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**INYUVESI  
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**An investigation of the specific job-related challenges and coping strategies of Senior and Master teachers at South African public schools**

**by**

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**A dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education (Teacher Development Studies), School of Education, College of Humanities, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood Campus**

**Supervisor**

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**June 2020**

## DECLARATION

I, **Olivia Pinkie Zondi**, declare that

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2. This thesis has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.
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**STATEMENT BY SUPERVISOR**

This dissertation is submitted with my approval.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
*Prof A Philipp*

June 2020

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

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## **DEDICATION**

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## ABSTRACT

Many in-service teachers describe their profession as highly challenging and express feelings of stress. In South African schools, some of these teachers also become Senior or Master teachers. As part of the Senior and Master teacher roles, they have additional tasks to fulfil and they thus form a specific level in the school hierarchy. Research from Occupational Psychology has coined the term middle managers for such positions (also called sandwich positions). This term implies that employees in such positions face a specific set of job-related challenges. The same can be assumed for Senior and Master teachers. Yet, there are job-related challenges of these two groups of teachers and coping strategies they use to cope with these specific set of challenges. Thus, the aim of this study was to investigate the specific job-related challenges and coping strategies of Senior and Master teachers at South African public schools.

This research draws on the Transactional Model of Stress and Coping (Lazarus & Folkman, 1987) as a theoretical framework which allows a researcher to look at the daily challenges of individuals and their coping strategies and how both may affect their well-being. The study was conducted in three Primary schools and two Secondary schools in the Umlazi District using a sequential mixed-method design involving quantitative followed by qualitative data generation based on a pragmatic paradigm. Data were generated using screening questionnaires (N=40) based on established scales to assess challenges and coping strategies as well as semi-structured interviews with selected Senior and Master teachers (n=5). Quantitative data on the level of challenges and choice of coping strategies of Senior and Master teachers was presented enriched by qualitative data which was analysed thematically.

For quantitative results, Senior and Master teachers showed moderate to high levels of role clarity and support from supervisors and colleagues but also moderate levels of role conflict. These teachers also used instrumental support, positive reframing and planning as the mostly used coping strategies. The least used coping strategies were behavioural disengagement, humour and self-blame. For the well-being of these teachers, the more coping strategies they used the more likely they were to show low to moderate levels of stress, somatic stress and cognitive stress. For example, when these teachers used behavioural disengagement, positive reframing, religion, self-

blame and distraction, results show low to moderate levels of stress and somatic stress as well as low levels of cognitive stress.

For qualitative results, Senior and Master teachers indicated clear roles, lack of recognition and lack of induction when it came to facing their challenges. The most used coping strategies for these teachers were active coping, acceptance, instrumental support and behavioural disengagement. For their well-being, when they use behavioural disengagement, instrumental support, active coping and acceptance, the less they are affected by stress, somatic stress and cognitive stress. In conclusion, these results shed light on the specific roles of Senior and Master teachers, which in turn will help them fulfil their specific tasks more effectively.

## **LIST OF ACRONYMS**

ELRC	-----	Education Labour Relations Council
SMT	-----	School Management Team
DoE	-----	Department of Education
PL1	-----	Post Level One teachers
IQMS	-----	Integrated Quality Management System
HoD	-----	Head of Department
FET	-----	Further Education and Training
GET	-----	General Education and Training
PAM	-----	Personnel Administrative Measures
CAO	-----	Central Application Office
PISA	-----	Programme for International Student Assessment
NIE	-----	National Institute of Education
SGB	-----	School Governing Body
SADTU	-----	South African Democratic Teachers' Union
SAERA	-----	South African Education Researchers' Association
NRF	-----	National Research Foundation
IT	-----	Information Technology
PhD	-----	Doctor of Philosophy

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

#### 1.1 Introduction

This chapter sets the tone for the topic of this dissertation, which addresses the challenges of Senior and Master teachers. The specific job-related challenges and coping strategies of Senior and Master teachers at South African public schools were investigated from a Master teacher's perspective. In this chapter, the background is presented to the creation of posts of the Senior and Master teachers and outlines the problem addressed in the research and the aims of the study. This chapter will arrive at the objectives as well as the critical research questions that are addressed in the research. To allow for conceptual clarity, brief definitions of the key concepts used will be outlined.

#### 1.2 Background and Rationale of the study

The creation of Senior and Master teacher positions by the Department of Basic Education has led to confusion amongst teachers. According to *the Education Labour Relations Council, Collective Agreement NO.5 of 2006*, these positions were created in March 2006. The collective agreement is a written contract negotiated through collective bargaining between the Department of Basic Education and teacher Unions, regarding the regulation of terms and conditions of employees (or teachers) at work.

The system of education in South Africa at that time recognised that there were many teachers with many years' experience who were not occupying promotional positions. Therefore, these positions were established to mitigate the challenges brought about by the scarcity of promotional positions in school establishments. The aim behind the creation of these positions was to improve career development or advancement for qualified Post Level one (PL 1) teachers and to accelerate progression for all teachers on applicable salary levels. Usually, Post Level one teachers occupy salary level seven. Therefore, the purpose of this agreement was to make preparations for qualified Post Level one teachers to accelerate and progress to higher

salary levels, for example, salary level nine, without having to be promoted to an available vacant post that needs advertisement. Another purpose was to make sure that all teachers progress more quickly to the maximum of their applicable salary scales. However, according to this agreement (Education Labour Relations Council, 2006), a qualified teacher may progress by means of salary and grade to the position of Senior teacher on salary level eight. Once that Senior teacher has completed a period of at least 12 months on this salary level, he/she may be progressed to the next salary of level nine, and his salary moved to that particular level. Grade progression means the movement of salary from one scale in salary level eight to the first salary notch of salary level nine. For salary grading during grade progression, there are two notches attached, that is, the first or lower salary notch and the second or higher salary notch. Therefore, upon grade progression to salary level nine, the Senior teacher is then known as a Master teacher.

These positions are for Post Level one teachers who are expected to be of assistance to the School Management Teams and also to the development of the teaching staff. The teachers given such positions have a lot of experience, and that is why they are given these designations. This title indicates that they have more than 15 years of teaching experience and have roles and duties that are specific to them. For example, according to the Education Labour Relations Council (2006), it is stipulated that amongst their roles, there is teaching, extra and co-curricular, administrative, interaction with stakeholders, to mention but a few. Under these roles fall the responsibilities that are bestowed on them that cannot be undertaken by a novice or a teacher without these qualifications.

The creation of these positions was to increase learner performance through effective teaching and learning. Contrary to these expectations, such positions have led to more problems than expected. The ELRC Collective Agreement (Education Labour Relations Council, 2006) clearly states that the positions of Senior and Master teachers are for improved career pathing for qualified PL1 teachers in salary level seven to progress to salary level eight and nine, without having to be promoted to an available vacant post. Hence these positions were questionable as there was no letter of appointment and no interviews conducted as is the case with other senior positions in the Teaching profession. For example, according to *Education Labour Relations Council, Collective Agreement NO.1 of 2008*, for school-based and office-based promotional posts, when a teacher is promoted to be a Head of Department, Deputy Principal, Principal or Education Specialist, there are formalities that are followed, like being interviewed for the advertised job, issuing of the appointment letter for a new position, being

formally announced to the members of staff and also being workshopped for the new position that the teacher is occupying.

The situation was aggravated by the fact that these teachers learned that they had been promoted to these new positions from their salary advice notices. Another problem was the lack of clarity of what this role might entail. It seemed that in some schools, being a Senior or Master teacher means to be part of the management, whereas, in other schools, it means being in the pool of other Post Level one teachers.

According to the Education Labour Relations Council (2006), Senior and Master teachers are teachers who have the same tasks as any other teachers. They are supposed to be classroom teachers or managers, and they are supposed to plan, prepare and go to class and teach. In addition, they are supposed to look after the interests of the school as well as those of the learners.

The positions of Senior and Master teachers are well intended because they indicate the level of seniority in a school. They also come with responsibilities as mentioned above (Education Labour Relations Council, 2006) which are an indication that teachers occupying them are expected to 'go the extra mile'. This means to do what is expected of them beyond the duties of PL 1 teacher like communicating and co-operating with and supporting other teachers regarding instructional procedures and personal growth. This implies that they might experience challenges beyond the challenges of PL 1 teachers. To be able to meet these challenges, they should have sufficient resources to be able to function in their roles (Education Labour Relations Council, 2006). As one potential resource, it is important to investigate if these teachers have the coping strategies which will enable them to overcome these challenges. However, bearing in mind that there seems to be some confusion and misunderstanding concerning the existence of Senior and Master teacher positions in schools and a limited understanding concerning the nature and obligations of their positions, it is not clear if these resources are available or developed fully. Thus, I decided to investigate this topic further.

In a first step, I now outline the content of the ELRC Collective Agreement NO.5 of 2006 which details the roles, responsibilities, and functions of these teachers in addition to classroom teaching, which I have mentioned above. These tasks summarised below are mandatory duties for them.

## ***ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF SENIOR AND MASTER TEACHERS***

### **Teaching**

Senior and Master teachers are expected to focus on and be involved in classroom teaching (Education Labour Relations Council, 2006). They are also expected to encourage the development and progression in learning, to be consistent with the learning areas and programmes of subjects and grades, as stated in the school curriculum. On top of that, they are required to be class teachers. Among other tasks, they are supposed to plan, design and prepare lessons paying attention to orientation, regional courses, new approaches to teaching and learning as well as assessments in their field. This they can do by selecting, developing and using a variety of resources, for example, dedicating their personal time in order to achieve the various objectives of all concerned. This is a crucial activity that requires that all children are involved in the teaching and learning process. It is crucial in the sense that it is when the teacher should lay the foundations, allowing everyone to have equal access to knowledge, skills and the requirements of the topic under discussion. By so doing, everyone will have the chance to progress and succeed.

Dorman, Fraser and McRobbie (1997, p. 1) argue that there is a generally accepted view that “a good school environment enhances student outcomes”. This means that a good environment yields good results based on high-quality standards of teaching and learning. By good environment, reference is made to class size and availability of resources, for example, teaching materials, like textbooks and computers - to mention just two resources. Above all else, they should create a positive learning environment that stimulates positive learning which actively engages all learners in the learning process. Lastly, they should take leading roles in respect of the subject, learning area or phase, if required. This they can do by setting out the vision of the organisation they represent, clearly, in this case, the school and to motivate teachers through the work process and also to build morale amongst them. Apart from this core role, they are expected to fulfil other roles as outlined below:

### **Extra and co-curricular activities.**

The Education Labour Relations Council (2006) further illustrates that Senior and Master teachers are expected to assist the Heads of Department (HoD) to establish different features that require further attention and also help in addressing them, for example, ensuring that buildings and classrooms are clean and inviting or that learners’ work is up to standard. Additionally, they need to cater for the safety of all learners in their care. They are required to

assist the principal in overseeing learner counselling and guidance, career counselling, discipline and the general welfare of all learners. Lastly, they share the responsibilities of organising and conducting some activities in a school. Extra-curricular activities are those that are non-academic, and they include sports, music lessons and scouting. Co-curricular activities, on the other hand, include student council, school sports teams, shows or competitions and performances by amateur entertainers. They also include discussions and debates as well as drama productions. However, extra-curricular and co-curricular activities are “distinctly different, but both can add essential experience and skills to a student’s course of study” (Reaves, Hinson & Marchant, 2010, p. 54). Apart from this role, they are expected to fulfil other roles that will be discussed below:

### **Administration**

In as far as the administrative role is concerned, Senior and Master teachers have to be responsible for all the activities of the learning area taught (Education Labour Relations Council, 2006). This they can do by coordinating and controlling them. On top of this, they are expected to take care of all the stock (for example, ordering of books and stationery) and equipment for example for sporting activities) which is used and required. They are also expected to engage in management tasks in support of the Management. When, and if required, they are to act as the leaders of Subjects, Phases or Grades as a way of providing support to the relevant Education Specialists or the HoDs. In performing or assisting with one or more of other non-teaching administrative duties, this means that they can be secretaries to general staff meetings, they must be prepared to assist in the collection of fees and other monies, they must be able to draw up the time-table for the school, and they must get themselves involved in staff welfare and any accidents that may occur during school time. Apart from these roles, Senior and Master teachers are also expected to interact with other stakeholders.

### **Interaction with stakeholders**

The interaction with stakeholders means that Senior and Master teachers are required to take part in or to become involved in agreed school/educator appraisal processes in order to review regularly their professional practice with the aim of bringing change and improving teaching, learning and management (Education Labour Relations Council, 2006). Jongman and Padovani (2006) argue that the role played by stakeholders is essential as it develops knowledge for decision-making. For example, it is important that they contribute to the professional development of colleagues by sharing knowledge, ideas and resources. Above all, they must

keep up to date with information concerning current developments in educational thinking and curriculum development. Stakeholders are to take part in the school governance and in fulfilling communication role.

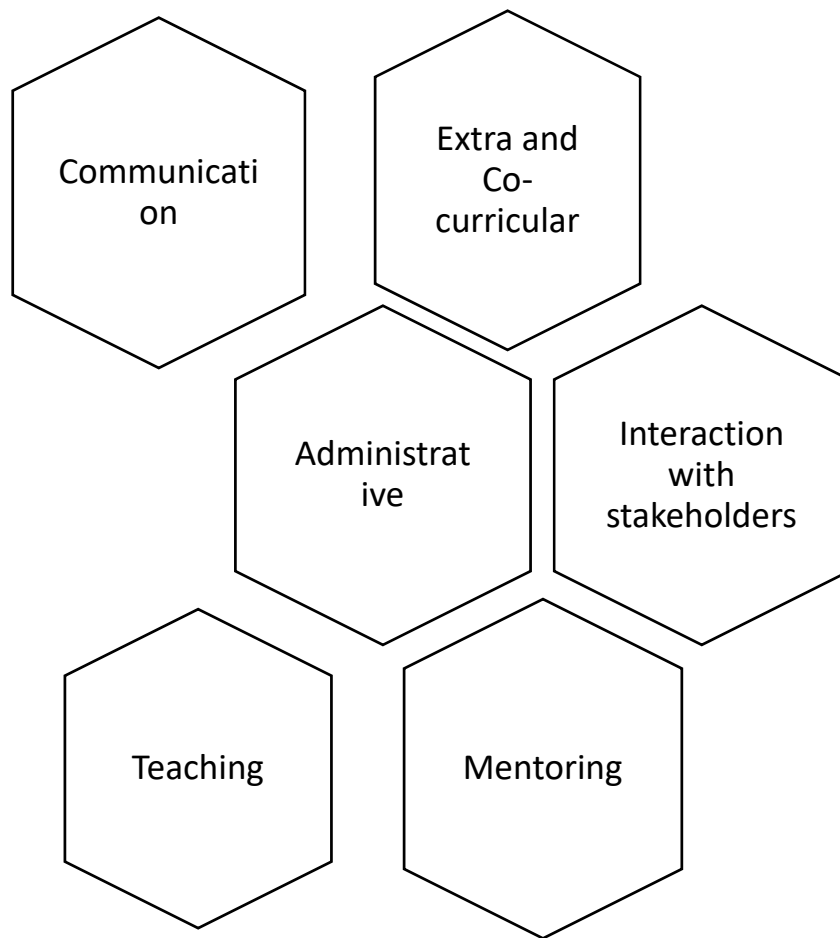
### **Communication**

The communication role suggests that Senior and Master teachers have to liaise and communicate with teachers from all grades, concerning teaching and learning, in order to maintain healthy teaching standards and ensuring progress among learners within the school (Education Labour Relations Council, 2006). Cornelissen (2008) refers to communication as public relations, meaning that it is communication with all stakeholders. For example, communication with Management and other teachers in the school. Moreover, they are to work with other teachers of other schools in organising and conducting non-related activities of the school. On top of this, they should also interact with parents and to discuss with them the behaviour and progress of their children. Furthermore, they must participate in departmental committees, for example, Staff Development Committee and Developmental Support Groups as a way of contributing towards the teaching profession. They must also work so closely with the community and be the voice of the principal with the public.

### **Mentoring**

Senior and Master teachers are expected to be mentor teachers to the less experienced teachers (Education Labour Relations Council, 2006). The concept of mentors is defined by Maynard (2000) when he talks about old timers giving guidance and directions to new timers. By old-timers, reference is made to experienced teachers and by new timers, reference is made to student or novice teachers. They are also supposed to advise and supervise novice and student teachers. Mentor teachers are expected to supervise, coach and give clear guidance and direction to pre-service teachers to successfully complete a professional experience placement and to develop their teaching capabilities (Awaya, McEwan, Heyler, Linsky, Lum, & Wakukawa, 2003).

The above additional tasks that these teachers are required to fulfil in comparison to other staff members may pose more threats or challenges than opportunities. Below is a figure that highlights the roles and responsibilities of these teachers.



**Figure 1.** A graphical representation of roles and responsibilities of Senior and Master teachers as outlined in the Education Labour Relations Council Agreement (2006).

## Summary

This section has discussed the background of the study, paying attention to the roles and responsibilities of Senior and Master teachers (refer to Figure 1, above). The next section focuses on the rationale for conducting this study and covers the personal, contextual and international debates concerning the challenges of these teachers.

### 1.3 Personal rationale for conducting this study

Finding myself in the Senior and Master teacher positions for a number of years has led me to research the nature of such positions which are public school positions in the South African

Education system and were designed for career pathing and accelerated progression amongst teachers who had served in the Department of Basic Education for more than fifteen years. There seems to have been chaos and confusion in the creation of these positions, which was caused by a number of factors. For example, personally, the manner in which this position was given to me is questionable, and I learnt of my promotion from my salary advice slip. Whilst the salary advice slip does contain important and confidential information for a position like this, everything should be official and indicated clearly and communicated amongst all the staff members in a school.

There was no letter of appointment appointing me to the Senior teacher position. According to Human Resources, a protocol should be followed when appointing anybody to this position and appointment letters should be issued to the appointee. This is especially true when the appointment is to, senior or higher positions. That was not done in my case; however, I had to occupy a new position, and there were a lot of expectations from the Management of the school and the teachers in general. Neither was there any communication from the Management nor clear guidance given by senior officials of the Department of Basic Education concerning the appointment.

I was still on the Post Level one like an ordinary teacher. Post Level one refers to the level of teachers who are not in the Management but find themselves in the same pool as other ordinary teachers whose job is to teach. By the time I was given the Senior teacher position, I had had seventeen years' experience in the Department of Basic Education which coincided with the eligibility criterion of a minimum of fifteen years as stated by the Department of Basic Education.

To my surprise, there were many teachers with more than fifteen years' experience in my school, but they were not in the category of Senior or Master teacher. I became so frustrated and, at the same time, inquisitive, and I started to doubt the authenticity of these positions. I, therefore, started discussing this with other teachers who also discovered about such positions through their Salary Advice Slips. Through those discussions, I discovered that there were also other teachers who were called Senior teachers and other Master teachers. I was so inquisitive and wanted to know more about these positions as well as the difference between the two (Senior teacher and Master teacher) and if there was, in fact, any difference. That prompted me

to do a further study on these positions in order to find out what rationale lay beyond the creation of these two categories.

### **Contextual rationale for the study**

According to the Education Labour Relations Council (2006), the Department of Basic Education clearly outlines the differences between Senior and Master teachers and the duties that these teachers should perform. The purpose of this agreement was to make provision for qualified Post Level one teachers to progress to Salary Level Nine without having to be promoted to an available vacant post and for all educators to progress more quickly to the maximum of their applicable salary scales.

The agreement emphasises that a Senior teacher occupies a middle position in the school hierarchy, who according to the Department of Basic Education, is required to work with the Management Team and to assist in the development of other teachers. This can be done so that effective teaching and learning is in place and an increase in learner performance as is the objective behind the creation of these posts. The Master teacher, on the other hand, works in collaboration with the HoD as his/her next immediate supervisor. This is a teacher whom students and novices look up to, for guidance and proper directions. A Master teacher, on the other hand, is also a teacher in the lower level of the school hierarchy, who according to the Department of Basic Education, does a similar job to a Senior teacher, but is more experienced than he/she is. The Master teacher reports to the HoD. He/she is also expected to develop other teachers in a school. This can be done through staff-development workshops and classroom visits. Mentoring also forms part of his/her job description.

In the South African education system, Senior and Master teachers are different compared to ordinary teachers because of the positions they occupy and the experience they have in a school. According to this system, the positions occupied by these teachers are beneficial in the sense that they were created to promote effective teaching and learning, leading to an increase in learner performance. Be this as it may, the positions come with responsibilities and demands. The positions of Senior and Master teachers are for experienced Post Level one teachers who possess some skills that are different from those found in other ordinary teachers. These skills refer to good communication because of the knowledge and expertise that they have. The

teachers given such positions are first and foremost expected to teach like all the other teachers. The mere fact that they are teachers is an indication that teaching should be a priority for them.

In addition to that, they need to take leading roles in non-academic related activities. This they can achieve by assisting in the running of the school, admission of learners to different grades, record keeping, and financial planning which involves the collection of school fees and other billing details. In addition to this, they should also interact with the stakeholders for the efficient running of the school. Stakeholders involve parents, learners, teachers, families, community members and School Governing Bodies. As far as their knowledge and skills are concerned, these should involve the ability to make decisions, and they must not be afraid of taking risks when necessary.

Senior and Master teachers are supposed to mentor teachers to the students and novice teachers (Education Labour Relations Council, 2006). This means that they must be leaders for staff development committees, and should be able to take leading roles in the implementation of the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) by explaining the whole process of the system to the newly employed teachers. That is, they should be able to explain the beneficial reasons for having a staff development committee in a school. They should also explain the idea behind the creation of the IQMS to these future teachers.

They are also expected to work closely with the Heads of Departments and to be able to simplify the Departmental concepts as a way of grooming both the students and novice teachers. In addition to this, they should possess good classroom management skills. Extra and co-curricular activities are the true and practical experiences received by learners or students in a school. They include sports and other activities. Therefore, Senior and Master teachers need to facilitate that learners engage themselves in sports and other activities in a school. The afore-mentioned roles and responsibilities of these teachers add to the challenges that they have on a daily basis in schools. My study is, therefore, to discover the other challenges that these teachers will experience and what coping strategies are necessary in order to overcome them.

### ***Development and growth status***

According to the Education Labour Relations Council (2006), Senior and Master teachers are teachers who have been moved from the teaching staff hierarchy to a middle hierarchy and are then in the middle position between the Management and the teachers. Being moved to another

level in the school ladder indicates some kind of growth. Therefore, the knowledge, skills and expertise that they have as Senior and Master teachers should indicate their potential to be able to meet the various challenges inherent in the position.

### ***Financial status***

Senior and Master teacher positions were created with the aim of moving teachers to another hierarchy level (Education Labour Relations Council, 2006). The purpose of this agreement was, therefore, to make provision for qualified Post Level one teachers to progress to Salary Level Nine without having to be promoted to an available vacant post and for all teachers to progress more quickly to the maximum of their applicable salary scales. This simply means that, in any organisation, being moved to another advanced level means a higher salary notch. This was done to retain teachers and to make the teaching profession more attractive.

### **International trends**

There are international debates concerning the positions of Senior and Master teachers. In countries like Singapore, Australia, Canada and Finland (Darling-Hammond, 2017), similar categories were introduced. In South Africa, a similar strategy to the one used in Singapore was used by introducing another level in the school hierarchy. For example, an introduction of a well-defined career ladder for teachers, including Senior and Master Teachers in South Africa was established. In Finland, on the other hand, an overall job enrichment beyond traditional teacher roles was also established (Darling-Hammond, 2017). Darling-Hammond (2017) talks about well-developed systems for the development of teachers in countries like Australia, Canada, Finland and Singapore whose systems include recruitment, preparation, induction and ongoing professional development and growth.

According to Darling-Hammond (2017, p. 291) “Teacher preparation and development are key building blocks in developing effective teachers”. When comparing the United States with Finland and Singapore, as well as other countries, there is a multitude of factors related to developing effective teachers (Darling-Hammond, 2017). South Africa has tried a similar method with the introduction of Senior and Master teacher positions. The aim behind the creation of these positions was two-fold. Firstly, the introduction aimed at creating a development and growth status (teacher-enrichment); and secondly, to create a different

financial status, as a way of making teaching more attractive and financially lucrative for teachers and, of course, consequently, to retain them in the profession.

### **Other Terms Related to Roles of Senior and Master teachers**

When researching these teachers, I noticed that I needed to expand my scope and to look at related terms to better understand the roles and potential challenges of these teachers. The following are the terms that refer to them: middle managers, staff developers and teachers working in a sandwich position. I will outline these terms in more detail below.

#### ***Middle managers***

Middle managers find themselves in middle positions between the management and the staff (Ng, 2014). Generally, a manager is someone who is responsible for a part of the company or institution. Managers may be in charge of a department and the people who work in it. On the other hand, a middle management position refers to the position that is between the two groups. Therefore, Senior and Master teachers are called Middle Managers because they find themselves between the two groups or hierarchies. That is the Management hierarchy and the teaching staff hierarchy. Therefore, there are expectations for them to be functional in both hierarchies.

They are expected to be working with the School Management Team and also the Teaching staff (Ng, 2014). The position that they occupy is so demanding that they should be working with the Management in the running of the school and at the same time, with the teaching staff for the developmental purposes of teachers. They find themselves in the middle positions, between the Management and the teaching staff (Bennet, Woods, Wise, & Newton, 2007).

