, but also the creation and recreation of related meaning and social context in a wider perspective is the focus (Rodgers & Scott, 2008).

Akkerman and Meijer (2011) also agree that teachers' professional identity is multiple, discontinuing and social in nature; therefore this identity is shifting in nature. As such teachers' professional identity changes with time, place and circumstances like change in curriculum. Burns and Bell (2011) adding to this, postulate that teachers' professional identity is constructed and reconstructed in time and space. Since the relevance of every curriculum being determined by time, the teacher identity is therefore shaped by the curriculum which itself is shaped by space, time and relevance. Seetal (2006) theorizes that teachers' professional identity is always in a state of flux and a fleeting multiplicity of opportunities. The teacher is considered the constructor and his or her identity constructed in ongoing effects in response to the changing curriculum. She continues that teachers can and do experience educational change as a field to denaturalize or recreate themselves and embrace new pleasurable and fulfilling ways of seeing themselves. The nature and development of teachers' professional identity and the discourses surrounding it, is determined by continuing power structured relations and the inability to fix teachers' professional identity in a specific category, leaving it in an open category (Pillay, 2003).

Rodgers and Scott (2008) articulated that the nature of teachers' professional identity is characterized by four factors: professional identity is influenced by context, change, formed in relations or relationships, and involves meaning making. The context in this case being the teachers immediate surroundings and the policy documents in place at the time. What teachers think of themselves and how they work is a direct result of their environment. Once the environment changes the identity of the teacher also changes.

The nature of teachers' professional identity is also characterized by the relationships the teacher is involved in whether willingly or unwillingly. The relationships in the classroom between the teachers and the students involves more than just participants in the teaching and learning process but it is a complex process of meaning making for both the teacher and the students (Rodgers & Scott 2008). The issue of emotions nurtured by the complex relationships between teacher, students, colleagues, mentor, school, community and state is increasingly being examined as a critical aspect of teacher professional identity (Timostsuk

&Ugaste, 2010). The relationship with the professional community of teachers also influences their understanding of complex practice, and the understanding of self. Shoulders and Myers (2011) concurred with this as they opined that teacher' professional identity affects teachers' interpretation and reaction to information throughout their experiences, as well as when in professional development throughout their teaching careers. Individual and social factors can and do contribute to one's professional identity, and each of these aspects is a fluid entity that undergoes transformation based on the other. The role of individuals in the social spaces varies throughout their lives and it is a determining factor in whether they adopt or reject the ideas of that particular society (Shoulders & Myers, 2011). These agreed or accepted social realities and social contexts are supported to a greater or lesser extent by the individuals who believe in them. As such, they are vital to the nature of teachers' professional identity, since they constitute important constituents of how teachers see themselves and the groups or professional community to which they belong (Shoulders & Myers, 2011). Therefore the way a teacher sees himself in conjunction with the professional community where he or she belongs determines the nature of his professional identity.

Shoulders and Myers (2011) therefore advocate that professional identity is partially the product of one's social relationships. However, social expectations concerning a group or professional community originating from people outside that group also influence teachers' professional identity (Beijaard et al., 2004). Teachers' professional and personal experiences and the importance teachers attach to their responsibilities and the widely accepted societal views about a teacher's responsibilities are greatly influential in the nature of teachers' professional identity. As such teachers' professional identity is not fix but rather changes as the teacher's experiences, responsibilities and views changes.

Teachers' professional identity according to Rodgers and Scott (2008) is also characterized by change. Change of environment and change in policy documents characterizes the nature of the professional identity of teachers. Change brings about revolutions not only in thoughts but also in the understanding of self, causing teachers to create and recreate versions of themselves or diverse identities for themselves. Furthermore, teachers' professional identity is also characterized by meaning making. Identity is created by making meaning of self and surrounding, and by understanding what others think of you and your perceptions of yourself. What you think of yourself and what others think of you changes as the circumstances change. As such the nature of teachers' professional identity is a function of meaning making.

Shoulders and Myers (2011) agree with this as they argue that teachers' professional identity deals with how teachers look at themselves personally or individually and as part of a larger professional unit. And this is rooted in constructivist views of education which sees knowledge as something only obtained through experience that occurs both individually and socially, resulting in unique and personal knowledge for teachers (Shoulders & Myers, 2011). They add that because knowledge is not known on its own except through experience, it can and is constructed through one's subjective reality, and these results in the acquisition of separate knowledge based on individual experiences in or within the social space. This throws more light on the nature of teachers' identity since identity is constructing meaning or giving meaning to self, from experiences arrived at from contact with the social sphere and the ideas surrounding it.

Timostsuk and Ugaste (2010) also agree with this as they see teachers' professional identity construction as learning or making meaning out of experiences. They see learning as experiencing; that is the ability to experience another's life or sense of self and the surrounding world as meaningful. They also see teachers' professional identity development as a joint action relying on common historical and social resources, background ideas, and societal viewpoints. To them, teachers' professional identity development is also about belonging: belonging to a social community where your activities and ideas are recognized as valuable and important and again teachers' professional identity as becoming; or an understanding of how learning, within the community, affects and shapes us. However this identity is not static (Shoulders & Myers, 2011) but it is dependent on the environment in which it is located. Teachers' professional identity "can be best characterized as an ongoing process, a process of interpreting oneself as a certain kind of person and being recognized as such in a given context" (Beijaard et al., 2004, p. 108). They see the development of teachers' professional identity, as closely linked to the constructivist approach to teacher education. To them the notion that the development of teachers professional identity is an ongoing process, anchors on the interpretation and meaning making of experiences, involving both people and the society and joins sub–identities that more or less co-exist harmoniously in an individual. The fact that teachers participate in or are main actors in the development of their professional identity through active participation in experiences alters the nature of teachers' professional identity. As such no teacher is void of a professional identity and both the aspects of the identity of specific groups of teachers as well as the process of identity development influences the nature of teachers' professional identity

Sachs (2010) posits that under circumstances of change, uncertainty and continuous educational restructuring teachers' professional identity emerges from retrospective and prospective identity. The retrospective identity draws from the past and that provides the framework for the prospective identity, while the prospective identity is basically future orientated. She continues that prospective identity changes the way teachers relate and are recognized by the community. The prospective identity is influenced by teacher organizations and unions as they engage in discussions to develop their professional identity. Recently due to rapid changes, teacher professional identity cannot be considered to be fixed; rather it is negotiated, ambiguous, open, and shifting. These are the results of culturally and politically available meanings and the open-ended power laden buildings of those meanings in everyday situations.

Sachs (2010) further postulates that teachers mediate between these two identities through their experiences both in and outside schools as well as through their beliefs and values considering who a teacher is and the kind of teacher they want to be. Sachs (2010) also identifies five dimensions of teacher professional identity which are of vital importance when thinking of the teaching and learning process. They are:

1. teachers' professional identity as a negotiated experience through which a teacher defines who he or she is using the lens of their experiences obtained through participation as well as how they and others reify themselves;
2. teachers' professional identity as community identity or membership where teachers determine who they are through the familiar and the unfamiliar;
3. teachers' professional identity as a learning trajectory in which teachers make meaning of themselves from where they are coming from and where they are going to;
4. teachers' professional identity as a coalition of multiple memberships where teachers define who they are by the ways in which they reconcile the different types of identities into one identity; and

5) teachers' professional identity as a relationship between the national and the international where teachers define who they are by negotiating national ways of belonging to the wider constellations and manifestations of the broader or international styles and discourses. These five dimensions of teachers professional identity is

applicable in the creation and recreation of self or identity by the teacher as he or she navigates his or herself through professional development.

With multiple and diverse educational restructurings as the order of the day, teachers' professional identity is not straightforward. There are incongruities between the defined teacher professional identity as proposed by educational systems and unions and individual teachers themselves. Teachers' professional identity is forever recreated and negotiated. It determines their ability to speak and act separately and creates room for the delineation of themselves from those of others while continuing to be the same individuals (Sachs, 2010). Therefore it is clear that teachers possess multiple identities. For example, a secondary school teachers' professional identity might include the general category of secondary teacher (Robinson & McMillan, 2006), but this category can be further broken down into further identities by year level such as a junior and senior or high school teacher or into a subject or discipline specific teacher such as geography teacher, mathematics teacher, biology teacher and so on. These people may see themselves as belonging to the generic category of secondary teachers but also identify with their area of specialization and year level. Any idea of a fixed teacher professional identity is unproductive but it serves the gullibility and needs of the state by providing a framework for externally initiated controls. This control sets barriers of what is said about teacher professional identity and at the same time defining what must remain unsaid, making teachers professional identity to serve bureaucratic purposes (Sachs, 2010).

Pillen, Beijaard and Brok (2012) opine that researchers who have investigated the nature of teachers' professional identity seem to be of the opinion that teachers professional identity is not a stable entity, but rather it is continuously changing, dynamic, active and an ongoing process, which develops over time and is influenced by individual teacher's personal characteristics, learning background or history and prior experiences, on the one hand, and professional contexts, including significant others, knowledge, skills and attitudes that are found relevant by teacher educators, on the other (see e.g. Beauchamp and Thomas 2009; Beijaard, Meijer, and Verloop 2004; Flores and Day 2006; Hong 2010; Olsen 2010, 2011; Schepens, Aelterman, and Vlerick 2009). No agreement exists on one particular concept which shapes or constitutes the nature of teacher's professional identity. This has to do particularly with the various ways in which teachers' professional identity is being conceptualized and reconceptualized in the literature on teaching and learning and teacher

education (Pillen, Beijaard & Brok, 2012) and how it is being employed as a tool to study teachers' professional development. With regards to the conceptualization and reconceptualisation of teachers' professional identity, Pillen, Beijaard and Brok (2012), discuss three perspectives often used: a social perspective, which deals with the changing conditions in and within the teaching profession; a cognitive perspective, which addresses the underpinning processes and structures of teachers' thinking and teachers' (practical) knowledge; and a biographical perspective, which integrates and combines the social and cognitive perspectives.

Akkerman and Meijer (2011) postulating from a psychological perspective, use the theory of dialogical self to conceptualise and reconceptualise teachers' professional identity. They argue that teachers' professional identity is both unitary and multiple, both continuous and discontinuous and both individual and social. Vähäsantanen, Hökkä, Eteläpelto, Rasku-Puttonen and Littleton (2008) reasoning from a social psychological perspective, concur with this view as they argue that teachers' professional identity is the interplay between individual agency and social context, while Lasky (2005) uses a socio cultural approach to understand the structure, agency and interplay among teachers of teachers' professional identity. In order to gain insight in the way teachers acquire their professional identity, Pillen et al (2012) perceive teacher professional identity as partly given and partly taken or achieved by active location in social space. They also see teachers' professional identity formation as an interaction between the teacher's professional and personal identity.

A different kind of and often occurring perspective on the nature of teachers' professional identity is the narrative perspective. Several researchers presume that narratives, stories or talks shape or construct the nature of teachers' professional identity (e.g. Atkinson 2004; Cohen 2008; Olsen 2008). Alsup (2006) agrees with this as she sees teachers' professional identity development as a product of discourses. The work of Sutherland, Howard, and Markauskaite (2010) that focused on the importance of reflection in teachers' professional identity creation agrees with Alsup. All the above mentioned perspectives prove that the nature of teachers' professional identity is differently understood and highlights a number of different aspects (e.g. narratives, discourse, and reflection) that are considered important in the development of teachers' professional identity. In addition, different terms are also used for the concept of professional identity or as a substitute. Pillen, Beijaard and Brok (2012) liken the nature of teachers' professional identity to the concept of self, self-image, and roles

that teachers can take (Sutherland, Howard, & Markauskaite 2010) or multiple identities. While researchers have been viewing teachers' professional identity from different perspectives and putting emphasis on diverse aspects of the identity, it has and will always involve the engagement between the teacher as a professional and the teacher as a person, operating in a particular (educational) context (Day, Sammons, Stobart, Kington, & Gu. 2007). As such teachers' professional identity is a concept that covers the complexity of becoming and being a teacher which is useful as a theoretical frame work or lens to study this interaction (Olsen 2011).

Cohen (2008) postulated that there is a constant debate over the way social roles operate in the patterning of teachers' professional identity, including the level at which teacher professional identity roles are either predetermined or negotiated through social interaction. She also identifies two major views or approaches through which the nature of teachers professional identity can be viewed; a structuralist view, which argues that individuals occupy or experience roles that are constrained by pre-existing material conditions, and a symbolic interactionist (also commonly called a poststructuralist) view, which argues that teachers construct professional identity through constant evaluation, negotiation, and discovery of new roles. She continues that the symbolic interactionists assume that roles come from or emerge from or are significantly shaped by interactions in specific social settings. As such schools represent diverse analytical foci that exist in tension with each other. Furthermore she adds that this tension constitutes the heart of the deepest problem in the social disciplines: the dynamic interplay between the social, conventional, and ready-made in the professional and the individual life, creative, and emergent qualities of human experiences. Sachs (2005) acknowledges the contested nature of teachers' professional identity. The idea that there might be one, fixed teacher professional identity is therefore considered unproductive as she views this identity as a reflexive process which is unstable and fragile in nature. She equates identity to a kind of self-narrative or the individual's biography. In a similar way, Alsup (2006) argues that the teacher's creation of a professional identity is as a result of the amalgamation of, and conflict with various subject positions and ideologies. As such emotions inevitably play a role in such a construction and are often fore-grounded in discussions about teacher professional identity.

Boreham and Gray (2006) postulate that teachers' professional identity is only constructed within the workplace or school environments and is only represented, and not reproduced, in

the educational situations which precede it. They continue that it is difficult and almost impossible to distance teachers' professional identity from the wider contexts of life-course, social arena, and individual difference or self-concept, but this identity amounts to more than the sum of competences or expert task performances. The teachers' professional identity is therefore constructed within worlds of purposeful and meaningful activities (Boreham & Gray 2006) and it involves self-interpretation of ability by the teachers involved, and leads to the production of value systems which are anchored in the past and geared towards the future. O'Connor (2008) opines that to understand the complex and dichotomous natures of teachers' professional identity, researchers need an understanding of how teachers deal with and respond to professional situations in different school contexts. She sees teachers' professional identity as being recognized as a being or entity in a given context. The nature of teachers' professional identity has reflective and active dimensions, engulfing both a teacher's professional philosophy and his public actions. Boreham and Gray (2006) concur with this as they argue that the nature of teachers' professional identity is determined by professional development activities, interactions between teachers and environment and levels of job satisfaction making it a very complex and crucial issue. O'Connor (2008) continues that individual reflections and social communication with others is essential for the development of teachers' professional identity, and this is seen as the ways through which each teacher negotiates and reflects on the social and environmental aspects of their role as teachers. Boreham and Gray (2006) model the nature of teachers' professional identity on its embeddedness in social contexts by suggesting six major dimensions of the nature of teachers professional identity which are; multiple selfhood, collectivity, communicative action, recognition, professional expertise and spatial possession.

Boreham and Gray (2006) conclude that the nature of teachers professional identity is a matter of where, within the specific professional arrays of possibilities a particular teacher is located. As such teachers must distinguish between the various locations they are each given and that which they achieve or take themselves to, because part of their identity is born with them, some is achieved, and another part is thrust upon them. They also describe four traditions through which teachers can draw possibilities for professional identity formation and practice. These are the craft, the moral, the artistic and the scientific traditions. The craft tradition legitimises the competence-based approach above all thereby failing to capture the essence of teaching.The moral dimension deals with the ability to make accurate judgments about the relative value of instructions and practices as a teacher. The artistic tradition

transcends making judgments to record teachers' aesthetic responses and emotional engagement with their teaching. And the scientific tradition calls upon the teachers to anchor and incorporate research in his or her practice. Teachers' professional identity has both content and structure, and these two are developed at the junction between public and private conceptions or expectations of the role. Teachers therefore are required to function in this increasingly complex and changing roles and environment. In this light the changing and subjective conception of an individual's sense of self is more essential to his professional identity than the persistent self and objective idea (Boreham & Gray 2006).

2.4 Determinants of Teachers Professional Identity

From the nature of teachers' professional identity it is clear that teachers' professional identity isn't stable but constantly in a state of flux. As such there are certain factors which determine when it should change and what direction it should take next. Some of these factors are; curriculum change, relation and experiences.

