



**Exploring the Role of the School Management Teams in  
Inducting Novice Educators**

**By**

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Policy

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## **DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY**

I, **Bongekile Lynn Mlambo**, declare that:

- i. The research reported in this dissertation, except otherwise stated, is my original work.
- ii. This dissertation has never been submitted for any degree or examination in any other university.
- iii. This dissertation does not contain any other person's data, pictures or graphs, or any other information unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other persons.
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\_\_\_\_February 2022\_\_\_\_

**DATE**

## **STATEMENT BY THE SUPERVISOR**

This dissertation has been submitted with/without my approval.



February 2022

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**DR PINKIE E. MTHEMBU**

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**DATE**

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this research to my family: my husband, Desmond, and our children, Thando, Phila, Ayanna and Zuzu, for supporting me throughout my studies. Not forgetting my parents, Mrs Eunice and Mr Simon Hlongwane; your words of encouragement have carried me through.

*But thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession, and through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of him everywhere.*

**2 Corinthians 2:14**

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I love you all.

## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to explore the understanding of school management teams (SMTs) members of their role in inducting novice educators. The study sought to investigate the role played by SMT in the induction of novice educators, their lived experiences, perceived challenges and mitigation strategies. Reviewed literature revealed that due to their liminality and lack of experience, novice educators often experience challenges in their initial years of teaching. The challenges that novice educators experience include, *inter alia*, classroom management, learner discipline, management of learners' behaviour, accommodation of diverse learning needs, time management, conflict with parents, discipline, and motivating learners

This was a qualitative study, located within an interpretive paradigm. The sample for the study comprised five (5) members of school management teams from two secondary schools in UThukela District, KwaZulu-Natal. The sample of SMT members included school principals and Departmental Heads. The key research questions for the study were investigated through face-to-face semi-structured interviews, with strict adherence to COVID-19 protocols.

The findings of this study revealed that SMT members understood and somewhat performed their role of inducting novice educators. However, most of the induction took place informally, due to the limited time that SMT members had. In addition, SMT members reported that they had not received training or support from the Department of Education on the induction of novice educators. However, despite the challenges encountered, SMT reported that they used their knowledge and experience to ensure that novice educators in their schools were orientated and inducted. For instance, they used subject and departmental meetings held per term to encourage collaboration between novice and experienced educators to ensure support and guidance for novice educators.

The findings point to the resilience of the SMT members in that they did something to ensure that novice educators were inducted, despite the challenges that they were facing.

**Keywords:** school management team; induction; novice educators

## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

ATP	Annual Teaching Plan
COP	Community of Practice
CPTD	Continuing professional teacher development
DoE	Department of Education
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DH	Departmental Head
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
HoD	Head of Department
JET	Joint Education Trust
KZN	KwaZulu-Natal
NTIP	New Teacher Induction Programme
PAM	Personnel Administrative Measures
PD	Professional Development
PGCE	Post-Graduate Certificate in Education
PL1	Post Level One
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SACE	South African Council for Education
SASA	South African Schools Act
VVOB	Vlaamse Vereniging voor Ontwikkelingssamenwerking en Technische Bijstand

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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION AND ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY**

#### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

Novice educators often face problems in the initial years of their careers, leading to growing rates of attrition. For instance, Kearney (2014) states that high rates of attrition, coupled with the ageing educator population in many countries in the developed world, may cause an educator shortage crisis in the future. Beginning teacher induction is an imperative process in the assimilation of educators into their new careers and in assisting them to overcome the complexities of teaching and accreditation processes. In this chapter, the background and rationale for the study are first introduced. Then the statement of the problem, clarification of concepts, the purpose of the study, the significance of the study, and limitations of the study are presented.

#### **1.2 BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY**

The beginning years of teaching are critical yet overwhelming for some novice educators (Botha & Rens, 2018). Hence, induction is crucial as the first phase of on-the-job professional development. This study focuses on the roles of selected members of school management teams (SMTs) in the induction of novice educators appointed to their schools. Research, both nationally and internationally, reveals that novice educators often experience challenges during their first few years of teaching (Callahan, 2016; Sikma, 2019; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004; Kearney, 2014; 2015). Sikma (2019) reports that these challenges often lead to high attrition rates among novice educators, which may erode the quality of teaching and learning.