#### ***Staff developers***

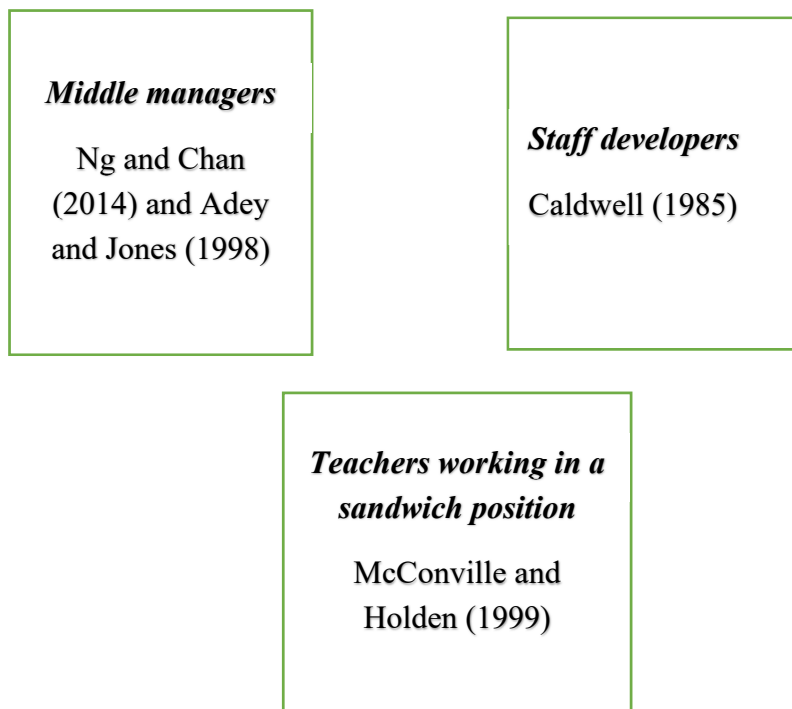
In general terms, a staff developer is a training and development specialist, who helps in planning, conducting and administering programmes that train employees and that improve their skills and knowledge. Caldwell (1985) refers to Senior and Master teachers as staff developers. By this, he argues that these teachers are responsible for training and developing other teachers, the students and the novice teachers in particular. He further acknowledges that Senior and Master teachers should assist in improving the skills and the knowledge of teachers

so that they are effective in their teaching. The explanation that is given of being a staff developer is in line with Caldwell's (1985) argument presented thirty-five years ago.

### ***Employees in sandwich positions***

Generally, to be in a sandwich position literally means, as pointed out earlier, to be between two things. This definition applies to both Senior and Master teachers because they are teachers between the management hierarchy and the teaching staff hierarchy. They are, therefore, called teachers working in sandwich positions (McConville & Holden, 1999). Working between these two hierarchies can be stressful and challenging (McConville & Holden, 1999). More so because, if you assist the management, you should be able to contribute effectively to the development planning of the school. You should also have competencies such as management skills in order to manage effectively. You should also have interpersonal, communication and negotiating skills (Adey & Jones, 1998). On the other hand, being of assistance in the development of staff is also challenging because you are expected to assist both students and novices on how to learn and how to teach (Feiman-Nemser, 2001).

The name for these teachers plays a vital role in the investigation of the challenges and coping strategies they use for survival. They are expected to work with the School Management Team and must be part of the decisions that are taken in a school. On the other hand, they are expected to work with the teaching staff in that they should develop the newly-appointed teachers in the field (Day, 2002). This they can do by mentoring them and motivating them to attend developmental workshops which should be beneficial to them and assist them to be effective teachers.



**Figure 2.** Terms related to roles of Senior and Master teachers.

### **Summary**

This section has outlined the rationale for conducting this study by focusing on the personal factors, contextual factors as well as the international debates about the challenges of the Senior and Master teachers. Other terms related to the roles of Senior and Master teachers were discussed, and they are as middle managers, staff developers and employees working in sandwich positions. The next section provides the reader with the statement of the problem of this study.

### **1.4 Problem statement**

The introduction of Senior and Master teacher positions in South African schools created some frustration and confusion amongst the teachers. The teachers who were entitled to these positions were also confused. These positions were designed by the Department of Basic

Education, together with the Unions that represent teachers. The rationale behind their creation was to improve career progression amongst qualified Post Level one teachers and to accelerate progression for all teachers on applicable salary levels.

The criteria concerning the selection of teachers for promotion to these positions was not clearly stated. On top of this, there were roles and responsibilities designed by the Department of Basic Education for these teachers. What was surprising is the fact that these teachers were still in the Post Level one category and there was no elevation to the next level yet the stipulated roles and responsibilities suggested that they perform and deliver in their new positions.

The Department of Basic Education expected them to work closely with School Management Teams, to make contributions and be decisive in the running of the school (Education Labour Relations Council, 2006). On the other hand, they were expected to assist in the development of the teaching staff. From my experience, there can be resistance by both the School Management Teams and the teaching staff concerning these teachers and they were recognised by neither. This may create some tensions between the teachers and School Management Teams. Such a failure to be recognised can make it difficult for them to perform in their newly designed positions.

Internationally, similar roles were developed. Darling-Hammond (2017) points out that in Finland, the most recognised qualification amongst all qualifications is teaching. This is an indication that there is a high level of training of teachers in order to meet the existing situation. This training is provided by highly-skilled professionals who believe that holding a Master's Degree is not sufficient. Teachers, therefore, opt for PhD qualifications in ensuring that high-quality education is provided to future teachers. Holding such qualifications in the teaching profession is also an indication that there is a strong knowledge of the subject and teacher-related issues. Research by Darling-Hammond (2017) has shown that Finland has shifted completely from an uneducated nation to a Twenty-First-Century powerhouse where the level of literacy and numeracy is highly achieved. For example, with a current literacy rate of 96%, high graduation and college-going rates and top scores in all areas of the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) show the level of improvement. Therefore, teachers in that country are highly developed, supported, recognised and respected.

Darling-Hammond (2017) argues that Singapore has moved away from considering any teacher to join the teaching profession. The massive growth of its education suggests that teachers possessing high-quality standards of Education should be the ones considered in the profession.

In 1997, the *Thinking Schools Learning Nation* reform explicitly redefined the role of teachers (Darling-Hammond, 2017). As Singapore Prime Minister, Gok (1997, pg. 292) proclaimed, *“Every school must be a model learning organization. Teachers and principals will constantly look out for new ideas and practices, and continuously refresh their own knowledge. Teaching will itself be a learning profession like any other knowledge-based profession of the future”*.

This reform has caused a number of changes in the selection of teachers. Their training, salaries and status should be on top of everything. They should be assisted in developing professionally by attending workshops and seminars (Darling-Hammond, 2017). Similar to Finland, this author mentions that standards of admission in preparing teachers for the teaching profession are very strict, precise and they should include evidence or attitude of strong ability that future teachers should portray towards academic work from schools and a strong desire to become future teachers. In Canada, these teachers are funded by the Government whilst they are still training. There are developmental programmes that are designed by the National Institute of Education (NIE) to fully equip teachers to become effective teachers. These programmes are followed by orientation and development in the profession (Darling-Hammond, 2017).

Furthermore, Singapore has designed a career ladder to equip people for leadership positions throughout their lives. This can be achieved by training, preparing and supporting people, giving them the right skills to cope in those positions. This, in turn, will enable people to have a wide choice of opportunities throughout their careers (Darling-Hammond, 2017). In South Africa, such ideas need to be considered for Senior and Master teachers and where possible implemented. By so doing, I have no doubt that the kind of teachers that will be produced are effective, which should bring a massive improvement in learners’ performance.

### **1.5 Objectives of the study and critical questions**

This study investigated the specific job-related challenges of Senior and Master teachers in South African public schools. The study further sought to discover what coping strategies these teachers use in their day-to-day work life to finally link these with their well-being. The study had a number of objectives and sought to find answers to the subsequent critical questions.

The objectives that underpin this study are:

1. To investigate the specific job-related challenges of Senior and Master teachers working in sandwich positions
2. To investigate the coping strategies of Senior and Master teachers in addressing these challenges and
3. To investigate the implications of these challenges and coping strategies of Senior and Master teachers for their own development and that of their schools.

### **1.6 The following Critical Research Questions were formulated:**

The proposed study addressed and sought to answer the following questions:

1. Which challenges do Senior and Master teachers working in sandwich positions experience?
2. How do Senior and Master teachers cope with these challenges?
3. Which implications do the challenges and coping strategies have for teachers and schools, respectively?

The above sections looked at the statement of the problem of the study, its objectives, as well as its critical research questions. The first research question directs the reader to the challenges specific to the Senior and Master teachers. The second research question looks at the coping strategies that Senior and Master teachers can employ to deal with their challenges. The third and last research question looks at the implications that the challenges and coping strategies have for teachers and for schools, respectively.

### **1.7 Significance of the study**

The study examined the introduction of such additional hierarchical roles and the factors that should be taken into consideration if those roles are implemented. Besides the idea that they would allow for growth and development for teachers, they come with challenges which need to be known in order to make such a process successful. Understanding these challenges will be useful to support these teachers and provide them with the necessary resources to manage this role and, thus, allow for the full growth potential to develop. Teachers can also be supported in their coping mechanisms to be able to fulfil their tasks more efficiently.

Secondly, for the success of these roles, it is also crucial to know how they are to be implemented and how this process is communicated. Thus, the study also looked at how these

roles have been established (please see chapter 1 for details) and how this is perceived by the participants of the study. A greater understanding of the communication process can also benefit schools. Greater transparency in who fulfils the role of a Senior or Master teacher will allow schools to make greater use of their expertise, their knowledge and their valued skills that these teachers have.

## **1.8 Outline of the study**

**Chapter 1** introduces the study and presents the statement of the problem, the rationale as to giving reasons behind the selection of this particular study as well as details on the information that was drawn from the findings. The objectives and the critical questions of this study were also provided in this chapter.

**Chapter 2** describes in detail a review of the literature of other authors/scholars on the challenges that Senior and Master teachers have, the coping strategies of teachers, personal well-being of ordinary teachers as well as the personal well-being of Senior and Master teachers. The debates by National and international scholars are also presented in this chapter. The study also looks at the theoretical and conceptual frameworks that appear in this chapter, and it includes major and minor life events and the coping strategies.

**Chapter 3** provides the methodology of the study. This includes the research paradigm, research design, location of the study, research sampling, methods of data collection, which include the quantitative and qualitative parts of the study. This chapter also presents methods of data analysis which include analysis of quantitative and qualitative data as well as triangulation of data.

**Chapter 4** describes the results based on the presentation of data using SPSS 25 form as well as the analysis of the different themes that came up whilst analysing these.

**Chapter 5** describes the interpretation of data and the discussions of findings during the interview. The limitations and challenges of the study are also included in this chapter.

**Chapter 6** provides outlook, recommendations and conclusion of the whole study.

## **1.9 Chapter summary**

In this chapter, the background of the study has been outlined. It covered the following areas: research problem, rationale and motivation, the significance of the study, objectives, critical questions, its demarcation as well as an outline of the study. It also critically described the implementation of such new hierarchical levels. The next chapter is an introduction to the review of the relevant literature relative to this topic.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

The previous chapter discussed the orientation to the dissertation and covered the problem being investigated and the critical questions that the study aimed to answer. Guided by the purpose and the questions that are critical, this chapter reviews debates surrounding the specific job-related challenges and coping strategies of Senior and Master teachers. The aim is to obtain information from different sources, concerning the set of emerging views for Senior and Master teacher positions, what challenges they face and what coping strategies can be implemented to overcome the challenges they come across with. This section reviews research on the challenges of teachers with a specific focus on Senior and Master teachers or other relevant positions as summarised in chapter 1.

##### **2.1.1 Challenges specific to Senior and Master teachers**

In my literature review, I intended to summarise research from different fields which refers to teachers in the roles listed below to be able to present a balanced understanding of potential challenges associated with these roles. The list below is an indication of the fact that Senior and Master teachers have more roles than what is expected of ordinary teachers. These additional roles suggest how challenged they are in their positions, hence is the topic for the study.

Introducing a new step in the ladder of the school hierarchy poses specific challenges to these teachers as outlined above. Senior and Master teachers occupy a specific hierarchical level in their schools and associated with this is a specific status as described in the background section. These teachers are in the PL1 positions, but also in Management. This means that they are in the middle position between the Management and the ordinary PL1 teachers. Consequently, they are called the middle managers by some authors (Ng & Chan, 2014).

A series of studies by different authors indicate that these teachers are also called staff developers (Caldwell, 1985; Day, 2002), expert or effective teachers (McClean, 2009),

teachers working in sandwich positions (McConville & Holden, 1999), teacher leaders (Bush *et al.*, 2016; Werner, 2017), co-operating teachers (Clarke, 2006), teachers who must transform the teaching profession (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012), teachers who must play the role as a bridge to reconcile the communication issue between the principals and teachers (Wong & Wong, 2005), middle managers (Adey & Jones, 1998; Ng & Chan, 2014), middle leaders (Dinham, 2007), staff or professional developers (Bush *et al.*, 2016), mentor teachers (Galvez-Hjornevik, 1986), effective teachers (Doyle, 1985; Harris, 1998) and teachers who must raise the professional status of teaching (Du Plessis, 2015).

Furthermore, there are several names which are used to describe a teacher leader. For example, if you are a teacher leader, you are an “instructional specialist in that you are also expected to give instructions on how to be a pedagogical professional that creates content and sets the guidelines for teaching material by using a variety of teaching and research techniques in order to generate and create education programmes” (Harrison & Killion, 2007, p. 1). Teacher leaders are also “classroom supporters because they help teachers implement new ideas of teaching. This they do by demonstrating lessons, co-teach, or observe and give feedback” (Harrison & Killion, 2007, p. 2). Furthermore, they are learning facilitators, school leaders and also learners themselves (Werner, 2017).

Moreover, these teachers are expected to work in sandwich positions, middle management, staff development, to work as teacher leaders, expert teachers and also teachers who are expected to transform the teaching profession (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). In other words, finding yourself working in two hierarchies is challenging on its own. This means that by creating an additional hierarchical level, Senior and Master teachers are allowed development and growth and, therefore, this can have an effect on the retainment of teachers. The reasons for implementing such levels may be that financial incentives are provided. For example, this is the situation that exists in a country like Singapore (Darling-Hammond, Hyler & Gardner, 2017). According to these authors, ideal teacher education is described across the globe as having well-developed systems for teacher development.

Again, such additional hierarchical levels may come with a specific set of challenges which can be understood when we look to see how these hierarchical positions are described in the literature. For instance, being in the middle position between two hierarchies is a challenge, as has been claimed several times above. To be a staff developer, a teacher leader and an expert teacher is an indication of going an ‘extra-mile’. Therefore, it is a challenge to these teachers

because of the teaching load involved. The above names (staff developer, teacher leader, expert teacher) belong to two groups of background which are discussed below, and they are Work and Organisation Psychology Background and Education Background (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2010). As far as organisational background is concerned, there are middle managers, teacher leaders, staff developers and teachers working in sandwich positions. In an educational context, there are expert teachers, mentor teachers, co-operating teachers, teachers who must transform the teaching profession and teachers who are expected to play the role of a bridge between the School Management Teams and PL1 teachers (Education Labour Relations Council, 2006). Appointing teachers to be in charge of development processes at local schools, is another way of retaining them and making the teaching profession more attractive (Werner, 2017, p. 1).

### **2.1.1.i Work and Organisation Psychology Background**

As described below, Senior and Master teachers are described as middle managers, teacher leaders, staff developers and teachers working in sandwich positions. Adey and Jones (1998) and (Ng & Chan, 2014) argue that Senior and Master teachers are middle managers. Generally, to be in the middle position means that you are between two groups. Senior and Master teachers are finding themselves between these two groups, which are the School Management Team group and the teaching staff group. On the other hand, the denotative meaning of being a manager means that you are in charge of a company or an institution. These two meanings suggest that Senior and Master teachers are challenged in that they should work with the School Management Team and must be part of the decisions that are taken in a school. On the other hand, they are expected to work with the teaching staff in that they should develop the newly-appointed teachers in the field. This they can do by mentoring them (Harrison & Killion, 2007) and motivating them to attend developmental workshops which should, in the long run, be beneficial to them because they could then be considered to be effective teachers.

Adey and Jones (1998, p. 135) argue that “middle managers have numerous general and functional job titles, including departmental manager, and team leader and they must be able to make an effective contribution to the whole-school development planning process”. Whole-school development planning has to do with creating an effective working environment, based on transparency and open communication amongst teachers and which caters for the health and well-being of both teachers and learners. This also refers to an environment that administers

the work process and makes sure that it is compliant with the school's requirements, leading teachers and must also report to the highest level in a school, which is the management team. This task cannot be done by any teacher but by those who have the potential to do well, like the Senior and the Master teachers. Adding to this, middle managers must possess some skills to be able to do well, for example, they must have excellent communication skills, ability to delegate, how to use the curriculum in planning instruction, they must be able to put plans into action, collaboration skills and decision-making skills (Harrison & Killion, 2007).

Senior and Master teachers are defined as the middle managers by some authors, but Dinham (2007) suggests that they should be called middle leaders. This is a responsibility in a school that has more added responsibility outside of the classroom. "Middle leadership has become increasingly important to the work of schools" (De Nobile, 2018, p. 2, citing Dinham, 2016). This means that some of the load of leadership should be distributed from senior leadership to middle leaders (De Nobile, 2017, citing Dinham, 2016). Middle leaders in schools may have a variety of responsibility. These may include pastoral leadership, curriculum leadership and leadership of additional students' support (Bennet, Woods & Wise, 2007). In this context, middle leadership is being interpreted as a "dynamic or 'out-of-classroom' remit and a leadership strategic remit" (Dinham, 2016, cited by De Noble, 2018, p. 2). This means that Senior and Master teachers should ensure the availability of many places where learning can take place rather than using the classroom as a learning environment all the time.

In addition, Senior and Master teachers should also implement the directives of the policy and monitor their translations into practice (Dinham, 2007). They should take an active role in linking the positions between the principals and teachers. Occupying these positions requires them to play an important role in improving and maintaining the nature and quality of learners' learning experience. This is based on the nature of their working environment. Moreover, they should display great interest in the thought of assessing the quality of the teachers' work during class teaching (Harrison & Killion, 2007). The position that they hold is so crucial in the sense that it promotes change and structuring in the education system and within their schools (Bush, 2006).

Furthermore, acting as a link between the SMT and PL 1 teachers is their responsibility. According to Poppleton and Williamson (2004, p. 289) "teachers expect to be included in the initial process of meaningful decision-making where their voices will be heard". A study

conducted by Wong and Cheung (2005, p. 1) in Hong Kong indicates that “a potential communication problem or a lack of mutual trust between principals and teachers is detrimental to the management and development of a school”. Thus, Senior and Master teachers as middle leaders can play a crucial function in reconciling the communication issue.

Previous studies have emphasised that these teachers are defined as staff developers (Caldwell, 1985). Simply put, they are training and developing specialists who plan, organise and direct overall operations in developing employees, thus improving skills and knowledge to facilitate the attainment of goals and objectives (Caldwell, 1985). He goes on by saying that these teachers assist in the development of novice teachers with the aim of producing effective teachers. On the other hand, Day (2002) is also of the same view when he argues that these teachers are staff developers. They are expected to develop staff or teachers. This they do on top of their day-to-day teaching. Being a staff developer means that Senior and Master teachers carry out functions for development and professional growth, meaning that they motivate participation in staff development opportunities (Day, 2002).

Staff development opportunities refer to being a secretary or chairperson for a development committee like the Integrated Quality Management System or Staff Development Team (refer to the Education Labour Relations Council, 2006). Their role also includes serving as a voting representative on the school staff developing committee, providing leadership skills and support to the school’s staff development process, and developing the means for continuous discussions regarding staff development opportunities and best practices (Day, 2002). Furthermore, Senior and Master teachers also assist staff in aligning their individual goals with building goals. Individual goals refer to vision and mission of an individual school whereas building goals refer to goals and objectives set by the Department of Basic Education that all schools with their teachers should adhere to (Day, 2002).

In addition to this, Bush, Glover, Ng and Romero (2016) argue that these teachers are staff or professional developers. They are professional developers in the sense that they are expected to raise the professional status of teaching and must also warrant that their quality of teaching is of vital importance in the achievement of students, despite the shortage of evidence that links achievement to observable teacher characteristics (Bush *et al.*, 2016). Raising the professional status of teaching involves placing a strong emphasis on academic achievement in the selection

process and also on the basis of other attributes such as motivation for teaching, willingness to learn and communication skills (Bush *et al.*, 2016).

Similarly, McConville and Holden (1999) define Senior and Master teachers as teachers who are working in sandwich positions. In other words, they are between the superior and the subordinate levels in a school. Superior levels control subordinate levels in the hierarchy and at the highest level is the SMT that is responsible for overseeing the daily operations of a school within a district, that is, the school functionality. The subordinate level is made up of the teaching staff. It is the function of the staff to play a major role and be responsible for providing the students or learners they serve with direct instruction in the area of content in which they specialise.

### **2.1.1.ii Educational Background**

In as far as educational background is concerned, these teachers are referred to as expert teachers (McClellan, 2009), mentor teachers (Galvez-Hjornevik, 1986), co-operating teachers (Clarke, 2006), or in general as teachers whose role is to transform the teaching profession as well as teachers who are expected to play the role as a bridge between the SMT and PL1 teachers. As a result, McClellan (2009) defines these teachers as expert teachers.

Senior and Master teachers are regarded as experts because of the service or experience they have had in the teaching profession. According to this author, the primary aim of an expert teacher is to show knowledge and expertise in the area of specialisation, taking into account the subjects taught. He can also demonstrate his knowledge in developing young teachers in the field by mentoring and supervising them. This he should do continuously for effective teaching and learning and helping the learners achieve to the best of their abilities (McClellan, 2009). Expert teachers should display a high proficiency and highly skilled level of teaching and the ability to guide and assist other teachers (McClellan, 2009). The improvement of learners' performance shows clearly the effectiveness of support to other staff members in a school (Bush *et al.*, 2016).

Again, these teachers are expert teachers in the sense that they should contribute to the development and implementation of school policies and programmes and should also be accountable for their effective delivery (McClellan, 2009). The positions of Senior and Master teachers are for more experienced teachers, hence being knowledgeable in a subject is a

requirement (McClellan, 2009). Senior and Master teachers are therefore expected to be experts by displaying knowledge and innovations of relevant curriculum areas, should clearly show a productive contribution to the school programme and lastly, should demonstrate a high-quality standard of commitment to the safety of learners in a school (McClellan, 2009).

Furthermore, they are also experts because they have expertise when it comes to school and classroom management. To be able to share their expertise regarding these aspects, they can take on the role of a special teacher who is not an assistant to the ordinary teacher nor a secondary to other specialist teachers. Instead, the two teachers teach together. When one teacher teaches, the other teacher observes. The observer sits at the back and observes the learners/students, drawing specific observations and analysing their behaviour. This is one of the approaches that Senior and Master teachers can potentially use.

Senior and Master teachers are also defined as teacher leaders (Bush *et al.*, 2016). Denotatively, a leader is someone who leads or commands a group, institution or country (Oxford Thesaurus of Current English, second edition, 2006). These teachers are regarded as leaders because they are expected to lead other teachers, students and novice teachers, providing them with all the expert skills they require to be effective teachers. Their role is “to improve the skill, knowledge and performance of the teaching workforce in a school or group of schools and to improve the curriculum programme of a school” (Bush *et al.*, 2016, p. 22). For teaching and learning to be effective, teachers need to be developed. This can be done through workshops and seminars. This is a way of improving skills amongst teachers, their knowledge and attainment of good learner outcomes. For example, if learners are taught by good and well-trained teachers, it is likely that the results that are going to be produced at the end of the year are very good (Bush *et al.*, 2016).

Added to the above terms that describe Senior and Master teachers, they are “teacher leaders in that they are expected to facilitate learning by taking the leading roles in the development of teachers because of the skills that they have” (Harrison & Killion, 2007, p. 2). This they can do by providing resources that they can get from the District offices to the other teachers. Resources include instructional materials like teaching-aids, reading and other resources to use with learners or students during teaching.

They can also lead by being “instructional specialists” to other teachers (Harrison & Killion, 2007, p. 1). This means that they are expected to provide instruction to teachers through verbal communication, email writing and distribution of circulars. By so doing, Senior and Master teachers should be able to encourage a variety of teaching strategies, which includes different ways of lesson plans, of teaching methods and instructional resources used. Teacher leaders also mean that both Senior and Master teachers are “curriculum specialists” (Harrison & Killion, 2007, p. 1). To be a curriculum specialist means that you possess depth knowledge concerning curriculum-related matters. This means that they understand content, standards, and knowledge of how the component parts of the curriculum link together and how to use the curriculum in planning instruction. Assessment is, therefore, of vital importance in ensuring consistent curriculum implementation throughout a school (Harrison & Killion, 2007). “Curriculum specialists lead teachers to agree on standards, follow the adopted curriculum and develop shared assessments” (Harrison & Killion, 2007, p. 1).

A teacher leader is also a classroom supporter (Harrison & Killion, 2007). “Classroom supporters work inside classrooms to help teachers implement new ideas, often by demonstrating a lesson or observing and giving feedback” (Harrison & Killion, 2007, p. 2). Blasé and Blasé (2000) found that consultation with peers enhanced teachers’ self-efficacy as they reflected on practice and grew together, therefore, encouraging a bias for action on the part of the teachers. Over and above this, teacher leaders are also called learning facilitators (Harrison & Killion, 2007). Facilitating professional learning is a way of making learning easier, for example, through the simplification of concepts, making them easier to be understood. This can also be accomplished when developing students or novice teachers and can produce good results. When the work is explained, it is easy for the goals of the lesson to be achieved (Harrison & Killion, 2007). By so doing, all the difficulties encountered by teachers in learning can be broken down.

Again, these teachers are also mentor teachers (Harrison & Killion, 2007). Being a mentor for novice teachers is a good activity as it shows proper guidance and direction to the teachers who have just joined the teaching profession (Maynard, 2000). Being a mentor means dedicating time in directing the teachers accordingly (Daly & Milton, 2017). In all sectors, novice employees require guidelines taken from policy documents for proper guidance and direction in order to be effective in their career choice (Galvez-Hjornevik, 1986).