2.4.1 Curriculum Change

Curriculum change is one of the major determinants of teachers' professional identity (Seetal, 2006). Once the curriculum changes in any educational environment, the way in which teachers see themselves also changes. For example Cross and Teruvinga (2012) opined that Curriculum 2005 posited the notion of the 'disappearing' teacher as learners emerged as the initiators and creators of learning. The teacher ceases from being the all-knowing teacher as in the days of apartheid and became a facilitator in the teaching and learning process. They continue that Curriculum 2005 was laid aside in favour of the National Curriculum Statements (NCS) and later as a result of its failures and challenges the Revised Nation Curriculum Statements (RNCS) was formulated (Cross & Teruvinga, 2012), and presently the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS). This constant change of the curriculum and the curriculum policy document has led to a constant change in the professional identity of teachers, what they represent in the classroom, and has caused diverse problems in terms of lesson delivery and professional development for teachers (Cross & Teruvinga, 2012).

Furthermore, within the context of curriculum change, teachers more often than not are constantly in a frustrating position of being simultaneously both the subject and the agent of change (Seetal, 2006). They are often obliged to change themselves, their practice and take

the necessary steps to meet specific objectives or laid down directions and principles outlined by policymakers who themselves know neither how to meet such objectives or the contexts in which the objectives are supposed to be met. At certain points in time teachers are required to make changes which they believe on the basis of their professional experience, to be unreasonable, inappropriate or impossible and this inevitably changes the way they see themselves and the very fact that they are required or expected to implement these imposed changes means that their professional identity fluctuates and their freedom and autonomy are further curtailed (Seetal, 2006). Teachers are continually required to alter their administrative and organization systems, their pedagogy, curriculum content, the resources and technology they use and their assessment procedures to meet new standards set up by the changing curriculum.

Cross and Teruvinga (2012) postulated that Curriculum 2005 brought with it an almost new professional identity for teachers and an educational discourse with a range of new demands in terms of teaching and learning, with which most teachers are unfamiliar. They add that the rearrangement of school subjects into eight learning areas and the introduction of the new forms of assessment have hampered the implementation of the curriculum and the way teachers see themselves. The merging of knowledge into learning areas means a recreation of identity for teachers and also the collapsing of the traditional boundaries and subject disciplines. This means that teachers who were used to teaching single subjects have to change their thinking, approach and what they know so as to meet the demands of the new curriculum. Seetal (2006) adds that during the apartheid era, the educational system had school subjects which enjoyed hallowed status. But in the new educational system teachers are expected to work together in teams, cooperating with one another to promote a collaborative culture of learning amongst pupils, and encourage a problem-solving mentality and a project approach to the curriculum. As such teachers' professional identity is determined by curriculum change since it dictates what direction the teaching and learning process should take. Before the introduction of curriculum 2005 teachers were loners within the educational system. Once the curriculum change was introduced, not only did what was to be taught change, but also how it was to be taught and the person of the teacher was redefined. Due to this, it was noticed that the training required to support teachers perform their duty was inadequate (Seetal, 2006) and their performance drastically dropped leading to a failure of the curriculum change and consequently the introduction of a new curriculum with a new professional identity for the teacher.

Cross and Teruvinga (2012) continued that the new curriculum redefined teacher professional identity in the classroom and the school system as a whole. The teacher or his role disappeared into a facilitative background role or a passive actor while the learners emerged as the initiators and creators of learning. The teacher faded out as such learning displaced teaching, making meaning constructing among the learners the priority of the teaching and learning process over dispensing information by teachers. Seetal (2006) agrees with this as she postulates that Curriculum 2005 and the National Curriculum Statements turned teachers into curriculum developers, classroom managers and learning mediators or facilitators in the context of a discourse which was unfamiliar, perhaps even unrecognizable to them. She adds that often educational reforms or curriculum changes are based on a particular conception or identity structure of teachers. Curriculum developers or policymakers and stake holders usually assume that teachers are somewhere between workers and professionals, where educational policymakers on the one hand may consider that teachers are closely supervised workers who are bound to implement the prescribed curriculum, while on the other hand they may assume that teachers have considerable autonomy in implementing the curriculum or the notion of teachers as agents of transformation. More often than not teachers do not fit this assumed identity. This often leads to a change in teachers' professional identity and how these teachers understand their roles and professional identity. The constant curriculum change in South Africa and all around the world has heralded an era of constant fluctuation of teachers' professional identity, and this has an effect on the performance of teachers in school since they constantly have to grapple with understanding their professional identity and the new roles attributed to them. Curriculum change consciously or unconsciously determines the professional identity of teachers and how they see or understand their roles, actions, duties and responsibilities.

Vähäsantanen, Hökkä, Eteläpelto, Rasku-Puttonen, and Littleton (2008) postulated that teaching demands the continuous negotiation and renegotiation of professional identity. This embodies the individual's perceptions of his or her self as a professional actor. It also involves their individual sense of belonging, notions of commitment, and values regarding education. As such professional identity is negotiated and renegotiated in the course of the individual's biography. With the advent of curriculum change the concept of teachers' professional identity constantly fluctuates as it dictates the roles and commitments teachers will take from then on. Teachers' professional identity takes shape as a result of the dictates

or directions of the new curriculum. Vähäsantanen, Hökkä, Eteläpelto, Rasku-Puttonen, and Littleton (2008) continue that teachers' professional identity is influenced by future prospects of the teacher's goals, aspirations, and notions of the kind of professional individual she or he desires to be, since the core of professional identity is based on those elements which give a sense of meaning and commitment to people in their work. Concurringly, Seetal (2006) postulates that teachers' professional identity is determined by curriculum change. As such all which the teacher desires to be or his prospects for the future is fine-tuned by curriculum change. The concept of teachers' professional identity has re-occurringly been related to the teacher's self-image (Eteläpelto, 2007), based on the belief that concepts or images of the self-determine the way people develop as teachers. The emphasis has often been placed on teachers' roles, or on what teachers themselves consider as important in the light of their own personal background and practical experience (Vähäsantanen, Hökkä, Eteläpelto, Rasku-Puttonen, & Littleton, 2008). Geijsel and Meijers (2005) add that teachers' professional identity also encompasses moral, emotional and political dimensions, including the teacher's values and interests. With the understanding that teachers do not operate in a vacuum but within the school milieu, governed by stake holders and the government at large, and that this this authorities determine what happens in the educational system through the curriculum therefore signifies that teachers' professional identity is determined by curriculum change.

Vähäsantanen, Hökkä, Eteläpelto, Rasku-Puttonen, and Littleton (2008) continue that teacher professional identity is constructed in the course of change processes and this is at different levels of interaction between personal and social. At the personal level it means being able to make occupational choices and changes concerning one's core work based on one's own interests and motivations and in relation to social change one is able to act in a way that corresponds to personal values and hopes. In the same light social change includes organizational conditions and cultural practices, along with situational demands, constraints and opportunities. These two dimensions constitute curriculum change. The personal and social suggestions or changes can be either weaker or stronger in degree (Billett, 2007). The relationship between the personal and the social has been looked at from different theoretical viewpoints by Billett (2006) as he distinguishes between humanist, structuralist, late modernity and post-structural approaches. The humanist tradition presumes that social change is weak, or that it is not present in teacher professional identity negotiations and renegotiations. Individuals are considered to be able to exercise autonomy in realizing their goals almost independently of social structures and educational systems. They can and do

freely express their subjectivity and negotiate their identity based on self-actualization and agency. As Seetal (2006) and Timostsuk and Ugaste (2010) have however stated, teachers subjectivity, agency and goals are determined and shaped by curriculum change. The structuralist approach assumes that teachers are subjected to social structures and pressures. As such professional identity is thought to be strongly shaped by the social context of work organizations and the self is developed fully when the individual accepts the community or the educational system's norms and values. This therefore means that there are diverse restrictions in the way agency is exercised or in keeping an individual approach towards one's profession and these restrictions exist as a result of the dictates of curriculum. To add to this, the late modernity tradition creates more space for agency, although teacher professional identity negotiations are still within the confines of social suggestion. Lastly the post-structural approach sees teachers' professional identity as presumed by or created through continues changes in relations, and in response to cultural practices and discourses. The teacher chooses, engages and negotiates with social suggestions or changes that are directed towards her or him, and his or her intention is to secure, develop and maintain his or her identity (Fenwick 2006). The teachers' choices within the school system are however guided by the curriculum in use. Teachers' professional identity is negotiated through interaction between individual agency, the professional community and curriculum (Cohen, 2008).

Educational reforms or curriculum change has been considered the greatest determinant of teachers' professional identity and it also constitutes an ideological assault on the primary nature, intent and purpose of school education (Tang, 2011). She continues that the continuous and ongoing struggle to construct a sustainable and lasting professional identity by teachers is an ongoing and dynamic process which entails the negotiating and renegotiating, making sense, interpretation and re-interpretation of one's own values and experiences and those that are thrust upon you by the educational system. Therefore, being a teacher and teaching within the school system, the teacher's personality or the way he is seen is a function of the curriculum. Since teachers' professional identity is constructed in social contexts and determined by curriculum change (Wenger 2008), such identity is temporal and more complex than a linear notion of time. Day (2002) agrees with this as he propounds that professional identity is a conglomerate of personal biography, culture, social influence and institutional demands or guides which may change according to role and dictates of the system. Tang (2011) also postulates that the historical periods of curriculum change offer different opportunities for the formation and reformation of teachers' professional identity.

She offers a detailed explanation of how curriculum change both internal and external drastically changes teachers' work and their identity and argues that the latter has resulted in widespread changes and detachment of teachers' internal and personal missions.

Goodson (2010) identifies that the continuous structuring and restructuring of the educational system has become a broad-based movement across the world in the 1990s yet building on different trajectory foundations, but also cautions on the danger of alienating core professional teaching ideals. These policy changes have drastically changed the nature of teachers' professional identity (Codd, 2005), for these changes are not simply vehicles for the smooth technical and structural functioning of the organizations but are also mechanisms for reforming teachers and for changing what it means to be a teacher or teachers' professional identity (Ball 2003). According to Ball (2003) this change in teachers' professional identity is 'the struggle over the teacher's soul' (217). Troman (2008) concurs with this as he postulates that change in teachers; professional identity leads to intensification of teachers' work, creating an audit culture which inhibits more intrinsically, educationally oriented professional development approaches, and erodes teachers' autonomy thereby challenging their individual and collective identity.

Samuel (2008) traces the trajectory of the changing roles and professional identity of teachers. He interprets the role of the teacher as that of a technician enacting the expressed goals of the authorities or stakeholders to the expectations underlying constant transformations in education policy and teachers as agents of change. As such the change determines the direction of teachers' professional identity. Teachers therefore were constructed as technicians of the state-driven agendas or curriculum change and the role of the good teacher was interpreted as one who adhered both ideologically and politically to the dictates of curriculum change (Samuel, 2008).

Pillen, Beijaard and Brok (2012) postulate that teachers' professional identity keeps evolving as teachers seek to make sense of themselves in relation to others and the society surrounding them. This is due to the fact that the society around them or the school environment and what happens in it keeps changing as a result of the change in curriculum, making curriculum change a major determinant of teachers' professional identity. The process of learning to teach and teaching itself is not only a very complex one, especially since the teaching profession is constantly changing(Olsen, 2010), but teachers also have to keep up with the

demands of institutional changes. As such teachers should be ready to constantly negotiate and renegotiate their professional identity, thereby being able to inculcate their personal subjectivities into the professional and curriculum expectations of what it means to be a teacher.

Teachers' professional identity therefore has and always will be determined principally by curriculum change. The dictates of curriculum change in all academic systems, whether partial or complete change, has an impact on what teachers are to do in class and their professional identity. Much has been said on how curriculum change affects teachers' professional identity but there is a gap as to how student teachers experience teachers' professional identity and the changes that accompany it. This research work therefore investigates this gap of how student teachers experience teachers' professional identity within the context of curriculum change.

2.4.2 Relation

Relation is another major determinant of teachers' professional identity. This is due to the fact that teachers make sense of themselves as a result of their constant interactions with other teachers, the school governing body, government and the society around them (Stenberg, 2010). She continues to say that the teacher relates to his or her learners or students (the pedagogical relation), his or her content, to students' studying and learning (the didactical relation) and to the teacher's personal work theory. The teacher's relation with his content includes the actual content of teaching or what actually transpires in the classroom. Relating to the content therefore embodies subject matter, instructions and classroom management amongst other things (Kemp, Blake, Shaw & Preston, 2009). To a larger extent it also involves the bigger content of the curriculum, the manifold settings in which teachers work and the school environment (Stenberg, 2010), as such his relation to these multiple settings aids in determining who he or she is or who he or she eventually turns out to be. The didactical relation refers to the teacher's relation to the students' relating to content or how teachers aid and support students' learning. This cannot be done by following a specific set of rules. Instead, each teacher determines his or her approach or theory to use depending on the circumstances around him, because students learn in diverse ways and at various paces. The pedagogical relation shifts the focus from teaching and learning to the communication

between the teacher and learners or students and to how the teacher aids and supports the learner or students' personal growth. The teacher also relates to his or her personal working theory which more often than not is derived from the teacher's professional and personal experiences, involving his inner values, understandings and beliefs that ultimately guide and determine his professional identity (Levin & He, 2008;Kansanen, 2009). Therefore as MacLeod and Cowieson (2001) postulate, it is most likely impossible to split the twin elements of the professional and the personal aspect of the teacher.

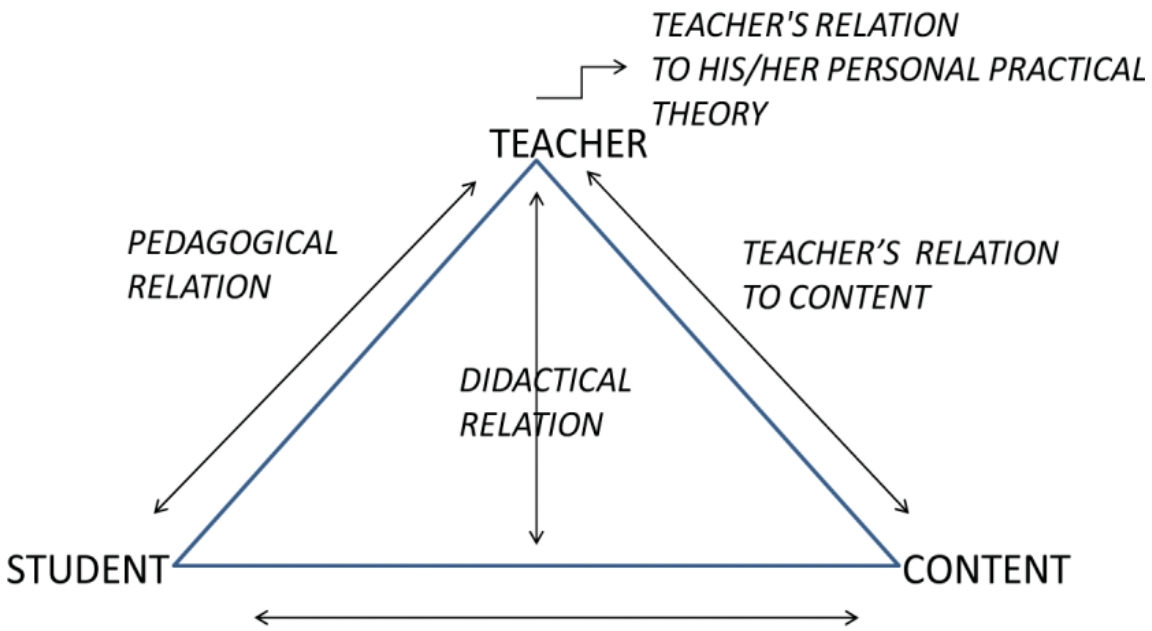

Figure 2.1: Presents the relations in the didactical triangle in this study adapted from Stenberg (2010, p. 333)

Boreham and Gray (2006) posit that teachers' professional identity is something that is negotiated and renegotiated in the workplace and it involves a relation between the teacher and the social context. And teachers' professional identity keeps changing because of the constant change in the workplace determined by the context of changing curriculum. This means that this identity is determined by the kind of relation each teacher has with the environment and the people around him, as such each teacher's professional identity is unique to him (Schepens, Aelterman & Vlerick, 2009). Timostsuk and Ugaste (2012) concurringly opine that the professional identity of the teacher is the resulting effect of his or her relation with his or her self-knowledge in teaching and learning and his or her relation with his colleagues in particular and the teaching environment in general. Teachers'

professional identity is therefore determined by situations and relationships that present themselves in practical professional activities, learning experiences and feelings of belonging. Teachers' professional identity is undeniably influenced or determined by their relation to the teaching and learning process, their colleagues and the teaching environment at large. The teacher's ability to relate with and put the curriculum into use is a determining factor in the process of meaning making of who he or she is. The fact that he or she also has to relate to the stakeholders and the government in his or her functioning within the school system makes relation an undeniable determinant of who the teacher sees his or her self to be or his or her professional identity.