The stresses of the job, administration and tight deadlines, to mention just a few, sometimes leave novice educators confused and frustrated (Kearney, 2015). While some may be intimidated by the fact that they are hardly older than their learners, others are intimidated by the expectation of having to manage a large classroom (Engvik & Emstad, 2017; Harju & Niemi, 2020). The responsibility of having to master sufficient content knowledge to teach all subjects in a primary school curriculum may also be daunting for some novice educators (Baker, 2014). The social

problems in communities in the neighbourhood of schools often contribute to the difficulties novice educators must contend with and may leave them overwhelmed (Dube, 2008). These challenges may result in anxiety and stress, leading to novice educators leaving the profession, which Botha and Rens (2020) refer to as the gap between theory and practice. The dissonance between what novice educators have learned about teaching and learning at university and what they already know and continue to learn about themselves in schools is often overwhelming (Stewart & Jansky, 2022). This may lead to novice educators getting frustrated with themselves and beginning to believe that the profession is not for them. This may then compound into high attrition rates among novice educators, which the literature contends may be due to ineffective induction programmes (Kearney, 2014; 2015).

Due to the novice educators' liminality and lack of experience, research has found that they often experience challenges in classroom management, learner discipline, management of learners' behaviour, meeting diverse learning needs, time management, conflict with parents, discipline, and motivating learners (Sikma, 2019). The induction of novice educators to their new careers is thus of the utmost importance for the time it takes for them to adjust to being kept to a minimum. According to Kearney (2014), the challenges faced by novice educators are not new, but have been compounding and continuing for a few decades. The South African Department of Basic Education (DBE) is aware of the challenges faced by novice educators. Hence, the objective is to review, analyse and improve the quality of initial teacher training and continuous professional teacher development and support (Department of Basic Education, 2017).

The above challenges have given rise to a need for school managers, SMTs in the South African context, to introduce programmes to induct novice educators appointed to their schools (Mamba, 2020). However, often the induction programmes put in place by education districts and schools have not succeeded in addressing these challenges (Maake, 2013; Mestry, 2017; Kadenge, 2021). In this regard, the South African Council for Educators (SACE) proposed the introduction of an induction year in 2017 (Kimathi & Rusznyak, 2018). SACE's rationale in this regard is that the image of the teaching profession may be promoted by identifying and assisting those educators who

cannot live up to the profession's standards (South African Council for Educators, 2011).

From the foregoing discussion, there seems to be a need for decisions and actions by school leaders to be made that would ensure the successful induction of novice educators. This suggests that school leaders are critical in this regard, as they can influence novice educators' professional lives during adapting to the schooling environment and cultures (Schleicher, 2012). Therefore, effective and visionary school leadership and management are essential in developing and fostering environments in which professional cultures can meet the needs of novice educators (Khalifa, Gooden & Davis, 2016).

### **1.2.1 Policy foundations of induction processes**

Education authorities internationally have legislated and mandated the induction of novice educators within their education districts. For example, education authorities in the district of Ontario in Canada introduced an initiative called the Ontario New Teacher Induction Programme (NITP) to support the professional development and growth of their country's novice educators (Kane & Francis, 2013). In South Africa, the National Framework for Induction of New educators was developed in 2018-2019 by the Department of Basic Education (DBE), in consultation with working groups of two round tables (Department of Basic Education, 2018). This process was facilitated by the Joint Education Trust (JET) Services, and commissioned by the Vlaamse Vereniging voor Ontwikkelingssamenwerking en Technische Bijstand (VVOB). This initiative constituted the country's response to challenges in respect of continuing professional teacher development (CPTD) for the teaching profession (Department of Basic Education, 2018).

The *Employment of Educators Act* (Act 76 of 1998) provides for the constitution of (SMTs, whose responsibility is to ensure the professional management of schools (Department of Education, 1998). Section 16 of the *South African Schools Act 84 of 1996* states that the principal, who is a leader or head of the SMT, is responsible for the professional management of a school (Republic of South Africa, 1996). The responsibility to manage the school professionally includes the induction of novice

educators into the teaching profession (Department of Education, 1998a). In addition, Goal 16 of the *Action Plan to 2019 Towards the Realisation of Schooling 2030* states that the improvement of professionalism, teaching skills, subject knowledge and computer literacy of educators throughout their entire careers are of the utmost importance (Department of Basic Education, 2014).

### **1.2.2 Personal and professional motivation**

Novice educators often express frustration at the challenges they experience in the early stages of their teaching careers (see, for instance, Makoa & Segalo, 2021; Khalid & Husnin, 2019). These challenges may come from the fact that novice educators are sometimes expected to take on full loads of teaching, often with inadequate induction into the profession (Kearney, 2016). To this end, schools often struggle to retain novice educators as they quickly realise that the reality of the profession is not what they were expecting (see, for instance, Petersen, 2017; Botha & Rens, 2018). In addition to these issues, learner numbers per classroom may well range from 40 to 70 learners per classroom, making it difficult for novice educators to manage classes and deliver quality lessons (see, for instance, Darling-Hammond, 2019). The lack of skills in terms of classroom management leaves some novice educators frustrated resulting in them leaving the profession, feeling that they are not ready for the realities of the teaching profession (Botha & Rens, 2018).