According to Awaya *et al.* (2003, p. 51), a mentor must simply be “a more seasoned traveller who is accompanying the mentee as they journey together towards a new destination”. By this, he argues that in schools, there should be mentor teachers as well. Mentoring in schools should be designated to Senior and Master teachers because they are supposed to accompany the student and novice teachers on their journey towards becoming effective teachers (Maynard, 2000). Senior and Master teachers should encourage the development and growth of the novice teachers, and they should facilitate that the student teacher maintains a steady improvement of student learning in the classroom (Awaya *et al.*, 2003).

Different teaching methods and new ideas are suggested to student and novice teachers. This goes for professional books, aiming at personal growth that student teachers are encouraged to read. Sequeira (2012) shares the same idea when he argues that Senior and Master teachers are made to be teachers. By this, he argues that they should consider teaching as a calling and work diligently in helping novice teachers achieve to their best. In addition to this, they must also be mentors to student teachers, should give sound advice about what works and what does not, should give teaching tips, must have good knowledge of students and the school as an institution (McClean, 2009).

On the other hand, Clarke (2006) refers to these teachers as co-operating teachers. They are called co-operating teachers because they should work jointly with PL1 teachers by implementing different approaches in order to achieve the teaching objectives set by the Department of Basic Education. This they can do by playing a critical role in pre-service teacher education in the settings that are practical, for example, practice teaching (Clarke, 2006). This is supported by Copperfield (1984) talking about different approaches that teachers can implement in class to reduce the stress level of the learning content. Among other things, they are required to work together simultaneously with the subject teachers (for example, Mathematics teachers, English teachers, etcetera) in order to facilitate the learning process. In other words, their responsibilities differ in that the Post Level one teacher is responsible for the content whereas the special teacher, in this case, the Senior or Master teacher, is responsible for the learning process.

They are also supposed to guide new teachers to show improvement in planning, instruction and content knowledge. In addition to this, they are also expected to supervise and support the development of a pre-service teacher’s teaching skills by facilitating learning through

professional conversations concerning the expectations of all stakeholders, room dynamics and room management (positive guidance) to mention a few factors (Awaya *et al.*, 2003). Teacher leaders are also school leaders (Harrison & Killion, 2007). This means “serving on a committee such as a school improvement team, supporting school initiatives or representing the school on community or district task forces or committees” (Harrison & Killion, 2007, p. 3). According to the two authors, a school leader leads other teachers, learners and parents towards achieving common educational goals. They are also called catalysts for change (Harrison & Killion, 2007, citing Larner, 2004, p. 32).

They are “visionaries who are never content with the *status quo* but are rather always looking for a better way” (Harrison & Killion, 2007, p. 3). This means that Senior and Master teachers work so entirely and commit themselves to bring improvement in a school. Lastly, teacher leaders are learners themselves (Harrison & Killion, 2007). This means that Senior and Master teachers should be learners. They should always be prepared to learn and acquire knowledge that they can make use of in future (Harrison & Killion, 2007).

Senior and Master teachers are defined as co-operating teachers because of their ability to do parallel teaching (Dunn, 1984). In implementing this approach, the class is divided into two groups. This is implemented when each teacher handles one group teaching the same content to both groups (Dunn, 1984). This approach is effective when a lower adult-student ratio is preferred. It may also be used to encourage student discussion. The author further suggests that being called co-operating teachers is appropriate for them because they can employ station teaching, alternative teaching and team teaching approaches during the lesson.

In as far as station teaching is concerned, content is divided amongst teachers and learners sit with one teacher before moving to the other (Dunn, 1984). A third station may be formed where the learner works independently. In alternative teaching, smaller groups are formed for those learners that need attention, and that small group is handled by one of the teachers separately while the others work with the bigger group. In as far as team-teaching is concerned, Senior and Master teachers work together with the ordinary teachers, teaching the same content at the same time, filling in the gaps of others (Dunn, 1984). In employing these approaches, Senior teachers and Master teachers should also “provide the supplementary material for a unit that the student teacher was planning and be prepared to provide the student teacher with aids, sources and resources for the lesson” (McClellan, 2009, p. 13).

Despite decades of research, the issues raised in this study continue to be debated amongst authors. For example, Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) argue that Senior and Master teachers are teachers who must transform the teaching profession. This they can achieve by bringing change to the profession and can be seen upon using relevant resources when teaching as a way of clarifying some concepts. They can also come up with new strategies to teach by using different teaching methods, facilitating learning and giving clear explanations to novice teachers. On top of this, they should come up with ideas that will help improve their effectiveness and that of the learners. This means that they are supposed to prepare teachers and those who work with them with insights, ideas and actions that will help in developing their effectiveness, which in turn will make better the societies and generations to come. On the other hand, Senior and Master teachers are expected to develop programmes focused on the implementation of dialogic teaching, which means, increasing the amount of talk with reasoning, encouraging teachers' open questions of high cognitive demand, teacher uptake and open discussion as a way of transforming the teaching profession.

Doyle (1985) and Harris (1998) define Senior and Master teachers as effective teachers. The two authors maintain that Senior and Master teachers need to develop staff in such a way that there is effective teaching and learning in all the schools. This can be achieved if the teaching staff is guided and developed towards their professional goals. They are also expected to facilitate student learning in a way that allows students to reach their full potential (Doyle, 1985). For example, students/learners must feel free to express themselves in a respectful and non-judgemental way, and it is the responsibility of the teacher to make sure that they are able to do that. Effective teachers must display their effectiveness by acquiring the skills and qualities that include dedication, good communication skills and a desire for continuous learning and professional growth (Doyle, 1985).

A seminal contribution has also been made by Du Plessis (2015) when he argues that raising the professional status of teaching is one of the challenges that Senior and Master teachers have to confront and overcome. By this he means reducing disparities amongst teachers, promoting flexible learning opportunities focused on growth and identifying, also meeting the needs of learners who are underachievers. This also means developing teachers so that they are able to prepare students/learners for future demands (Du Plessis, 2015).

Therefore, given the arguments discussed above, it becomes necessary to investigate the challenges of these teachers in a school because schools exist for teaching and learning and the effective management of the curriculum becomes the most important function of any school.

### **Synthesis on potential challenges of Senior and Master teachers**

In order to be able to conduct research on this particular group, it was essential to review literature from different research backgrounds. What transpires across all these readings from different research backgrounds is that teachers in this particular group may experience a variety of challenges.

Firstly, a set of challenges may be associated with their roles as instructional leaders (Harrison & Killion, 2007). Senior and Master teachers are expected to provide guidance and leadership for other teaching staff at their school and to mentor younger staff members (Maynard, 2000). Such a role may entail that Senior and Master teachers have an additional workload and might feel the need to invest more time and effort into this role.

Secondly, another set of challenges is related to their role as “middle” managers (Day & Jones, 1998). In such positions, which other researchers would call “sandwich positions” (McConville & Holden, 1999), Senior and Master teachers might feel pressure from both sides, the school leadership and other staff members. The challenge could be that Senior and Master teachers would need to negotiate between these two hierarchical levels in the school.

It also seems possible that Senior and Master teachers may experience challenges because their roles are potentially not clearly defined. If that is the case, this might create insecurity on their side but also tensions with other staff members.

Thirdly, it also has emerged from the literature that Senior and Master teachers need support in order to be agents of change in the teaching profession (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). If such support is not available, this may become challenging for Senior and Master teachers.

To sum up, it seems that different challenges may be experienced and this study will shed further light on this. However, the study is not going to simply investigate the levels of challenges of Senior and Master teachers. In addition to this, it will also be investigated how Senior and Master teachers can respond to these challenges and which strategies they have developed to manage such potential challenges. Thus, another focus of the study is on coping strategies (Carver, 1997). In the next chapter, I will summarise the Transactional Stress Model

(Lazarus & Folkman, 1987) and related research which highlight the role of coping strategies for the well-being of individuals. This study aligns with this theory because it involves a variety of coping strategies to deal with a variety of challenges.

Firstly, proper planning to overcome these challenges plays a critical role (Harrison & Killion, 2007). Hence planning is one of the strategies used by these teachers. Secondly, these teachers should work in middle positions as they are middle managers (Adey & Jones, 1999). This term compels them that they should work with School Management Team and also develop staff. Thus, acceptance is another coping strategy that they can employ to overcome their challenges. Maynard (2000) argues that these teachers are mentor teachers. Their role involves giving guidance, support and direction to the less experienced teachers, as a result, emotional support is another coping strategy that Senior and Master teachers can implement.

To draw a conclusion, different coping strategies may be implemented by Senior and Master teachers to overcome their challenges. This will be further explored below.

## **Summary**

This section has outlined the challenges that Senior and Master teachers face. Thereafter, a series of designations for teachers was discussed. For example, they are staff developers, expert or effective teachers, teachers working in sandwich positions, teacher leaders, co-operating teachers, teachers who must transform the teaching profession, teachers who play the role as a bridge to reconcile the communication issue between principals and teachers, middle managers, middle leaders, staff or professional developers, mentor teachers, effective teachers and teachers who must raise the professional status of teaching. The next section deals with the coping strategies of Senior and Master teachers.

### **2.1.2 Coping strategies**

#### **2.1.2.1 Introduction**

The previous section indicated the challenges specific to the Senior and Master teachers. Guided by critical research questions and the objectives of the study, this section explores the coping strategies that Senior and Master teachers use to overcome challenges.

### **2.1.2.2 Coping strategies of Senior and Master teachers**

According to Brittle (2020, p. 1), research has found that “high levels of stress can lead to burnout”. Burnout is defined as “an erosion of engagement that what started out as being important, meaningful and challenging work, becomes unpleasant, unfulfilling and meaningless” (Brittle, 2020, p. 1, citing Leiter & Maslach, 2014). This means that a good teacher can end up losing interest in his or her job because of the challenges encountered. Factors include large class size, lack of resources and poor infrastructure, to mention but a few. Teacher burnout results in fatigue, ineffectiveness, withdrawal and feelings of incompetence which both the class and the school to suffer (Chang, 2009).

On the other hand, stress only develops if individuals lack the capacity to manage the challenges (Lazarus & Folkman, 1987). This word (stress) was initially used in a non-technical sense in the 14<sup>th</sup> Century to refer to “hardship, straits, adversity or affliction” (Lumsden, 1998, p. 29). Hardship is a challenging condition that refers to severe suffering caused by work-overload, loss of a job or death of a loved one that an individual faces. If this condition is not properly managed, it leads to stress. Lazarus and Folkman (1987) argue that challenges consist of the sensibility that problems and difficulties will always be there, but they can be conquered by applying proper coping mechanisms or strategies.

Coping strategies or styles determine how individuals deal with difficult situations (Grennan & Woodhams, 2007). Individuals have different and specific coping strategies; therefore, the effect on stress and burnout is determined by the type of coping strategy that s/he uses to cope with the stressful situation (Lazarus & Folkman, 1987). In their early research, the two authors found that there are two basic types of coping strategies that are most relevant and practical that people used in almost all stressful encounters. There are those that deal with solving problems pertaining to the mind and the ones that deal with managing the emotions of an individual. The ones that deal with problems of the mind are called cognitive or problem-focused coping strategies, and the ones that deal with the emotions of an individual are called emotion-focused coping strategies (Lazarus, 1993).

Problem-focused coping strategies mean “trying to control the situation or problem by coming up with alternative ideas and solutions to solve it, taking into account all the procedures and resources that an individual may think of” (Garcia & Osca, 2017, p. 723). Emotion-focused

coping strategies, on the other hand, involve “avoiding problems and seeking social support from others” (Garcia & Osca, 2017, p. 723). Examples of emotion-focused coping strategies are avoidance, distancing, seeking refuge in hobbies, religion, seeking someone’s company or social support (Garcia & Osca, 2017). Others turn to other work-related activities in order to keep themselves occupied. The activities could include reading, participating in training or employment programme (Carver, 1997).

Planful problem-solving strategies and positive reappraisal may yield good results and improvement when used by teachers during their stressful period, for example, feeling of happiness and satisfaction (Lazarus, 1993). On the other hand, confrontative coping as a strategy and distancing can result in negative feelings. For example, if teachers detach or distance themselves from stressful situations, it does not mean that the problem has disappeared. The problem might be gone for a short while, but it soon comes back. Hence the association with unsatisfactory outcomes (Lazarus, 1993).

## **Summary**

This section has defined stress and stated that challenges lead to it. It touched on the two different coping strategies, that are discussed above and elaborated on the fact that some strategies aim at short-term stress relief, whereas others aim at long-term stress relief. Examples of short-term coping strategies were also given, which are self-blame and denial. On the other hand, examples of long-term coping strategies were also defined. The next section will focus on the personal well-being of Senior and Master teachers.

### **2.1.3 Personal well-being of Senior and Master teachers**

#### **2.1.3.1 Introduction**

The previous section focused on the different coping styles of Senior and Master teachers, discussed above. Different examples were highlighted for these two kinds of coping styles. This section focuses on the personal well-being of Senior and Master teachers. In other words, it deals with the implications that the challenges and coping strategies have for these teachers and schools, respectively.

### **2.1.3.2 Personal well-being**

Kyriacou (2001, p. 1) defined stress as “the experience of negative or unpleasant emotions resulting from aspects of the work”. “Stress can cause feelings of anxiety, depression, changes in behaviour and physiology, as well as acute and chronic illness, increasing the likelihood of addictions to drugs, alcohol and eating and is particularly evident as a result of daily stressors” (Lazarus, 1999, p. 27). This means that individuals with strong emotional support are less likely to be affected by stress-related illness than those who lack emotional support (DeLongis, Lazarus & Folkman, 1988). This encourages individuals to have mentors, that is, someone they can rely on for support and comfort.

The focus of this study is on psychological stress. According to Lazarus (1999, p. 27), this kind of stress is the “emotional response experienced when environmental stimuli or event, which could endanger well-being, is perceived as exceeding a person’s resources and can be defined by a stimulus-response relationship”. This is the kind of stress that can endanger or destroy a person if the resources or coping strategies are lacking. The degree of stress experienced depends on how much of a stake a person has in the outcome of the event, meaning the amount of stress an individual experience depends on the amount of coping strategies an individual has. This is relevant to Senior and Master teachers in case their problems exceed their coping strategies.

Stress can affect the well-being of the teachers negatively (Lazarus, 1999). Cognitive stress scales were also assessed. “Cognitive stress is reflected in anxious thoughts, fearful anticipation, poor concentration and difficulty with memory” (Lazarus, 1999, p. 28). For this type of stress, there is tension in the muscles, leading to depression. This makes it difficult for him to relax and concentrate. This proves the point that cognitive stress affects the well-being of the teachers in a negative way. On the other hand, teaching is associated with an increased burnout risk and manifold challenges due to the stress that they encounter daily (Farber & Ascher, 1991; Kyriacou, 1987). Burnout is the reaction to prolonged high stress, that results in anxiety, tiredness and exhaustion (Farber & Ascher, 1991, citing Farber, 1991).

A study done by Rudow (1999) in Europe on teacher stress and burnout, indicates that an overall estimation of burnout level of teachers was at 30%. Similarly, in South Africa, in a

study conducted by Jackson and Rothmann (2005), 47% of teachers in the North-West Province report high levels of emotional exhaustion due to stress and burnout. According to these authors, stress and burnout mean “the condition of physical and emotional exhaustion as well as the associated negative attitudes resulting from intense interaction in working with people” (Jackson & Rothmann, 2005, p. 100). This condition is due to high levels of stress which are caused by work overload, large class sizes, lack of resources, isolation, limited promotion opportunities, little involvement in decision-making, learner behaviour problems and poor image of the profession, to mention a few (Rudow, 1999). Research by Jackson and Rothmann (2005) has proven that these problems can lead to ill-health which occurs when a person’s resources are far below the environmental demands.

According to Hakanen, Bakker and Schaufeli (2006), depression is caused by the exceeding job demands that an individual is faced with. For example, Senior and Master teachers suffer from depression caused by job demands related to the challenges. The pressure at work and emotional demands can be associated with job demands. On the other hand, job resources are assumed to increase work engagement which, in turn, is associated with the quality of the outcomes. (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). To increase work engagement, there should be a positive and fulfilling work-related state of mind that is characterised by vigour, dedication and absorption. The more challenged these teachers are, the more stressed they become (Lazarus & Folkman, 1987) and feelings of emotional exhaustion may also increase (Hakanen, Bakker & Schaufeli, 2006).

For the well-being of Senior and Master teachers, a number of coping strategies show distinct patterns of relationship with stress. Firstly, when participants use instrumental support as a coping strategy to address their challenges, they are less likely to be affected by stress, somatic stress and cognitive stress. For example, when they work with Unions, parents and community members in educating the child, they have fewer challenges and are less affected by stress of any kind. Secondly, behavioural disengagement is another coping strategy to be used by Senior and Master teachers (Carver, 1997). This strategy can be used by these teachers to detach themselves from stressful situations. However, this strategy can have negative results when used for a long period of time as schools may suffer when these teachers are no longer functioning in their positions, leading to a high failure rate.

Thirdly, when positive reframing is used as a coping strategy, these teachers are less likely to be affected by stress (Carver, 1997). Hence their well-being and that of the school improves.

To sum up, the more coping strategies Senior and Master teachers use in dealing with their challenges, the less stressed they are likely to become in their positions.

## **Summary**

Senior and Master teachers show impaired well-being levels because of stress, cognitive stress and burnout. This is caused by roles and responsibilities allocated them by the Department of Basic Education. They are expected to go the ‘extra-mile’ more so because, on top of daily teaching, they are also expected to fulfil other roles as described in the *ELRC, Collective Agreement NO.5 of 2006* above. The degree of stress experienced depends on how much of a stake a person has in the outcome of the event, meaning the amount of stress an individual experiences depends on the amount of coping strategies an individual has.

## **2.1.4 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

This research draws from the Transactional Model of Stress and Coping by Lazarus and Folkman (1987) and is used as a Theoretical Framework which allows us to look at the daily challenges of the individuals and their coping styles and how both may affect their well-being.

### **2.1.4.1 Transactional Model of Stress and Coping Theory (Lazarus & Folkman, 1987)**

The Transactional Model of Stress and Coping Theory is a framework which emphasises that stress and challenges can be dealt with by applying a variety of coping strategies (Lazarus & Folkman, 1987). According to these authors, this theory remains an important one in dealing with psychological stress and coping strategies across multiple fields.

The two authors argue that challenges lead to stress, meaning the more challenges one has, the more stressed he becomes. Stress means a struggle to adapt to life (Lazarus, 1999, p. 31). This means that it affects your body, your thoughts or your behaviour because it can lead to many health problems if it remains unchecked and unattended to. Similarly, Lumsden, (1998, p. 31) shares the same idea when he mentions that this word was first used in the 14<sup>th</sup> Century to refer

to struggles, hardship, straits, adversity or affliction. He argues that no one can escape stress, and all of us must learn how to deal with it.

Lazarus distinguishes between two types of stress, which are physical or mechanical stress and psychological stress. This study will focus on the latter because emotional problems are presumed to be the result of stress. This is relevant to Senior and Master teachers because of the job-related challenges they are faced with on a daily basis. Lazarus and Folkman (1999) argue that stress can be triggered by two types of events, which are either permanent or temporary that they refer to either as major and minor life events which are outlined below.

### ***Psychological stress***

According to Lazarus (1999, p. 31), this is “a kind of stress that contributes to a variety of mental and physical conditions”. It is experienced when an individual confronts a situation where problems, demands or challenges are outweighing the coping strategies. An example of psychological stress may be death in a family which could have serious consequences in a person’s life. Lazarus and Folkman (1987) argue that stress is caused by two types of events; major life events and minor life events or daily hassles.

### **Major life events**

Lazarus and Folkman (1987) argue that there are two categories of major life events. The first is environmental/natural events, whereas the second type affects few people and include events like divorce. The focus of this dissertation is on minor life events as they are experienced by Senior and Master teachers on a daily basis at school.

### **Minor life events**

Lazarus (1999) argues that minor life events are also important but not like major life events. They are therefore taken for granted because they refer to little or minor things and last for a short while. They are the ongoing stresses of daily living and are also referred to as daily hassles (Lazarus, 1999, p. 32). The examples of minor life events are little things that include annoyance, irritation and distress and also in feeling overwhelmed by responsibilities. These little things start small and eventually grow until such time that they might lead to stress. Other authors refer to them as chronic role strains (Pearlin, 1983) or minor negative events (Monroe, 1983). According to Wagner, Compas and Howell (1988) these two concepts are not the same,

but they all refer to stress as immediately experienced daily by individuals or what Lazarus (1999) referred to as proximal stress which is situated in the immediate context of thought, feeling and action.

Therefore, the challenging jobs of Senior and Master teachers lead to stress that they are faced with on a daily basis. Their challenges result in them being prone to irritation and becoming annoyed by petty things. For example, short-temperedness and feeling disturbed by their duties or responsibilities. Therefore, the challenges these teachers face on daily may contribute to their feelings of stress. Staff development (Caldwell, 1985) and mentoring the student and novice teachers by Feiman-Nemser (2001) are 'extra-mile' jobs that contribute to their challenges.

### **The prominent key concept**

#### **Coping**

Coping has been defined as an "individual's efforts to master demands that are appraised as exceeding or taxing his or her resources" (Brittle, 2020, p. 2, citing Monat & Lazarus, 1991). This means demands that are beyond a person's control. It can be differentiated between regulation of problems and emotions. However, individuals have specific coping strategies, which have differing effects on stress and burnout depending on these strategies.

Coping has also been viewed as "a stabilising factor that may assist individuals in maintaining psychosocial adaptation during stressful events" (Seyedfatemi, Tafreshi & Hagani, 2007). In addition, following Lazarus (1999, p. 102), "coping mechanisms are the behavioural and cognitive efforts made to manage, reduce or tolerate the internal or external demands generated by stressful events". The process of coping should be taken seriously in that it happens when an individual tries to deal with stress from his/her surroundings. Therefore, the actual reaction to an environmental event may be as important as the event itself (Seyedfatemi *et al.*, 2007). Furthermore, "coping has been viewed as arising from appraisal that the demands of an event exceed personal resources and are motivated by the emotional response to harm and threat" (Lazarus, 1999, p. 102). He also argues that coping comprises "the cognitive and behavioural efforts required to manage the internal or external environment when a level of dissonance exists in a person's perception of their ability and resources to deal with the psychological stress".

Carver (1997), on the other hand, argues that different coping strategies come up with different stress reliefs. There are those strategies that aim at short-term stress relief (for example, substance abuse) and those that aim at long-term stress relief. Examples of short-term coping strategies have a tendency of dealing with stress over short periods of time and include humour and denial. On the other hand, acceptance and planning are strategies that counteract stress over longer periods of time. Literally, humour refers to making jokes or fun about the situation or problem that one is faced with, whereas denial refers to not accepting that something has happened (Carver, 1997). Contrary to this is acceptance, which means being positive that something has happened and learning to live with it. This research will, therefore focus on which short- and long-term coping strategies these teachers at public schools use.

### *Example of short-term coping strategy.*

#### **Self-blame**

This is a short-term coping strategy that people use to criticise or blame themselves for things that have happened (Carver, 1997, p. 2).

#### **Denial**

Denial is also a short-term coping strategy that people use when they deny that something has happened or refuse to believe that something requested or desired has not materialised (Carver, 1997, p. 2).

### *Example of long-term coping strategy*

#### **Instrumental support**

Refers to a long-term coping strategy that people can use to get help and advice from other people about what to do concerning the situation they are faced with, Carver (1997, p. 2). It means a kind of assistance that is tangible; which can come from teacher Unions, parents and the community.

#### **Positive reframing**

This is also a long-term coping strategy that people use to look at a problem in a different light in order to make it seem more positive. It also means finding something good in what is happening (Carver, 1997, p. 2).

## **Planning**

Again, this is a long-term coping strategy that people use to think and come up with strategies about what to do about their challenges in order to survive (Carver, 1997, p. 2). They need to come up with different ideas that will help solve their problems.

## **Behavioural- disengagement**

This describes a coping strategy that involves giving up in trying to deal with a situation or giving up the attempt to cope. It also means detaching yourself from a stressful situation (Carver, 1997, p. 2).

## **Humour**

This long-term coping strategy emphasises the importance of making jokes or fun about a situation. Humour, as a coping strategy, means the quality of being amusing or being comical, as expressed in literature or speech (Carver, 1997, p. 2).

### **2.1.4.2 How does this theory contribute to this study?**

The contribution brought about by the above theory is of great help to the Senior and Master teachers when trying to manage the challenges of their everyday life at school. The mere fact that these teachers have roles and responsibilities to fulfil and that they have many designations and duties pertaining to the job poses more challenges than opportunities. Upon the implementation of this theory, more attention will be placed on the coping mechanism side. For example, participants report that they mostly use instrumental support and behavioural disengagement and positive reframing and that these are the coping strategies used mainly to overcome their challenges.

### **2.1.5 Chapter summary**

This chapter focused on some of the key debates concerning challenges specific to Senior and Master teachers, coping strategies and the personal well-being of these teachers at South African public schools. It concluded with the theoretical framework underpinning the study. The next chapter will discuss the methodology used.

## CHAPTER 3

### METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter reviewed a number of items of literature drawn from different authors concerning challenges, coping strategies and the personal well-being of Senior and Master teachers. It also looked at the theory relevant to this study. In this chapter, research design and methodology are presented with a focus on a research paradigm, research design, setting/location of the study, research sampling, methods of data generation, data analysis procedures, triangulation of data, issues of trustworthiness, ethical considerations and limitations of this study.

#### 3.2 Research Approach

The study adopted a mixed-method approach, as described by Creswell and Creswell (2017). This is a research approach that is used for conducting research that involves data generation, interpretation and integrating quantitative data drawn from sources such as screening questionnaires, experiments and surveys as well as qualitative data drawn from focus groups and semi-structured interviews (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Using both approaches in this research is appropriate because a combination of the two approaches leads to clarity and a better understanding of the research problem than if only one of the approaches was used and lends greater relevance and validity to the data.