According to Rodgers and Scott (2008) the relations in the classroom between the teachers and the students involves more than just participants in the teaching and learning process but it is a complex process of meaning making for both the teacher and the learners or students. As such what transpires in the classroom is more than an exchange of knowledge but the reproduction of self by both parties and a rub off of this self. The issue of emotions nurtured by the complex relation between teachers, learners, coworkers, mentors, school, community and state is more and more being scrutinized as a critical aspect of teachers' professional identity (Timostsuk & Ugaste, 2010). This relation inadvertently impacts how the teacher treats or reacts to the students in his class and also the quality of his or her teaching. The relation with the professional community of teachers also influences their understanding of complex practices, and the understanding of self. Since other teachers also go through this process, it is therefore an exchange of who they are rather than an impartation, making relations a critical determinant of teachers' professional identity.

Sexton (2008) further postulates that teacher professional identity can be treated as the relation between one's inherited attributes and those that materialize through general and particular social structures. The macro and micro structures cannot be easily divided in actual daily interactions, but rather, class, race, and gender are huge structural categories that are nevertheless complexly woven into the fabric of our everyday experiences. This implies that other categorizations of the society also have an impact on the way teachers see themselves. He continues that professional identity draws attention to how an individual mediates teaching, relating with different collections of social positioning, experiences, and resources to build their professional selves in particular ways.

Therefore, the teacher's relation with his learners, content, colleagues and environment at large determines his professional identity. The teaching and learning process is a very complicated one in which the teacher has to relate with the curriculum, its designers and the stake holders to support the smooth functioning of the school. The exchange between the teacher and the rest of the contributors or partakers in the teaching and learning process therefore has a great impact in the meaning making process for the teacher about himself. Relation is therefore a determinant of teachers' professional identity.

2.4.3 Experiences

Since teacher professional identity is not static but rather involves the creation and recreation of meaning through experiences or stories over time (Timostsuk & Ugaste, 2010), experiences is another major determinant of teacher professional identity. The teacher uses his experiences to construct and reconstruct his professional identity over time, owing to the fact that meaningful learning only builds upon previous knowledge and knowing who we are is the first step of knowing or determining who we want to be. Timostsuk and Ugaste (2010) consider teachers' professional identity to be a product of experience by seeing it as a process of practical knowledge building characterized by an ongoing integration of what is individually and collectively seen or experienced as relevant to the teaching field. Geijsel and Meijers (2005) attempt to model this integration, by treating the formation of teacher professional identity as an ongoing learning process, in which each professional experience is re-thought against a backdrop of mutual interactions of emotions and knowledge and where experiences can be both individualistic and one experienced with other colleagues. Thus, teachers' professional identity is determined by experience and this experience is a continuous learning process in which behavior amongst other things, like the creation of related meaning (Rodgers & Scott, 2008) and social context in a broader perspective, is the focus.

Furthermore, teachers' professional identity is determined by experiences as postulated by Timostsuk and Ugaste (2010). They argue that teachers' professional identity deals with the person's self-knowledge in teaching and this knowledge is acquired through related situations and relationships that present themselves in practical teaching and learning processes, feelings of belonging and learning experiences. As such this identity is constructed through learning processes for the teacher, even as he is teaching. Schutz, Quijada, Vries and Lynde (2010) postulate that experiences can be organized or sub-divided into other categories and these experiences can be described as socially constructed and personally constructed ways of

being that materialize from conscious and or unconscious conclusions regarding recognized successes at attaining predetermined goals or preserving standards or beliefs during transactions as part of the teaching and learning process.

To add to this, Reddy (2003) argues that teacher professional identity construction is an active process on the part of teachers as they struggle to acquire a means to represent oneself to self and others. This means that the teacher uses what he or she knows or has been doing (experiences) to present his or her self (identity) to his or herself and others. Seetal (2006) concurs with this as she adds that teachers' professional identity is a product of teacher's experiences as they execute their duties and build a sense of self within the continuous changing educational environment or within the context of curriculum change. This process exists not only under educational circumstances but also under socially given conditions, amongst which are structures of social and power relations, institutional contests and opportunities as well as the available cultural expectations. As Feistritzer argues, not only do the educational experiences shape the teacher's professional identity but also political, social and cultural experiences (Feistritzer, 2007). Seetal (2006) maintains that the relation between curriculum change discourses and teachers' professional identity provides insights to curriculum developers and theorist into how teachers' experiences determine or shape teachers' professional identity, teachers' practices and the meaning they make of it. Teachers therefore actively interpret and re-interpret their life experiences, creating their professional identity as teachers. It is therefore clear that teachers' professional identity cannot be complete or fully shaped without the teachers' experiences. With this understanding therefore, for student teachers to fully develop into teachers, their experiences of what it means to be a teacher should be investigated and the results used in teacher education. There exists a gap in this area as far as student teachers experiences are concerned, hence this study.

2.5 Teacher education and Teacher Professional Identity

Teacher education also has a role to play in the development of teachers' professional identity. Student teachers undergo teacher education to become teachers and this also helps equip them with the tools with which they will be able to construct a professional identity for themselves. Chong, Ling and Chuan (2011) argue that the process of becoming an effective teacher begins with the pre-service or student teacher's understanding and creation of personal knowledge, creation of self, and knowledge of identity development. As they

progress on the academic ladder they therefor begin to develop insights and gain experiences of what it means to become a teacher. They add that the process of professional identity formation by student teachers spans their four years in the teacher education program and this process is shaped by the diverse teaching and learning experiences they go through. After which such identity is then negotiated and renegotiated as the student teacher matches his experience in the teaching career and also due to the various determinants of teachers' professional identity.

Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) agree with this as they argue that student teachers must undergo a change in identity (from students to teachers) as they navigate through teacher training and take up positions as teachers in the contemporary challenging school contexts as fully prepared teachers at the end of the program. The concept of identity and the teaching and learning process is a complex one, which demands careful investigation to understand and appreciate the importance of teacher professional identity in teacher development. Gaining a complete understanding of teacher professional identity by student teachers during teacher training would enhance their effective functioning in schools as teachers at the end of their training program (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). Thomas and Beauchamp (2007) investigating the change in identity as student teachers move from student teachers to teachers concluded that there is a need to more effectually address identity as a component in teacher education. Teacher education is therefore essential in the negotiation and renegotiation of professional identity by teachers.

Teacher professional identity development is invariably the product of teacher education. This is due to the fact that student teachers are initiated into the business of teaching through the different courses and practices they go through. When student teachers go out for teaching practice sessions, they experience what it means to be a teacher. Timostsuk and Ugaste (2010) argue that identity is defined through learning, doing, experiencing, and belonging. The importance of experiences in the student teachers understanding of teacher identity and teaching profession only emerges clearly in teacher education. This study therefore seeks to fill the gap in the body of knowledge concerning student teachers' experiences of teachers' professional identity which has been left fallow by researchers over many years.

2.6 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the literature around teachers' professional identity. It began by defining teachers' professional identity and moved forward to the nature of teachers' professional identity, after which the review continued with examining what determines teachers' professional identity which according to the literature was curriculum change, relations and experiences. The last thing to be examined was teacher education and teacher professional identity. It also identified the gaps in the body of knowledge which has pushed the undertaking of this study. The next chapter of the study discusses the theoretical framework which is social constructionist theory and the paradigm of the study which is the interpretive paradigm.

CHAPTER THREE

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND PARADIGM

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter examined the review of related literature around teachers' professional identity. This chapter focuses on the theoretical underpinning backing this study and the paradigm which guides the study. The first part of the chapter will focus on the theory which guides the study and the second part will focus on the paradigm.

3.2 Theoretical Framework

Khanare (2012) has postulated that a theoretical framework is needed in research because it explains why the research is done in a particular way. She adds that the theoretical framework provides the basis for the researcher to theorize his work. The theoretical framework can be defined as a well-developed and structured explanation of circumstances or events in a logical and coherent form (Vithal & Jansen, 1997). Yilmaz (2011) argues that the choice of theoretical framework guides or dictates the direction of the research process by identifying key issues like phenomenon to be investigated, data generation strategies, data analysis techniques and data interpretation. This study uses the theory of social constructionism as it attempts at explaining student teachers' experiences of teachers' professional identity as a learning experience where meaning is constructed through such experiences.

3.2.1 Social Constructionist Theory

The social constructionist philosophy of education articulates that the society needs a reconstructing and schools are the ultimate utensil to foster such changes (Harguindéguy & Gouin, 2012). They add that social constructionists advocate that world crises need education to facilitate the creation of a new social order or status, one that is strictly democratic in nature. Social constructionist theory deals primarily with the society's construction of the environment they live in (Burr, 2003). The basic tenet of social constructionism according to Young and Collin (2004) comprises of the focus on the collective rather than the individual construction of knowledge or the collective meaning-making process. Nawaz and Kundi (2010) argue that social constructionism focuses on learning as a process of understanding and the creation of meaning where learning is considered to be the construction of meaning

rather than the memorization of facts. Khanare (2012) opines that social constructionism emphasizes the importance of culture and context in understanding what occurs within the school environment and knowledge is constructed based on this understanding. She further argues that social constructionism deals with anything that exists by virtue of social interactions.

Khalid and Azeem (2012), postulate that social constructionists see the teaching and learning process as an active, contextualized procedure of creating knowledge rather than acquiring it. Such knowledge is created based on experiences in and around the school environment. Students continuously test these experiences through social negotiation and renegotiation. The student is not blank but rather brings a wealth of experiences and cultural factors to the teaching and learning process. These points to the fact that student teachers can and do experience teachers' professional identity as a learning experience and make sense of it due to the wealth of knowledge they come into the teaching and learning process with. Experiencing teacher professional identity by student teachers in this case is learning by doing under the guidance of mentors or teacher educators and these experiences shape the kind of teacher they become in future.

Nawaz (2012b) postulates that social constructionism lays emphasis on collective-learning, where the parents, teachers, peers, community members and stakeholders help the student become prominent. He continues that Social constructionists emphasize that the teaching and learning process is active and social requiring the students to construct knowledge from their experiences under the guidance of the teacher. Social constructionism is gaining grounds in higher education because teaching and learning is now easily undertaken as a social and community experience thereby advocating collective as well as individual learning with the help of the teacher (Nawaz, 2012a).

Burr (2003) postulates that there are three assumptions about social constructionism namely: reality, knowledge or artifacts and learning. Khanare (2012) concurring with this contends that reality, artifacts or knowledge and social construction are assumptions in social constructionism but are not objective or universal in the world but are rather dependent on human subjectivity. This therefore means that these assumptions will work together for student teachers when they are experiencing teachers' professional identity towards the

underlying experiences and practices of teachers with regard to the teaching and learning process. Each of these assumptions is explained below.

Reality: Khanare (2012) postulates that social constructionists argue that reality is constructed through human experiences. Individuals in a society work together to invent realities in their world and reality cannot be discovered or does not exist before its social construction. Young and Collin (2004) opine that in social constructionism reality is the universe of socially constructed knowledge invented through experiences. They add that reality is anchored in an individual's dream, behavior, language, culture and experiences.

Knowledge/Artifacts: Young and Collin (2004) define artifacts as knowledge attained socially and culturally on the wings of social reality. Khanare (2012) agrees with this as she argues that knowledge as a human product is culturally and socially constructed. People through their experiences create meaning as they interact with each other and with the environment in which they live.

Learning: Learning is a social process (Khanare, 2012) and it does not take place just within an individual, neither is it a reflexive growth of behaviors shaped by external forces. She continues that meaningful learning only takes place when people are engaged in social activities. These activities produce experiences which are used to construct knowledge. These assumptions propagate that social constructionism considers both the context in which learning takes place and the participants in such a context very important in the teaching and learning process.

Lock and Strong (2010) postulate that there is no single universal school for social constructionism, but rather it is a broad stage with some tenets that hold it together universally. They opine that there are five major tenets which are expounded below.
The first tenet deals with meaning and understanding as the main feature of human activities. In relation to meaning the focus is on the quality of social experience attained due to the language in use. For without a common contextual language meaning and understanding is impossible. The second tenet is concerned with meaning and understanding whose base or beginning is social interactions. These interactions produce a shared agreement as to what direction the meaning construction should take. The third tenet focuses on the ways of meaning making or construction which is inherently imbedded in social processes and is

specific to particular time and place. Such particular situations and our ways of understanding them vary from one individual to the other. These variations can be simple, for example people wish to present themselves as fashionably dressed yet what is regarded as fashion varies within cultures, over time (compare photographs of how people dressed in the twenties and in 2012) and across space (how the president of South Africa dresses in comparison to the king of Saudi Arabia). On the other hand such variations can be complex or more substantive. Hepworth (1999) pointed out the manner in which western ways of making sense of fasting has changed quite remarkably over the years: medieval women who take up this practice were considered saints who withdrew themselves from worldly pleasures and sustained themselves with heavenly rather than physical nourishment. These women therefore did not relate to their experience using the modern discourse of 'anorexia'. Similarly the Delphic Oracle was respected for hearing and understanding the voices of gods rather than positioned as schizophrenic. The diverse discourses through which their experiences were available to be constructed and made sense of are both historical examples in diverse relations to very different problems of their modern day compatriots.

The fourth tenet shows that social constructionists more often than not are interested in determining the processes operating in the socio cultural line of action leading to the production of discourses within which people construe themselves. This is not to refute or ignore the fact that humans have an ability to act in a particular way, but rather the argument is that this ability is rather shapeless. For example, human beings at an early age demonstrate a special interest in human faces and this interest is very important in the establishment and growth of our relationship with other humans. Later on these relationships are structured and conducted in diverse ways and have different moral and psychological demands upon people across space and time. The fifth and last tenet deals with the revealing of the activities or operations of the social world and the political allocation of power which is often done unknowingly in a bid to change existing operations and replace it with something better. This bypasses the notion of philosophers interpreting the world but failing to change it, as man takes action while he struggles to create a meaningful society.

There are three varieties of social constructionism which are: the trivial, moderate and radical or extreme constructionism (Elder-Vass, 2012). Trivial constructionism deals with situations or operations that are socially constructed but have nothing to add to a researcher's day to day understanding of the case. For example when a group of cleaners cooperate to clean a

building or buildings, they coordinate their actions by talking to each other. Such communication definitely determines the ways in which the subsequently act in the physical process of cleaning the building or buildings (Elder-Vass, 2012).

Moderate constructionism on its part sees the world as dependent on how people individually and collectively think and act. In other words, changing the manner in which people think and communicate concerning the world, constitutes a resultant change in significance to the social world. And one of the major implications of moderate constructionism, that something is socially constructed is that it can be constructed differently. It is possible for people to think differently therefore the resulting constructions from this thinking would be different in themselves. For example if all of mankind stops believing that money is the best thing to exchange for goods and services, or that it has exchange value, then money would become valueless or cease to exist. Bank notes, credit cards and coins might still be in people's pocket, but they will no longer function as money. Money then in this sense is socially constructed (Elder-Vass, 2012).

Radical or extreme constructionism posits that everything evolves or depends on the way people think about it. It interrogates what exactly is being constructed, what or who is doing the construction and the process of construction. Lock and Strong (2010) postulates that meaning should be understood within a relational context, and this context determines how new meanings are created as well. Social constructionism considers the teaching and learning process as an active one which involves the conversion of information, deriving meaning from experience and making decisions from the meanings constructed.