From a personal perspective, as an educator myself, I have experienced challenges where there are expectations from the school and the Department of Education, whereas I have not been inducted into how I could work towards meeting those expectations. Often, as a novice teacher, I was blamed for not delivering and for the gaps in my teaching regarding the theory of teaching and learning. As an experienced member of staff and subject head at my school, I have also been frustrated by the unavailability of information that I could use to induct novice educators under my supervision into the teaching profession. To this end, it is hoped that this research could broaden my knowledge base in this regard and assist those interested in the induction of novice educators.

### **1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The first year in the teaching profession tends to be the most difficult for novice educators (Talley, 2017). The reality shock that novice educators often experience when they get into classrooms for the first time and realise that the reality of teaching is different from their expectations is overwhelming (see, for instance, Talley, 2017; Botha & Rens, 2020; Voss (Dubberke) & Kunter, 2020). The specific problem that this study sought to address was how SMT members performed their role of inducting novice educators and investigate the challenges encountered by SMTs in formulating appropriate induction programmes.

In South Africa, according to an internal planning report of the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), approximately 15 000 new educators graduate from the universities yearly (VVOB, 2020). This means that a significant number of educators are joining the teaching profession, which suggests the need for effective induction programmes. The education systems must have adequate support mechanisms for novice educators so that they can become competent, confident, passionate, and enthusiastic about the teaching profession. Although the induction of novice educators has been comprehensively studied, the literature search I conducted revealed that SMTs are still experiencing challenges with the induction of novice educators (Kearney, 2014; 2015; Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Ntsoane, 2017). This study sought to explore the role of SMT members in the induction of novice educators and investigate the challenges encountered by SMTs in formulating appropriate induction programmes.

### **1.4 THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The purpose of this study was to explore the role of SMT members in the induction of novice educators. Furthermore, the study sought to investigate the challenges encountered by SMTs in formulating appropriate induction programmes. To this end, the study sought to explore mitigation strategies SMT members developed to address the challenges that they experienced in this regard.

## **1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The key question for the study was: How do School Management Teams (SMTs) induct novice educators? The key research question for the study was investigated through the following sub-questions:

1. What roles do members of the SMT play in the induction of novice educators?
2. What are the experiences of SMT members in their roles of inducting novice educators?
3. How do SMT members mitigate challenges experienced while inducting novice educators?

## **1.6 CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS**

### **1.6.1 School Management Team**

Schools are managed by teams of experts who must ensure that quality teaching and learning take place in schools through planning, organising, leading, and controlling (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2016). School leaders are regarded as key to providing support to novice educators (see, for instance, Nemaston, 2020). School leaders have a responsibility of ensuring the effective functioning of schools (Harju & Niemi, 2020), which may include different roles, ranging from being managers to being pedagogical or instructional leaders. Included in these roles is the responsibility to determine whether educators require support and finding the most appropriate forms of support necessary. Bush and Glover (2014) posit that before the introduction of the *South African Schools Act 84 of 1996*, accountability was the sole responsibility of principals, who had to use their discretion to deal with such matters, which means there was no framework or mechanism to guide how this was done. The *Employment of Educators Act (Act 76, 1998)* now refers to SMTs as management structures, with the responsibility of ensuring the professional day-to-day running of schools (Department of Education, 1998). The SMT consists of the principal, deputy principal (where appropriate), departmental heads, and senior educators (Department of Education, 2016). The *Personnel Administrative Measures* and the *South African Standards for Principals* posit that one of the roles of SMT members is the induction of novice educators appointed in their schools (Department of Education, 2014; 2016).

### **1.6.2 Novice educator**

The definition of a novice educator often depends on the geographic location. For example, in Botswana, a novice educator is that who is still under probation (Ntsoane, 2017), while in Australia, they are a fully qualified beginning teacher who acts on the periphery of the profession (Kearney, 2015). On the other hand, in Ontario, Canada, a novice educator is that who has been appointed to a permanent position by the Education Board for the first time but still must complete the New Teacher Induction Programme (NTIP) for registration as a qualified teacher.

In South Africa, a novice educator is a graduate who has completed a professional qualification at an institution of higher learning, and who has been appointed for the first time in a public or independent school. Educators from outside of South Africa and experienced foreign educators looking for jobs who have completed their teaching qualification and wish to teach in South Africa are regarded as novice educators (Department of Education, 2011). Novice educators may also be educators who are returning to the teaching profession and have not been teaching for five or more years (Department of Education, 2011).

### **1.6.3 Induction**

Induction may be defined as attempts by, for instance, a school, to assist educators to make a transition as manageable as possible, with minimum disruptions as possible, while familiarising them with their new working environment (Curry, 2016). The process of induction may apply to both novice and experienced educators appointed to new schools. However, for this study, induction will be understood from the point of view of novice educators.