A mixed-method approach is an important tool for researchers because it combines quantitative and qualitative research methods in the same research inquiry (Venkatesh, Brown & Bala, 2013). Using the mixed-method approach is appropriate to confirm the validity of the study, as results are obtained from both the questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. It also helps to develop rich insights into various phenomena of interest that cannot be understood in full, using only a quantitative or a qualitative method. Again, it helps in providing an understanding of the research problem better (Creswell, Shope, Clark & Green, 2006).

In the social sciences at large, mixed-method research has become increasingly popular and may be considered a stand-alone research design that does not have any interferences with other methods (Creswell *et al.*, 2006). According to Hurmerinta-Peltomaki and Numella (2006, p. 212), a mixed-method study can be defined as “the collection or analysis of both quantitative

and qualitative data in a single study in which the data are collected concurrently or sequentially”.

When using the mixed-method approach in a study, researchers get detailed and elaborate information about the researched topic than they can get if one form of approach is used (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). This approach of collecting data allows the researchers to understand their phenomenon of interest (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998) deeply. The results may be precisely genuine because they will be gathered from both the quantitative and the qualitative methods.

The mixed-method approach is relevant as it gives strengths that compensate for the deficiencies of either quantitative and qualitative research alone (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). For example, it is not easy to understand the behaviour of people if quantitative research is implemented, nor the potential for the subjectivity of people if using the qualitative method. For a qualitative method, it is easy to determine the subjectivity of people based on different answers, whereas quantitative method helps in determining the objectivity of answers. This approach has strengths and weaknesses. But when used in a study, rich information can be attained (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). It also gives a complete and comprehensive understanding of the problem of the research than either quantitative or qualitative methods alone cannot do.

According to Guest (2013, p. 17) “a sequential design is a combination of both a cross-sectional design and a longitudinal design”. In other words, this research study follows a particular sequence. It started by using a quantitative method where the research respondents were asked to fill in the screening questionnaires. This was followed by a qualitative method (semi-structured interviews) where participants were asked a set of questions concerning the challenges, the coping strategies and the implications that the challenges and the coping strategies have for them and schools respectively. I chose this method because I wanted to have a better understanding of the challenges that Senior and Master teachers have, the coping strategies, as well as their personal well-being, something that cannot be understood if one method was used.

A sequential design is appropriate because it combines the quantitative and qualitative methods in the same research inquiry (Venkatesh, Brown & Bala, 2013). This work can help develop rich insights into various phenomena of interest that cannot be fully understood using either of

the two methods. Using both, a screening questionnaire followed by a semi-structured interview made the study more effective (Venkatesh, Brown & Bala, 2013). The quantitative part of the study required the respondents to fill in the screening questionnaires. This is because Research Question one and two are answered through the screening questionnaire, and Research Question three is answered through a triangulation of data from the screening questionnaire and the semi-structured interviews. Triangulation combines two or more methods from different methodologies to generate data on the same topic (Venkatesh, Brown & Bala, 2013).

It ensures that the research is valid because of the information collected from both methods which allow the researcher to have a comprehensive understanding of the research problem under discussion (Venkatesh, Brown & Bala, 2013). However, the purpose of triangulation is to capture different responses and views of participants on a particular phenomenon within a single study by using at least two methods from different methodologies. Semi-structured interviews, on the other hand, were employed as the qualitative part of the study as this aimed at getting a deeper understanding of the challenges and coping strategies of these teachers. I interviewed five participants, two Master teachers and three Senior teachers. They were chosen because they already had more than ten years of experience of teaching in middle positions.

### **3.3 Research Paradigm**

I chose a pragmatic paradigm for my study (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). This is a deconstructive paradigm that advocates the use of mixed-methods in research and “sidesteps the contentious issues of truth and reality” (Feilzer 2010, p. 8) and it “focuses instead on ‘what works’ as the truth regarding the research questions under investigation” (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003, p. 713). This is relevant to the study as it makes use of both quantitative and qualitative methods. Using the two methods provided rich information from the participants, and, when combined together, clearly give answers to the objectives or research questions.

This paradigm is problem-centered in that it addresses the solving of problems in a sensible way that suits the conditions that really exist now rather than obeying fixed theories, ideas or rules (Creswell & Creswell, 2017) and it is best suited to the research problem, that is, the challenges that Senior and Master teachers experience on a daily basis in schools.

This research paradigm is relevant to the study because it seeks to find the reality of answers pertaining to the challenges, the coping strategies used and the well-being of these teachers who work as Senior and Master teachers.

### **3.4 Recruitment of schools and participants**

First, the research instruments and gatekeeper letters for the schools I wanted to work with for my study had to be written. I selected three Primary Schools and two Secondary schools. All these schools are in the Umlazi District and are all in quintile four, meaning they are easy-to-reach because of their good infrastructure.

I approached the principals of schools in the area as the gatekeepers and asked for a meeting with them. In that meeting, I explained the purpose of my research study and gave the reasons as to what my intentions were concerning the study. The principals then indicated their consent that this study could be conducted in their schools, pending approval by the Ethical Clearance Committee.

Only after permission was granted, I introduced my study to these teachers at the respective schools, and I also requested them to become participants for my study. I did the same with them by giving detailed information about the purpose of my study. Fortunately, the Senior and Master teachers agreed to work with me. I explained to them that the study entailed a mixed-method approach, which involves the filling in of the screening questionnaires first, thereafter the semi-structured interviews.

Secondly, I wrote an application to the Ethics Committee, which is based at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Westville campus, asking for permission to research my chosen topic. The role of this committee is to ascertain whether the rules of conduct, standards and policies that guide research study were compliant with departmental requirements. It ascertains that the researcher will respect the autonomy, freedom or independence of all the people participating in the research and whether or not the research study is at all threatening to the participants.

I also wrote an application to the Department of Basic Education of the Province of KwaZulu-Natal, based in the Head Office in Pietermaritzburg to ask for permission to conduct research in the selected schools. After doing all these procedures, I waited for responses from both the Ethics Committee and the Department of Basic Education. Ethical clearance and permission from the Department of Basic Education were granted before proceeding to contact the participants of the study.

Upon getting approval, I started gathering data by firstly distributing questionnaires to schools. I put them in a sealed envelope and gave them to an Administration Clerk for him/her to distribute to the responsible teachers, that is, Senior and Master teachers. Participants were asked to write their codes following a particular instruction, where they had to write the first two letters of their mothers' first names, followed by their date of birth and the first two letters of their mothers' birth month (Girlye Nomzamo-GI; 14; January-JA). The code from this instruction is **GI14JA**. The creation of the codes was for easy identification. The questionnaires were then collected a week later, and research participants were selected for semi-structured interviews. The code was also created for the semi-structured interviews, allowing me to match responses from the screening questionnaire and the semi-structured interviews and allowing the data to remain confidential.

### **3.5 Setting/Location of the study**

The study was conducted in public schools in KwaZulu-Natal, specifically in the eThekweni Region and particularly in the Umlazi District. It was conducted at three primary and two secondary schools. The first primary school in which the study was conducted had enrolments of eight hundred learners. The second primary school had enrolments of four hundred learners. The last primary school had enrolments of two thousand learners. The secondary school had enrolments of four thousand learners, and the other had enrolments of one thousand learners.

The number of staff member differed across schools. There were 25 teachers in the first primary school, 12 teachers in the second primary school and 46 teachers in the last primary school. In the first secondary school, there were 100 teachers and 30 teachers in the second one. The academic performance of the learners in these schools was very good and this was shown by the high pass rates. These schools were noted for the good discipline of the learners. All these schools were in quintile four schools, which made it easy to reach to them as they were in urban areas, in townships where there were all the resources like electricity or tarred roads.

### **3.6 Research Sampling and Sample**

Purposive and convenience sampling approaches were used (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014). Choosing purposive this sampling is fundamental to the quality of data gathered; therefore, reliability and competence of the informant must be ensured (Tongco, 2007). In the purposive

sampling, I, purposively selected groups in the population to become the participants of the study (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014). Senior and Master teachers were chosen. On the other hand, convenience sampling ensures that the knowledge gained is representative of the population from which the sample was drawn (Etikan, Musa & Alkassim, 2016). For convenience sampling, a sample that was easy to reach was chosen, that is, Senior and Master teachers who were amongst those who filled in the screening questionnaires. A more detailed description follows.

For the quantitative part of the study, that is, the filling in of the screening questionnaires, I used purposive sampling (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014). This means that all teachers working as Senior or Master teachers at primary and secondary schools in the Umlazi area were asked to take part in the study. I approached five schools, that is, three primary schools and two secondary schools. That helped me to get 50 teachers for the quantitative part of the study if all Senior and Master teachers in the five targeted schools were going to take part.

There were 25 teachers in the first primary school, 12 teachers in the second primary school and 46 teachers in the last primary school. In the first secondary school, there were 100 teachers and 30 teachers in the second one. Overall, 213 teachers were employed at these schools. Only Senior and Master teachers were targeted. Therefore, 50 teachers across both schools were addressed. Of these, 40 teachers took part in the questionnaire part of the study (response rate was 80 %). There were 14 males and 26 females whose ages ranged from 46 to 54. Their time in the teaching profession ranged from 21 to 29 years.

For the second part, six participants from the previous part of the study were recruited, where purposive sampling was used but ended up with five who were conveniently selected because they were easy to reach and were from the previous group involved in the quantitative part of the study. Again, only Senior and Master teachers (six teachers) were addressed. Of these, five teachers took part in this study. The teacher who could not make it had a lot of excuses and broke many appointments; therefore, the interview ended up with five teachers. There were three males and two females whose ages ranged from 46 to 56 years. Their time in the teaching profession ranged from 21 to 31 years.

### **3.7 Profiling the participants**

In presenting the data, the following codes for the participants were used, **TH25AP**, **BH14NO**, **TH11JA**, **FI14NO** and **SI26NO** to protect their identity.

**Table 1:** Profiles of participants for the qualitative part of the study.

<i>Codes</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Ages</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>School Type</i>
<b>TH25AP</b>	Male	54	Senior teacher	Secondary school
<b>BH14NO</b>	Male	49	Master teacher	Secondary school
<b>TH11JA</b>	female	57	Master teacher	Primary school
<b>FI14NO</b>	female	53	Senior teacher	Primary school
<b>SI26NO</b>	Male	44	Senior teacher	Primary school

### **3.8 Methods of Data Generation**

#### **3.8.1 Quantitative part of the study**

As a first step of the study, participants were requested to fill in the questionnaire, which was used as a screening tool before conducting the qualitative analyses. Screening questions are placed at the beginning of a survey in order to determine whether or not respondents have certain characteristics that would make them take part in a study (Carver, 1997). In this case, the screening questionnaire was used to identify or obtain biographical information as well as to detect early challenges and coping strategies in a large group of participants, that is, Senior and Master teachers.

The screening questionnaire was structured in such a way that there were closed-ended questions which were used to investigate the challenges and coping strategies used by these teachers in public schools based on an existing scale (Carver, 1997). In total, 16 items were used to assess the challenges of these teachers. Those items were divided into different scales. There was role clarity, role conflict, social support from supervisors, social community at work and social support from colleagues. For example, under the role clarity scale, there were three items that were assessed; four items were assessed in role conflict scale; three items were assessed in social support from supervisors' scale; three items were assessed in social community at work scale, and lastly, three items were assessed in social support from colleagues' scale (Pejtersen, Kristensen, Borg & Bjorner, 2010).

A Likert-type response scale of 1 to 5 was used to assess these items with 1- to a very small extent to 5 to a very large extent (see Appendix E for details).

#### ***An example of role clarity scale***

Role clarity scales assessed the three items which are found in the attached screening questionnaire (please refer to Appendix E).

Overall, for role clarity, Cronbach's Alpha was .98, which indicates that the internal consistency of the overall scale was good.

#### ***An example of role conflict scale***

For role conflict assessed with four items, Cronbach's Alpha was .69, which is an indication that the internal consistency of the overall scale was acceptable (for details, see Appendix E).

#### ***An example of social support from supervisors***

Three items assessed this scale as part of the screening questionnaire attached (see Appendix E). The Cronbach's Alpha for social support from supervisors was .94, which indicates that the internal consistency of the overall scale was good.

#### ***An example from social community at work***

Three items assessed social community at work in the screening questionnaire (see Appendix E). For social community at work, the Cronbach's Alpha was .87. Cronbach's Alpha indicates that the internal consistency of the overall scale was good.

#### ***An example of social support from colleagues***

For social support from colleagues (assessed with three items), the Cronbach's Alpha was .85. This Cronbach Alpha indicates that the internal consistency of the overall scale was good (please see screening questionnaire in Appendix E).

Again, the screening questionnaire had a list of coping strategies that Senior and Master teachers are using to overcome their challenges. There are 25 items that were used to assess the coping strategies of these teachers. Those items belong to different scales, i.e., active coping, denial, use of emotional support, use of instrumental support, behavioural disengagement, venting, positive reframing, planning, humour, acceptance, religion and self-

blame. Under each scale, there were two items of coping strategies that were assessed (Pejtersen *et al.*, 2010). A Likert-type response scale of 1 to 4 was used to assess these items with 1 –I have not been doing this at all to 4 I have been doing this a lot (see Appendix E for details).

The Cronbach's Alpha for the overall scale was .86, meaning the internal consistency was good. The examples of all the scales used are found in the attached screening questionnaire (see Appendix E).

For the well-being of these teachers, stress, somatic and cognitive stress scales were used. The Copenhagen Psychosocial Questionnaire (COPSOQ) by Pejtersen, Kristenses, Borg and Bjorner (2010) instrument was used. There were three items that were assessed for stress, three items again were assessed for somatic stress and four items were assessed for cognitive stress (Pejtersen *et al.*, 2010). A Likert-type response scale of 1 to 5 was used to assess these items with 1 – not at all to 5 all the time (see Appendix E for details).

#### *An example of a stress scale*

In this scale, three items were assessed, with questions asked appearing on the attached screening questionnaire (see Appendix E). Cronbach's Alpha, measuring internal consistency, was good (.82).

#### *An example of somatic stress*

Again for this scale, three items were assessed, and the examples are at the screening questionnaire that is assessed (see Appendix E). Cronbach's Alpha, measuring internal consistency, was good (.86).

#### *An example of cognitive stress*

For cognitive stress scales, four items were assessed, and the examples of those items are in the attached screening questionnaire (see Appendix E). Out of this assessment, the Cronbach's Alpha, measuring internal consistency was good (.85).

**Table 2:** List of Scales and Instruments of the quantitative part of the study.

<b>Scale</b>	<b>Instrument</b>	<b>Alpha</b>	<b>Number of Items</b>
Role clarity, role conflict	COPSOQ (Pejtersen <i>et al.</i> , 2010), Likert type response scale from 1= to a very small extent to 5=to a very large extent	.98; .69	3; 4
Social support from supervisors and colleagues	COPSOQ (Pejtersen <i>et al.</i> , 2010), Likert type response scale from 1= never/hardly ever to 5=always	.94; .85	6;
Social community at work	COPSOQ (Pejtersen <i>et al.</i> , 2010) Likert type response scale from 1= never/hardly ever to 5=always	.87	3
Coping strategies	Brief Cope (Carver, 1997), Likert type response scale from 1= I haven't been doing this at all to 4=I've been doing this a lot	.86	25
Stress, somatic and cognitive stress scales	COPSOQ (Pejtersen <i>et al.</i> , 2010), Likert type response scale from 1= not at all to 5=all the time	.82; .89	3; 7

## Summary

In this section of the study, attention was given to the method of data generation, with a focus on the quantitative part of the study. The participants were asked to fill in the screening questionnaire, with its role being discussed to detect early problems in a large group of participants concerning challenges, coping strategies and well-being of the Senior and Master teachers. The structure of the screening questionnaire, which comprised the closed-ended items based on the challenges, coping strategies and well-being of the teachers was also discussed. Under closed-ended items on challenges, 16 items were assessed. Those items were grouped into different scales discussed above. Under closed-ended items on coping strategies, 25 items

were assessed. Those items were grouped into different scales discussed above. Lastly, under closed-ended items on the well-being of teachers, ten items were assessed. Those items were grouped into stress scales discussed above. This section was concluded by presenting a table, showing a list of scales and instruments for the quantitative part of the study. In the next section, the focus will be on the qualitative part of the study.

### **3.8.2 Qualitative part of the study**

For the second part of the study, data was generated using the qualitative method (Creswell, 2017). This method is used to dig, explore and discover the meaning individuals or groups ascribed to a social or human problem. Moreover, the author argues that the process of research involves “emerging questions and procedures; data typically collected in the participants’ settings; data analysis inductively building from particulars to general themes and the researcher making interpretations of the meaning of data” (Creswell, 2017, p. 203). Those who utilise in their studies this form of inquiry support a way of looking at research that honours an inductive style, a focus on the subjectivity of an individual and the importance of rendering the difficulties of a situation.

A qualitative design was deemed to be relevant because it was chosen to complement the study. The study uses the pragmatic paradigm, which supports the utilisation of mixed-methods in research; that is, it works hand-in-hand with both the quantitative and qualitative approach (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). The main focus of getting information was through semi-structured interviews and to draw from the participants’ experiences concerning the challenges and coping strategies that they implement at schools. This approach was chosen in order to have an in-depth understanding of the challenges of Senior and Master teachers as well as their coping strategies and how these affect both themselves and their schools (Creswell, 2017).

Semi-structured interviews for conducting such a study were chosen. This kind of interview recognises the structured and focused conversation where the interviewer gives clarity on the structure and purpose of the interview (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014). Denotatively, such interviews use open-ended questions that allow the participants to talk freely about the topic, giving their own interpretations and allows for clarification and understanding during the interview. Three Senior teachers and two Master teachers were selected from the total number

of participants. The reasons for doing this particular study were clearly explained to them as well as the duration of the interviews, which lasted on average 45 minutes.

A set of three questions were asked, with question one focusing on the challenges that Senior and Master teachers experience in schools. Question two focused on the coping strategies that these teachers implement to overcome the challenges. Lastly, question three focused on the implications that the challenges and coping strategies have for the well-being of these teachers. The first set of questions aimed to address the challenges of the Senior and Master teachers. In order to do that, questions were formulated based on the role of these teachers, the kind of work associated with their role and the questions also attempted to discover the situations in their role that they find challenging. Situations in their schools that are affecting their work as Senior and Master teachers were investigated as well as other work that is associated with their role.

The second set of questions aimed at assessing the coping mechanisms that these teachers use to manage their challenges. The coping mechanisms focused on how these teachers handle the duties associated with their role. The teachers were also asked to give a description of a specific situation that was challenging for them in their role as Senior or Master teacher to discover how they dealt with the situation. In the last set of questions, the aim was to assess the personal well-being of these teachers, concerning their roles. That is, how do these roles affect them? Are they positively or negatively affected? In determining answers to this question, they were asked about the influence of their roles on other teachers' lives and also on the influence they have in the school as a whole.

For the semi-structured interviews, all of these took place after school. This was deliberately done so as not to disturb teachers during the teaching time and, more so, because, the teachers that were interviewed were not just ordinary teachers, but were the Senior and Master teachers who have specific roles and responsibilities to fulfil in a school. A smart cell phone was used for recording the interviews. The planned time for the interviews was one hour, but due to the fact that some of the teachers that I interviewed were in a hurry, rushing to go home, the time was less than an hour. In fact, the longest interview lasted for 35 minutes. I interviewed the teachers on different days and classrooms were used for the venue.

The intention was to interview six participants, but I ended up interviewing five because the other teacher withdrew from the study. He was not answering calls and could not be found at

school. He would make promises and give assurance that he would take part, but I eventually excluded him.

**Table 3:** Information about the details of the semi-structured interviews

	<b>Day</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Time of Interview</b>	<b>Venue</b>	<b>Duration</b>
<b>TH25AP</b>	1	23 July 2019	15H00	Classroom	25 minutes
<b>BH14NO</b>	1	23 July 2019	16H00	Classroom	18 minutes
<b>TH11JA</b>	2	25 July 2019	14H45	Classroom	19 minutes
<b>FI14NO</b>	3	30 July 2019	14H30	Classroom	17 minutes
<b>SI26NO</b>	4	12 July 2019	15H30	participant's home	35 minutes

### Summary

In this section, the focus was on the data generation method, paying attention, particularly to the qualitative part of the study. The design that was considered appropriate was the qualitative design, and it was chosen to complement the study. Information was obtained using semi-structured interviews, where five teachers were interviewed on the questions covering challenges, coping strategies and the wellbeing of Senior and Master teachers. Three Senior teachers and two Master teachers were interviewed. It was also highlighted that interviews took place after school in the classrooms. A smart cell phone was used for recording the interviews. In the next section of the study, attention is paid to the methods of data analysis for both quantitative data and qualitative data.

## 3.9 Methods of Data Analysis

### 3.9.1 Analysis of quantitative data

Numerical data from closed-ended questions (items) was entered into SPSS 25 (IBM Corp. Released, 2017). Different items were grouped together according to scales for challenges, coping strategies and the wellbeing of Senior and Master teachers (please see information on scales in the section of data generation method, focusing on the quantitative part of the study).

Scales were analysed using a descriptive approach (Means and Standard Deviations, Frequencies, graphical representation of the data) to address critical questions (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014). The Mean, also called mathematical expectation or average, is the central value of a discrete set of numbers, or the sum of the values divided by the number of values (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014). On the other hand, a Standard Deviation refers to how much the set of values deviate from the mean (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014). For example, a low standard deviation shows that the values are close to the mean of the set, while a high standard deviation shows that the values are spread out over a wider range or further from the average. It also means, a measure of how much the data deviates from the mean and it indicates the standard of the variability of the scores around the mean (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014).

On an inferential level, correlations between scales and biographical variables were analysed to address critical question three. Exploratory analyses were conducted based on scatter plots of responses across participants. In order to identify clusters within the dataset, groups according to other characteristics were formed by using Median split. This is a technique where the Median of a scale is calculated. Denotatively, a median is a value that separates the data from the lowest half to the highest half. Then the data set is grouped according to low and high levels of participant responses on this scale. All participants with responses below the Median form one group (including the exact level of the Median), and all participants with responses above the Median form a second group (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014).

### **3.9.2 Analysis of qualitative data**

Firstly, interview data were audio-recorded using a cell phone. Thereafter, the recordings were transcribed verbatim. Data was then organised according to similar items. It was then analysed thematically. The data was generated from information given by the participants. In data transcription, open-coding was used and compiled into themes in order to discover the most valuable part of the information given (Gilbert, 2008). An inductive approach was used to analyse the data according to the themes extracted from the generated data (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014). There are four themes that emerged during the analysis process. Those themes centred around the first research question, which is about the challenges of the Senior and the Master teachers.

This type of analysis of data allows the researcher to reduce the data into controllable units called codes. The codes are then classified together with the aim of creating a pattern of developing themes (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003; Cohen, Janicki-Deverts & Miller, 2007). This is the kind of analysis that makes sense and gives a clearer meaning of the data generated in qualitative research (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014). The qualitative data in this study took the form of records of semi-structured interviews. During this type of analysis, references that are appropriate from the information given by participants are handpicked in order to check the similarity in what the participants were saying (Maree & Van der Westhuizen, 2007). Furthermore, Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Kelly (2006) highlight that data analysis in pragmatic research is not a tranquil and free exercise, but rather, it requires the development of themes and philosophies concerning the phenomenon being studied.

In presenting the data, codes were used for the participants to protect their identity and to allow to match responses from the screening questionnaire and the semi-structured interviews. Those codes were created (like in the screening questionnaire) considering the first two letters of the first name of the participant's mother (Olivia Pinkie- OL). This was followed by the participant's date of birth (14 September-14) and the first two letters of the mother's birth month (January-JA). Therefore, the example code would be OL14JA. The first participant was a male who is a Senior teacher. The next two participants were male and female, and they were both Master teachers. The fourth participant was a female and a Senior teacher. The last participant was a male and also a Senior teacher.

## **Summary**

In this section, the focus was on the methods of data analysis, paying attention to both the quantitative and the qualitative analysis. For quantitative data analysis, scales were analysed on a descriptive means and Standard Deviation. Thereafter, a definition of a mean and a Standard Deviation was given (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014). On an inferential level, correlations between scales and biographical variables were also analysed to address critical questions. Exploratory analyses were conducted, based on scatter plots of responses across participants. To identify clusters within the data set, groups of items according to other characteristics were formed using Median split. Lastly, a definition of a Median was also given.

For the qualitative part of the study, a smart cell phone was used to record the interviews. Data were then transcribed verbatim. Materials were organised using similar items. The organised material was then analysed thematically. Lastly, data were presented, using codes for the participants to protect their identity. In the next section of the study, the focus will be on the triangulation of data. This is an approach that allows for gaining a complete view on the phenomenon, that is in this instance, the challenges of Senior and Master teachers at South African public schools.

### **3.9.3 Process of creating codes and pseudonyms for the participants**

Both sources were matched by using individual codes, which were only known to the participants. The codes were created using the first two letters of the first name of the participant's mother (for example, Girlie Nomzamo- GI). This was followed by the participant's date of birth (31 January-31) and the first two letters of the mother's birth month (April-AP). Therefore, the example code would be GI31AP. In-depth data from the semi-structured interviews were complemented by data on the levels of challenges, coping styles and stress of Senior and Master teachers. Information from the screening questionnaire helped to prepare for the interviews in which the participants were asked probing questions based on their questionnaire responses. Such an approach allowed for gaining a complete view of the phenomenon under discussion.

### **3.10 Ensuring research quality**

In ensuring the quality of the research, the researcher had to consider the interest and personal experiences of the participants; hence it was important to ensure trustworthiness in this study. Therefore, to ensure trustworthiness, an emerging operational model was used (Spall, 1998). This model suggests the practice of validity, reliability and rigour.