3.3 Research Paradigm

Opie (2004, p. 18) postulates that paradigm is "a basic set of beliefs that guides action", and add that two main paradigms have influenced or guided educational research as far as its history is concerned: the quantitative and qualitative research paradigms. Denzin and Lincoln (2003) define a paradigm as an essential set of philosophy or viewpoint that guides the action or points the direction of the research. This study is positioned within the interpretive paradigm, since it is dealing with a world of lived experiences.

3.3.2 Interpretive Paradigm

According to Neuman (2006, p. 81) a research paradigm is " a general organising framework for theory and research that includes basic assumptions, models of quality research, and key issues, methods for seeking answers''. A paradigm therefore provides the platform which a researcher can use to study people's experiences, values, beliefs, understanding of self and others and meaning making processes (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011). Creswell (2008) postulates that the interpretive paradigm focuses on creation of a detailed analysis of a single or multiple situation or issue and it caters for a thorough understanding of teachers' experiences and practices. This therefore is an interpretive study which will be conducted using a qualitative approach.

Nieuwenhuis (2010) opines that interpretive research provides a lens through which the researcher can understand human life from within and this focuses on people's subjective experiences, or how people "construct" the social world by sharing meanings, and how they relate to or interact with others. In order to address the research questions of this study the researcher will interact with student teachers in order to gain a deeper understanding of their subjective experience of teachers' professional identity. By investigating the richness, depth and complexity of student teachers' experiences of teachers' professional identity within the context of the changing curriculum the researcher will build up a sense of understanding of the meaning developed by student teachers. The underpinning assumption is that by investigating participants in their social contexts or personal space, there is a greater opportunity to understand the perception they have of their subjective reality. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) concur that the principal concern is an understanding of the way in which participants (student teachers) will create, modify, and interpret the world in which they find themselves.

Neuman (2006) argues that the researcher needs to learn more about the phenomenon being investigated, by developing questions of diverse forms which are broad and general in the form of words or images to collect all the relevant information. In this study therefore the participant's responses are the source of data with richness, depth and complexity. The main aim of educational research according to Nieuwenhuis (2010) is to understand what informs human behaviour and this is based on the fact that reality or truth isn't objective or universally but rather it is subjective, local, specific and non generalisable. Furthermore, Denzin and Lincoln (2003) advocate that paradigms acknowledge that results are not kept

somewhere out there waiting for the researcher to come and take, but it is created and recreated through the interpretation of data. Concurring with this, Creswell (2008) argues that the interpretive paradigm is primarily geared towards understanding and gaining knowledge of an individual from his or her perspective. This therefore means that human behaviour is inadvertently affected by his or her knowledge of the social world making reality a multiple phenomenon and socially constructed across space and time (Creswell, 2008). To add to this, Nieuwenhuis (2010) postulates that in the interpretive paradigm, reality is socially constructed and its knowledge is self-objective, coming from experience and construction of meaning, pointing to the fact that knowledge is constructed within an individual. In this context the researcher wants to explore student teachers experiences of teachers' professional identity.

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) postulate that critics of interpretivism argue that its key weakness is that it cannot address the features and conditions from which meanings and actions, interpretations, beliefs and rules are deduced. Furthermore, Sarantakos (2005) advocates that this paradigm comes short of ''acknowledging the organizational structures, particularly divisions of interest and relations to power and as a result presents partial accounts of social behavior by their neglect of the political and ideological contexts of much educational research'' (p. 24). This study bypasses such criticism since it looks at the experiences of individuals within a social order and as explained earlier in the study, the society shapes the individual. Thus the individual can effectively represent the society or a social order and all that happens in it. Figure 4.2 represent the representation of the interpretive paradigm.

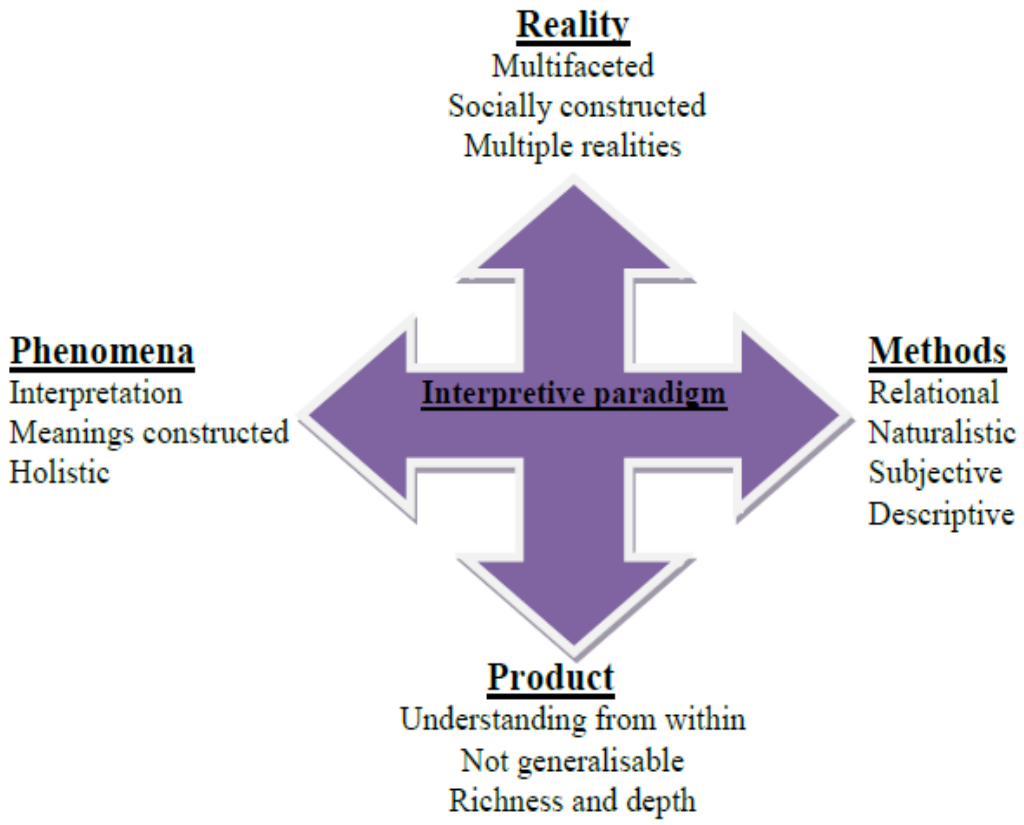

Figure 3.1: Above illustrates the interpretive paradigm adapted from Nieuwenhuis (2010, p. 55).

3.4 Conclusion

This study focuses on exploring student teachers experiences of teachers' professional identity within the context of changing curriculum. From the discourses above, it is clear that social constructionism and the interpretive paradigm would work quite well in this study, since both social constructionism and the interpretive paradigm agree to an extent on the subjectivity of knowledge. Student teachers experiences are subjective and this means that both the theoretical framework and the paradigm are in place. The next chapter discusses the research design and methodology.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the direction the study will take. It focuses on the style and approach of the study. Nieuwenhuis (2010) postulates that design refers to a map of what the researcher intends to do and this plan according to Merriam (1998) accumulates, categorizes, and integrates information and brings an end product: the findings of the research. This plan must be structured in ways that will enable the researcher to answer the research questions. Nieuwenhuis (2010) opines that the research design pays more attention to the findings of the study, while the research methodology focuses on how these findings will be arrived at by looking at the kind of method and instrument to be used in the study. Furthermore, Opie (2004) articulates that research methodology equals the methods or approaches working together to generate data and findings which reflects the research question. It seeks to explain the methods used and why they have been used. He adds that the trustworthiness and usefulness of the study depends on the design and methodology used. Silverman (2001) argues that methodology is a way of meeting the focus of the study, in other words the methods of data generation, ways of analysing data and the planning and conducting of the study. As such this is the express road to use in studying student teachers experiences of teachers' professional identity within the context of a changing curriculum. This study is a case study of student teachers' experiences of teachers' professional identity within the context of a changing curriculum in a university in Kwa-Zulu Natal. The first part of this chapter will therefore look at case study research, while the second section will focus on the approach which is qualitative in nature. The third will look at the method of data generation, while the fourth focuses on data analysis. The fifth will deal with sampling of the participants, while the sixth will look at ethical considerations. The last seventh will examine trustworthiness and the last part will focus on the limitations of the study.

4.2 Case Study

This study is a case study of student teachers in a university in Kwa-Zulu Natal. Neumann (2006), defines case study as '' an in-depth study of one particular case in which the case may be a person, a school, a group of people, an organization, a community, an event, a movement, or geographical unit''(p. 40). Cohen *et al* (2011) argue that case study is often

used within qualitative research and Rule and John (2011), agreeing with these, also define case study as an orderly and comprehensive investigation of a particular example in its context in order to generate data. The student teachers' experiences of teachers' professional identity within the context of a changing curriculum can likewise be studied as a case study. Cohen *et al* (2011) postulate that case study explores an incident or example in detail and analyses intensively the diverse examples or phases that make up the life cycle of the unit being explored. In this research the case was student teachers in a university in Kwa-Zulu Natal and the unit of exploration or investigation was student teachers' experiences of teachers' professional identity. Cohen et al (2007) pointed out that ''case studies are conducted in a specific temporary, geographic and institutional context'', therefore this university was selected because the student teachers existence there is temporal after which they have to move into the professional world.

Neumann (2006 p. 41) opines that most case studies utilize a variety of data generation methods such as photos, interviews, observations, maps, documents, newspapers, and records in a single case. The researcher in this case aims at capturing the lived experiences, thoughts, perceptions and meaning making process (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007, p. 255) about teacher professional identity. Denzin and Lincoln (2003) state that the benefits of the case study is that it presents a real life experience and offers a complete account of an example or a phenomenon and an insight that would provide the reader with visible experiences of the participants.

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) outlined several hallmarks for case study, arguing that firstly it deals with a rich and detailed description of issues important to the example. Secondly, it provides a sequential narrative of issues important to the example. Thirdly, it combines the account of issues with the analysis thereof. Fourthly, it focuses on individual participants or group of participants and seeks to understand their perceptions of the example. Fifthly, it highlights specific issues that are important to the example and lastly the researcher is completely involved in the case or example and the case study might be linked to the person of the researcher. Likewise Simons (1996) postulated that case studies should address six paradoxes which often make it problematic. To begin with, it should dismiss the subject-object dichotomy by seeing all participants as equals. Secondly, case studies should acknowledge the input an authentic creative encounter can and will make to new ways of understanding education. Thirdly, case studies must consider diverse ways of seeing as new

forms of knowing. Fourthly, case studies should follow the ways of the artist. Fifthly, case studies should liberate the mind from traditional analysis and lastly it should cling to these paradoxes with an overshadowing interest in people.

Yin (2009) distinguishes four main designs of case study which includes; embedded single case design, single case design, embedded multiple-case design and multiple case designs. The single case design can essentially deal with a critical example, revelatory example (a case which has never been researched before), a unique example, a representative example, a longitudinal example or an extreme example. The embedded single case design deals with more than one unit of analysis and this unit is incorporated into the design. For example a case of a whole university might also use sub-units such as schools or faculties, disciplines, lecturers, students, administrators and all the sub-units may need a different data collection instrument. The multiple case design focuses on more than one case study, for example comparative case studies within a study, where a researcher might want to compare the results of one case (e.g. a school) to that of another (a university) to produce a more comprehensive and trustworthy result. The embedded multiple case design, like the multiple case design, also focuses on more than one case study, but it takes it further by involving different sub-units in each of the cases and by utilizing a wide range of instruments like questionnaires, interviews, observations and reports in the production of data.

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) outline three main types of case study which are: the explanatory, the descriptive and the exploratory. The explanatory case study focuses on testing theories or ideas that have been generated, while the descriptive case study focuses on providing detailed narrative information about a case or example. The exploratory case study probes into a distinguished phenomenon and provides a platform for the researcher to gain detailed knowledge about the phenomenon. This study is conducted as an exploratory case study using a single case design as this will provide the researcher with a detailed exploration of the experiences student teachers have of teachers' professional identity. For Mills, Eurepos and Wiebe (2010) an exploratory case study works well with social constructionism. This works hand in hand with the researcher's theoretical framework and has also in a way influenced the choice of the exploratory case study.

4.3 Qualitative Approach

The qualitative approach to research aims at investigating every detail about an issue or a case. It brings out the quality of whatever is being researched (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). In this study the qualitative approach is used to get rich and in-depth information about student teachers experiences of teachers' professional identity. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) postulate that qualitative research can be used in diverse ways: to recognize and refine fields, topics, foci and questions, to present data in its own right for research synthesis, to locate and present the outcomes that are of interest in the research, to enhance and harmonize data from quantitative research, to fill up gaps in quantitative research and data, to provide another viewpoint on topics, to contribute in making decisions or conclusions on research and to suggest ways of turning results into practice. Creswell (2009) points out several features of qualitative research. Firstly it employs rigorous procedures and diverse data generation methods. Secondly, enquiry is a major feature and it can take one or more forms like case study, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography or biography. Thirdly the research begins with a single focus on an issue or problem, not a hypothesis or the interplay of relationships in variables. Relationships might find be found in the research later on, but are open. Fourthly the measuring rod for verification or validity is set out and rigour is practiced when writing up the report. Fifthly verisimilitude is needed to enable the readers to become part of the situation or problem. Sixthly data is analysed in different categories and these categories are multi-layered. Lastly the research engages the reader and it is full of unexpected insights, while maintaining validity and trustworthiness.

Maxwell (2005) postulates that qualitative research should contain both practical goals, which can be realised, produce specific outcomes and meet a need and intellectual goals to understand or explain certain concepts or issues. He further breaks them down as follows: practical goals aim at generating results and theories which are valid and can be understood by the participants as well as the readers. Secondly, it aims at conducting formative evaluation so as to improve practice. Thirdly, it aims at engaging in collaborative action research with diverse parties. The intellectual goal aims at understanding the meaning given to situations or problems by participants. It also aims at understanding the specific context in which participants find themselves. Furthermore, the intellectual goals also aim at identifying unexpected events, phenomena and situations and produce theories that cover these areas.

Intellectual goals also aim at understanding the processes that contribute to actions, situations and events. And lastly it aims at developing simple explanations for situations.

Neill (2007) opines that the qualitative approach of research provides a platform to gain insights through the unearthing of meaning by increasing comprehension. This approach explores the depth, richness and difficulty of situations and is often associated with interpretivist paradigms (Lowe, 2007) in which the main projector of meaning is the content (Henning, 2004). Again as Lichtman (2006) puts it, its focus or primary concern is with describing and understanding human relationships and life experiences. Therefore, this study is justifiably qualitative and this approach is employed to explore and explain the experiences student teachers have of teachers' professional identity. This is achieved by using evidence from their relationships, practices and perceptions (Henning, 2004).Their understanding or interpretation of teachers' professional identity will aid the researcher in understanding the kind of experiences student teachers have while acting as teachers and how these experiences can be used to improve the quality of teacher education from their point of view (Sprat, Walker & Robinson, 2004).

Cohen et al (2007) argue that the method of data generation in the qualitative approach more often than not mostly favours interviews and document analyses where there is a lot of text and the data generated is in the form of words. Henning (2004, p. 3) concurring with this, points out that in the qualitative approach, the researcher aims at understanding and explaining, using arguments, the evidence constructed from data and literature. Fraenkel and Wallen (2008) posit that interviews are designs that help provide, in sequential order, detailed and in-depth information observed through communications. Gonzales, Brown and Slate (2008, p. 3) argue that qualitative research provides intricate details and distinct understanding of meaning and observable as well as non-observable situations, phenomena, attitudes, intensions and behaviours. They add that this approach helps to give voice to the participants and interrogate issues that lie beneath the behaviours and actions therefore student teachers' experiences of teachers' professional identity can best be studied using the qualitative approach and using interviews as a method of data generation.

4.4 Method of Data Generation

The study will utilize two methods to generate data: document analyses and semi structured interviews. For the research to be corroborated, more than one method must be used to generate data. The semi structured interview was done in a university in Kaw Zulu Natal and the document analysis at the researcher's private study.