Novice educators are still in the liminal stages of their teaching careers; as a result, they experience challenges (Petersen, 2017). Within the context of this study, induction is made up of a school's efforts to assist educators to adjust and teach effectively in their new working environment (Ntsoane, 2017). Dishena and Mokoena (2016) view induction as a programme whose aim is to acquaint novice educators with the cultural workings of a school, while facilitating their transition from student to

professional educators. The induction of novice educators can be two-fold: first, it may refer to familiarising novice educators with the culture of the school in which they are employed; and secondly, it may refer to guiding them into becoming members of a profession, what is known as professional induction (Van Velzen et al., 2010). Hobson et al. (2012) view induction as individualised professional development, whose aim is to foster the development of a novice educator, while promoting effective teaching and learning for all schools.

While the above-mentioned scholars view induction as a process of effectively familiarising a novice educator with the new working environment, Barker-Gardner (2015) argues that induction is a period through which a recruit adjusts with their new working environment, while trying to effectively and efficiently cope with the demands of their new job. On the other hand, Hobson et al. (2012) view induction as a process that is more than just a programme to facilitate novice educator's entry into their new role, but also as a way of welcoming them into a collaborative professional learning community. It must be noted that all these scholars view induction as a temporary support mechanism, which is used to alleviate stress and reduce the impact of the challenges that novice educators may be facing in their transition. However, Kearney (2014) argues that there is no common understanding or definition of induction and that it is difficult to articulate a conceptualisation that will satisfy the vast array of formal and informal practices currently undertaken in various educational settings.

## **1.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

This study has the potential to provide useful insights into how SMT members work with the induction of novice educators. SMT members reading this study may learn and enhance their practice and knowledge on the induction of novice educators. The study may further provide an understanding of how to mitigate challenges encountered during the implementation of school-based induction programmes. Thus, this study will contribute to the body of knowledge regarding the induction of novice educators and the role of SMTs in this regard.

## **1.8 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

My position as a Post Level One educator may in some way have affected the responses of the SMT members, especially the school principals, and novice educators who participated in this study. To alleviate this power dynamic, I explained to them that the findings of the study were not intended to evaluate their work or how they applied policy, but that the intention was to obtain insights into how the induction of novice educators was carried out. Secondly, given the fact that the study was confined to selected SMT members from two schools, the findings of this study may not be generalisable to SMT members in other contexts. However, it must be noted that the intention was not to generalise findings to other contexts but to obtain insights into how induction was operationalised by SMTs within a specific context.

## **1.9 CONCLUSION**

This chapter discussed the introduction and orientation of the study. This included a discussion of the background of the study, which was followed by the purpose and rationale. The key concepts that underpinned this study were defined and discussed, and the limitations of the study and research questions and objectives were presented.

The next chapter discusses the literature reviewed and the theoretical framework underpinning this study in order to locate the study within the scholarly conversation.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

The previous chapter provided an overview and introduction to the study. This chapter provides a review of the literature relevant to the focus and objectives of this study. Thus, this chapter will discuss firstly, the role of school management in the induction of novice educators; secondly, experiences of SMTs in the induction of novice educators; finally, the theoretical and conceptual framework, which must be used to understand discussions and arguments in this study. The discussions in this chapter are intended to locate the study within the relevant scholarly conversation and provide the theoretical foundations for the study.

#### **2.2 THE ROLE OF SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAMS IN THE INDUCTION OF NOVICE EDUCATORS**

Novice educators across the globe often encounter challenges during their initial years of teaching (Botha & Rens, 2020; Kearney, 2017; 2015; Kutsyuruba & Tregunna, 2014). Therefore, SMTs throughout the world have a significant role in the induction of novice educators. This role includes functions, such as orientating, mentoring, coaching, collaboration, observation, networking, and providing opportunities for CPTD for novice educators (Kutsyuruba, Godden & Walter, 2020). In developing countries, members of SMTs must induct novice educators to ensure that they can teach under difficult circumstances in those contexts. For instance, in Namibia and Botswana, a school principal and their Departmental Head must hold informal meetings with and orientate novice educators into their new roles, and conduct classroom observations to ensure in situ support for them (Dishena & Mokoena, 2016). Similarly, in Kenya and Ghana, SMT members conduct workshops, hold seminars, and train novice educators in the intricacies of their new roles (Dishena, 2014). According to Kutsyuruba and Tregunna (2014), the role of the school principal, as part of school management, is critical for the creation of a supportive structure or mechanism for the induction of novice educators. Principals must build conducive and

supportive school cultures, characterised by shared leadership, create opportunities for shared values and vision, and promote healthy professional relationships among novice and experienced educators (Kutsyuruba & Tregunna, 2014). This is an important aspect of ensuring improved morale and strengthening of self-concept among novice educators. This suggests that there may be a strong link between school cultures, approaches to school management and school performance (see, for instance, Melesse & Molla, 2018).