#### **3.10.1 *Validity***

Validity refers to whether or not the test measures what it intends to measure (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014). Golafshani (2003) also argues that it determines how truthful the research results are. In this case, the semi-structured interview questions should focus on the challenges that teachers working in sandwich positions experience in schools. Therefore, the data received

from the participants will be based on the challenges that these teachers experience in Primary and Secondary schools.

### **3.10.2 Reliability**

Reliability refers to the consistency of measures and the degree to which the test produces stable and similar results (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014). This suggests that any researcher should also be able to arrive at similar or comparable findings in a similar study (Noble & Smith, 2015). Reliability in qualitative research looks at accuracy, fairness, uniqueness, and the explanatory and descriptive potential of the data (Cohen *et al.*, 2013). In other words, the answers given by teachers working in sandwich positions on the challenges they experience should be more or less the same, even though there will be uniqueness and accuracy in the results given.

### **3.10.3 Rigour**

Rigour refers to the restrictions or fearful response from the participants (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014). According to the two authors, it is the disadvantage of conducting an interview. For example, the interviewer will not have to ask questions that limit the capabilities of teachers working in sandwich positions like yes/no and true/false questions. Questions asked will also be open-ended, and of course, a schedule of questions will also be available. If the questions are limited, there is the possibility that many teachers could withdraw from participating in the study, and only a few may take part.

## **3.11 Ethical Considerations**

Ethical issues must be considered first and foremost. In every study, authors are required to report on the ethical considerations of their research work (Connelly, 2014). This is the central point of ethics in research where the researcher has to prioritise that no harmful things will prevail in the lives of the participants but instead should inform them that they are going to benefit in one way or the other (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2013). On top of this, the researcher must take all precautionary measures in avoiding threats that might happen to the participants. Additional to this, the researcher must ensure the participants that the study is voluntary and that they can withdraw anytime from participation if they so wish. He/She should also emphasise the freedom to talk upon answering questions and should ensure anonymity and confidentiality to them (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014).

On the other hand, Ruzek and Zatzick (2000) conducted research with trauma victims and argue that increased attention to ethical considerations beyond the standard guidelines for conducting research with human participants is required. This goes for Senior and Master teachers who always have additional roles to fulfil in their positions. These additional roles lead to challenges, hence increased attention to ethical considerations is required. This concern is highlighted amongst these teachers for a number of reasons. Amongst the reasons are their roles and responsibilities which add to their challenges (Education Labour Relations Council, 2006).

To conduct the study, I followed all the necessary steps that are required. Permission to conduct the research was requested and granted at all levels that the research required. I wrote an application to the Ethics Committee based at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Westville campus. The Ethics Committee gave me permission to conduct the study. After all this, I approached the Department of Basic Education in order to gain access to the research sites. Lastly, I requested permission from all the participants of my study. The participants had the right to agree to participate or to refuse without any consequences (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014). I explained to each participant what the study is all about. When the participants had agreed to participate, I gave them formal letters of consent prior to the questionnaires and the interviews. I asked them to sign those letters as evidence of their agreement to participate.

Throughout the whole process of data collection, I had to assure the participants of the confidentiality of the information that they provided (Vanclay, Banes & Taylor, 2013). I guaranteed the participants that in the questionnaires, codes were used instead of their real names in order to preserve anonymity (Christians, 2000). Again, for the interviews, I had to assure them that pseudonyms would be used when writing up the dissertation (Christians, 2000). Furthermore, I told them that their participation was voluntary, meaning that if they wished to pull out from the study, they would be allowed to do so without incurring any negative consequence (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014). No money was paid to them either. The recordings were made in accordance with their permission, and I explained to them that the recorded information would be kept in the University archives for a period of five years and thereafter destroyed (Vanclay, Banes & Taylor, 2013). The research, therefore, followed three ethical principles which are autonomy, non-maleficence and beneficence (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014).

### **3.11.1 Autonomy**

The principle of autonomy finds its most immediate application in the requirement of informed consent (Mkhize, 2006). It also refers to the fact that the researcher will have to respect the autonomy, freedom or independence of all the people who will be taking part (Bertram & Christiansen). Respect for persons requires that research participants be treated as free and autonomous subjects (Mkhize, 2006). Furthermore, the author says that an autonomous person is “self-governing, guided by considerations, characteristics and desires that emanate from within the self as opposed to being driven by externally imposed conditions and considerations” (Mkhize, 2006, p. 1). I assured them that they participated voluntarily and that they could withdraw at any time as outlined in the informed consent form.

### **3.11.2 Non-maleficence**

This ethical principle is also called a “do no harm” principle, (Andersson, Chapman, Dekutoski, Dettori, Fehlings, Fournay & Weinstein, 2010, p. 1). This means that the researcher had to assure the participants that the research was not going to threaten them or any other person participating (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014). The place where interviews were to be held should be conducive for the semi-structured interview to take place. For example, in a school, the best place for a semi-structured interview is a classroom, when all the learners have left.

### **3.11.3 Beneficence**

Under this principle, researchers are enjoined to secure the well-being of their participants (Christians, 2000). Alternatively, beneficence refers to the fact that the research benefits the participants, either directly or more broadly to other researchers or to society at large (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014). If, for example, the number of participants who see themselves as being ineffective is high, the recommendations that I would come up with as a researcher, directed to the Department of Basic Education, would help to shed more light to the subject and I would also recommend looking at these positions from another perspective.

## **3.12 Chapter summary**

At the beginning of this chapter, the research approach and methodology, which embraced the pragmatic paradigm and the research design were discussed. It is, thereafter, discussed the location of the study, research sampling, data generation methods and data analysis procedures as well as triangulation of data. Issues of trustworthiness and ethical issues were also

discussed. The next chapter will discuss the results generated from the quantitative and qualitative part of the study.

## CHAPTER 4

### RESULTS

#### 4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I present the results from the questionnaires and semi-structured interviews concerning the specific job-related challenges and coping strategies of Senior and Master teachers at South African public schools as well as the implications that the challenges and coping strategies have for these teachers and schools respectively. I will start with the results from the quantitative part of the study. This will be followed by the results from the qualitative part of the study.

#### 4.2 Results from the quantitative method of the study

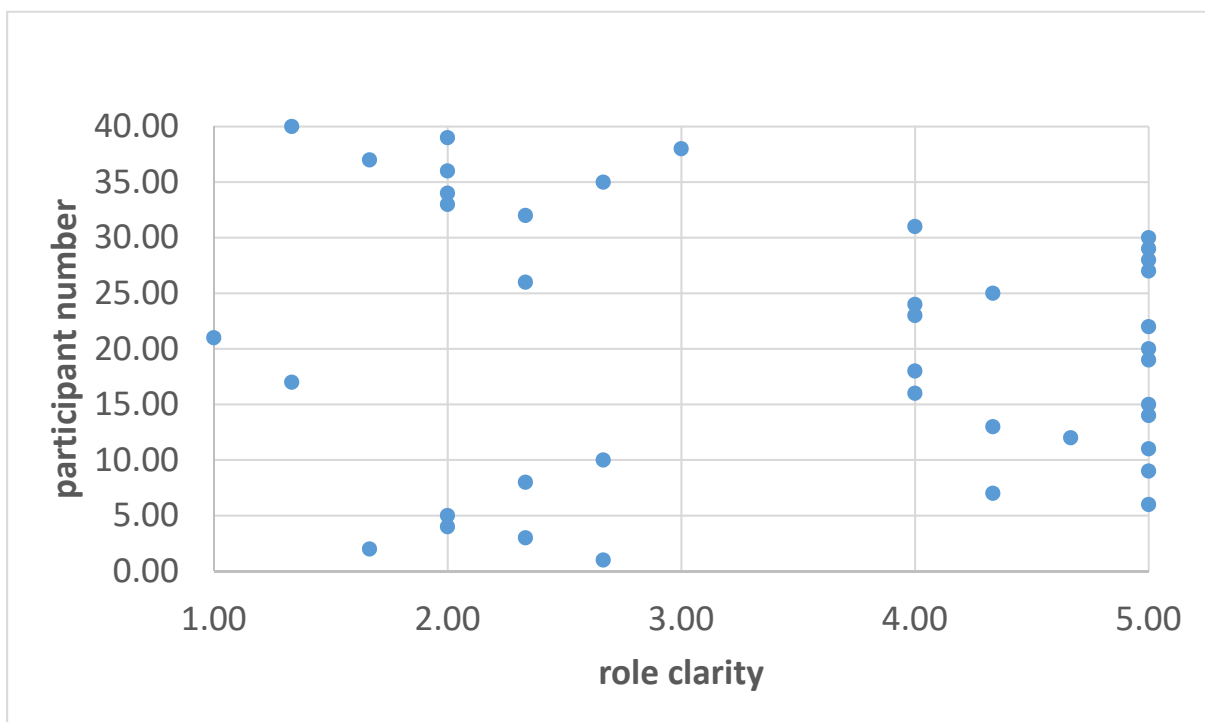
##### 4.2.1 *Results on the challenges of Senior and Master teachers*

First, to address Research Question one, I analysed the scales assessing whether the work of these teachers had clear objectives or not as well as the areas of responsibility. I also wanted to find out whether or not these teachers sometimes do things which seem to be unnecessary or do things which ought to have been done in a different way. This was followed by whether or not these teachers get help and support from their nearest superiors, whether or not there is a pleasant atmosphere between themselves and their colleagues or a feeling of being a part of a community at their place of work. Lastly, I analysed the scales with the aim of finding out whether or not the colleagues of these teachers are willing to listen to their problems at work or whether their colleagues talk with them about how well they carry out their work or not. Below is a table for such analysis.

**Table 4:** Descriptive results concerning the challenges of the Senior and Master teachers ( $N=40$ ).

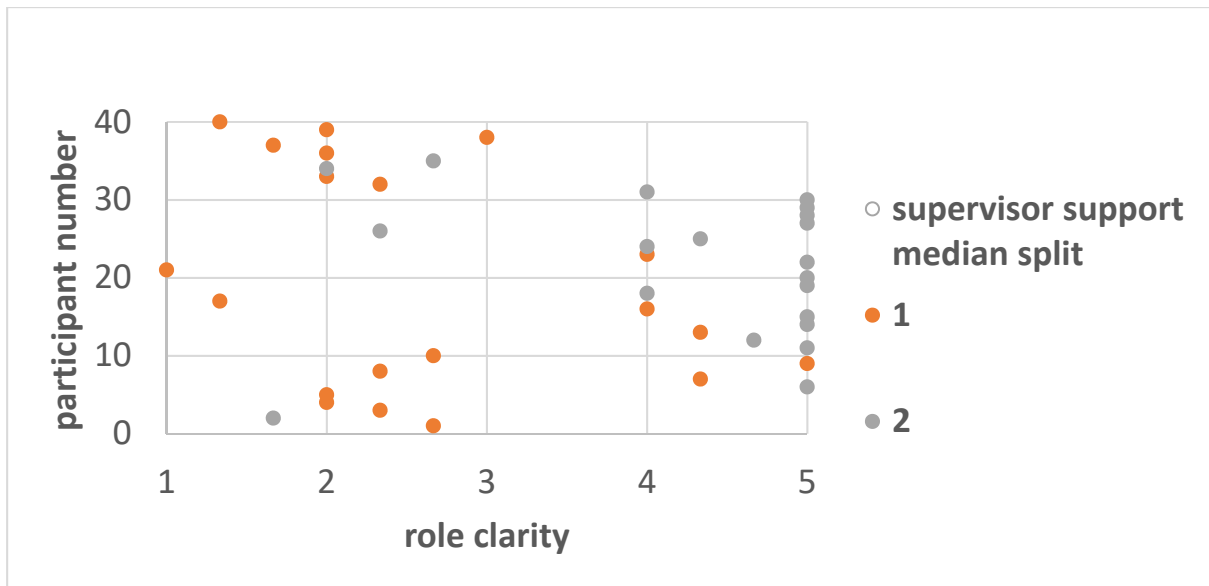
	<i>Mean (M)</i>	<i>Standard Deviation (SD)</i>
Role clarity	3.43	1.39
Role conflict	2.59	.86
Support from supervisors	3.62	1.11
Support from colleagues	3.52	.92
Social community at work	3.73	.87

The results indicate that participants expressed low to moderate levels of role conflict as well as moderate levels of role clarity. They received moderate levels of support from supervisors and colleagues and expressed moderate levels of social community at work. The Standard Deviations indicate that results of participants differed somewhat, with highest levels of variance for role clarity and support from supervisors (please see table 4 for details). In the next exploratory step, I plotted role clarity across all participants to further investigate this variance in the data (please see figure 3 for more details).



**Figure 3:** Role clarity across participants ( $N=40$ ).

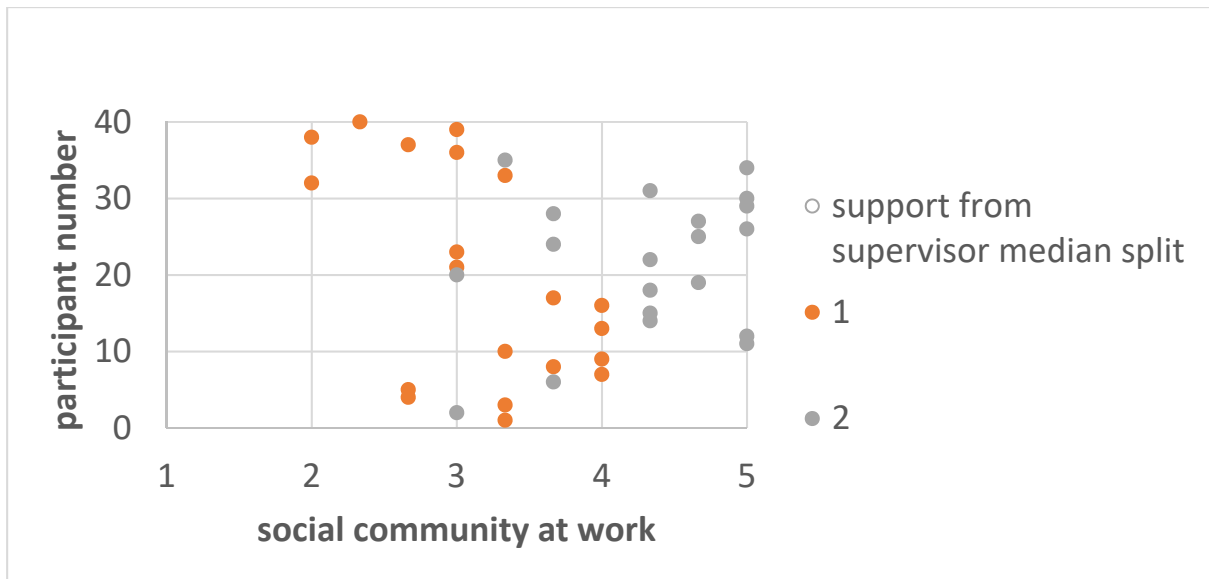
In as far as role clarity is concerned, responses from participants show a high variance. It even seems as if two Clusters emerged (one with low to medium role clarity and one with high role clarity). In the next exploratory step, I tried to identify how these two Clusters can be characterised. I grouped all participants according to their levels of supervisor support via Median split (group 1 below and equal to the Median and group two above the Median) and introduced this in the plot of the variance of the responses on role clarity (please see figure 4).



**Figure 4:** Levels of supervisor support on role clarity ( $N=40$ ).

The above figure shows that supervisor support plays an important role in explaining the variation in role clarity. The bulleted numbers indicate low support from supervisors (below and equal to the Median) and high support from supervisor (above the Median). Orange dots indicate low support and grey dots indicate high support. Participants with low support are predominantly in the low to moderate role clarity Cluster, and participants with high levels of support are predominantly in the Cluster with high role clarity.

In order to verify this result, I repeated this analysis for other scales to identify similar patterns. Please see the result for social community at work below (figure 5).



**Figure 5:** Results for social community at work ( $N=40$ ).

The above figures indicate that supervisor support plays an important role in explaining the variation in social community at work. It seems that when participants expressed low support from supervisors, they are more likely to experience lower role clarity and lower social community at work.

### Summary

This section focused on analysing descriptive results for the quantitative part of the study. Upon analysing Research Question one, which is based on the challenges, items from different scales discussed above, were analysed. Overall, role clarity is moderate to high, and participants report moderate levels of role conflict. This means that most of the participants say that the roles of Senior and Master teachers are clearly stated and that there are few conflicting ideas, pertaining to such positions. On another note, participants reported moderate to high levels of support from both hierarchical levels, that is, supervisors and colleagues. This is an indication that both the management and teachers play a vital role in supporting these teachers. The people in the community, for example, parents also play a role in supporting these teachers; hence the results show moderate to good social community at work. Role conflict, on the other hand, was moderate (please see table 4 for details).

Table 4 showing descriptive results on the challenges of Senior and Master teachers is included in the study. On top of it is a figure showing role clarity across participants. Another figure, showing levels of supervisor support on role clarity and the results for social community at work are also included in the study. In the next section, levels of coping strategies will be described.

#### 4.2.2 *Descriptive results on the coping strategies of Senior and Master teachers*

To address Research Question two based on the descriptive analysis of the coping strategies of Senior and Master teachers, different scales discussed below (see table 5) were analysed. The most used coping strategies are emotional support, instrumental support, positive reframing, planning, acceptance, religion and active coping. On the other hand, behavioural disengagement, humour and self-blame are the least used coping strategies.

**Table 5:** Descriptive results on the coping strategies of Senior and Master teachers.

	<i>Mean (M)</i>	<i>Standard Deviation (SD)</i>
Active coping	2.99	.71
Denial	2.60	.67
Emotional support	3.14	.62
Instrumental support	3.33	.67
Behavioural disengagement	2.34	.86
Venting	2.79	.81
Positive reframing	3.28	.58
Planning	3.23	.61
Humour	2.53	.81
Acceptance	3.18	.45
Religion	3.15	.70
Self-blame	2.08	.94

In the above table, participants report that they mostly cope with their challenges by getting help and advice from other people. For them to keep going, they also try to look for something good in whatever challenge they encounter or look at something in a different light to make it

seem more positive. This is a kind of strategy that is used to think of the necessary steps to be taken in order to solve the problem. On the other hand, few participants gave up the attempt to cope, and few had been making jokes about the situation they were faced with. Some even blamed themselves for things that have happened.

## Summary

In this section, descriptive results on the coping strategies of Senior and Master teachers were analysed. A table is included to show those results. It shows that participants mostly use cognitive strategies, for example, instrumental support, positive reframing and planning as coping strategies for their challenges. It also shows that emotional strategies, for example, behavioural disengagement, humour and self-blame are the least used coping strategies. In the next section, the focus will be on critical question three, which takes the reader to the analysis of results on stress levels of the participants.

### 4.2.3 Results on stress levels of the participants

The stress levels of participants were investigated as overall stress, somatic stress (physical symptoms of stress) and cognitive stress (stress-related thoughts).

**Table 6:** Descriptive results on the stress levels of Senior and Master teachers ( $N=40$ ).

	<i>Mean (M)</i>	<i>Standard Deviation (SD)</i>
Stress	2.19	.75
Somatic stress	2.22	.86
Cognitive stress	2.03	.65

I wanted to investigate how often participants had been irritable, tense or experienced general stress symptoms. Additionally, I wanted to find out how often they experienced physical symptoms of stress, that is, stomach-ache, head-ache and tension in various muscles (somatic stress) due to a number of challenges they are faced with. Lastly, I wanted to explore how often they had problems on a cognitive level, that is, how often they had difficulty in concentrating, thinking clearly, making decisions and remembering (cognitive stress). The results show that participants reported low to moderate levels of stress and somatic stress but slightly lower

levels of cognitive stress. This means that participants, on average experience a moderate to medium amount of stress and physical stress and a lesser amount of cognitive stress. In the correlation table below, the results show the expected relationship between coping strategies and stress. Specific coping strategies (in bold) are significantly related to lower stress levels. For example, upon using these coping strategies in bold, participants show a connection of low levels of stress, somatic stress and cognitive stress.

**Table 7:** Correlations between coping strategies and stress of participants ( $N=40$ ).

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
1 active coping	1															
2 denial	.27	1														
3 emotional support	.47**	.38*	1													
4 instrumental support	.33*	.21	.67**	1												
5 <b>behavioural diseng.</b>	.20	.36*	.02	-.20	1											
6 venting	.15	.25	.46**	.28	.09	1										
7 <b>positive reframing</b>	.54**	.34*	.48**	.46**	.02	.17	1									
8 planning	.55**	.15	.43**	.46**	.08	.04	.71**	1								
9 humour	.15	.28†	.06	-.06	.11	.22	.27†	.12	1							
10 acceptance	.51**	.45**	.33*	.28†	.34*	.05	.46**	.39*	.41**	1						
11 <b>religion</b>	.48**	.35*	.48**	.39*	.19	.32*	.55**	.42**	.25	.55**	1					
12 <b>self-blame</b>	.14	.42**	.15	.14	.46**	.24	.28†	.38*	.31	.29†	.20	1				
13 <b>distraction</b>	.08	.18	.22	.06	.27	.42**	.26	.25	-.07	.10	.20	.32*	1			
14 <b>stress</b>	-.20	-.02	-.05	-.03	-.18	-.25	-.31*	-.10	-.28†	-.21	-.23	.02	-.07	1		
15 <b>somatic stress</b>	-.02	-.02	-.02	.06	-.32*	-.20	-.10	-.02	-.22	-.29†	-.16	-.07	-.40**	.62**	1	
16 <b>cognitive stress</b>	-.22	-.15	-.12	-.13	-.14	-.20	-.34*	-.07	-.32*	-.33*	-.29†	-.03	-.26	.78**	.65**	1

Note: \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*  $p < .05$ , †  $p < .10$ .

## Summary

This section focuses on the stress levels of participants. Participants reported low to moderate levels of somatic stress, low levels of cognitive stress and moderate levels of stress. This means that the more coping strategies the participants used in their challenges, the less stressed they become. In the next section, results from the qualitative method will be analysed.

### **4.3 Results from the qualitative method of the study**

For this section of the study, three Research Questions for my study will be analysed, and they concern the challenges of Senior and Master teachers, their coping strategies and also the implications that the challenges and coping strategies have for them and their schools, respectively.

#### ***4.3.1 Results on challenges of the Senior and Master teachers***

In this particular section, the focus is on Research Question one, which looks at the challenges of these teachers. I would like to understand how these teachers interpret their roles and duties.

##### **4.3.1.1 Roles and duties**

Roles refer to the functions assumed or parts played by a person or thing in a particular situation. Duties refer to tasks or actions that one is required to perform as part of one's job. The fact that these teachers have parts that they play in particular situations or actions makes them eligible to be called Senior and Master teachers. They are not just ordinary teachers but are teachers with specific duties to perform, on top of teaching. Those roles or duties include mentoring, extra and co-curricular, as well as administrative work. The Senior and Master teacher positions mean being elevated to another level, the middle position. But for these teachers, they mean having a lot of experience compared to the other teachers. For the school, it means ensuring that effective teaching and learning will take place, and learners will perform well in their assessments because of experienced teachers.

This is what the participants said about roles and duties as part of the challenges of the Senior and Master teachers.

##### **TH25AP**

*“We as Senior and Master teachers assist the HoD in his/her duties. As a Physical Science teacher in the Further Education and Training (FET) Phase, which is Grade*

10, 11 and 12; the HoD does not have the know-how in all the subjects in his/her Department and therefore he/she seeks assistance from Senior and Master teachers. We are actually called **Subject Heads**”.

“When it is moderation during exams, we moderate scripts and we prepare Grade 12 learners for their exams. What we normally do is to check the Question Papers to see whether they are up to standard for FET Phase. There are also those who do (General Education and Training) the GET Phase”.

“When student teachers come for Teaching Practice, we act as mentors to those teachers, giving guidance and the know-how about the teaching profession. We allocate them to different classrooms so that they get first-hand experience from the teachers”.

Upon sharing some ideas on the challenges of Senior and Master teachers, this participant mentioned assisting the HoDs, moderation of scripts, acting as mentors and also giving guidance and sharing ‘know-how’ about the teaching profession as the roles and duties of these teachers. These additional roles and functions may be challenging for these teachers because they still need to teach, as Post Level one teachers.

#### **TH11JA**

“I know the roles because of Sadtu (South African Democratic Teachers’ Union). They gave me a paper with the roles and they emphasized that I should work harder now because I cannot get a good salary for doing nothing. One of the roles is to make sure that teaching and learning is happening in the school, you must also be a mentor teacher, mentoring the students and novice teachers. You are also supposed to take a leading role in extra or co-curricular activities and that is what I am always doing. You must also control stock and equipment for administrative purposes and you must have good communication skills. For example, I am a Chairperson of IQMS in my school and I volunteered for this role, it was not something that was coming from the Principal; actually it was because of the motivation that I always have in working hard”.

During the interview with this participant, she acknowledges these additional functions and integrates them as part of her new role in the school. In order to accommodate these new functions, she would invest even more time and work even harder than before. The participant does not explicitly mention challenges, but highlighting the fact that taking these on requires a strong motivation to work hard implies a higher workload which can be challenging.

#### **BH14NO**

“First[ly] and foremost, it is about Management work as we are part of it. If the Management calls for a meeting, we are there. If the Management calls for supervision, we are also there. In fact, we are just above; we are more than the ordinary educators. Under Grade Heads there are Class Managers that we also

*supervise. For example, under my supervision, there are eight Class Managers, that is from A to H. Class Managers supervise learners in classrooms. They check whether the school uniform is properly [worn]dressed, shoes are polished, etcetera. If a child misbehaves, I am always called as the Grade Head. Then I have to submit the names of learners who misbehave to the Principal of the school”.*

In a discussion with this participant, he mentioned management work, attending to Management meetings and supervision of class managers as the roles of Senior and Master teachers. This participant emphasised the additional management tasks for which he needs to be available at any time. Also, as a supervisor, he expresses additional responsibility for discipline and order in the school. Two aspects seem to emerge from this. Firstly, that this teacher needs to invest additional time in management work and meetings, which also needs to be fitted into an already challenging timetable which may contribute to limited time resources. Secondly, he expresses a heightened feeling of responsibility for discipline in the school. This additional function may be challenging because it requires a teacher to constantly be alert and responsive to the supervised staff.