4.4.1 Document Analysis

This method of data generation helped the researcher to answer the second research question which is: How do these experiences shape or not shape their professional development as teachers of tomorrow? The documents were analyzed with the aim of discovering how student teachers experiences of teachers' professional identity do shape their professional development as teachers of tomorrow. Cohen et al (2011) postulate that documents and other materials or artifacts are very important sources of information in research and Henning (2004) adds that these sources cannot be co-constructed by the researcher but can be used. It doesn't matter if it is old or new, printed or hand written or in electronic format, the fact is that if it relates to the research question, then it is of the utmost importance. Documents provide the researcher with meaningful and already organized data which has been generated by relevant authorities in the field. The information in the documents is already in printed form therefore the researcher doesn't have to go into the process of transcribing. However, documents might be inadequate or inaccurate even though they may be coming from relevant authorities. As such the researcher must be very selective of the documents he intends to use.

Cohen et al (2011) postulated that document analysis entails defining or delineating as precisely as possible those ideas in the document or documents that the researcher wants to research and then generating relevant categories which are open and explicit so that any other researcher who utilizes them to explore the same topic or material would discover or produce essentially the same kind of results. The researcher after careful pondering on the research question, selected relevant documents which would be of importance in generating content or data which would be used to answer the second question. According to Khanare (2012, p. 60) ''literature recommends that researchers identify a population of documents that can be used, and decide whether to use the whole population or to select a sample of the population''. Two documents will be used in generating data in document analysis. For the purpose of this study

the researcher utilizes two peer reviewed journal articles about teachers' professional identity and teachers' professional development or find out how teachers' experiences of professional identity contribute to their professional development as teachers of tomorrow. These documents will help the researcher determine to what extend these experiences contributes to the student teachers professional development and what can be done to make them better professionals. Table 4.1 indicates the documents from which the researcher generated data.

The importance or significance of documents according to Creswell (2008) lies in the fact that it generates good data for qualitative study. The documents are in the words or language of the participants and are ready for analysis without necessary transcription. Also it is used without consulting participants therefore the results can be checked and rechecked several times for reliability. However some documents might be inaccurate or incomplete or specific to a certain context. These limitations were controlled for and overcome by the use of interviews as another data generation method (Creswell, 2008).

Documents	**Source**
Key experiences in student teachers' Development	Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice
Teachers' professional development in schools: rhetoric versus reality	Professional Development in Education

Table 4.1 Documents analyzed and their source journals

4.4.2 Semi-structured Interviews

According Cohen et al(2011) an interview is usually a one-on-one situation or two and more wherein an individual asks questions to which another individual or a second individual or group of individuals (which may be teachers or a teacher, student or students, parent or parents) responds. The individual posing the questions is known as the interviewer, while the person or persons answering the questions are called the interviewee. Interviews are utilized when the researcher wants to fully understand someone's impressions or experiences, or study more about their answers to questionnaires (Cohen et al, 2011). They add that interviews deal with the generation of data from direct verbal interaction between the researcher and the

participants. According to Khanare (2012) well designed and appropriately conducted interviews produce in-depth data or information about the phenomenon being investigated. An interview makes it easy to extract insight about what an individual (student teacher in this case) knows or has experienced and what he or she thinks (Sarantakos, 2005). According to Khanare (2012) interviews are used extensively in interpretive research. This is due to the fact that interpretive research explores and describes in detail an individual's understanding and beliefs about a concept.

There are three types of interviews: the structured, unstructured and the semi-structured interview. Cohen et al (2007) defines the structured interview as a natural extension of participant observation, involving the utilization of a rigid list of questions requiring specific answers to such questions. For example, "do history students fail information technology modules at university because: a) the language used is beyond the comprehension of history students, b) there is too much content c) or there are too many rules, patterns and illustrations. The semi-structured interview on its part asks questions which require closed responses or open-ended responses (Cohen et al 2007). The interviewer does not follow a rigid list of questions and there is a great deal of flexibility in the responses. For example "Why do history students fail information technology modules at university? The teacher or lecturer answering such a question will or might give a variety of reasons. Some of the reasons given may be general (as in the general causes of failure) while others may be specific to certain concepts or technicalities in information technology. The open-ended nature of the question gives the researcher the opportunity to ask further questions which are related to the answers given. Cohen et al (2007) opine that the semi-structured interview is a very important tool for data generation since it gives the researcher the added advantage of probing deeper, asking clarifying questions and discussing with participants their understanding of the phenomenon. In this research a semi-structured interview will be used. This is because to fully explore student teachers experiences of teachers' professional identity, closed questions will be limiting. While guiding questions, with the opportunity of asking further questions will help the researcher generate qualitative data to answer the first research question which is: what experiences do student teachers have of teachers' professional identity? This implies that the researcher was able to probe if need be and ask clarifying questions where necessary.

The importance or significance of semi-structured interviews is that when well-planned and appropriately conducted, it generates in-depth data and because it allows the researcher to ask

for clarification, it increases the chance of obtaining reliable information from the participants (Cohen et al 2011). A semi-structured interview provides the possibility of obtaining sensitive information that would not be easy to obtain using other methods. According to Cohen et al (2011) semi-structured interviews also do not require participants to possess the ability to handle complex documents or long questionnaires, but provides an opportunity for the researcher to assist participants in answering complex questions. Questions which are not clear to the participants can therefore be rephrased and follow up or probing questions are asked to assist participants answer the questions. Although semi-structured interviews may be time consuming, it is very important for this research for the purpose of clarification and accurate interpretation (Cohen et al, 2007). The semi-structured interviews were recorded using tape recorders with the permission of the participants. On the contrary, semi-structured interviews do have potential disadvantages. Face-to-face interaction may in one way or another interfere with the participants answer due to the researchers tone or facial expressions and hence, the participant feels like responding in ways or giving responses which will be acceptable to the researcher (Cohen et al 2011). They caution that semi-structured interviews are also prone to "subjectivity and bias on the part of the interviewer"(Cohen et al, 2007, p. 300). For instance, researchers may have the tendency of getting answers which support a preconceived view, or the researcher may interpret the participant's responses in a way which supports his or her preconceived ideas (Opie, 2004). Despite these limitations, when a semi-structured interview is appropriately planned and conducted it generates detailed in-depth information which cannot be generated using other methods.

4.5 Data Analyses

Cohen et al (2011 p. 537) postulate that qualitative data analysis deals with ''accounting for, organizing, and explaining the data or making sense of the data in terms of the participants' experiences of the situation noting categories, regularities, patterns, and themes,''. They add that there is no universally accepted method of analyzing data in qualitative research, but each researcher defines a path for themself based on the purpose. The researcher therefore coded the data generated and streamlined it into major themes. These themes were then discussed alongside the literature. Nieuwenhuis (2010) argues that data analysis entails decoding data, breaking it down into smaller units, synthesizing it, identifying patterns and deciding what to write as findings. Lichtman (2006) therefore concludes that the researcher

has the responsibility of giving interpretation and meaning to the data, therefore the data will be analyzed in a descriptive manner.

4.6 Sampling of Participants

There are two main types of sampling: probability or random sampling and non- probability sampling (Cohen et al, 2011). The probability or random sampling technique draws from the wider population and all the members of this population have an equal chance of appearing in the study. The chances of the wider population being selected or not selected for the study, is a complete matter of chance and nothing else. Since probability sampling randomly selects from the population, it gives the researcher the opportunity to make generalisations and produce results which are representative (Cohen et al, 2011). The non-probability sampling technique is a sampling technique whereby participants or a particular group of participants are chosen by the researcher with the full knowledge that it doesn't represent the entire population. In this case the members of the wider population don't have an equal chance of being selected or not selected. Some members will definitely be selected or included while others will definitely be excluded. The researcher consciously, deliberately and purposely chooses a part of the population (Cohen et al, 2011). This researcher will be using a non-probability sample for this study.

Cohen et al (2011) discuss several types of non-probability sampling which include: quota sampling, convenience sampling, dimensional sampling, snowball sampling, and purposive sampling. Convenience sampling which is sometimes called accidental or opportunity sampling entails choosing people who are nearest to the researcher as participants and continuing the process in that light until the sample size has been obtained. Quota sampling aims at representing a significant part or characteristic of a wider population and it involves three stages. The first stage is to pick out the characteristics which appear in the wider population which must also appear in the sample. The second stage is to identify the proportions in which the selected characteristics appear in the wider population, expressed as a percentage. And the last stage is to make sure that the percentage proportions of the characteristics selected from the wider population appear in the sample.

Dimensional sampling is a further refinement of quota sampling. It entails identifying several factors of interest in a sample population and selecting participants with at least one

participant for a combination of those factors. In snowball sampling the researcher identifies a few individuals who fall within the sample population and uses them to get in touch with other people in the sample population who would also act as participants. These participants in turn also put the researcher in touch with other people. The chain referral keeps getting bigger as new participants always introduce the researcher to new people. The process only ends when the sample size is complete. Lastly, in purposive sampling the researcher picks out individuals who he or she thinks possess the particular characteristic he is looking for based on his or her personal judgement. In this way the researcher builds up a sample satisfactory to his specific needs. Teddlie and Yu (2007) opine that purposive sampling in research is used to produce representativeness, to make comparisons, to focus on unique and or specific cases or issues and to generate theory through the continuous accumulation of data from diverse sources. It also provides greater depth to the study than other methods do, since more often than not researchers use the method to access people who have in-depth knowledge about a particular issue due to their role, access to network, power or experiences. Purposive sampling is a very important feature of qualitative research (Cohen et al, 2011).

This study therefore uses non-probability purposive sampling to select participants for the study. The study which is built up around student teachers in a University in Kwa-Zulu Natal has four student teachers as participants. These four student teachers who have experienced what it means to be a teacher, or have experienced teaching practice were hand-picked by the researcher based on his personal judgement of them and with the understanding that they possess in-depth knowledge or experiences about the phenomenon being investigated. The researcher has chosen four participants for the study based on Cohen et al, (2007, p. 101) as they postulate that ‘‘there is no clear-cut answer, for the correct sample size’’. Each researcher therefore chooses the sample size based on the aims of the research and the nature of the study.The researcher understands that this number is not representative of the entire population of student teachers at the university and that the results may not be generalised but the focus here is on the in-depth information provided by the participants.

4.7 Ethical Considerations

Wellington (2004) articulates that every research project must take ethical issues into consideration. Cohen et al (2011) add that ethical issues have a very significant role to play in research, especially when it concerns humans and animals. As such the researcher obtained the permission of the Dean to carry out research in his School and also obtained the permission of the Cluster Head to use his cluster in conducting the research. The researcher also kept the identity of the University and the participants of the study anonymous. The data generated from participants was treated with outmost confidentiality (Cohen et al., 2011). The names of the four participants were replaced with the codes names; Alpha, Bravo, Charlie, and Delta. An informed consent form was also given to all the participants who read and signed it before the interview was conducted. Cohen et al (2011) postulates that the consent letter should contain details of how the research will be conducted and used, and any implications for participants should be made known. The participants of the study were informed both by word of mouth and through the consent form that their participation was voluntary and that they were free to withdraw their participation at any time during the research if they change their mind or feel uncomfortable. Furthermore they were also informed that they have all the rights to withdraw any information they have contributed to the research if they so desire. Through this diverse means the researcher ensured that no ethical law was broken.

4.8 Trustworthiness

Yin (2011) argues that concepts like validity and reliability are not valid or vital in case study research because they better suit surveys and experiments. This research being a case study therefore considers trustworthiness. Trustworthiness deals with the credibility and dependability of the study. Therefore to attain trustworthiness in the study the researcher uses different sources of data generation which provides him the opportunity of checking one source against the other and ensure its trustworthiness (Creswell, 2008). Creswell adds that using diverse sources of data enhances credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability in the study. Cohen et al (2011) call this triangulation and define it as the utilisation of two or more ways of generating data in research and it is a powerful method of ensuring trustworthiness especially in qualitative research. The complete dependence upon one method may bias or distort the researcher's understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. The use of two or more methods in generating data and producing the same

results ensures trustworthiness in the study. The researcher used semi-structured interviews and document analysis to ensure the process of triangulation in the study. To strengthen this, the researcher, after transcribing the data, gave the participants the opportunity of examining and making reasonable corrections where necessary before the data was analysed.

4.9 Limitations of the Study

The major limitation of the study is that the result will not be a reflection of all the student teachers at the University but will be limited to the selected participants. Since the researcher used non-probability purposive sampling, participants chosen for the study may be biased due to the researcher's convenience and prior encounters with the participants. Since the study requires the participants to explain their experiences of teachers' professional identity, some for purposes of appearing bright or fear of being perceived as dull might provide inadequate data. But the researcher will do all in his power to explain to the participants that their experiences cannot be invalid.

4.10 Conclusion

This study aims at exploring student teachers experiences of teachers' professional identity within the context of a changing curriculum in a University in Kwa-Zulu Natal and from the above discussions it is clear that it will be best studied as a qualitative case study using document analyses and semi-structured interviews as its method of data generation and non-probability purposive sampling as a means of selecting participants. Measures have also been taken to ensure trustworthiness and all ethical concerns have been dealt with. The next chapter deals with data analyses and interpretation.

CHAPTER FIVE

DATA ANALYSES

5.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with analysing the data which has been generated from the participants. The experiences provided by the student teachers were grouped into four main recurring themes. The themes are: change of self, professional language, relationship, professional development. These four themes were again divided into sub themes: single self, multiple self, curriculum, delivery, content, pedagogy, becoming a teacher and teaching skills. This analysis also includes diverse direct quotations from participants. Slavin (2007) argues it is of utmost importance to utilise direct quotations from data to illustrate and substantiate the arguments. In analysing the data, findings are also discussed. In this way, the analysis is integrated with the theoretical framework and literature already discussed. Figure 5.1 below presents the themes and sub themes discussed in the data analysis. All these come from student teachers' experiences of what it means to be a teacher.

Data analysis framework

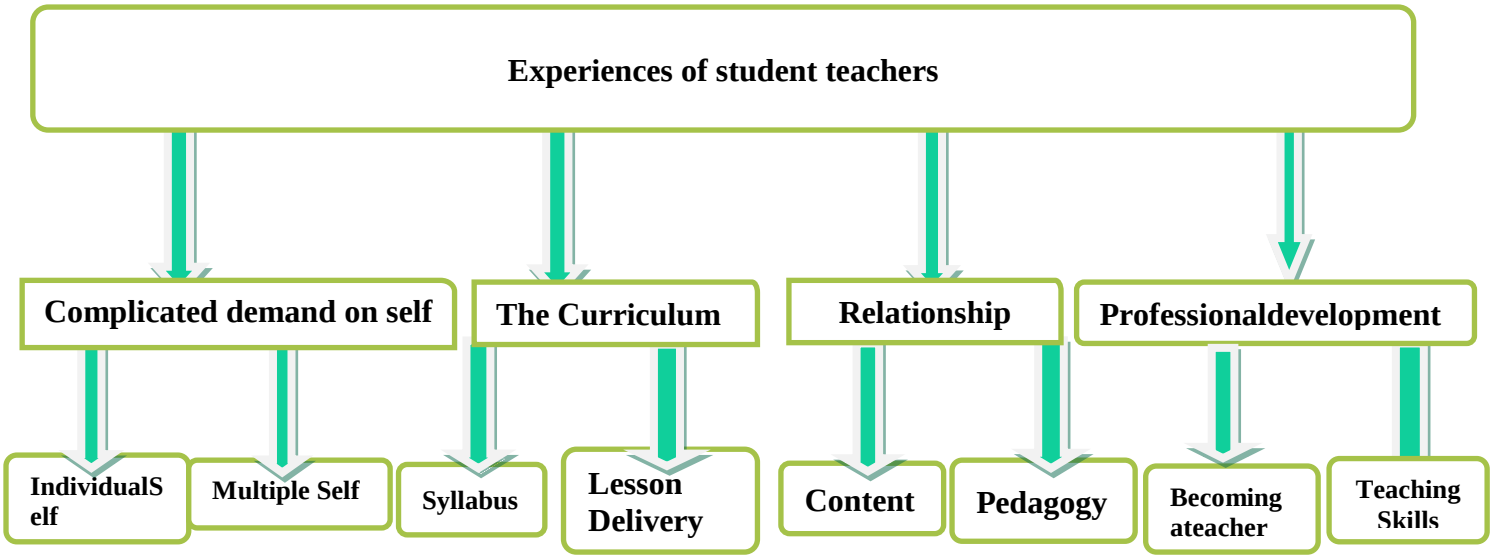

Figure 5.1 Data analysis framework

5.2 Complicated Demand on Self

This refers to the nature of work the student teacher is expected to do when he assumes the role of teacher. Since teachers' professional identity or what it means to be a teacher is on-going and ever changing, according to Timostsuk and Ugaste (2010), the student teacher who is new to such a role finds it complicated. Lamote and Engels (2010) opine that teachers' professional identity is made up of three different sub-identities or roles and these three are based on different contexts and relationships. Puurula and Löfström (2003) concur with this as they see the three sub identities as the role the teacher takes upon his or herself. The first sub identity they identify deals with a teacher's personal understanding of the demands upon him or herself as an individual which ultimately leads to professional growth. The second sub identity deals with a teacher's perception of his or her skilled multiple self and this produces efficiency in the teacher. The third and last sub identity deals with a teacher's membership in a professional community, which generates commitment. Assuming the role of a teacher consequently places a complicated demand upon both the individual self and the multiple self of the student teacher. In order words, being a teacher is not just about teaching, but also about assuming different roles.