Schools require a management team that can steer them toward agreed-upon values and outcomes that can create a context where educators, learners and stakeholders can teach, learn, and provide requisite support respectively (Lebeloane, 2014). Marzano (2011) contends that one of the roles of a school principal is the supervision of their staff. In this context, the primary purpose of supervision must be the enhancement of the educators' pedagogical skills to ensure improved learner performance and achievement. For instance, from the perspective of this study, initiatives such as the induction process will ensure that novice educators are not left to sink or swim but assisted to increase their pedagogical expertise, with the ultimate goal of ensuring that learners can learn and succeed. To this end, departmental heads, in particular, have a responsibility of ensuring that novice educators are properly inducted into their new roles as educators. This means that departmental heads must orientate, induct, mentor and coach their less experienced educators (Department of Education, 1998b). These processes must include inducting novice educators into the importance of collaborating with other educators regarding instructional procedures and personal growth.

### **2.3 EXPERIENCES OF SCHOOL MANAGEMENT OF THE INDUCTION OF NOVICE EDUCATORS**

Members of SMTs often experience challenges in the execution of their roles of inducting novice educators (Ntsoane, 2017). For instance, in South Africa, whether a school qualifies for a deputy principal and how many departmental heads it has, is often determined by its size (Department of Education, 1998a). This implies that schools with low learner enrolments may be constrained by few resources, making it difficult for them to properly carry out certain duties, including the implementation of induction programmes for novice educators (Du Plessis, 2014). In addition, in some

instances, members of school management do not possess adequate skills and competencies to perform and carry out their responsibilities in respect of the induction of novice educators (Ntsoane, 2017).

Mestry (2017) has attributed this inadequacy to the lack of training in instructional leadership and the shortage of in-service training programmes for SMTs. This often exacerbates the challenges experienced by SMT members in performing the role of inducting novice educators. Seobi and Wood (2016) posit that Departmental Heads are often constrained by excessive administrative loads, which often make it difficult for them to work with their educators to improve their professional expertise and practice. Often, their administrative duties are so heavy that these consume almost all the available time, leaving them with no time for the induction of novice educators. When the literature was reviewed, five major strategies for induction were identified, namely, the development and adoption of an induction policy; structured observations; mentoring as induction; collaboration and communities of practice; and continuing professional development. These strategies for induction are discussed in the section below.

### **2.3.1 Development and adoption of an induction policy**

Policies articulate essential features of the notion of induction and what form it ought to take, which suggests that there is an intention to implement it (Bekker & Moody, 2006). In a schooling context, policy often represents some general plan of action, designed to achieve a particular educational purpose. The policy may serve as a guide for how individuals should exercise their decision-making powers. In the development of an induction policy by the SMT, not only the intention should be outlined, but also clear guidelines on the implementation of the policy must articulated and stipulated (Van der Merwe, Prinsloo & Steinmann, 2013). In terms of the *South African Schools Act (84 of 1996)*, it is the responsibility of the SMT, led by the school principal, to implement policies relating to the professional obligations of a school (Republic of South Africa, 1996). In this regard, within the South African context, the development and implementation of an induction policy is the responsibility of the SMT (Van Wyk & Marumoloa, 2012).

Policy implementation would be simple if SMTs and educators agreed on clear values and structures (Marshall & Patterson, 2002). In this regard, Marshall and Patterson (2002) argue that decentralisation has been a major reform thrust in the United States and elsewhere. Decentralisation makes sense, given extensive research pointing out that educators are likely to resist change unless mechanisms are set for them to feel that they own such a change (Fullan, 1991, as cited in Marshall & Patterson, 2002). The involvement of educators when formulating policy is thus critical, as it may assist novice educators to understand the need for participating in induction programmes provided at their schools.

Van der Merwe et al. (2013) have identified five steps in the development and adoption of a policy, as briefly discussed below.

- **Policy formulation:** This step expresses the importance of the policy by articulating the results, outcomes, significance and objectives of the policy.
- **Approving the policy:** This step involves reviewing the policy while ensuring accuracy and making sure that the draft is clear, but still open for recommendations. From the perspective of induction, this would be the step where the SMT ensures the involvement of both experienced and novice educators in providing inputs to the induction policy to ensure ownership by key stakeholders (Marshall & Patterson, 2002).
- **Realising and interpreting policy:** During this step, the SMT ensures that the policy outlines the processes and procedures involved in day-to-day implementation, specifying how non-compliance will be dealt with.
- **Putting policy into effect:** This stage involves ensuring that roles are clarified and responsibilities and accountability are clearly articulated.
- **Reviewing and updating the policy:** This step involves ensuring that the policy is reviewed, evaluated and updated so that remedial and policy amendments could be undertaken (Van der Merwe et al., 2013). In this step,

the SMT must continuously observe and monitor the implementation of the policy to ensure that the objectives of the policy are achieved.