### **Summary**

The following two participants (TH25AP and TH11JA) share the same ideas when they mention that their roles as Senior and Master Teachers are to act as mentors to the student and novice teachers. For example,

**TH25AP** says: *“When student teachers come for Teaching, we act as mentors to those teachers, giving guidance and the know-how about the teaching profession”.*

**TH11JA** says: *“One of the roles is to make sure that teaching and learning is happening in the school, you must also be a mentor teacher, mentoring the students and novice teachers”.*

These participants share the same ideas about their roles. The first participant mentions that their role as Senior and Master teachers is to provide guidance and ‘know-how’ about the teaching profession. Similarly, the second participant mentioned that their role is to make sure that teaching and learning are happening in school. Therefore, the two participants focus on mentoring and sustaining teaching and learning functions. These additional functions add to their challenges. Taken together, these two participants mention a whole range of roles and functions of Senior and Master teachers. The first participant mentions management functions predominantly, whereas the second one focuses on mentoring and ensuring that teaching and

learning are happening in a school, in particular. All the roles that they mentioned are stipulated in the *ELRC, Collective Agreement NO.5 of 2006*.

The third participant (**BH14NO**), on the other hand, is mentioning that their role is to be part of the management as they are supposed to work there. He also mentions that Senior and Master teachers are more than Post level 1 teachers which is an indication that these teachers are expected to go an ‘extra-mile’ by engaging in these additional functions and duties, different from Post level 1 teachers’ work.

Whenever new roles are being added to an existing role, additional resources need to be invested, for example, additional time, additional effort, working extra hard and additional attention to detail, which is associated with the responsibility for school discipline. Senior and Master teachers do not express this explicitly, but their responses indicate that they all need to invest additional personal resources to be able to go the ‘extra-mile’. Thus, they may not explicitly express that these additional functions are challenging, but it can be assumed that the investment of additional personal resources may contribute to an increase in feeling challenged.

#### **4.3.1.2 Role clarity**

Role clarity means the degree to which there is clarity and understanding of the work of the participants. For Senior and Master teachers, it means that these teachers need to have a clear understanding of the roles, that is, they should know what their expectations are, concerning their roles and what other teachers expect from them for ensuring effective teaching and learning. For the school, it is, however going to benefit if there are teachers who know exactly what to do. In an interview with one participant, she mentioned that she is just labelled as a Senior teacher, she does not know the roles that pertain to this position. She even emphasised that she knows nothing about her being a Senior teacher.

Below you find the responses of my participants on their experience of role clarity.

#### **TH25AP**

*“First[ly] and foremost, there are no clear directives regarding responsibilities and duties of Senior and Master teachers. We as Senior and Master teachers assist the HOD in his/her duties”.*

In a discussion I had with this participant, it was surprising as he mentioned that there are no clear directives about the roles of Senior and Master teachers. The way he conceived this role was to assist the HODs in their duties.

#### **SI26NO**

*“Even the people in the Education fraternity do not understand the duties associated with these positions. They just take you for granted and being rude and the Principals do not adhere to the rules because the (Personnel Administrative Measures) PAM document is there but the duties of these teachers are not clearly stated and it is so frustrating because people do not know us as well as the extent and the importance of these positions”.*

In addition to being unclear on the additional functions and roles, this participant also mentioned that people in the Education fraternity (teachers, principals, school counsellors, etcetera) do not understand the duties associated with these positions. This adds to experiencing challenges because stakeholders at schools might misinterpret the functions and roles. And indeed, the participant expresses that other stakeholders in the school take the person for granted, indicating they show no appreciation for this role and are even acting rudely. And in addition to that, the participant expresses the view that there is not sufficient support from principals as supervisors. A combination of not being clear about one’s functions and roles, not being respected and even being treated rudely and experiencing a lack of support may surely add up to experiences of challenges.

#### **FI14NO**

*“I am labelled as a Senior teacher but I do not know my role because there was nothing that was given by the DoE to me which gives me the duties of being a Senior teacher. Again, I am saying that I do not know my roles as a Senior teacher. I am teaching as a teacher and what I can say is that I am an experienced teacher but there is nothing that pertains to the role of a Senior teacher that I do. I know nothing about such a position”.*

The only aspect this teacher is certain about is that she shows a relevant level of experience. But she seems to be completely unclear how to use this experience to fulfil this role. It is certainly a loss for the school because this experience is not used.

#### **TH11JA**

*“I know the roles because of Sadtu (South African Democratic Teachers’ Union). They gave me a paper with the roles and they emphasised that I should work harder now because I cannot get a good salary for doing nothing”.*

This participant seems to have a clear understanding of the functions and roles. An important aspect here is that a teacher union communicated clearly what should have been made transparent by other stakeholders like, too.

One participant expressed a clear understanding of additional functions and roles of Senior and Master teachers, but three other participants agree on a lack of clarity of roles for Senior and Master teacher positions. As argued above, such a lack of clarity on a personal level may be a loss for schools because the expertise of Senior and Master teachers is not utilised.

### **Summary**

What is more disturbing is that if these educational stakeholders are unclear about these functions and roles, other stakeholders may react adversely (for example, by being rude) and may not recognise the potential contribution to the school. The next section will explore such a lack of recognition further.

#### **4.3.1.3 Lack of recognition**

Lack of recognition can potentially make employees feel that they are less important than others and fail to understand why their contribution is not considered. They do not know whether their performance is actually making a positive impact on the organisation or not.

Below is the response of a participant on his experiences of lack of recognition.

#### **SI26NO**

*“Most of the challenges concern a lack of recognition. We are not recognised by the Government and we are also not recognised by the school itself, which makes the other teachers not recognising us. This I say because the Principal can give you some duties as a Senior teacher but the teachers do not take you seriously. Even the people in the Education fraternity do not understand the duties associated with these positions”.*

In a discussion I had with this participant, he mentioned that as Senior and Master teachers, they are not recognised by the Government (Department of Basic Education), the schools or by the teachers. On top of that, he mentioned that teachers do not even take them seriously as the SMT does not recognise them either. Based on this response, it shows that there is a lack of recognition when it comes to the positions of Senior and Master teachers.

#### **BH14NO**

*Unfortunately, we are not regarded as Senior or Master teachers here in the school, it is only the name that is given to us. There is absolutely nothing that shows that you are a Senior or a Master teacher.*

**TH11JA**

*“Firstly, I am not known. This Master teacher and Senior Teacher came as a way of Unions”.*

**FI14NO**

*“I am labelled as a Senior Teacher but I do not know my role because there was nothing that was given by the Department of Education to me which gives me the duties of being a Senior teacher”.*

According to the responses from the participants, Senior and Master teachers seem to lack recognition from the management, from other teachers and from the Department of Basic Education itself. For these teachers, lack of recognition implies that they are looked down upon; no one cares or recognises them. This may also have implications for the school because Senior and Master teachers who lack recognition will not fully commit to academic or even extra- and co-curricular activities.

#### **4.3.1.4 Lack of induction**

Lack of induction means a shortage of arrangements made to familiarise the new employees with the organisation. For Senior and Master teachers, lack of induction refers to the fact that their positions are new, but there were no arrangements made to introduce them formally or orientate them to their positions and also to the rest of the staff. There was not even any letter of appointment, appointing them to their duties.

This is what the two participants shared in relation to a lack of induction as a challenge to the work of the Senior and Master teachers:

**TH25AP**

*“The school actually does not know as to who the Senior and Master teacher is. [If] They actually asked teachers who are Senior and Master teachers to come forward and avail themselves. You know what teachers would do? They just hold back the information and sit at the corners because they do not want to be given extra-mile work. That is what normally happens in schools”.*

This participant mentioned a lack of induction as another challenge for Senior and Master teachers. This is because there was no formal introduction in place. This kind of reaction indicates rather a reluctance to be proactive and take charge in fulfilling their roles.

#### **FI14NO**

*“How can I be affected because I know nothing about the duties of a Senior teacher? There was no one who came to give me clarity, I know nothing about these positions as a Senior teacher...I know nothing. I only saw a name from my payslip but there was no change, nothing”.*

This is what the participant highlighted as a lack of induction for Senior and Master teacher positions. She mentioned that she is not affected as she knows nothing about such positions. She further mentioned that no one came to give her clarity about Senior and Master teacher positions. She also mentioned that she only saw the name on her payslip.

The results from the two participants above indicate that there is a lack of induction for the Senior and Master teacher positions. They go on by saying that no one was aware of these positions unless it was stated on their payslips. All the teachers in schools were talking about these positions in the staffrooms and in corridors, but the management did not say a thing. These positions were new to all of them, including the principals, and they wanted to know whether such positions affect all of them or a selected few.

Implementing these functions and roles without formal induction and communication will leave the success of these roles up to the individual initiative of the Senior and Master teachers. Taking charge to fulfil these additional functions and roles may be difficult because of the demands already associated with being a teacher and not having enough personal resources to go the extra mile, potentially being treated rudely when fulfilling the position or a potential lack of support from other stakeholders, who also do not know about the requirements. Thus, Senior and Master teachers may not be proactively seeking to fulfil these roles, and they may rather remain quiet.

Therefore, the specific challenges that Senior and Master teachers encountered in their positions are ill-defined roles and duties, lack of role clarity, lack of recognition and lack of induction. In comparison with the results from the questionnaire, role clarity is a common challenge mentioned by these teachers, but the results from both methods are contradictory.

For questionnaire results, roles for Senior and Master teachers are clear as most of the participants reported moderate to high levels of role clarity. For interview results, it is the opposite because all the participants reported that roles for Senior and Master teachers are unclear. In the next section, I will be looking at Research Question two, which discusses the coping strategies that Senior and Master teachers employ to overcome their challenges.

### **4.3.2 Results on the coping strategies of Senior and Master teachers**

The following section summarises the results on the use of coping strategies based on some of the participants' responses. They are active coping, acceptance, and they are followed by the emotion-focused coping style, which involves instrumental support and behavioural disengagement. I will describe these in detail.

#### **4.3.2.1 Active coping**

Literally, active coping refers to a strategy that is characterised by being active in dealing or solving problems and seeking information, which could be social support and professional help. This can be achieved by implementing a number of activities, such as changing environments, planning activities and reframing the meanings of problems. The participants become actively involved in a number of relevant activities. The participants shared the following regarding active coping as a strategy:

##### **SI26NO**

*“Most of us pretend as if we do not see and behave or do the work of Post Level one teachers because we are in this level. Some, like I do, I am just open. I speak my mind and when I am not happy with something, I voice it out. Even though sometimes I become submissive to my superior so that they can use some of the experiences that we have”.*

In an interview with this participant, he expressed the view that he is generally outspoken about potential challenges but that he proactively seeks to avoid or to solve them.

##### **TH25AP**

*“Being a Senior teacher, what I do is, I am responsible for applications for Tertiary Institutions in Grade 12, like arranging the CAO, that is, applications for learners and formulating files for previous exam questions which will assist learners when they prepare for exams. You must prepare a file for Grade 10, 11 and Grade 12 and it will be distributed amongst the teachers, so that when we work, we are on the same wavelength and that is what is normally happening”.*

In an interview with this participant, he said he makes the situation better by being involved in many activities, like being responsible for applications for Tertiary Institutions in Grade 12 and arranging for CAO. This means doing more than what is expected of him. This participant does something different in order to cope with the challenges of his position.

#### **BH14NO**

*“In fact, it is more than what you are mentioning. As a Senior teacher, I am also an Educator. I am teaching four sections. The one for helping the newly-appointed educators is not a daily duty nor is it my duty. I used to help them whenever they are dealing with my grade or whenever I can see that they are encountering a problem. If there is a problem, I used to intervene. It is not something that requires me to always be there. Like, I have been in Grade 12 all these years and last year I was allocated to Grade 9”.*

In an interview with this participant, he said he makes the situation better by playing the role of an Educator and also a Senior teacher at the same time. In other words, he does more than what is expected of him. For example, he mentions teaching four sections or four different grades. He also mentions being in Grade 12 for a number of years which is the most difficult class to pass as the examination is external.

#### **TH11JA**

*“I handle my duties well and pretend as if everything is fine but sometimes I have a problem because I wish to mentor my colleagues but each and every time I try to do that, other teachers discourage me because of the Post Level one position that I am occupying”.*

In an interview with this participant, she mentioned active coping as a strategy that she uses to overcome the challenges pertaining to Senior and Master teacher positions. This participant tried to make the situation better by doing more than what is expected of her, that is, going an extra-mile by mentoring her colleagues, which are novice teachers.

#### **Summary**

Active coping requires being actively involved in many activities in order to improve a potentially challenging situation. In order to avoid the situation becoming stressful, the participants become actively involved in a number of relevant activities. Two participants seemed active to address potential challenges related to specific functions, for example, tertiary education applications and in supporting novices. By actively getting involved in these activities, they seem to experience fulfilment which makes this coping style relevant. Such a

strategy may be helpful because if challenges are addressed early, they will not fully contribute to stress experiences.

#### **4.3.2.2 Acceptance**

Acceptance means a coping strategy that can be used to address unchangeable negative events (Nakamura, 2005). This simply means to accept a negative event in order to get over it and to continue with life. For Senior and Master teachers, acceptance as a coping strategy means that they should move away or avoid arguments and also learn to accept the situation as it is. For the positions of Senior and Master teachers, moving away from a situation or accepting a negative situation as it is, is a sign of professionalism. If professionalism prevails in schools, the schools become transformed.

The participants mentioned the following about acceptance as a strategy that Senior and Master teachers used

##### **TH25AP**

*“I am not affected that much because I do not look at myself as somebody who has been elevated, somebody who is above the other Post Level one teachers, we are just one and the same”.*

In an interview with this participant, he mentioned that he has learnt to accept the situation as it is as he is no longer looking at himself as someone whose salary will be increased because of the movement from one level to the other. Seeing that nothing is happening in as far as those levels are concerned, he accepts the situation and remains a PL 1 teacher.

##### **BH14NO**

*“Personally, I told myself from the word go before I went for a Management position and I used to remind myself that this is a calling. If I regard my teaching as a calling, you do something like you were called for it. You just remind yourself that you are here for the purpose, even if you have those difficulties”.*

This participant also uses acceptance as a coping strategy. He accepts that teaching is a calling, and for him, that is fine. He also accepts himself in a Post Level one position and is doing his work like he was called for it.

##### **FI14NO**

*“I cannot be stressed because I do not know my duties, I really cannot be affected. I am just doing my work as an educator not as a Senior teacher”.*

During an interview with this participant, she has also accepted the fact that she is a Post Level One teacher. She is no longer stressed nor affected by the kind of situation she is in. She just focuses on doing her work as a teacher, not as a Senior teacher.

**TH11JA**

*“I am disturbed a little bit because sometimes it is difficult to deal with your colleagues when you are at the same level as them, but I keep quiet and move forward with my work as a Master teacher”.*

When sharing ideas with this participant, she mentioned that she had accepted the fact that she is in Post Level one, even though sometimes, she somehow finds it difficult to work with teachers when she knows exactly that she is a Master teacher.

**SI26NO**

*“Most of us pretend as if we do not see and behave or do the work of Post Level one teachers because we are in this level”.*

*“Even though sometimes I become submissive to my superior so that they can use some of the experiences that we have”.*

This participant also uses acceptance as a coping strategy when he mentions that he pretends and behaves or does the work of a Post Level one teacher because he is at this level. No matter what contributions these teachers can make in a school, they remain Post Level one teachers (ELRC, *Collective Agreement NO.5 of 2006*).

**Summary**

Some participants seem to be actively accepting the situation, trying to shape it and others seem to passively accept a given situation which almost seems like resigning and giving in.

**4.3.2.3 Instrumental support**

Instrumental support refers to assistance or support offered by others to relieve stress. For these teachers, that kind of support can be offered by teacher Unions and the parents. This is what the participants said about instrumental support as a coping strategy for Senior and Master teachers.

**TH11JA**

*“There is nothing that the DoE is doing for us, we rely on and we know things because of the Unions”.*

Also, in discussion with this participant, she is using instrumental support because she mentioned her Union as the provider of support during stressful situations.

#### **BH14NO**

*“In fact, it is not easy how to handle that. The method that helps me is to meet with the parents on quarterly basis. Like, I have been in Grade 12 all these years and last year I was created for Grade 9. We used to meet with the parents concerning study purposes, results, discipline, talking about whatever. If I can mention 2017, I was having Matric and we conducted so many issues. The interesting one is that we had a trip to Cape Town. We called parents’ meetings to discuss about the trip and the payment. The last meeting, we had with the parents was on dealing with drugs. Some of the learners are involved in them. We talk to the parents and whenever we talk, they give a hand in whatever problems we had. The parents are very supportive”.*

When interviewing this participant, he mentioned parents as the instrumental support that he is using or relying on when things go wrong.

The two participants have different opinions when it comes to instrumental support as a coping strategy. The first participant relies solely on her teacher Union for support, like getting help and advice. The second participant highlights that he relies on parents for support. Parents form part of the school’s stakeholders; therefore, the contribution they make to a school is of vital importance.

#### **Summary**

For these teachers, instrumental support is what they really need because it lessens the burden on their shoulders. Extra support does not have to come from principals and other teachers, parents and teacher Unions can also make a huge contribution to the lives of these teachers.

#### **4.3.2.4 Behavioural Disengagement**

This is a coping strategy that reflects the tendency of people to reduce their efforts in difficult situations. This means that people protect themselves by staying away or detaching themselves from any problems or difficult situations. From the results of these two teachers, they protect themselves by not getting involved in any challenges, they just sit back, watch, take a deep breath and move away from the situation because there is nothing they can do.

This is what the three participants shared in relation to behavioural disengagement as a coping strategy:

**TH25AP**

*“It is like you are imposing yourself on them because when the due date is near, they run around. We are not taken seriously. We just sit back and there is not much we are doing really”.*

Upon interviewing this participant, he mentioned that Senior and Master teachers detach themselves from stressful situations by sitting back because there is nothing they are really doing. This is a strategy that this participant uses to protect himself from the challenges pertaining to his position.

**TH11JA**

*“I do not know why the SMT is side-lining us when there is a Management meeting. The SMT only considers these teachers when there is a problem because it knows exactly that these teachers have expertise. So I just sit and watch”.*

This participant mentioned that in her school, those who are Senior and Master teachers are excluded from SMT meetings. They are only involved if there is a problem; hence, they sit and do nothing.

**SI26NO**

*“Sometimes, I take a deep breath and move away from the situation”.*

Upon sharing ideas with this participant, he mentioned that Senior and Master teachers detach themselves from any problems by just moving away from the situation.

The first two participants use behavioural disengagement as a coping strategy to address their challenges. They share similar ideas about this strategy. The first participant says that, in his school, Senior and Master teachers sit back and do nothing because there is not much they are really doing. The second participant, on the other hand, highlighted the fact that, in her school, they just sit back and watch. The third participant has a different opinion and mentions that in his school, they just take a deep breath and move away from the situation. Therefore, under circumstances of lack of clarity and recognition, these participants rather detach themselves from the situation by leaning back or moving away from a potentially challenging situation.

## Summary

Upon interviewing Senior and Master teachers, the coping strategies that they used in their positions to overcome their challenges were revealed and discussed above. In comparison to responses to the questionnaire, the participants mentioned different coping strategies (please refer to Table 4 above). It, therefore, became apparent that instrumental support and different forms of acceptance are the core coping strategies that Senior and Master teachers are using to overcome their challenges. In the next section, the focus will be on the personal well-being of these teachers.

### ***4.3.3 Quantitative results on the well-being of the Senior and Master teachers***

When discussing the well-being of the teachers, the focus needs to be put on stress, somatic stress and cognitive stress. “Stress is the reaction of the body to any change that requires an adjustment or response” (Lazarus, 1999, p. 29). The symptoms of stress can include irritation and tension. “Somatic stress on the other hand is characterized by an extreme focus on physical symptoms such as pain or fatigue that causes major emotional distress and problems functioning” (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 2013, p. 11). Somatic stress refers to headache, stomach-ache and tension in various muscles. Cognitive stress refers to anxious thoughts, fearful anticipation, poor concentration and difficulty with memory. For questionnaire results on the well-being of these teachers, the respondents are less affected by stress, somatic stress and cognitive stress when different coping strategies were used (see table 7 above).

### ***4.3.4 Qualitative results on the well-being of the Senior and Master teachers***

For interview results, this is what the five participants mentioned about their well-being.

#### **TH25AP**

*“The environment is so much relaxed. There is not much work that we do. You have your own duty load, you must go to class. These extra duties pertaining to Senior and Master teachers is very limited”.*

In an interview with this participant, he is not affected by stress, somatic stress or cognitive stress. He mentions that the environment is relaxed, and there is not much work that they do. He even said that the duties associated with these positions are very limited.

## **BH14NO**

*“Personally, I told myself from the word go before I went for Management position and I used to remind myself that this is a calling. If I regard my teaching as a calling, you do something like you were called for it. You just remind yourself that you are here for the purpose, even if you have those difficulties”.* (BH14NO)

This shows that the moment you accept something or the situation as it is, you become less affected by stress.

## **TH11JA**

*“I am disturbed a little bit because sometimes it is difficult to deal with your colleagues when you are at the same level as them”.*

This participant is somewhat affected by stress as she mentioned that she is a little bit disturbed and finds it difficult to deal with people who are at the same level as hers.

## **FI14NO**

*“I am not affected that much because I do not look at myself as somebody who has been elevated, somebody who is above the other Post Level one teachers, we are just one and the same”.*

In an interview with this participant, she is not affected by stress, somatic stress or cognitive stress.

## **SI26NO**

*“I am not affected that much as I strongly believe that when a person challenges you in as far as your profession is concerned, you need to sit down with that person and try to talk sense rather than fighting back for no reason. But the people who provoke us as Senior and Master teachers are the HoDs, why, because we work closely with them. Personally, I do sometimes get frustrated but time and experience has taught me to put my head down most of the time. Sometimes, I take a deep breath and move away from the situation”.*

This participant is somehow affected by stress but to a minimum because he mentions that he does sometimes get frustrated, but time and experience have taught him to be strong.

## **Summary**

Out of the five participants, two of them do not express feelings of stress as they are not affected by it, and they work in a relaxed environment. On the other hand, the three participants seem to be slightly disturbed, have difficulties and sometimes get frustrated. These can be interpreted as early signs of stress. They rely mostly on different coping strategies to overcome their challenges. The more coping strategies are implemented the less stress the participants

experience. When comparing the results for the questionnaire and the interviews, it emerges that Senior and Master teachers use or implement a number of coping strategies to deal with their challenges and are thus not experiencing any great stress but only mild stress.

#### **4.4 Triangulation of Results**

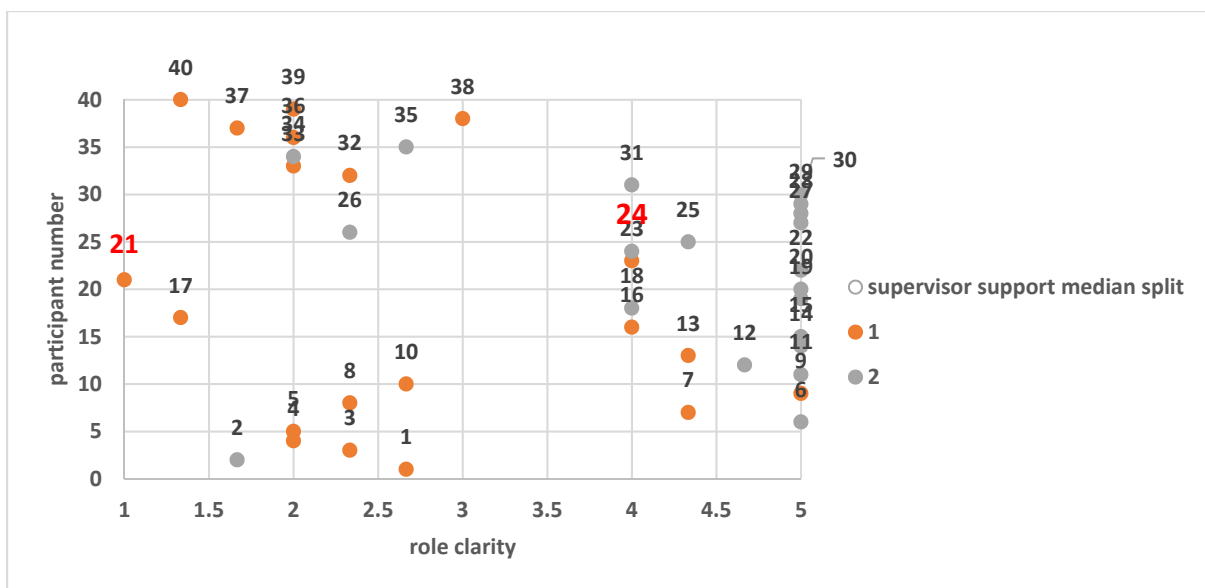
The mixed-method approach is appropriate because it provides the firmness that compensates for the weaknesses of either quantitative or qualitative research (Venkatesh, Brown & Bala, 2013). It also provides a more complete and comprehensive understanding of the research problem than either quantitative or qualitative method alone. Therefore, this study uses a sequential design which is a combination of both a cross-sectional design and a longitudinal design (Guest, 2013). This means that this research study follows a particular sequence; that is, it starts with the quantitative method followed by the qualitative method. A sequential design is suitable because it combines both quantitative and qualitative research methods in the same research inquiry (Venkatesh, Brown & Bala, 2013). Such work can help by bringing detailed information into various phenomena of interest that cannot be fully understood using only a quantitative method or a qualitative method.