5.2.1Individual Self

Experiencing teachers' professional identity places a complicated demand on the individual self of the student teacher. Sutherland, Howard, and Markauskaite (2010) postulate that teachers' professional identity can be considered one facet of a multitude belonging to an individual which comes as a result of his understanding of self. Assuming the role of a teacher therefore places a demand on the student teacher as a teacher to ensure that teaching and learning process takes place effectively. The student teacher no longer sees him or herself as a student but as a teacher. The student teacher carries the personality of the teacher and acts as the teacher. He has the responsibility of teaching and ensuring that his message is well understood. Alpha, one of the participants, stated that ''being a teacher means developing lesson plans and developing teaching aids constantly. It is also about a perfect delivery of the lesson to one's learners and making a difference in their lives''. This is the core of the teaching profession, since teaching and learning is all about transmitting knowledge from the teacher to the learner. Another participant, Bravo, added that;

> *Knowing what to teach is one thing and actually teaching it to the perfect understanding of your learners is another. Being a teacher is about re-*

> *enacting what you have learned to your learners and ensuring that they understood what you wanted them to.*

Since no meaningful learning takes place without understanding, it is the student teacher's duty to ensure that there is perfect communication between him or her and his or her learners. Rodgers and Scott (2008) articulate that communicating in the classroom between the teachers and the students involves more than just participants in the teaching and learning process but it is a complex process of meaning making for both the teacher and the students. Most student teachers described this task as a complicated demand on the individual self. The student teachers environment also dictates or shapes the nature of the demand.

Chong, Ling and Chuan (2011) postulated that what actually takes place in the classroom, especially during teaching practice, has a significant impact on the professional development of the student teacher and their sense of identity. They add that teacher education programmes should focus more distinctly and efficiently on the issue of identity since ''quite often during teaching practice a great deal of focus is directed to the delivery of lessons and feedback by supervisors who focus on issues of knowledge and skills of teaching. On the contrary, teachers' identity is not measured purely by how good or bad they perform in the classroom. The student teachers' experience and understanding of the teacher's work and professional role is what ultimately shapes identity and fosters professional development''(Chong, Ling and Chuan, 2011p. 34). As such, it is clear that in fostering professional development for the student teacher, issues of teachers' professional identity should be taken into consideration in teacher education programs coupled with lesson delivery and responsibilities.

Another participant, Charlie, opined that taking up the role of the teacher places a complicated demand on her individual self as a student teacher. She stated that;

> *for me to be successful in this task, means that I must have an understanding of how learners learn, a critical understanding of the learning area or subject, and be able to arrange, categorise and present it to my learners in ways which will better enhance their understanding within that particular context of the teaching and learning process. And secondly to continuously review my strategy and develop new ways of improving learning.*

For this reason experiencing teachers' professional identity or assuming the role of the teacher comes with diverse responsibilities for the student teacher. It is the student teacher's

response to such responsibilities that leads to professional development or frustration in the teaching profession. Cole (2004) postulates that student teachers fail to develop professionally because they focus on why they need to change and what they need to change but neglect learning how to negotiate and implement change. Adding to this, he opines that professional development is perfecting practice (or teaching as far as education is concerned), by acquiring new strategies, skills, ideas and attitudes required for meaningful change to occur. Without these tools, the student teacher's professional development is therefore far-fetched. Experiencing teachers' professional identity therefore provides the student teacher with the opportunity to encounter and respond to challenges first hand thereby building a platform upon which he should be guided to develop. But this seldom happens according to Britzman (2003). He postulates that teacher education establishments and programs provide students with fragmented knowledge and theories in ill-designed courses while the school environment gives the student teacher the platform to apply this knowledge. Student teachers therefore have the uphill task of utilizing their fragmented knowledge and adequately delivering lessons to learners when they assume the role of the teacher. He adds that these traditional or ill-designed courses have proved ineffective in terms of equipping student teachers for their future profession. It is clear that experiencing teachers' professional identity is an asset to the student teacher and teacher educators. Teacher education programs are to use the feedback provided by student teachers to design courses and to improve pedagogy. It is therefore clear that this experience lays a complicated demand on the individual self of the teacher.

5.2.2 Multiple Self

Experiencing teachers' professional identity also places a complicated demand on the multiple self of the student teacher. The multiple self of the teacher refers to the multiple roles the teacher assumes or plays to the learners. Some of these roles include: caregiver, parent, social worker, counselor and many others. Owing to the fact that these roles are professions in themselves, has made the participants see them as multiple or different faces of the teacher. For this reason the teacher has an individual self which has to do with teaching and a multiple self which has to do with the different roles he or she performs within the school environment.

Delta, another participant, stated that the different responsibilities which she had to cater for when experiencing what it means to be a teacher were very complicated. Having specialized

in the Foundation Phase, she is expected to become a parent to her learners. And being a parent, she added, meant different things to different people and her learners also expected her to care for them as their parents would. Due to the fact that the learners all come from different homes with different parents who treat them differently, it becomes very complicated for her to become a parent to all her learners. Alpha also corroborated Delta's story with his own experience. He stated that:

> *I had to be very sensitive and vigilant as a teacher since some of my students were experiencing diverse challenges and chose to speak to me instead of the school counselor because I was younger. Some told me deep and dark secrets while others wanted advice on how to win a girl they believe they are in love with. Counseling or advising them on what to do was very complicated especially when some of the troubles they were going through were bigger than me. To further complicate the situation, some made me promise not to tell anyone what they told me therefore it was difficult getting help for them from the school counselor or other members of staff.*

These multiple tasks of teaching, counselling, parenting and the rest become very complicated for the student teacher to handle, as it places demands on the multiple self of the teacher. Naidoo (2012) postulates that teaching is more often than not a socially constructed exercise which requires elucidation, negotiation and renegotiation of meanings built around the classroom. Therefore teachers develop professionally when they build up and implement personalised meanings of issues and phenomena in their practice. For, as Cole (2004) puts it, accumulating new knowledge, experiences and skills would be useless for a teacher until it is put into practice. For this reason the student teachers' experiences of teachers' professional identity should be used to improve modules in teacher education programmes, their strengths and weaknesses should be taken into consideration and necessary steps taken to make sure that their challenges become stepping stones for them to grow in practice.

Furthermore, Delta added that;

> *Going back to the secondary school as a teacher was a very complicated experience. I felt more like a social worker rather than a teacher. I believe schools should be about teaching and maintaining the educational standards but this seem to be different in the school where I was teaching. From my colleagues or mentors in the school I learnt that children from broken homes or families who can't afford to buy books, uniforms or go for excursions are at*

risk of educational failure as such it is the duty of the teacher to intervene on behalf of the child. But considering the fact that I my resources are limited and barely enough for me, I find this very hard to deal with. To make up for this in turn make compromises as far as the standards are concern to ensure that the student doesn't fail because combining the learners social disadvantages and academic failure will ultimately lead to a life of poverty and marginalisation.

It is therefore clear that the student teacher though trained to teach, more often than not assumes diverse roles which places different responsibilities on his multiple self. He or she has to be a teacher, social worker, counsellor, care giver, parent and many other things to his or her learners which brings out multiple aspects or sides of the individual most of which he is not qualified for, or which leads him to compromise his duties. Paton (2008) postulates that teachers are not social workers and adding this responsibility to them may cause failure in meeting basic standards in core learning areas. He adds that the society's conscience has transferred its duties to the teacher, making teachers responsible for preaching against 'gangsterism', substance abuse, teenage pregnancy, bullying, violence, suicide tendencies and many others things and this in effect is replacing the social worker and counsellors with the teacher.

These experiences accumulated by the student teacher can be used by teacher educators to redesign teacher education courses to make provision for basic training to be provided to the student teacher to handle such circumstances. In such circumstances the student teacher therefore develops professionally as he or she gains new skills and is able to handle the challenges he faced before. Experiencing teachers' professional identity therefore places a complicated demand both the individual self and the multiple self of the student teacher. He or she doesn't only teach but also assumes diverse roles.

5.3 The Curriculum

Theorists, curriculum developers and curriculum theorisers are yet to agree on one universal definition of the curriculum. As such there are as many definitions as there are theorists or curriculum theorisers. Marsh and Willis (2003) provide eight alternative definitions of the curriculum which ultimately combines almost all there is to know about the curriculum. Firstly they define the curriculum as those "permanent" subjects like writing, mathematics,

rhetoric, reading, arts and the greatest books of the Western world that best carry essential knowledge. Secondly they postulate that curriculum refers to learning areas or subjects that are important for living in today's society. Thirdly they see curriculum as all organised learning controlled by the school. Fourthly they postulate that curriculum refers to the experiences students have under the supervision of the school. Fifthly Marsh and Willis (2003) see curriculum as all learning experiences given to learners so they can develop a variety of skills and accumulate knowledge in diverse learning areas. Furthermore they opine that curriculum is what learners build or get from working with a computer and all the systems and networks associated with it such as the internet. To add to this, they define curriculum as the questioning of authority and the investigation or exploration of multifaceted faces of human situations. Lastly they see curriculum as all experiences which students have in the course of their lives (Marsh & Willis, 2003).

From the definitions above, it is clear that curriculum surpasses what should be studied in schools, often referred to as the syllabus, but also encompasses how it should be studied, known as the delivery. When student teachers assume the role of teachers, they must master the syllabus and deliver it according to the dictates of the curriculum. As such teaching and learning is impossible without the curriculum, making the syllabus and the delivery of this syllabus the main road for professional development.

5.3.1 Syllabus

Rabbini and Gakuen (2002) define the syllabus as a detailed outline of what students must learn in the course of studying a particular program or course. As such the student teacher needs a thorough understanding of this for his or her experience to be meaningful. The constant changes in the South African curriculum mean a constant change in the syllabus of every learning area. The participants of this study who are third and fourth year students have had to teach using both the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) and the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS). This context of changing curriculum is a major barrier the student teacher has to deal with. Alpha, one of the participants, postulated that:

> *Assuming the role of the teacher within these two curriculums is no easy task. The demands of both curriculums are somewhat different and the approaches are also different. The languages of both curriculums are also very different.*

> *After the curriculum was changed, I had no knowledge of what it meant. As such when the time came for me to go practicing, I dived in with my ignorance and I was very embarrassed when my mentor in the school started asking me questions about the new curriculum. My first two weeks were a total failure. I only made progress from the third week.*

Cross and Teruvinga (2012) argue that the constant change to the curriculum and the curriculum policy document has led to a constant change in syllabus, what it represents in the classroom, and has caused diverse problems in the teaching and learning process and professional development for teachers. More often than not student teachers are not always fully equipped with knowledge of what transpires in schools. And the failure of teacher education to adequately prepare them to adapt to changes as postulated by Cole (2004) makes it worse. For student teachers to develop professionally, it follows that these challenges should be incorporated in their educational programs and adequate knowledge provided to them as to how they can solve such problems, for growth comes as a result of an individual's ability to solve problems that he wasn't able to solve before. By helping the student teacher meet these challenges, he or she develops professionally.

Delta corroborated Alpha's experience by adding that

> *Experiencing teachers' professional identity is not as easy as I thought it will be. Owing to the fact that I have gone out for teaching practice twice, I thought this time it will be very easy since I had gained some experience and had also grown in knowledge. The change in syllabus made everything very tedious and complicated. There were new speculations which were not there before as such, much of my time was spent trying to familiarise myself with the new syllabus.*

Knowing what to teach as a teacher is therefore the first step towards success in teaching practice. Cross and Teruvinga (2012) argued that with the constant change in curriculum most South African teachers where confused as to what was required of them in the classroom. As most of them strived to acquaint themselves with the curriculum in place, a new one was introduced or diverse changes were introduced into the curriculum. This has made mastering the syllabus a major challenge for teachers which in turn affected the teaching and learning process and their professional development. Assuming a teachers role is problematic, if not impossible, when you don't know the syllabus. The student teacher needs a concrete knowledge of the syllabus and the curriculum to be able to fully assume the

role of the teacher. For the student teacher to develop professionally, the knowledge of the school syllabus should therefore be inculcated into teacher education courses. And these courses should be restructured every year to meet new challenges faced by student teachers. Stenberg (2010) postulated that when student teachers are accorded the opportunity to ponder their experiences (of teachers' professional identity) and actions and to expand their comprehension of concepts and approaches (through improved teacher education courses) then they stand a chance of developing professionally. He adds that professional development is all about working with professional and personal experiences to achieve a certain level of professional knowledge which will enable the student teacher to improve his practice.

Contrary to Alpha and Delta's story, Bravo had a different experience. He postulated that:

> *Before I went out to practice in school as a teacher, I made sure I acquainted myself with what was happening in schools thoroughly. My mother is a teacher, so she was able to help me with whatever information I needed. This made my stay in the school quite enjoying and my teaching quite simple. The expansion and details provided by CAPS made my preparation for teaching also easy. My mother provided me with the feedbacks she gave to the students she has mentored in the past and using it as a guideline I was able to guard against the same errors they made. I left the school feeling very happy and improved looking forward to the next time I will have to teach.*

Lamote and Engels (2010) argue that teacher educators believe and know that they can help student teachers develop professionally in ways that they fit the contemporary teaching world and be able to adapt to changes as they are being introduced. Since what it means to be a teacher keeps changing as changes are being made to the curriculum, they add that teacher education programs must train student teachers to adapt to change and help them to deal with whatever challenges they encounter in the course of experiencing teachers' professional identity. This will ultimately result in professional development for the student teacher and consequently the way he or she delivers his lessons.

5.3.2 Lesson Delivery

Lesson delivery refers to teaching. It encompasses the teaching methods, strategies, skills and resources used by the teacher in the teaching and learning process. Without such methods and strategies, no lesson can be delivered effectively. Each teacher chooses the teaching method

or strategy he wants to use based on the lesson he is teaching and the resources available. Some of methods or strategies include demonstrations, discussions, questioning, explanations, storytelling, group work and problem solving. These strategies when used effectively and interchangeable can produce excellent results in the classroom. The participants of the study acknowledged having used most, if not all, of the above mentioned strategies while experiencing teachers' professional identity. Bravo, one of the participants, stated that

> *In delivering my lesson, I used group work as my strategy and it was very exciting and illuminating at the same time. I saw my learners expressed themselves in their respective groups in ways that I had not seen before and the opposing ideas they brought and how they unanimously decided to stick to one particular idea was mind blowing. I learnt a lot from their presentations and for the first time I really felt I truly belong in the teaching profession.*

Group work is a very effective teaching method as postulated by Pike and Kuh (2005). It makes the teacher a facilitator in the teaching and learning process and encourages all learners to be active participants in the knowledge construction process. It also eases understanding for the learners as they get to listen not only to their friends but also to the teacher. Strydom and Mentz (2010) concur with this as they argue that quality learning should involve student's contribution in the knowledge construction process and not see them as dormant partners or receptors of knowledge from the all-knowing teacher. As such teacher education programs should utilise and drill student teachers accurately in using these strategies. The more they get involved with such strategies (whether as students in a classroom or as student teachers teaching in a classroom) the easier they develop professionally since practice makes perfect.