It is the view of this study that the above steps of policy formulation and implementation could ensure that an effective policy for the induction of novice educators is formulated and implemented.

### **2.3.2 Structured observations**

Observation is one of the most important aspects of learning (Groenendijk et al., 2013). Observation involves the selection, recording and encoding of behaviours and receiving and giving feedback (Browder, Schoen & Lentz, 1986). Analysing and reflecting on information from observations can be a valuable means for the professional growth of novice educators (Kearney, 2015). Kearney (2015) contends that structured observation could be used by members of SMTs to evaluate lessons and provide feedback to novice educators on their performance.

The observation of novice educators may include a focus on lesson design, instructional practices and classroom management, which are some of the challenges that novice educators face in their initial years of teaching (Kearney, 2015). Methods of classroom observation must be appropriate to their purpose. For example, there should be a difference between classroom observation for appraisal and developmental purposes (Kearney, 2017). When observing an educator's performance, the SMT will be looking at how a novice educator performs their job and how well that is demonstrated in the classroom context. This process should not be judgemental or constitute any fault-finding mission (Department of Education, 2020). To this end, an observation exercise would intend to appraise performance, with a view of assisting a novice educator to improve in specific areas, which may require attention. This suggests that if the SMT must use observation as an aspect of their induction strategy, it must be purposed for development.

### **2.3.3 Mentoring**

Mentoring, within an education or schooling context, can be defined as a process whereby a master or more senior teacher who has more experience is allocated to a

novice educator to guide them through their probationary period (Fletcher, 2000; Cullingford, 2006). Within this perspective, mentoring involves a process of providing guidance, support and feedback to a novice educator (Callahan, 2016). Marz and Kelchtermans (2020) contend that mentoring is a dynamic and reciprocal learning relationship between an experienced and a novice educator. In this regard, assigning a mentor potentially ensures that a novice educator can transition relatively smoothly from being a student to being a practising educator and that such transition does not impact negatively the quality of teaching and learning.

From the above, it can be concluded that mentoring involves guidance provided to novice educators, usually by experienced educators (Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). During the past decade, teacher mentoring programmes have become one of the most dominant elements of effective educator induction (Kearney, 2015). Establishing mentor/mentee relationships suggest that a mentee may visit a mentor's classroom to observe how they teach a specific topic, which may be presented as a challenge to them, to learn ways of how to tackle such a topic. In the same light, a mentor may visit a novice educator class to observe, learn from and guide them on how they could approach specific aspects of their teaching. This, when managed appropriately, may contribute positively to the improvement of the quality of teaching and learning.

Kent, Green and Feldman (2012) contend that mentoring is not a choice; it is the responsibility of everyone within the schooling system, given the fact that all have specific interests in the performance of novice educators and the success of learners. In this regard, Callahan (2016) has argued that a mentoring programme is as strong as its mentors are and that it is, therefore, essential for mentors to also receive professional development themselves. From Callahan's (2016) perspective, such training and development will ensure that mentoring programmes are effective and helpful to novice educators. However, Ramnarain and Ramaila (2016) argue that, in the field of teacher education, there is no agreed-upon or definitive conceptualisation of the notion of mentoring. Ramnarain and Ramaila (2016) contend that this may be because of the circumstances in which mentoring must happen, which tend to differ from one school to the other, and involve a set of complex human interactions that cannot be rigidly defined.

Lai (2010), as cited in Ramnarain and Ramaila (2016), posits that what may be leading to disagreement among scholars on the definition of the notion of mentoring may be as a result of researchers trying to focus on the different dimensions of mentoring. Lai (2010) has identified three dimensions in respect of the conceptualisation of mentoring: (i) relational, (ii) developmental, and (iii) contextual dimensions. The relational dimension refers to the relationship between the mentor and mentee. This dimension places more emphasis on the role of the mentor as an emotional supporter and critical friend (Ramnarain & Ramaila, 2016). The developmental dimension refers to mentoring functions and behaviours for promoting the professional and/or personal development of both the mentor and mentee. The last dimension of mentoring is contextual and thus focuses on the cultural and situational features of a mentoring setting or relationship (Ramnarain & Ramaila, 2016). Within a schooling context, for example, this dimension would focus on the influence(s) of the school culture and their effect on teaching and learning. To this end, this mentoring dimension would require that members of SMTs must involve novice educators in the processes of acquainting them with the school culture, to assist them in their functioning within a particular schooling context. This could be achieved by encouraging collaboration from both novice and experienced educators. Smith and Ingersoll (2012) assert that an induction programme consists of two components, namely, a mentee working with a mentor and regular supportive communication with one's mentor. As argued by Smith and Ingersoll (2012), it is argued in this study that novice educators who are exposed to any two components of the dimensions of induction programmes may have better retention outcomes than those not receiving induction at all.