Using both, a screening questionnaire followed by a semi-structured interview made my study more effective. For example, if used alone, quantitative research is weak in gathering insightful information about the context or topic, something that qualitative research makes up for. Also, qualitative research is seen as not having enough quality of the potential for biased interpretations made by the researcher, and also it has weaknesses in gathering information from a large group of people (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014).

In the following, I will integrate both results, and I will focus particularly on role clarity, role conflict, social support from supervisors, social community at work and social support from colleagues as the challenges of Senior and Master teachers. For the interviews, for example, the level of challenges reported by Senior and Master teachers upon filling in the questionnaires indicated that role clarity, support from supervisors and colleagues is moderate to high. On the other hand, participants reported high levels of social community at work but also moderate levels of role conflict. For the interviews, the participants reported a lack of definition of roles and duties, role clarity, lack of recognition and lack of induction as the challenges facing Senior and Master teachers.

First, I am focusing on role clarity. For both questionnaires and interviews, role clarity seems to be the core of the challenges, but the results seem contradictory. The questionnaire results indicate that most of the respondents express the view that roles for Senior and Master teachers are relatively clear. The interview results, however, point in the opposite direction. Four of the participants in the interviews expressed the view that the roles for these positions are unclear. Thus, I will focus particularly on this result.

Figure 6 depicts the quantitative results on role clarity as a challenge of Senior and Master teachers (see below).



**Figure 6.** The quantitative results on role clarity as a challenge of Senior and Master teachers ( $N=40$ ).

In highlighting triangulation, consider the questionnaire items that were assessed in the role clarity scale (see Appendix E) and the interview items or questions that were assessed regarding the role of Senior and Master teachers (see probing questions beneath interview question 1, Appendix D).

It became clear that participants varied in their responses to questions on role clarity. The majority of participants felt that their responsibilities are clearly outlined most of the time, and they know exactly what was expected of them. Others, however, expressed low levels of clarity, for example, participant 21 (F114NO). This participant also claimed that support from supervisors was lacking.

In the semi-structured interview, this participant shared the following:

*“I am labelled as a Senior teacher but I do not know my role because there was nothing that was given by the DoE to me which gives me the duties of being a Senior teacher. Again, I am saying that I do not know my roles as a Senior teacher. I am teaching as a teacher and what I can say is that I am an experienced teacher but there is nothing that pertains to the role of a Senior teacher that I do. I know nothing about such a position”. (F114NO)*

*“I cannot even be sure that my Principal is aware that I am a Senior teacher because there was nothing from the Department of Education. I think that she was supposed to call me and give me that information, but she never did. There is also nothing that the other teachers are doing”.*

*On the contrary, participant 24 (TH11JA) clearly shows that support from others can indeed contribute to greater role clarity.*

*“I know the roles because of Sadtu (South African Democratic Teachers’ Union). They gave me a paper with the roles and they emphasised that I should work harder now because I cannot get a good salary for doing nothing.” (TH11JA).*

This indicates that indeed, that support from outside the school, such as from Unions can contribute to greater role clarity.

Second, I am going to focus on the coping strategies of the participants. When filling in the questionnaires, respondents reported that they mostly use instrumental support, positive reframing and planning as coping strategies to overcome their challenges. The least used strategies are behavioural disengagement, humour and self-blame. The results from the interviews, however, indicate that those participants who took part in the interviews do preferably use behavioural disengagement, instrumental support, active coping and acceptance as the coping strategies. I will unpack these results separately for each coping strategy.

### **Behavioural disengagement**

*“It is like you are imposing yourself on them because when the due date is near, they run around. We are not taken seriously. We just sit back and there is not much we are doing really”. (TH25AP)*

*“I do not know why the SMT is side-lining us when there is a Management meeting. The SMT only considers these teachers when there is a problem because it knows exactly that these teachers have expertise. So I just sit and watch”. (TH11JA)*

### **Instrumental support**

*“There is nothing that the DoE is doing for us, we rely on [what we are told by] and we know things because of the Unions”.* (TH11JA)

*“In fact, it is not easy how to handle that. The method that helps me is to meet with the parents on a quarterly basis. Like, I have been in Grade 12 all these years and last year I was created for Grade 9. We used to meet with the parents concerning study purposes, results, discipline, talking about whatever”.* (BH14NO)

### **Active coping**

*“Most of us pretend as if we do not see and behave or do the work of Post Level one teachers because we are in this level. Some, like I do, I am just open. I speak my mind and when I am not happy with something, I voice it out. Even though sometimes I become submissive to my superior so that they can use some of the experiences that we have”.* (SI26NO)

*“In fact, it is above than what you are mentioning. As a Senior teacher, I am also an Educator. I am teaching four sections. The one for helping the newly-appointed educators is not a daily duty or is not my duty. I used to help them whenever they are dealing with my grade or whenever I can see that they are encountering a problem. If there is a problem, I used to intervene. It is not something that requires me to always be there. Like, I have been in Grade 12 all these years and last year I was created for Grade 9”.* (BH14NO)

### **Acceptance**

*“Personally, I told myself from the word go before I went for Management position and I used to remind myself that this is a calling. If I regard my teaching as a calling, you do something like you were called for it. You just remind yourself that you are here for the purpose, even if you have those difficulties”.* (BH14NO)

*“I cannot be stressed because I do not know my duties, I really cannot be affected. I am just doing my work as an educator not as a Senior teacher”.* (FI14NO)

In the questionnaire, respondents reported moderate levels of instrumental support. Those participants who participated in the interviews added an interesting aspect. Sources of this instrumental support are, according to these results, located outside the schools. This indicates that we need to expand the view on coping resources. It seems that an important source for instrumental support is provided by unions (for example, through communicating the functions and roles associated with being a Senior or Master teacher) or by parents (supporting teachers in initiatives at the school). This result may explain why there was no significant correlation between instrumental support and stress in the quantitative data. It is possible that the scale for this coping strategy did not capture sufficiently that other sources of instrumental support need to be considered. The latter was made explicit by participant BH14NO who shared that:

*“In fact, it is not easy how to handle that. The method that helps me is to meet with the parents on quarterly basis. Like, I have been in Grade 12 all these years and last year I was created for Grade 9. We used to meet with the parents concerning study purposes, results, discipline, talking about whatever. If I can mention 2017, I was having Matric and we conducted so many issues. The interesting one is that we had a trip to Cape Town. We called parents’ meetings to discuss about the trip and the payment. The last meeting, we had with the parents was on dealing with drugs. Some of the learners are involved in them. We talk to the parents and whenever we talk, they give a hand in whatever problems we had. The parents are very supportive”.*  
**(BH14NO).**

When interviewing this participant, he mentioned parents as the instrumental support that he uses or relies on when faced with the challenges of his work.

The interviews further allowed for a better understanding of the role of behavioural disengagement. Only relatively low levels of behavioural disengagement were reported in the questionnaire, the interviews showed that this strategy is crucial. It seems that some teachers rather detach themselves from the situation by leaning back or even moving out of a potentially challenging situation. This could be seen as a preventative step to avoid potential stress. And it also seems that this strategy can be useful to reduce somatic stress (see correlation results in Table 7). Again, active coping was especially highlighted during the interviews (with moderate levels reported in the questionnaire). Despite the fact that some participants seem to regard this as an adequate coping strategy, the results on the correlation with different stress indicators show no significant relationship.

For acceptance as a coping strategy, the quantitative results indicate that this coping strategy can contribute to reduced levels of stress (that are somatic and cognitive). The qualitative results, in addition to this, point towards a distinction between active acceptance and resigning acceptance. Yet, only active acceptance is assumed to be associated with reduced stress levels.

Lastly, when analysing the questionnaire results based on the personal well-being of Senior and Master teachers, results show low to moderate levels of stress and somatic stress as well as low levels of cognitive stress. When looking at the interview results, most participants also reported low to moderate results of stress and somatic stress. However, two participants report initial signs of stress (for example, frustration).

In making a comparison between these two sets of results, Senior and Master teachers seem not to be affected by stress and somatic stress when it comes to their challenges. For both the

questionnaire and the interview, results show that when participants used behavioural disengagement as a coping strategy, they are less affected by somatic stress.

The two results from questionnaires and semi-structured interviews by the same participant (BH14NO) complement each other, and the participant is saying that he is less affected by somatic stress when he uses behavioural disengagement as a coping strategy. This means that when people detach themselves from any situation, they are less affected by stress.

#### **4.5 Chapter summary**

To sum up, for both questionnaires and interviews, role clarity seems to be the core of the challenges, but the results seem contradictory. The questionnaire results indicate that most of the participants express the roles for Senior and Master teachers are relatively clear. The interview results, however, point in the opposite direction. Most of the participants in the interviews expressed the view that the roles for these positions are unclear. For coping strategies, instrumental support seems to be the core of the coping strategies that participants used both in questionnaires and interviews. When analysing the questionnaire results based on the personal well-being of Senior and Master teachers, results show low to moderate levels of stress and somatic stress as well as low levels of cognitive stress. When looking at the interview results, most participants also reported low to moderate results of stress and somatic stress. The next chapter that follows will provide an interpretation and discussion of the results.

## CHAPTER 5

### INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

#### 5.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, I presented both the quantitative and qualitative results of my study. For quantitative results, screening questionnaires were used, and semi-structured interviews were used for qualitative results. Both sets of results were then combined in a triangulation process.

In this chapter, results will be interpreted and discussed. Results from the challenges will be discussed, focusing on different scales that were used. For example, role clarity, role conflict, to highlight a few. Similarly, results from the coping strategies, based on different scales will be discussed as well. For example, active coping, acceptance and positive reframing, to mention a few. Lastly, results from the wellbeing of these teachers will also be discussed, using different scales, for example, stress, somatic stress and cognitive stress.

#### 5.2 *Challenges of Senior and Master teachers*

In interpreting the results, the focus should be on the critical questions, the literature review and the theoretical framework. The first Research question looks at the challenges of Senior and Master teachers. Results from both the quantitative and the qualitative part of the study should be considered in explaining this question. This section, however, focuses on the summary of the findings from both the questionnaires and the semi-structured interviews.

Senior and Master teachers can make the intended contribution when introducing their roles in the schools. Upon analysing data from research question one from both the questionnaires and semi-structured interviews, which was based on the challenges, it became clear from the respondents' answers that roles are in fact clear for Senior and Master teachers. This means that these teachers work following the policy document (Education Labour Relations Council, 2006). The idea was that these teachers experience challenges from both sides. Hence, their roles are in conflict. As they work in sandwich positions (McConville & Holden, 1999), it makes it difficult for them to function effectively because they sometimes work with the HODs in the School Management Team, but at the same time, they are expected to work with the teaching staff. This shows that they are challenged.

When I draw from literature, McConville and Holden (1999) argued that Senior and Master teachers are working in a sandwich position. If you find yourself working in a sandwich position or between two hierarchies, the Management hierarchy and the teaching staff hierarchy, it proves a point that you are somehow challenged because of the required commitments from both hierarchies. McClean (2009) also argues that these teachers are experts or effective teachers. Denotatively, an expert or effective person, is someone who is very knowledgeable or skilful in a particular area. To be able to work in two hierarchies shows that these teachers have the expertise, hence they are given such a role. But that on its own is a challenge.

Similarly, Werner (2017) argue that these teachers are teacher leaders. According to this author, a leader knows the roles and responsibilities of his or her position. Their roles involve leading other teachers who are in the pool of Post Level One for developmental purposes. That is challenging on its own because it indicates additional duties bestowed on them, other than teaching. They are also referred to as instructional or curriculum specialists (Harrison & Killion, 2007), implying that their roles and duties are clear. Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) argue that these teachers are expected to transform the teaching profession. To perform that function is challenging because they must bring change to the profession and should be seen upon using relevant resources when teaching as a way of clarifying some concepts. Du Plessis (2013) makes the point that these teachers are expected to raise the professional status of teaching without induction into that role. All these are challenges that they are confronted with on a daily basis.

Being staff developers (Day, 2002) is also challenging because they are expected to take leading roles in staff development committees, work with the School Management Team and at the same time, become PL1 teachers. This study, along with previous studies, has confirmed that Senior and Master teachers have clear roles to play and clear challenges. However, the support that they get from their supervisors, their colleagues and the community at large, plays a major role in minimising their challenges. This implies that these teachers are moderately challenged, meaning that the Department of Basic Education should make certain that they are elevated to the next level so that they feel recognised.

The principal should also ensure that these teachers are included in the SMT and that their contribution is respected as being of vital importance; therefore, they should be permitted to play an active role in SMT meetings. When linking my study to the Transactional Model of

Stress and Coping Theory by Lazarus and Folkman (1987), it turns out that Senior and Master teachers have challenges pertaining to their positions. This is because of the names that attach to their positions, for example, middle managers (Ng, 2014), teacher leaders (Bush *et al.*, 2016) and mentor teachers (Maynard, 2000), to mention a few. These names suggest extra roles that they should play in a school. By being functional in those roles, indicate extra responsibilities they have compared to ordinary PL 1 teachers; hence these teachers are challenged. “Challenges lead to stress” (Lazarus & Folkman, 1987, p. 27). This argument suggests that the more challenged one is, the more stressed he/she becomes. For Senior and Master teachers, this means that they can overcome stress by implementing different coping strategies in addressing challenges.

### ***5.3 Coping strategies of Senior and Master teachers***

There are many terms that are used to refer to Senior and Master teachers. Amongst the terms, these teachers are called staff or professional developers (Bush *et al.*, 2016), mentor teachers (Maynard, 2000), effective teachers (Harris, 1998; McClean, 2009), staff developers (Day, 2002) and middle managers (Adey & Jones, 1999; Ng, 2014). These terms refer to different roles that Senior and Master teachers play in different contexts; hence the differences in terminology. These different roles lead to stress; therefore, a variety of coping strategies need to be implemented to deal with it. Proper planning for the management of these challenges plays a crucial role (Harrison & Killion, 2007); hence planning is one of the strategies used by these teachers. Again, it is expected of these teachers that they work in the middle position as they are middle managers (Adey & Jones, 1999). This term compels these teachers to accept that they should work with the School Management Team and also develop staff; hence acceptance is another strategy that they can employ to overcome their challenges.

Maynard (2000) argues that these teachers are mentor teachers. Their role involves giving guidance, support and direction to the less experienced teachers; as a result, emotional support is a crucial coping strategy that Senior and Master teachers can implement. For them to be aware of the extra responsibilities, which further leads to challenges means that they are coping in their positions, hence active coping is also one of the coping strategies that they utilise. Based on a number of their challenges, the research finding is that some teachers use behavioural disengagement as a coping strategy. This strategy might be good for a while but seems critical for the commitment of teachers for the profession and their school and may turn

out to be detrimental over time. For these teachers to survive the challenges, support from various stakeholders plays a vital role (Carver, 1997). Amongst the stakeholders, are the parents and the teacher unions. These people offer ideas and support to these teachers; hence we talk of instrumental support as a coping strategy that these teachers implemented. Instrumental support refers to a coping strategy that involves help and advice being offered from others (Carver, 1997).

Furthermore, Senior and Master teachers need to accept that they have challenges and should learn to deal with them in a positive manner (Carver, 1997). This they can achieve by looking for something good in whatever challenge they come across within their positions, or they could try to look at challenges in a different light to make it seem more positive. Hence positive reframing is used as a coping strategy. A lack of induction for Senior and Master teachers is unfortunate as it leads to a lack of recognition from other teachers in the pool of PL1. No matter how challenged Senior and Master teachers are in their new positions, they are not alone because they do get support from their supervisors, colleagues, teacher Unions and the parents who form part of a large community at work. Outside sources of support play a critical role in the well-being of these teachers and schools respectively because they should provide effective implementation of the positive outcomes of the school restructuring model (Bol *et al.*, 1998). These sources provide these teachers with the capacity to cope with their challenges. One of the participants mentioned that he relies on parents for support in order to cope with his position as a Master teacher, whereas another mentioned teacher Unions as providing her with support for her well-being and for that of the school.

Thirty-six years ago, Copperfield (1984) talked about different approaches that teachers could implement in class to reduce the stress levels, and his advice might still be useful today. Among other things, Senior and Master teachers should work together with the subject teachers simultaneously in order to facilitate the learning process (Levine, 2006). This is another strategy that supports the fact that these teachers can implement different approaches to reduce the level of stress. They should be open to new ideas and should also know the tricks of handling criticism in order to survive.

My study aligns with the Transactional Model of Stress and Coping Theory (Lazarus & Folkman, 1987) because it involves implementing a variety of coping strategies to deal with a variety of challenges. For overall results on the coping strategies, Senior and Master teachers have plenty of the coping strategies that they can use to overcome their challenges and be less

affected by stress. When an individual has more strategies to cope with in any problematic situation, the more likely it is for that individual to be less affected by stress. For example, when I draw from literature, Abel (2002) emphasises the usage of coping strategies as a way of restructuring the situation so that it becomes less stressful. For overall results with coping strategies, it is clear that participants utilise a variety of them to deal with their challenges.

#### ***5.4 Well-being of Senior and Master teachers***

The third Research Question looks at the implications that the challenges and coping strategies have for teachers and schools, respectively. From the questionnaire results, I found that coping strategies, for example, instrumental support, behavioural disengagement, positive reframing, planning, active coping and acceptance show distinct patterns of relationship with stress. This means that, when participants use instrumental support as a coping strategy to address their challenges, they are less likely to be affected by stress, somatic stress and cognitive stress. When they work in collaboration with teacher Unions, parents and the community members in educating the child and uplifting the school, they have fewer challenges and are less affected by stress of any kind. Therefore, instrumental support is a beneficial coping strategy for the well-being of these teachers and schools, respectively.

Another coping strategy that is beneficial for Senior and Master teachers to use is behavioural disengagement (Carver, 1997). Senior and Master teachers can use it when they detach themselves from stressful situations. However, this strategy needs to be used cautiously because it may have negative results when used for a long period of time (Carver, 1997). Schools may suffer when these teachers are no longer functioning in their positions, leading to a high rate of failure.

On another note, when these teachers use positive reframing as a coping strategy, they are also less likely to be affected by stress (Carver, 1997). Hence their well-being and that of the school improves. Similarly, planning is also a helpful coping strategy that contributes to the well-being of these teachers as well as the schools. For example, proper planning involves steps to take in order to overcome challenges; hence it is a requirement that minimises the stress level of the teachers. Furthermore, active coping as a strategy leads to lower stress levels because it involves taking some actions to make the situation better (Carver, 1997). Therefore, if the situation becomes better, the less challenged these teachers are, and their well-being and that of the school is improved.

In conclusion, the more coping strategies these teachers implement in dealing with their challenges, the less stressed they are likely to become in their positions. For the well-being of these teachers, this means that the level of stress depends on the coping strategies that they implement daily at school. It is thus clear that support that is given by the supervisors, colleagues, parents and teacher Unions to these teachers, plays a vital role in their well-being and in that of a school. Simply put, the more coping strategies they use for their challenges, the less they are likely to be affected by stress.

### **5.5 Chapter summary**

The above section discusses the interpretation and discussion of results for the challenges of the Senior and Master teachers, the coping strategies that they utilise to deal with the challenges and also the implications that the challenges and coping strategies have for these teachers and schools respectively. Upon such interpretations and discussions, the *ELRC, Collective Agreement NO.5 of 2006* clearly states the roles for these teachers; hence Senior and Master teachers are moderately challenged. It was also found that these teachers have plenty of coping strategies that they are using to overcome their challenges, meaning that they are less affected by stress. For their well-being and that of a school, the level of stress depends on a number of coping strategies that are implemented. The next chapter discusses the outlook, recommendations to the Department of Basic Education of Senior and Master teachers or the Management of schools as well as the conclusion.

## CHAPTER 6

### OUTLOOK, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

#### 6.1 Introduction

The previous chapter contained a summary and the interpretation of results that were found in this study. The interpretation was based on the three Research Questions concerning the challenges of the Senior and Master teachers, the coping strategies that these teachers implement and the implications that the challenges and coping strategies have for both teachers and schools. This chapter declares the limitations and challenges of the study, and it makes recommendations for future research. Finally, it presents the conclusion of the whole study.

#### 6.2 Limitations and challenges of the study

In the South African context, the literature on Senior and Master teachers was very limited. I, therefore, had to rely on international studies which used terms similar to Senior and Master teachers in order to proceed with my study. This limitation was caused by the fact that, in South Africa, these terms (Senior and Master teachers) have just disappeared and are no longer topics for discussion as there are few teachers who still hold these positions.

Another limitation was caused by the fact that I had to focus only on Senior and Master teachers, not on ordinary PL1 teachers. This led to me getting very limited information, and most of the teachers did not want to be known as holding these positions. So it was very difficult for me to get the willing cooperation of these teachers. The number of schools that I worked with was very limited, and my study only dealt with three Primary schools and two Secondary schools. More data could have been gathered if many schools had been involved. Three of the participants that I worked with in the qualitative part of the study were from my school, so I had to be vigilant of my position when interviewing them because I was a researcher and also an insider in my school.

The choice that I made for choosing one District, that is, Umlazi District, prevented me from getting enough data for my study. There are many Districts that I could have consulted like Pinetown District, Ilembe District, etcetera in the province of KwaZulu-Natal. The schools that I targeted in the Umlazi District are all in quintile four, meaning that these were moderately resourced schools. It would have been better if this study had been extended to other Districts

and to under-resourced (quintile one) schools as well so that I could have learned about and understood challenges that other teachers have, pertaining to these positions.

The planned time frame of the study could have been a limitation in terms of the participants keeping to the given times, as well as changing times that were planned by both the participants and myself. This could further be caused by the busy schedules of the respondents, who were at work when given the questionnaires to fill in. Some of the respondents decided to withdraw from taking part, which is a reality that researchers have to deal with. Most of the respondents filled in the questionnaires, even though there were some minor issues due to missing data. Out of the fifty questionnaires that I distributed, I managed to get thirty-five back. To overcome this limitation, I requested another appointment with the respondents during working hours for them to fill in the forms at their schools. Fortunately, five participants agreed, and I ended up having forty questionnaires back.

The challenges that I encountered was in writing up the results and in the analysis of the data for the quantitative part of the study. It was the first time for me to do this part of the study and I had to give detailed information about terms that I did not understand, and I had to give reasons as to why I had to make some calculations. I would suggest more classes to be arranged by the institution on quantitative research methodology and on statistical analysis. If this can be done, more students will be happy to do their studies, using the quantitative method or mixed-method.

Another challenge that concerned the interviews was when I had to interview the Secondary school participants. My intention was to find a quiet corner, but I could not. This was because of the fact that Grade 11 and 12 learners remain behind in school for study whilst others from other grades leave for their homes. Some of the learners in Grade 11 and 12 made noise, so it was difficult for me to find a quiet corner, especially in the secondary school with 4 000 learners. The learners played outside, and it was noisy and chaotic. One of the HoDs from the secondary school allowed me to use his office but nonetheless, it was the same. There was noise, and this led to some of the recordings being affected, and in some, I had to pause for a while to avoid disturbances.

The incident that was also challenging was when we were nearly robbed off our possessions by gangsters. This incident happened in a primary school, after school. All the teachers had left, and there was a female participant that I was going to interview. There was a security guard at the school, but it was an old man who carries nothing for defending himself against

robbers or gangsters. The two gangsters approached him, and they wanted the owner of the car, which belongs to the participant I was going to interview. The security guard was clever enough as he called three men from the neighbourhood to follow these gangsters who were approaching the class where the interview was taking place. Those three men confronted them and told them to leave as school was over, if they desperately needed that teacher, they had to come the next day. When they realised that they could not continue with their plan, they started shouting and swearing at the men and the security guard. We were still in the middle of the interview, but we managed to finish. In all the interviews, we would listen to the recordings afterwards, so that we could make new recordings should it happen that the first one did not go well. On that day, there was no time for that, and when we finished, we quickly ran to our cars and drove off. I thanked my participant because if it was someone else, she would have just left without finishing the semi-structured interview questions. That was going to be a problem for me because I was going to be expected to look for another participant, and it was difficult to get them for interviews.

On another note, we were so lucky because if something went wrong, we were going to answer to the Principal, the Circuit and the District Managers as to what we were doing in the school by that time. This kind of action shows how rough life is in the townships, which turns out to be a challenge to teachers if they wish to work even after hours.

The last incident that happened to me was when my study got lost on my laptop. By the time it got lost, I had already written four chapters, and I was busy with the fifth chapter. Upon inserting the memory stick, all of a sudden everything got wiped out. I asked the Information Technology specialists, both at my workplace and at the university campus to retrieve it for me, but it was unsuccessful. I was compelled to take leave from work so that I could start everything afresh.

### **6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

I recommend that the study be used by the prospective students for further research because Senior and Master teachers are still there in schools occupying middle management. The study focused on Senior and Master teachers in one District and one Region. Therefore the findings concerning these teachers are specific to that District or Region only and cannot be generalised. For findings to be generalised, a study like this should be conducted in all the Districts, Regions

or even across Provinces to investigate challenges concerning Senior and Master teachers, their coping strategies are and how they affect their personal well-being are.

To gain a more detailed understanding of the roles, Senior and Master teachers from all racial groups (Whites, Blacks, Indians and Coloureds) should also be investigated in future studies. Schools from all the quintiles (quintile one to five) should be targeted in order to better understand the roles of Senior and Master teachers in schools with differing resources, that is, schools from both under-resourced and well-resourced areas.

Furthermore, it is recommended that a cross-national study could be conducted, including different countries so as to be able to make comparisons and explore differences regarding challenges, coping strategies and well-being in different educational systems.