To another participant, Delta, delivering her lesson was all about utilising diverse strategies and doing a lot of repetition. She stated that

> *Delivering my lessons was a very complicated part of my stay in the school. This was because my learners were quite diverse and I had to use quite a number of teaching strategies to help them understand the lesson. In some lessons, I had to use storytelling and questioning while in others I had to use demonstrations and discussions. I also had to do a lot of repetition when delivering the lessons because most of my lessons were not following and this*

made it very tedious for me. But at the end I was happy because when I assessed them, their results proved that I did my job thoroughly.

Using a variety of teaching strategies eases understanding in the teaching and learning process (Stohlman, 2009). As such it is important for student teachers to utilise a variety of teaching strategies to ensure that every learner in the classroom gets adequate understanding of the lessons. Using a variety of teaching strategies also ensures that lessons don't become monotonous and boring but remains interesting and captures the interest of the learners. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) postulated that it is important to use a variety of teaching strategies in the classroom to cater for the different type of learners. Growing in the knowledge of and utilising a variety of teaching strategies enables the student teacher to develop professionally. Khalid and Azeem (2012) postulated that in social constructionism learning and development is seen as an active, contextualized process of creating knowledge based on experiences rather than acquiring it. As such student teachers have the opportunity to continuously test these experiences through social negotiation and renegotiation, thereby finding the perfect ground and avenue for practice. Through continuous negotiation and renegotiation, the student teacher keeps on developing professionally.

The curriculum is therefore of utmost importance as far as the teaching and learning process is concerned. The student teacher's complete understanding of the syllabus and teaching strategies will equip him or her with the skills required to grow in the profession. Also developing the ability to negotiate change will help the student teacher to develop professionally as he or she will be able to navigate his or her way through any educational change. Professional development is therefore built on the student teacher's ability to negotiate change and to adequately facilitate learning.

5.4 Relationship

Relationship is another major theme that emerged from the data. The teaching and learning process is all about relationships: that is the teacher relating to his students, colleagues, content, strategies and the school environment at large. Stenberg (2010)postulates that the teacher relates to his or her learners (which she calls the pedagogical relation)and to his or her content. The teacher's relation with his content involves the concrete content of teaching or what actually transpires in the classroom. Relating to the content embodies subject matter, classroom management and instructions amongst other things. To a larger extend it also

involves the bigger content of the curriculum, the school environment and or the multiple settings wherein teachers work (Stenberg, 2010). The pedagogical relation deals with the way the teacher approaches his content and ensures student learning. As far as the teaching and learning process is concerned, the teacher relates in two major ways or has to major relationships: with content and pedagogy.

5.4.1 Content

As earlier postulated, the teacher's relation with the content involves the real content of teaching. Without content there is no learning and the student teacher needs mastery of the content to fully function in the classroom. The way he or she relates to his or her content determines the way his or her learners learn. Kansanen (2009) argued that content is the fundamental concept in the teaching and learning process and it is the cornerstone of the process. And it is generally seen in the curriculum as the subjects or learning areas. Being a teacher is about being an expert within a particular content area. As such it is the teacher's duty to mediate and facilitate learners' understanding of the content. Since content knowledge is what is always tested to determine whether learning has taken place or not, the teacher therefore needs to be a specialist in that particular learning area or content (Kansanen,2009). In experiencing teachers' professional identity, the student teacher needs to demonstrate a mastery of the content. This content is imparted to the student teacher by teacher education programmes but being well informed about a learning area at the university doesn't translate to mastery in the secondary schools.

Charlie, one of the participants, argued that:

> *At university we are exposed to a lot of content with deep meaning and this content is quite vast. Though it is the same learning area or subject that is studied at university, it is quite different from what is studied in the primary, secondary and high school. I teach Life Orientation and what I am being taught at the university, I cannot directly apply in the classroom. At the university I was merely exposed to different journal articles in the learning area but experiencing teacher professional identity made me realise that the content of my study and the content I was to teach were quite different. I had to explore the content myself to have mastery of it.*

Deng and Luke (2008) postulated that ‘‘the content knowledge of the academic disciplines is not completely related to the content knowledge of primary, secondary and high school education’’ (107). This therefore acts as a hindrance to learning and growth for student teachers who experience teacher professional identity since most of them get to realize that they have to keep learning; the teacher as a lifelong learner. But most student teachers don’t practice this. They concentrate on their personal learning and fail to realize that they have to study or learn what they have to teach. To develop professionally, student teachers therefore need an understanding or need to master the content they are to teach so as to grow in the profession since content is what guarantees learning.

Bravo provides another dimension of relation with content, different from Charlie’s experience by postulating that:

> *In experiencing teachers’ professional identity I had to immerse myself into the content so as to perfectly transmit it to my learners. I had to become part of the content for my learners to easily understand me. I did this by drawing from my wealth of personal experience and also seeing myself as a learner ready to learn. This way I was also able to ensure that the learners fully participate in the lessons since I partly came to the class as a learner. By fully engaging with the content I successfully imparted the content to my learners.*

Ball, Thames and Phelps (2008) postulated that content is the bridge between the teacher and practice. Meaningful learning takes place when the teacher fully relates with his content (Levin & He, 2008) by becoming part of the content or drawing from his or her personal experience. Stenberg (2010) postulated that teachers develop professionally when they expand the wealth of knowledge they possess. And she added that if student teachers are accorded the opportunity or if student teachers will take it upon themselves to constantly think or relate with their experiences and that of their learners, thereby developing greater insights on how they think and learn, they will develop professionally since professional development is all about expanding the wealth of knowledge the student teacher possesses. Therefore to guarantee professional development for the student teacher, teacher educators have to ensure that they relate constantly with the content, linking it to their experiences as they experience teachers’ professional identity.

Kansanen (2009) postulated that when teacher education forces the teacher to study content, it creates more problems. This is so because student teachers often study content from

departments or schools of content knowledge such as school of languages, school of mathematics, school of technology, and many others but more often than not these studies are fragmented and bear no connection to teacher education (though sometimes it is connected). The teacher educator (the one who teaches the student teacher how to teach) is therefore not an expert in subject content, but his or her ultimate responsibility is to teach the student teacher how to teach the content (13). As a result of this fragmentation and the nature of content mastered by the student teacher, he or she needs to forge a relationship between him or her and the content he or she is going to teach. Relating with the content lays the perfect groundwork for meaningful learning to take place not just for the learners but also for the student teacher. Since experiencing teachers' professional identity is a learning experience for the student teacher, it is necessary that he or she engages with the concept of reflective teaching and the teacher as a lifelong learner which would empower him or her to build a strong bond with his or her content, making the teaching and learning process effective. Without these the student teacher is bound to be frustrated after a few years of practice and ultimately leaves the teaching profession (Karsenti & Collin, 2013). Once he or she has related with his or her content, his or her pedagogic skills are utilised to ensure meaningful learning.

5.4.2 Pedagogy

Cogill (2008) defines pedagogy as the art and science of how teaching is practice or how it unfolds and how learners learn what is taught. She adds that pedagogy includes the manner in which teaching takes place, the teaching and learning approach, the diverse ways through which content is taught and what learners take home from the teaching and learning process.

Alexander (2003) agrees with Cogill (2008) as he postulates that ''pedagogy is the act of teaching combined with its associated discourse. It is what a teacher should know, and the skills the teacher has to command so as to make and justify the numerous different kinds of decisions of which teaching is constituted'' (p3).It is therefore clear that pedagogy surpasses how teaching is done in the classroom to the more rigorous work of how it is learned and decision making. Having acquired content knowledge, it follows that the student teacher needs and understanding of how to pass the content across and how the content will have to be learned by the learners.

Alpha one of the participants considered pedagogy to be the most disturbing thing about the teaching and learning process. He stated that;

> *Knowing what to teaching is quite easy because you can study it in a few hours and you're ready to go to class. But determining how to teach it is the most difficult part since you have to make sure that your learners perfectly comprehend what you are teaching. At times I ponder for days about what methods to use and how best my learners can learn that particular topic. But when I finally choose a method my learners end up enjoying the lesson and grasping if not everything the essentials about the topic.*

Boreham and Gray (2006) posit that the essence of a teacher or teachers' professional identity is negotiated and renegotiated in the workplace and it involves a relationship between the teacher and the teaching and learning process. And pedagogy is what ensures the smooth functioning of the teaching and learning process. Without a concrete knowledge of pedagogy, no meaningful learning can take place since it deals how learning takes place and how teaching should be done. Some theorists Feistritzer (2007) and Boe, Shin, and Cook (2007) have argued that pedagogical expertise is the primary indicator of an extremely qualified teacher. As such a teacher's choice of pedagogy is anchored on his believes, values and attitude towards his learners. The teacher therefore needs to fully relate with his pedagogy and also use it to relate with his or her learners for them to fully comprehend the lesson. As such the higher the level of a student teacher's pedagogical expertise, the faster his or her professional development. Teacher educators should therefore utilize student teachers lesson plans and teaching practice feedbacks to determine their level of pedagogical expertise and in turn ensure that those who lacking behind should before fully equipped with pedagogical tools with which they can function in the teaching and learning process while experiencing teachers' professional identity.

Bravo another participant also added that

> *Meaning in content is conveyed through pedagogy and when choosing pedagogy the learners have to be considered since what we know has to be transferred to the learner. I often put myself in the place of the learner, considering his or her previous knowledge, age and experiences as I meditate on what I am going to teach the next day. When I do this, I develop a relationship between the content, the learner and myself and I am able to identify those areas that may confuse or bore my learners. This leads me to*

choose diverse strategies which might complement the lesson and make it interesting.

Kemp, Blake, Shaw and Preston (2009) opine that when a teacher puts his or her self in the place of the learner and ponder about the learners difficulties and questions that may arise during a lesson, he or she clarifies the content thereby making it easy straightforward and interesting. Feistritzer (2007) added that since pedagogy is the arts and science of teaching, teachers have to be interested in how their learners grasp the content being taught and how they apply it in their daily lives. This would push them to choose and develop strategies which would allow the learners to fully participate in the lesson and consequently apply what they have learnt in their daily lives. This complex process of assuming the learners position and perspective gives the student teacher stamina and helps develop expertise in pedagogical issues making the student teachers professional development unavoidable as he experiences teachers' professional identity.

Delta another participant was also of the opinion that experiencing teachers professional identity was all about relationships and this relationship was enshrined in pedagogy since in it's the platform upon which the teacher translate knowledge to his or her learners. To stated that;

> *I believe every teacher has or should have his or her pedagogy and for me it is all about making my learners understand the lesson. I used a variety of teaching approaches like group work, discussions, debate, storytelling and many others to avoid making my strategies monotonous. I choose these strategies based on my relationship with my learners, colleagues and the school at large. I also take the availability of resources into consideration so that I don't end up being embarrassed in the classroom.*

Kansanen (2009) argues that relationships between the teacher, the content and learner is pedagogical and this relationship should be managed carefully, since it involves different kinds of decisions to be made by the teacher as far as the teaching and learning process is concerned. In choosing pedagogical strategies, teachers utilize more than ''just the latest government ideas on how teachers should teach into the classroom'' (Cogill, 2008 p. 4). She adds that the teacher's choice may be affected by his or her personal experience, position in school and the training he or she had. Bruner (1999) concur with this as he also argues that the manner in which the teacher looks at the learners mind determines the pedagogical practices he uses. He adds that there are four major levels of students mind which a teacher

needs to understand: ‘‘children as supervisors of their own knowledge, children as imitative learners, viewing children as thinkers and children as learning from didactic exposure,’’ (12). The mastery of these levels equips the student teacher for his professional development as he or she experiences teachers’ professional identity. As such teacher education programs should endeavor increase the teachers self-knowledge in teaching and in things patterning to teaching so that they will gain the necessary skills which will enable them to develop professionally (Schepens, Aelterman & Vlerick, 2009; Timostsuk & Ugaste, 2012).

It is therefore clear that experiencing teachers’ professional identity is all about relationships; relationship with the content and relationship with pedagogy and these relationships gradually lead to the professional development of the student teachers as the continuously engage in the teaching and learning process.

5.5 Professional Development

Stenberg (2010) defines professional development as the process of expanding and increasing self-knowledge. She adds that the more the self-knowledge of the teacher increases, the more apt his or her decisions will be in the teaching and learning process. This is because self-knowledge empowers teachers to recognize how, why and when they teach the way they do. The lack of self-knowledge will cause a teacher to be lead or controlled by unexamined ideas, beliefs and cultural myths not forgetting fear. Gemeda, Fiorucci and Catarci (2013) postulated that professional development comes as a result of all learning experiences and the structured and organised activities which are meant to be of benefit whether directly or indirectly to the student teacher, teacher or any organ or person within the teaching and learning process who contributes to the quality of education (3). Student teachers therefore need to develop professionally to become a teacher and also to gain a variety of teaching skills and these comes as a result of learning experiences and a deep sense of self (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009).

5.5.1 Becoming a Teacher

The ultimate aim of teacher education is to produce teachers and this is done by training student teachers until they graduate or phase out into the teaching profession. As such experiencing teachers’ professional identity is all about becoming a teacher in the classroom; disposing of your statues as a student and assuming that of the teacher and performing the

duties associated with it. Meijer, Graaf, and Meirink (2011) postulated that student teachers are require to use every resource at their disposal such as portfolio, mentor reports and feedbacks, teachers lesson plans, their reflections reports and many others to monitor and foster their development into teachers. And experiencing teachers' professional identity is what provides the student teacher with those resources. To the participants of the study experiencing teachers' professional identity was all about becoming a teacher. Charlie one of them started that;

> *Once I stepped into the class I didn't want the learners to see me as a student teacher who is learning how to teach, I dropped everything both physically and psychologically that associated me to a student and fully became a teacher. I believed that this will improve my performance and increase my knowledge about the responsibilities and processes a teacher is involve in as he or she becomes involve in the teaching and learning process. Also owing to the fact that one of the teachers in the school abandoned his class to me once I arrived the school, I had to be to be the teacher of the class.*

Schepens, Aelterman and Vlerick (2009) argued that student teachers often consider development to be the ability to do things better than before and those aspects which improved in their practice or the things they were able to do better and neglect how those things were improved. Teacher education and everything about it aims at helping the student teacher to become a teacher. As such when he or she goes into the school and assume the responsibility of the teacher, his or her drive is growing in the practice and becoming a teacher. This progress or improvement in practice is what guarantees professional development for the student teacher. Figure 5.2 below demonstrates this more accurately.

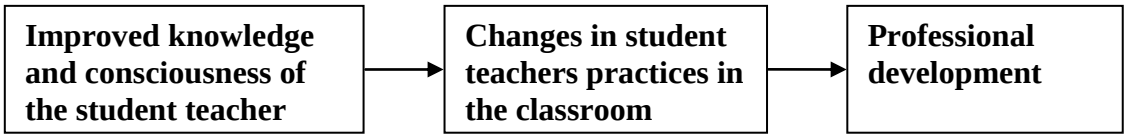

Figure 5.2 Model of student teacher change and development adapted from Guskey (2002, p. 383).

Delta was another participant who considered experiencing teachers' professional identity to about becoming a teacher. She started that:

> *Assuming the role of a teacher of me is all about my desire to be a teacher. Some learners (especially those in grade 10, 11 and 12) consider student*

teachers to be ignorant as such minimise them. I was a victim of this but what kept me going was my desire to become a teacher. I was constantly discourage to abandon the practice and go but I kept on pushing know that it is through this practice that I will subsequently become a teacher and earn the respect I deserve.

Gemeda, Fiorucci and Catarci (2013) propounded that student teachers need constant motivation to put into practice what they have learned. This is because motivation is the primary reason to teaching or teacher excellence. When the desired motivation has been gotten the student teacher or teacher will go to any length to ensure that appropriate learning takes place. They added that this is due to the fact that the teaching professional has gradually slummed into the category of the least paid jobs and teachers are losing motivation and quitting the profession. Many only stay in it because they can't find another job, while many who are joining it also doing so because they can't find another job. Experiencing teachers' professional identity therefore is about becoming a teacher and to fully function as a teacher the student teacher needs motivation. In ensuring that the student teachers develop professionally, there is therefore constant need for motivation both in their studies and when they are experiencing teachers' professional identity.