#### **2.3.4 Collaboration and communities of practice**

Collaboration can be defined as working with someone to produce or achieve some mutually beneficial outcome (Castañer & Oliveira, 2020). This means that the people working together must have a common goal, and purpose and their relations must be based on trust. Fay (2018) views collaboration as a process by which groups of educators meet regularly to work together as equals to help students succeed. This process may involve, but is not limited to, discussing lesson plans, instructional strategies, and assessments. Participants provide feedback and suggestions for development and enhancement to improve student outcomes. SMT members should

encourage collaboration when interacting with or inducting novice educators. This is based on the understanding that all of them, namely, experienced educators, SMT members, and novice educators, have a common goal, which is the success of learners (Ntsoane, 2017).

In terms of the above, collaboration to achieve a specific outcome, within an educational context, constitutes a Community of Practice (CoP). According to Pyrko et al. (2015), a CoP can be defined as a group of people who genuinely care about the same real-life problems or hot topics and who, on that basis, interact regularly to learn together and from one another. According to Cundill, Roux and Parker (2015), CoPs are a group of people with common interests or passion for something they practice. A CoP engages in learning collectively about how to improve their practice.

Literature on communities of practice posits that it comprises three characteristics. Firstly, CoPs are organised around a shared domain of interest (Pyrko et al., 2015). This characteristic is based on a commitment to an area of interest and shared expertise in that specific area. SMT members could use the CoP as an induction strategy, as both experienced and novice educators would be represented and collective learning can happen. Secondly, members of a CoP engage in joint activities (Pyrko et al., 2015). These activities may involve assisting and supporting one another and sharing information, which could allow for positive relations to be formed, allowing members to learn from one another. Thirdly, members of the CoP are practitioners, not spectators (Pyrko et al., 2015). This means that they actively test their ideas, usually through a shared set of resources, including experiences and ways to improve their practice (Cundill et al., 2016). From the perspective of this study, this could provide novice educators with an opportunity to share their challenges, while learning from the experiences of their senior colleagues and CoPs could, thus, serve as a useful platform for professional development.

### **2.3.5 Continuing professional development**

Continuing professional teacher development refers to the in-service training opportunities available for educators to advance their current and acquire new skills and expertise to assist them to improve their professional practice (Department of

Education, 1998). For Harju and Niemi (2020), the value of professional development opportunities for educators lies in their effect on learner performance. That is, if they have value, they must improve learning outcomes. In support of CPTD, Harju and Niemi (2020) contend that if educators are to be effective in educating learners, they must be learning and developing themselves. Therefore, SMT members need to make novice educators aware of the fact that their pre-service education must be continually developed. For this study, it was important to consider the fact that several aspects contributed to the effective implementation of the professional development of educators. These aspects included a focus on educators' professional needs and learning; educators' commitment to professional development programmes; quality of school leadership; and school context and feedback on educators' development (Steyn, 2010).

A focus on educators' learning entails structuring their professional development programmes in a way that caters for their individual needs (Steyn, 2010). Hence educators' professional growth requires programmes that acknowledge the uniqueness of their professional needs. This is in line with what Darling-Hammond et al. (2017) call structured professional learning. In respect of this study, this could be a situation whereby novice educators are provided with opportunities to familiarise themselves with developments, thinking and fresh ideas in education. According to Kapambwe (2015), one can distinguish good schools from average schools by their human resources; not physical resources. Motivated and effective staff often contribute more to the school than physical resources (Kapambwe et al., 2015). That is, the achievement of good results by a school depends on the quality of its educators (Kapambwe et al., 2015). Therefore, for schools to ensure that their educators are developed effectively to perform at their best, there needs to be an effective professional development programme for the school (Kapambwe et al., 2015).

According to De Jager and Du Toit (2016), professional development is one of the challenges facing novice educators, who may focus more on coping with their new role of teaching and developing and consolidating their instructional skills than on growth and new approaches. This is more reason for SMT members to develop novice educators as an induction strategy. Darling-Hammond et al. (2017) argue that effective professional development should be characterised by the following features: Content-

focused, incorporating active learning, supporting collaboration, and use models of effective practices. That effective professional development should be content-focused means that the focus must be on teacher learning with the centre of interest being the educators' classroom context. The classroom context, which involves discipline and curriculum development, is one of the challenges encountered by novice educators in their initial years of teaching (Callahan, 2016; Kearney, 2014; 2015).