#### **6.4 RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE DEPARTMENT OF BASIC EDUCATION/ SENIOR AND MASTER TEACHERS OR MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOLS**

The recommendations depend on the results that are found after an analysis based on three Research Questions. These results have implications for both the teachers and the schools. For results based on the first research question which concerns the challenges of Senior and Master teachers, there should be a clear set of guidelines around these positions. This set of guidelines is a “list that covers duties and responsibilities of any position, usually in a particular order” (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006, p. 1). This illustrates that when working following a proper set of guidelines, there is clarity and problems are limited. For example, in the case of these positions, the guidelines will help in determining clearly who the Senior and who the Master teacher is in a school establishment. This will also help in maintaining order and formalities concerning the issuing of appointment letters for the relevant and affected teachers. To achieve this, there should be adherence to rules and regulations so as to avoid misunderstandings and conflicts about these positions. Added to this, there should be support and incentives given to Senior and Master teachers as a way of assisting them in overcoming their challenges. That can be in the form of monetary value or awards.

Induction or orientation programmes should also play a role in the position of these teachers because it is from this that they will be getting proper training about their job-related demands or expectations. The induction programmes should form part of continuing education on job training because it indicates the transition, in this case from being an ordinary teacher to these

new positions of Senior and Master teachers (Ingersoll & Smith, 2004). There should be enough job resources, reduced workload as well as a developmental programme to assist these teachers in growing in their positions and also in the teaching profession *per se*.

For the second set of questions which concerned the coping strategies of Senior and Master teachers, support is recommended for those teachers. According to Chen *et al.* (2009, p. 1) “perceived organisational support was positively associated with a temporal change in extra-role performance”. Simply put, if extra-assistance is provided to a person, positive results are yielded in the work performance of that individual. In this particular case, it means part of the extra help that should be given to these teachers would be to overcome their challenges. That could take the form of encouragement, nurturing and teaching someone to become a better person. It can come from the community (parents), teacher Unions and other stakeholders.

There should also be mentorship programmes that should be designed to help these teachers deal with their problems or challenges. “The popularity of mentorship as a strategy for professional development has recently become part of the vocabulary of most organisations and is a particularly an appropriate strategy in the South African management context, given the country’s bitter legacy around education management” (Pather, 2010, p. 1). This means that in South Africa, particularly, staff needs to be mentored and developed to be able to withstand the pressures and frustrations related to their jobs or profession.

A proactive approach is crucial in this instance, rather than a reactive approach because it prepares teachers by arming them with ideas for difficult and challenging situations, rather than being passive and reactive. The organisation of work also plays a vital role; hence it is recommended that there should be proper planning on the side of these teachers in order to overcome their challenges. This can be achieved through monitoring of work. It is also recommended that there should be a staff-development programme, where staff will be developed and transformed by using different strategies they can implement in dealing with their challenges. Such programmes will help in the development of mindsets so that they look at the challenges from another angle.

It is also recommended that there should be professional development of these teachers so that there is a mastery of skills in how to tackle some challenges. Mental resources, on the other hand, are crucial because they focus on the mental capacity of an individual so that they adapt in any kind of a situation. By mental resources, reference is made to the Educational Psychologists or Counsellors. These people should be placed in a school as a way of providing

mental support. This kind of support needs to be strengthened so that teachers can benefit from it.

For results based on the third research question, which concerns the well-being of these teachers and schools, it is recommended that there should always be a variety of coping strategies that Senior and Master teachers can choose from to overcome their challenges. According to Lightsey Jr (1996, p. 1) “personality traits and psychological resources are important in human well-being”. This means that the more mental or psychological resources an individual has at his or her disposal, the less likely it is that this individual will become affected by stress. This strategy has proven to be working because the more coping strategies these teachers used, the less stressed they became in coping with their challenges.

Senior and Master teachers can survive their stressful situations by becoming mindful of the fact that they should consider and engage other teachers when they work and accept advice and opinions in order to be effective in their positions. In short, they should implement a variety of approaches to reduce the level of stress that they face on a daily basis.

## **Summary**

The above chapter has discussed the recommendations for further research concerning the challenges of Senior and Master teachers, their coping strategies and the implications that the challenges and coping strategies have for these teachers and schools, respectively. The researcher is aware, however, that these views might differ if similar studies are done using another group of teachers, in under-resourced schools, for example.

It is a sad reality that Senior and Master teachers have challenges in their positions. It is also true that there are a number of coping strategies that they can employ to overcome their challenges. The more coping strategies they implement in addressing their challenges, the less likely they are to be affected by stress, somatic stress and cognitive stress.

## **6.5 CONCLUSION**

This research study sought to investigate the specific job-related challenges and coping strategies of Senior and Master teachers at South African public schools. It also sought to look at the implications that the challenges and the coping strategies have for their well-being. Data

for this study were generated from screening questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. The generated data shed light on the challenges that these teachers have, what can be done to manage those challenges as well as on the relationship between the amount of stress and the coping strategies used.

It was time to conduct such a study because the positions of Senior and Master teachers are gradually disappearing in schools. If we sit and do nothing about the functionality of these teachers, we are failing our learners to achieve to the best of their abilities in their academic work.

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**APPENDIX A: ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE AND LETTER FROM  
THE DEPARTMENT OF BASIC EDUCATION**

**APPENDIX B: LETTER FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF BASIC EDUCATION**



UNIVERSITY OF  
KWAZULU-NATAL  
INYUVESI  
YAKWAZULU-NATALI

22 May 2019

Mrs OP Zondi 216074384  
School of Education  
Edgewood Campus

Dear Mrs Zondi

Protocol reference number: HSS/0158/019M

Project Title: An investigation of the specific job-related challenges and coping strategies of Senior and Master teachers at South African Public Schools.

**Full Approval – Expedited Application**

In response to your application received 28 February 2019, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol has been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

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

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 1 year from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

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

Yours faithfully

.....  
Dr Shamila Naidoo (Deputy Chair)

/px

cc Supervisor: Prof A Phillip  
cc. Academic Leader Research: Dr A Pillay  
cc. School Administrator: Ms S Jeenarain, Ms M Ngcobo, Ms N Dlamini and Mr SN Mthembu

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Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

Dr Rosemary Sibanda (Chair)

Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building

Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban 4000

Telephone: +27 (0) 31 260 3567/8350/4657 Facsimile: +27 (0) 31 260 4609 Email: [rsibanda@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:rsibanda@ukzn.ac.za) / [amyemrod@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:amyemrod@ukzn.ac.za) / [mthembu@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:mthembu@ukzn.ac.za)

Website: [www.ukzn.ac.za](http://www.ukzn.ac.za)



## education

Department:  
Education  
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

Enquiries: Phindile Duma

Tel: 033 392 1063

Ref: 2/4/8/1811

Mrs OP Zondi  
PO Box 201188  
Durban North  
4016

Dear Mrs Zondi

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

Your application to conduct research entitled: **"AN INVESTIGATION OF SPECIFIC JOB RELATED CHALLENGES AND COPING STRATEGIES OF SENIOR AND MASTER TEACHERS AT SOUTH AFRICAN PUBLIC SCHOOLS"**, in the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education Institutions has been approved. The conditions of the approval are as follows:

1. The researcher will make all the arrangements concerning the research and interviews.
2. The researcher must ensure that Educator and learning programmes are not interrupted.
3. Interviews are not conducted during the time of writing examinations in schools.
4. Learners, Educators, Schools and Institutions are not identifiable in any way from the results of the research.
5. A copy of this letter is submitted to District Managers, Principals and Heads of Institutions where the Intended research and interviews are to be conducted.
6. The period of investigation is limited to the period from 03 June 2019 to 04 January 2022.
7. Your research and interviews will be limited to the schools you have proposed and approved by the Head of Department. Please note that Principals, Educators, Departmental Officials and Learners are under no obligation to participate or assist you in your investigation.
8. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey at the school(s), please contact Miss Phindile Duma at the contact numbers below.
9. Upon completion of the research, a brief summary of the findings, recommendations or a full report/dissertation/thesis must be submitted to the research office of the Department. Please address it to The Office of the HOD, Private Bag X9137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200.
10. Please note that your research and interviews will be limited to schools and institutions in KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education.

Umlazi District

  
**Dr. EV Nzama**  
Head of Department: Education  
Date: 06 June 2019

#### KWAZULU-NATAL DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Postal Address: Private Bag X9137 • Pietermaritzburg • 3200 • Republic of South Africa

Physical Address: 247 Burger Street • Anton Lembede Building • Pietermaritzburg • 3201

Tel.: +27 33 392 1063 • Fax: +27 033 392 1203 • Email: [Phindile.Duma@kzndoe.gov.za](mailto:Phindile.Duma@kzndoe.gov.za) • Web: [www.kzndoe.gov.za](http://www.kzndoe.gov.za)

Facebook: KZNDOE... Twitter: @DBE\_KZN... Instagram: kzn\_education... Youtube: kzndoe

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

## APPENDIX C:

### INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

Email            zondipinky@gmail.com  
Address :        84 Avocado Grove, Avoca Hills, 4051  
Phone (cell):    082 927 1087

#### Request for permission to conduct research

Dear Principal,

My name is **Olivia Pinkie Zondi** and I am currently studying towards Masters in Education (M Ed.) degree at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal (UKZN). It is required of me to complete a research dissertation by the end of this year.

The title of my study is: **An investigation of the specific job-related challenges and coping strategies of Senior and Master teachers at South African public schools.** The main purpose of this study is to gather information to gain a deeper understanding of challenges and coping strategies of Senior and Master teachers in public schools. For the study, I would like to conduct interviews with Senior or Master teachers at your school in a face-to-face session and hand out questionnaires. Both are aimed to gather information on the professional past and current experience in the conduct of the work as a Senior or Master teacher. The responses of the participants will assist in shedding light on the challenges of Senior or Master teachers and the strategies they use in coping with these challenges. The study will also focus on how the work as a Senior or Master teacher influences teachers personally or the school.

I hereby request your approval to approach five of the Senior and Master teachers as participants in my research study.

I will use two data collecting tools: questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. Questionnaires can be filled in during teachers' private time and will be collected before the interviews begin using a sealed box placed in the clerk's office. All interviews will be conducted outside of the normal school time. The participants will be notified in advance of the exact date and time for the interviews. The data for all interviews will be audio- recorded using a digital device (if participants agree) and then transferred to typed transcriptions for analysis purposes.

#### **Methods of data collection & scheduled times**

<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>ESTIMATED TIME</b>	<b>PROPOSED TIME FRAME</b>	<b>FORMAT OF DATA COLLECTION</b>
Short Questionnaire	1 hour	January- February 2019	Filling in of questionnaire.
Individual interview	1 hour	March 2019	Audio-recordings and transcriptions.

The study is dependent on your willingness to allow the Senior and Master teachers at your school to participate in this research study. Participation in the study is entirely voluntary and participants are free to withdraw from the study at any stage and for any reason. Refusal to answer questions and withdrawal from this research will in no way result in any form of discrimination or disadvantage. All the data that will be collected will be used for my dissertation or potentially for academic publication purposes (e.g., research reports, conference presentations and publication in research journals).

Confidentiality of participants' responses, of all evidence and of documentation generated within the research will be guaranteed. Codes will be used to protect the identity of the school and of participants. The data collected during the research process will be securely stored in a safe place for a period of five years, and will be disposed of (by incineration) after this period.

There are no direct benefits to participants for participating in this study. However, I believe that participants will benefit a lot in terms of gaining more knowledge and understanding about the challenges and coping strategies of Senior and Master teachers' work, thus gaining more capacity to effectively facilitate a conducive learning environment at the schools. It will also provide insights into the influence of urban context on teachers' work.

My supervisor for this study is Prof. Anja Philipp (School of Education, UKZN). Please feel free to contact her on the number below if you have any queries regarding this research study. You may also contact me as the researcher or the UKZN Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee, contact details as follows:

Thank You!

Best regards,

Mrs O P Zondi

<p>Supervisor :Prof. Anja Philipp UKZN School of Education Office CS138 Main Tutorial Building Edgewood Campus</p> <p>Contact details : 031 260 3818 philippa@ukzn.ac.za</p>	<p><b>HUMANITIES &amp; SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION</b></p> <p><a href="#">Research Office, Westville Campus</a></p> <p><a href="#">Govan Mbeki Building</a> Private Bag X 54001 Durban 4000 KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA</p> <p>Tel: 27 31 2604557- Fax: 27 31 2604609 Email: <a href="mailto:HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za">HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za</a></p>
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## DECLARATION OF CONSENT

I, ----- (full name of principal) have been informed about the study entitled: **An investigation of the specific job-related challenges and coping strategies of Senior and Master teachers at South African public schools** by Olivia Pinkie Zondi.

I understand the purpose and procedures of the study.

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

I declare that the participation of my school in this study is entirely voluntary and that I may withdraw my permission at any stage and for any reason. Withdrawal from this research will in no way result in any form of discrimination or disadvantage.

If I have any further questions/concerns or queries related to the study, I understand that I may contact the researcher or the supervisor.

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

### **HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION**

Research Office, Westville Campus

Govan Mbeki Building  
Private Bag X 54001  
Durban  
4000

KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA

Tel: 27 31 2604557 - Fax: 27 31 2604609

Email: [HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za)

### **I hereby provide consent to:**

Audio-recording of interviews                      YES / NO

Handing out of questionnaires                      YES / NO

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature of Principal**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

**School stamp:**

## APPENDIX D: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

### Informed Consent Document:

#### INDIVIDUAL SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Title of Study: **An investigation of the specific job-related challenges and coping strategies of Senior and Master teachers at South African public schools.**

Dear Research Participant,

My name is **Olivia Pinkie Zondi** and I am currently studying towards Masters in Education (MEd.) degree at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal (UKZN). It is required of me to complete a research dissertation by the end of this year. My supervisor for this study is Anja Philipp (School of Education, University of KwaZulu-Natal, [philippa@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:philippa@ukzn.ac.za), 031 2603819).

The main purpose of this study is to gather information, to gain a deeper understanding of challenges and coping strategies of Senior and Master teachers at South African public schools. The interview will be conducted in a face-to-face session and will provide a platform for reflection on your professional past and current experience in the conduct of your work as a Senior or Master teacher. Your response to the questions will assist in shedding light on your challenges and strategies you as Senior or Master teacher use in coping with these challenges. The study will also focus on how your work as a Senior or Master teacher influences you personally as well as your school.

You will not be obligated to answer questions that you feel uncomfortable with or that you are unwilling to respond to, due to personal reasons.

First, I kindly ask you to fill in a questionnaire which will take approx. 1 hour and you can do that in your own time. Please return the questionnaire to the clerk's office and I will come and collect it.

For the interview, the recording tools used to collect the information will be a notepad, and with your approval, a digital voice recorder. The interview will be approximately one hour long and will focus on three key questions used for the research study focusing on your challenges and strategies how you cope with these as well as implications for you personally and for your schools.

Please provide me with a personal code so that I can link your questionnaire response to your interview. This code is only known to you.

**Please note** that the information you provide in the study will be kept strictly **confidential** and will be used for the purpose of writing my dissertation to meet the requirements of the Masters in Education degree. All names of persons and organisations will be substituted with **codes** to protect both the person's confidentiality. Your participation is **voluntary** and you are **free to withdraw** from the study at any stage and for any reason. Refusal to answer questions or withdrawal from this research project **will in no way result in any form of discrimination or disadvantage**. All the data that will be collected will be used for my dissertation and possibly for academic publications.

All recorded data will be kept in a secure storeroom housed in the School of Education and will be disposed of (by incineration) five years after completion of this study.

I will make sure that I arrange a meeting for us to meet so that I give you the feedback on the results of the study.

Thank you!

Mrs O. P. Zondi (MEd. Student)



**CODE OF PARTICIPANT:** \_\_\_\_\_

Please prepare the code in line with the following instruction: the two first letters of the first name of the participants' mother (example: Alicia – AL), your day of birth (example: 13 October – 13), first two letters of the mothers' birth month (example: 07 January – JA). The example code would be: AL13JA.

**An investigation of the specific job-related challenges and coping strategies of Senior and Master teachers at South African public schools.**

**CRITICAL QUESTIONS:**

1. Which challenges do Senior and Master teachers working in a sandwich position experience?
2. How do Senior and Master teachers cope with these challenges?
3. Which implications do the challenges and coping strategies have for teachers and schools respectively?

**Interview question 1:** Which challenges do you experience in your role as Senior / Master teacher?

**Probing questions:**

1. What do you regard as your role as a Senior or Master teacher in your school?
2. What kind of work is associated with this role?
3. Which situations in your role as Senior / Master teacher are challenging for you? Why?
4. Which aspects in your school are affecting your work as a Senior / Master teacher? Why?
5. What other work is associated with this role?

**Interview question 2:** How do you as Senior / Master teachers manage these challenges?

**Probing questions:**

1. How do you handle the duties associated with your role as Senior / Master teacher?
2. Please describe a specific situation that was challenging for you in your role as Senior / Master teacher. Explain how you dealt with this situation.

**Interview questions 3-5:**

3. How are you personally affected by your role as a Senior / Master teacher?
4. How do you influence other teachers at your school?
5. How do you influence the school as a whole?

## APPENDIX E: SCREENING QUESTIONNAIRE

### QUESTIONNAIRE TO EXPLORE THE SPECIFIC JOB-RELATED CHALLENGES AND COPING STRATEGIES OF SENIOR AND MASTER TEACHERS AT SOUTH AFRICAN PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

Dear Senior teacher, dear Master teacher,

I would like to ask you to fill in this short questionnaire which aims at exploring which work-related challenges you as a Senior or Master teachers at a South African public schools experience and which aspect you find especially challenging. I am also interested in how you as a Senior or Master teacher cope with such challenges. The results will be the basis for my study as a Masters' candidate at the School of Education of the University of KwaZulu-Natal and for academic publications.

Of course, your participation is **voluntary** and your responses will be treated **confidentially**.

If you participate, **please try not to leave out any answers**. All your responses are of importance for my study. If you are not sure, **please choose the answer that seems most appropriate** from your experience and there are **no “right” or “wrong” answers**.

After filling in the questionnaire, please put it in a **sealed box which is located in the clerk's office** where I will collect it.

I will inform you of the **general results of the study via email**. Please send an email to me under [zondipinky@gmail.com](mailto:zondipinky@gmail.com)

should you wish to receive a feedback for the study.

**Should you have any questions about the study, please contact my supervisor:**

Anja Philipp, School of Education, University of KwaZulu-Natal, 031 260 3819, [philippa@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:philippa@ukzn.ac.za)

Please provide me with informed consent on your participation in the questionnaire.

I understand the purpose and procedures of the project.

I can contact the supervisor of this study to ask questions about the project.

I declare that my participation in this project is entirely voluntary and that I may withdraw my permission at any stage and for any reason. Withdrawal from this research will in no way result in any form of discrimination or disadvantage.

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

**HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION**

Research Office, Westville Campus

Govan Mbeki Building  
Private Bag X 54001  
Durban  
4000

KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA

Tel: 27 31 2604557, Fax: 27 31 2604609, Email: [HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za)

**Informed consent for participation in questionnaire study.**

**Please tick one of the responses below:**

Yes, I agree with the points above and give my informed consent to the study.	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>1</sub>
No, I do not agree with the points above and do not give my informed consent to the study.	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>2</sub>

**Only if you ticked “Yes” and gave your consent to participate in the project, I kindly ask you to please fill in the following information and continue to filling in the questionnaire on the next pages.**

**Please provide me with your personal code to keep you data confidential.**

Please prepare the code in line with the following instruction:

- 1) first two letters of the first name of the participants’ mother (example: Alicia – AL)
  - 2) your day of birth (example: 13 October – 13)
  - 3) first two letters of the mothers’ birth month (example: 07 January – JA).
- The example code would be: AL13JA.

**PERSONAL CODE OF PARTICIPANT:** \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for your interest in this study. Please continue now to the next pages. I kindly ask you to answer some questions on your work-related challenges and how you manage those.

**First, I would like to know more about the challenges of being a Senior or Master teacher.**

Please tick the appropriate box for each statement.	To a very small extent	To a small extent	Some-what	To a large extent	To a very large extent
Does your work have clear objectives?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Do you know exactly which areas are your responsibility?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Do you know exactly what is expected of you at work?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Do you do things at work which are acceptable by some people but not by others?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Are contradictory demands placed on you at work?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Do you sometimes have to do things which ought to have been done in a different way?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Do you sometimes have to do things which seem to be unnecessary?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5

Please tick the most appropriate answer.	Never/ Hardly Ever	Seldom	Some- times	Often	Always
Is your workload unevenly distributed so it piles up?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
How often do you not have time to complete all your work tasks?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Do you get behind with your work?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Do you have to keep your eyes on lots of things while you work?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Does your work require that you remember a lot of things?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Does your work demand that you are good at coming up with new ideas?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Does your work put you in emotionally disturbing situations?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Do you have to relate to other people's personal problems as part of your work?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5

Do you get emotionally involved in your work?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
---	----------------------------	----------------------------	----------------------------	----------------------------	----------------------------

Overall, how many hours do you work in an **average week**: \_\_\_\_\_ hours

**What are the most challenging aspects of your work as Senior or Master teacher?**

--

Please also reflect on the support you receive as Senior or Master Teacher.

Please tick the appropriate box for each statement.	Never/ hardly ever	Seldom	Some- times	Often	Always
How often is your nearest superior willing to listen to your problems at work?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
How often do you get help and support from your nearest superior?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
How often does your nearest superior talk with you about how well you carry out your work?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Is there a good atmosphere between you and your colleagues?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Is there good co-operation between the colleagues at work?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Do you feel part of a community at your place of work?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
How often do you get help and support from your colleagues?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
How often are your colleagues willing to listen to your problems at work?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
How often do your colleagues talk with you about how well you carry out your work?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Is there a good atmosphere between you and your colleagues?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Is there good co-operation between the colleagues at work?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Do you feel part of a community at your place of work?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5

**What are the most important resources in your workplace for you as a Senior or Master teacher?**

Now, I would like to know more about your strategies of managing such challenges.

Please remember difficult work situations during the last 6 months. How did you react to such difficult work situations?

I've been...

	I haven't been doing this at all	I've been doing this a little bit	I've been doing this a medium amount	I've been doing this a lot
concentrating my efforts on doing something about the situation I'm in.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
saying to myself "this isn't real."	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
getting emotional support from others.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
giving up trying to deal with it.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
taking action to try to make the situation better.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
refusing to believe that it has happened.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
saying things to let my unpleasant feelings escape.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
getting help and advice from other people.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
trying to see it in a different light, to make it seem more positive.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
criticizing myself.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
trying to come up with a strategy about what to do.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
getting comfort and understanding from someone.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4

giving up the attempt to cope.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
looking for something good in what is happening.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
making jokes about it.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
doing something to think about it less, such as going to movies, watching TV, reading, daydreaming, sleeping, or shopping.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
accepting the reality of the fact that it has happened.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
expressing my negative feelings.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
trying to find comfort in my religion or spiritual beliefs.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
trying to get advice or help from other people about what to do.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
learning to live with it.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
thinking hard about what steps to take.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
blaming myself for things that happened.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
praying or meditating.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
making fun of the situation.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4

**What are the most important resources for you personally?**

Please take a moment to answer some questions on your personal wellbeing.

How did you feel in the last 6 months?	Not at all	A small part of the time	A part of the time	A large part of the time	All the time
How often have you been irritable?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
How often have you been tense?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
How often have you been stressed?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
How often have you had stomachache?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
How often have you had a headache?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
How often have you had tension in various muscles?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
How often have you had problems concentrating?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
How often have you found it difficult to think clearly?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
How often have you had difficulty in taking decisions?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
How often have you had difficulty with remembering?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5

Please tick the most appropriate answer.	Never/ Hardly Ever	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Al-ways
At my work, I feel bursting with energy.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
At my work I always persevere, even when things do not go well.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
I find the work that I do full of meaning and purpose.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
I am enthusiastic about my job.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
My job inspires me.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
I am proud on the work that I do.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
I feel happy when I am working intensely.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
I am immersed in my work.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
It is difficult to detach myself from my job.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
I feel emotionally drained from my work	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
I feel used up at the end of the workday.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
I feel fatigued when I get up in the morning and have to face another day on the job.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
I feel frustrated by my job.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5

I would also appreciate if you could give me some additional information. All responses are treated confidentially.

For how long are you a teacher?	for _____ years	I teach in the:	
For how long are you a Senior/Master teacher?	for _____ years	Foundation phase (Gr. 1- Intermediate phase	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2
How old are you	_____ years	Senior phase (Gr. 7-9)	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
I am		FET (Gr.10-12)	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
Male	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Female	<input type="checkbox"/>	I am a Senior Teacher	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
My home language is:		I am a Master Teacher	<input type="checkbox"/> 2

My academic qualification(s) is/are:

My professional qualification(s) is/are:

I obtained my qualification(s) from a:

- University
- Technikon
- College
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_ (please name the type of institution).

**Thank you for your participation!**

**APPENDIX F:**

**TURNITIN CERTIFICATE**

An investigation of specific job-related challenges and coping strategies of Senior and Master teachers at South African public schools

ORIGINALITY REPORT



PRIMARY SOURCES

1	Submitted to University of KwaZulu-Natal Student Paper	1%
2	uir.unisa.ac.za Internet Source	<1%
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**APPENDIX G: LANGUAGE EDITOR CERTIFICATE**

**ASOKA ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDITING**

**14 Boundary Rd., Escombe, 4093**

**CELL NO.: 0836507817**



**DECLARATION**

**THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT THE FOLLOWING DISSERTATION HAS BEEN  
ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDITED**

***An investigation of the specific job-related challenges and coping strategies of Senior and Master  
teachers at South African public schools***

Candidate: Zondi OP



## DISCLAIMER

Whilst the English language editor has used electronic track changes to facilitate corrections and has inserted comments and queries in a right-hand column, the responsibility for effecting changes in the final, submitted document, remains the responsibility of the client.

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