5.5.2 Teaching Skills

Experiencing teachers' professional identity is all about the exhibition or utilization of the teaching skills learned during teacher education. Wragg (2005) defines teaching skills as the strategies utilized by teachers to enhance learners learning in the teaching and learning process and which are recognized by curriculum experts or assessment experts as skills. He continues that every skill has the capacity to be repeated time and time again and concludes that these skills should be analyzed from a broader perspective of activity such as classroom management, questioning, explaining, flexibility, versatility.

Bravo one of the participants of the study believed that assuming a teachers role is all about demonstrating his thinking skill in the classroom. He believed it is quite necessary for meaningful learning to take place in the classroom because;

There are times when you plan a lesson and write down examples you are going to use but while in class you discover that your examples have not been

well understood. As such your thinking skills have to come in play so that new examples can be constructed which will ease learners understanding.

As such thinking skills is of outmost importance as far as experiencing teachers' professional identity is concerned. Student teachers need to therefore need to develop a strong thinking mentality or habit which will enable them stand tall in the face of any challenge. Bravo added that;

> *Sometimes learners ask you questions in class which you never anticipated or which requires certain concrete and detailed explanations. Or come to you with a personal challenge which requires careful thinking on your part before providing an answer. In this case the thinking skill is very important in providing a solution to the learner. This is due to the fact that there are many things we know but which are in our sub conscious mind and only critical thinking can bring them to the conscious mind.*

The student teacher therefore should possess a sound thinking skill or ability which he or she can constantly draw from while the teaching and learning process is going on. But it is rather disturbing that most people in the world at large do not think according to Oyedepo (2010). He states that a startling world report indicated that ''only 5 percent of the human race think, while 15 percent think they are thinking and the remaining 80 percent would rather die than think''(68). As such thinking especially critical thinking is a problem to man. Teacher education programs therefore need to take this into consideration and train teachers who have the ability to think critically and extensively. It is through such constant critical thinking that professional development is attained.

The cognitive skill is another teaching skill which is of vital importance as far as experiencing teachers' professional identity is concerned according to Alpha another participant of the study. He stated that;

> *In the classroom, this skill enables the student teacher to make quick and precise decisions based on changing circumstances and also amend lesson plans and teaching strategies to accommodate certain unforeseen circumstances. This is so because its development or cultivation provides the student teacher with a wealth of information about the processes and random circumstances that might occur during the teaching and learning process. It makes him or her aware of what might or might not happen in the classroom and equips the student teacher with the necessary tools to deal with them.*

Kyriacou (2007) argued that teachers build a catalog of reactions and behavioral patterns from which they pick the most suitable to deal with impromptu situations ranging from learners not being able to do the work they are supposed to do, to the broader prospects of disruptive behavior or failing in assessment task. He adds that the teacher profession is quite tedious in its early years to beginning teachers because they have to develop their expertise of ‘‘knowing what to do and being able to do it’’ (3). And this explains why many teachers leave the professional during their first few years of practice. Therefore teacher educators need to ensure that the development of this skills or expertise becomes part of the teacher education program such that student teachers will be fully equipped with these skills which will in turn ensure their smooth functioning in the teaching and learning process. The development of these skills by the student teacher ultimately leads to his or her professional development.

Delta was another participant who considered experiencing teachers’ professional identity to essentially about teaching skills. She stated that;

> *Becoming a teacher in a classroom is about managing the class and the learners learning. It is also about maintain discipline and ensuring that every learner learners what he or she is supposed to learn. To achieve this, the teacher must be flexible especially in the foundation phase where there is commotion most of the time. Only the teacher’s (student teacher) classroom management skills coupled with his or her disciplinary abilities and flexibility that can remedy such a commotion and ensure that meaningful learning takes place.*

Hedberg (2010) said teaching skills like classroom management, discipline and questioning are critical skills which a teacher should possess in order to succeed in the teaching profession. To her and Wragg (2005) without these skills teaching and learning cannot be successful. It is therefore of great importance that the student teacher learns these skills through teacher education so as to be fully prepared for his or her future profession. The development of these skills will also unequivocally lead to the development of the student teacher.

5.6 Conclusion

This chapter has analyzed the data provided by the participants in the study. It has examined the four main themes and the eight sub themes which were deduced from the data. In analyzing the data, the researcher has answered the two research questions which were: what experiences do student teachers have of teachers' professional identity within the context of a changing curriculum? And how can these experiences shape their professional development as teachers of tomorrow? In the next chapter which is the last chapter titled conclusion, the researcher will examine certain conclusions arising from the study and make some recommendations where necessary.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

This is the concluding chapter of this research titled "Student teachers' experiences of teachers' professional identity within the context of a changing curriculum in a university in Kwa-Zulu Natal. The focus of this study was toexplore student teachers experiences of teachers' professional identity within the context of a changing curriculum and how these experiences in turn shape the professional development of the student teacher. This was done by asking two main questions: what experiences do student teachers have of teacher professional identity? And how can these experiences shape or not shape their professional development as teachers of tomorrow?

In response to the research questions the participants generated data which was categorised into four main themes; complicated demand on self, the curriculum, relationships and professional development. These four themes were further broken down into eight sub themes; individual self, multiple self, syllabus, lesson delivery, content, pedagogy, becoming a teacher and teaching skills. These sub themes were then analysed in conjunction with the literature. This chapter therefore drawing from the findings of the study makes certain conclusions or provides a summary of findings and certain recommendations.

6.2 Summary of Findings

The summary of the findings is based on the analysis made in the previous chapter and it is divided into two sub themes: the complexity of the teaching and learning process and the importance of experiencing teachers' professional identity.

6.2.1 The Complexity of the Teaching and Learning Process.

The teaching and learning process is a very complicated one both for the teacher and the learners and entails a lot of conscious and unconscious processes. From the findings of the study it is clear that what happens in or around a classroom can never be known with certainty. As constructionists postulate, learning is constructed socially and its results are dependent on the context upon which it is created. As such teacher educators and stakeholders should constantly consider the context in which their would-be teachers are

going to be teaching so as to properly prepare them for the task. With the complicated demand teaching places on the teacher, adequate preparation needs to be made for the teacher to fully function in this role. Since the teacher has to function as a curriculum developer and lifelong learner, teacher education should inculcate such skills and attributes in teachers such that as they enter the teaching field they will be practicing what the already know and are used to.

Student teachers go through teacher education to emerge as teachers and therefore they need a perfect understanding of the curriculum in use. Most participants postulated that what they are being taught during teacher education doesn't directly translate to what he or she will be teaching when he or she becomes a teacher. Since the curriculum policy document constantly changes' student teachers should be trained to embrace change. But since it is one thing to embrace change and another thing to fully implement the change the way it was intended, the concept of lifelong learning should be inculcated in every student teacher such that when faced with change when they are teachers, they will know and understand that it is their responsibility to learn and understand how to authentically implement curriculum change.

The complicated relationships which are embedded in the teaching and learning process makes it very complicated. In a school environment there are different participants such as: teachers, learners, administrators. For these different groups of people to relate to each other, makes the teaching and learning process. Furthermore blending content with pedagogy also makes the teaching and learning process a very complicated one. Knowing what to teach doesn't directly make one a teacher but knowing what to teach and how to teach it effectively is what makes a teacher therefore it is the duty of teacher educators to make sure that student teachers are well versed with this. From the data generated, it was clear that a more rigorous approach of controlling and guiding student teachers during their experiences of teachers' professional identity is needed. Teacher education programs must monitor their student teachers carefully and provide them with information that is up to date and of a high standard such that they will be well schooled in every approach of teaching and become conversant with the actual material that is being taught in schools.

Developing professionally from a student teacher into a teacher is a complicated process which leads to a multi-dimensional involvement in a very complicated process (the teaching and learning process). Martinez (1994) postulated that teaching is a difficult task and student

teachers require a lot of support. He adds this is often made more difficult by diverse shortcomings inherent in teacher education programs. This explains why many teachers leave the profession after a few years of teaching. The complicated nature of the teaching and learning process should therefore be considered by teacher educators and other stakeholders when student teachers are being trained.

6.2.2 The Importance of Experiencing Teachers' Professional Identity

To complete the teacher education program without experiencing teachers' professional identity is like being immersed in water but not getting wet. Experiencing teachers' professional identity is of vital importance for every student teacher since it helps build their arsenal of knowledge and approaches. In experiencing teachers' professional identity, the student teacher becomes entangled in the proverbial web of teaching. He or she becomes acquainted with what happens in the classroom and starts preparing him or herself for the eminent change of phase. Experiencing teachers' professional identity psychologically prepares the student teacher for the complicated task that awaits him or her in the future. Before fully becoming a teacher, he or she is given a glimpse of what it means to be a teacher and the kind of demands it places on the teacher as well as the kind of responsibilities he or she has to take on as a teacher. Through this experience, the student teacher also knows and understands how to handle the diverse challenges he might or will go through when he or she becomes a teacher.

By experiencing teachers' professional identity, the student teacher also gains an understanding of the intended, the enacted and the received curriculum. He or she understands the difference between what he or she learns and what he or she has to teach. Experiencing teachers' professional identity also offers the student teacher the opportunity for familiarizing his or herself with the syllabus and also how lessons are delivery. This is important for the student teachers since this also helps his or her understanding of the reason why he or she has to not only study certain things but to study it carefully and in detail. It helps stamp out from the student teachers' mind the notion of studying to get degrees or learning for learning sake and therefore to critically engage with issues and fully develop his or her mind.Schwab (2012) postulated that the South African education system was ranked 140 out of 144 countries that were examined. If student teachers take their studies serious and

produce better results these circumstances can be changed as they take their places as teachers.

It is also important for student teachers to experience teachers' professional identity since it offers them the opportunity of practically relating content and pedagogy. Content and pedagogy stand out as the main things that make learning possible since being able to relate content with pedagogy in the classroom helps the student teacher identify his or her weaknesses and also to work on them. As the student teacher grows in this relationship he or she gradually develops professionally. He or she also learns how to become a teacher and also to develop teaching skills which would help him or her for the rest of his or her teaching career. Without the experiences the student teacher derives from being a teacher, his or her training will never be complete. Teacher education courses stand out as the ladder to becoming a teacher but experiencing teachers' professional identity is what ensures that the teacher will remain there forever.

6.3 Recommendations

The focus of this study was to explore student teachers experiences of teachers' professional identity within the context of a changing curriculum in a University in Kwa-Zulu Natal. The study was limited to a single university and to four student teachers in the university because of the qualitative nature of the study. Therefore the findings of the study cannot be generalised. The researcher therefore recommends further to other students and researchers in the nearby future a research of a quantitative nature on the topic involving more than one university and many more student teachers so that the findings can become generalizable and more objective. Also, extending the study to areas outside Kwa-Zulu Natal to places like the Eastern Cape where school performance is quite poor will help teacher educators and stakeholders know what to improve in teacher education programmes.

Secondly teacher educators and stakeholders should consider the challenges student teachers go through when experiencing teachers' professional identity and take the necessary steps to meeting these challenges. The reports of student teachers' mentors should be treated on an individual basis and adequate steps taken to ensure that the student teacher develops professionally.

Student teachers should also be encouraged to take full responsibility for their learning and development thereby making them ready and conscious to deal with change. Further research should be undertaken on mentor feedback and professional development of the student teacher so that all avenues will be open for the student teacher to grow and develop. And lastly more and more avenues should be created for student teachers to experience teachers' professional identity as these grounds and establishes them in the profession.

6.4 Conclusion

This study was divided into six chapters, the first being the introductory chapter which dealt with the focus of the study, the background, the key research questions, definition of key terms and ended with a map of the study. The second chapter was a literature review of what other researchers have said about the topic and this was subdivided into defining teachers' professional identity, the nature of teachers' professional identity, determinants of teachers' professional identity and finally teacher education and teachers' professional identity. The third chapter dealt with the theoretical framework and the paradigm of the study and it discussed social constructionism as the theoretical framework and the interpretive paradigm as the platform the study will use. The fourth chapter focused on the research design and the methodology. In this chapter, the type of research which is case study research was discussed coupled with the method for data generation, the manner in which the data will be analysed, the sampling of participants, the ethical considerations, trustworthiness and the limitations of the study. The fifth chapter was an analysis of the data generated and it was divided into four main themes: complicated demand on self, the curriculum, relationship, and professional development. These four themes were further divided into eight sub themes; the individual self, the multiple self, the syllabus, lesson delivery, content, pedagogy, becoming a teacher and teaching skills. This last chapter summarizes the findings of the study, makes recommendations and finally concludes the study.

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APPENDIX 1

ETHICAL CLEARANCE

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL
INYUVESI YAKWAZULU-NATALI

15 August 2013

Mr Kehdinga George Fomunyam 212558999
School of Education
Edgewood Campus

Protocol reference number: HSS/0691/013M
Project title: Student Teachers' experiences of teachers professional Identity within the Context of Changing Curriculum in a University in KwaZulu-Natal

Dear Mr Fomunyam

Full Approval – Expedited

This letter serves to notify you that your application in connection with the above has now been granted full approval.

Any alterations to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach/Methods must be reviewed and approved through an amendment /modification prior to its Implementation. Please quote the above reference number for all queries relating to this study. PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the school/department for a period of 5 years.

Best wishes for the successful completion of your research protocol

Yours faithfully

Dr Shenuka Singh (Deputy Chair)

/px

cc Supervisor: Dr SB Khoza
cc Academic Leader Research: Dr MN Devids
cc School Administrator: Ms B Bhengu and Mr T Mthembu

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee
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Website: www.ukzn.ac.za
Founding Campuses: Edgewood Howard College Medical School Pietermaritzburg Westville

INSPIRING GREATNESS

APPENDIX 2

INFORMED CONSENT

Informed consent for research participants: student teachers in a University in Kwa-Zulu Natal.

Dear Sir/Madam

I (Kehdinga George Fomunyam) am currently a registered full-time master's student at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. As part of the requirements to obtaining my degree, I am supposed to conduct a research project in my area of interest. The have chosen the following as the topic for my research: Student Teachers Experiences of Teachers' Professional Identity within the context of Curriculum Change in a University in KwaZulu-Natal.

This research aims an answering the following critical question:

1. What experiences do student teachers have of teachers' professional identity within the context of a changing curriculum?
2. How can these experiences shape or not shape their professional development as teachers of tomorrow?

The results of this research may contribute knowledge around student teachers experiences and ways of fostering professional development for the student teacher.

Research expectations of participants:

1. All participants will be expected to participate in an interview in a venue and at a time that is convenient for them.
2. A follow-up meeting will be scheduled to verify a transcript of interviews in order to confirm what was said earlier

Research Ethics:

1. Participants will participate in this study voluntarily, and are allowed to withdraw at any time.
2. Participants will be protected from any harm, i.e. they will not be exposed to any risks.
3. The participants will not under any circumstances be coerced to respond to interview questions in a particular manner, i.e. they have the right to refuse to answer some questions if they choose to do so.
4. In order to ensure confidentiality and anonymity, pseudonyms and different codes will be used for all participants. Each participant will only be aware of his/her own pseudonym and code.
5. Data generation during this research will only be used for the purposes of this study.

Your participation in this research project will be highly appreciated. Copies of the transcripts of data and research findings will be made available for any participant who is interested in them.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully

Kehdinga George Fomunyam

_____

Contact details:

Researcher: Kehdinga George Fomunyam
University of KwaZulu-Natal
0313044005

Supervisor: Dr. Simon Bheki Khoza
University of KwaZulu-Natal
031-2603478

I have read the above terms and agree with them. I understand that my real name will not be used in the write-up (dissertation) of this study and that the information that I will provide will be used only for this project. I am also aware that I am not forced to answer any questions that make me uncomfortable and that I am free to withdraw from the project at any point. Therefore, I am giving consent to participate in this research project.

Name: _____ Signature: _____

Date:_____