Designing and implementing teaching strategies that work for learners is also a challenge faced by novice educators (Callahan, 2016; Kearney, 2014; 2015). Professional development that incorporates active learning is a feature of an effective professional development programme (Darling-Hammond et.al. 2017). The use of models of effective practice is a feature of effective professional development that includes lesson planning and observation of peer teaching. These models could be used to support novice educators in their learning and application of what they have learned as part of their practice. The implementation of the above-mentioned models may strengthen the required collaboration among educators. Professional development that supports collaboration is a feature of effective professional development (Darling-Hammond et.al., 2017). This is useful in creating spaces for educators to share ideas and collaborate, often in job-embedded contexts (Darling-Hammond et.al., 2017). If educators are allowed space for collaboration, CoPs that could positively change the culture and education could be created.

## **2.4 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

Merriam (2009, p.88) contends that a “theoretical framework is the underlying structure, scaffolding or frame of a study. It is the system of concepts, assumptions, expectations, beliefs, and theories that supports and informs a study”. Maxwell (2005) asserts that a theoretical framework for research studies is most useful when it integrates theories that capture different aspects of the phenomenon of the study. For this reason, I used two theories as a lens and framework for understanding the arguments and discussions in this study. In this regard, Burns' (1978) theory of transformational leadership and Vygotsky's (1978) socio-cultural theory were used to explore the role of SMT members in the induction of novice educators, understating

the challenges encountered by SMTs in formulating appropriate induction programmes.

#### **2.4.1 Transformational leadership**

Transformational leadership was initially introduced by a leadership expert and presidential biographer, Burns (1978). According to Burns (1978), transformational leadership involves engagement between people, leading to increased motivational and moral levels. Transformational leadership can be observed when leaders and followers build each other to grow together to a higher moral and motivational level (Burns, 1978). Transformational leadership focuses on a specific way of leading, which takes into consideration the individual talents of employees as an important aspect from which an organisation can benefit. Burns (1978) argues that power has been overemphasised when it comes to leadership and, from this perspective, contends that power and leadership must not be viewed as things, but as relationships.

From the perspective of this study, this suggests that SMTs must not view themselves as people in power; they must rather work towards building relationships with novice educators during an induction period. Later Bass (1995) expanded on transformational leadership. Bass' (1995) research focused on leadership in the military, business and educational settings, which was an improvement to address the shortcomings pointed out in Burn's (1978) earlier work. Bass' (1995) argument was that transformational leadership was a powerful notion in that it had the potential to move followers, who may be novice educators in the context of this study, beyond expectations. Bass (1995) held that transformational leadership had more to offer than just exchange and agreements, as can be observed with transactional leadership. Stewart (2006) contends that a leader's behaviour often affects their followers' commitment. For instance, in this study, the behaviour of an SMT could have an impact on the commitment of novice educators and how things are done in the institution. From the point of view of Bass (1995), successful transformational leadership is often determined by its impact on followers. To this end, Bass (1995) contends that transformational leaders garner followers' trust, respect, and admiration.

Bass (1999) has proposed four components of transformational leadership, namely, intellectual stimulation, individualised consideration, inspirational motivation, and idealised influence, which are discussed in the section below.

#### **2.4.1.1 Intellectual stimulation**

Intellectual stimulation is the first component and requires transformational leaders to obtain new ideas and methods of doing things while encouraging creativity from followers (Bass, 1999). For this study, intellectual stimulation would involve novice educators allowed opportunities by SMTs to participate in identifying solutions to the problems facing the school, for instance, classroom management and learner discipline.

#### **2.4.1.2 Individualised consideration**

The second component, namely, individualised consideration, entails paying attention to the needs of followers and the potential for their development (Bass, 1995). Paying attention to the potential for followers' development would mean acknowledging diversity and building relationships, leading to novice educators realising the importance of their contributions in matters relating to their school. In this instance, the organisational climate would be established in such a way that the individual differences of educators are acknowledged and respected. Within this context, this means that interactions with and among educators are encouraged and the SMT is aware of the uniqueness of each educator (Bass, 1995).

#### **2.4.1.3 Inspirational motivation**

According to Bass (1995), this component involves a leader's behaviours from the point of view of how they motivate their followers, generate enthusiasm, and challenge them. In this instance, expectations are communicated with followers, and commitment to goals and shared vision are demonstrated. For instance, within the context of this study, Departmental Heads could hold meetings with their educators at the beginning of each term to communicate their expectations. In this instance, novice educators would be encouraged to contribute to the targets that must be achieved. This suggests that the SMT would have to inspire educators to contribute to the discussions and decisions to enhance their ownership.

#### **2.4.1.4 Idealised influence**

Idealised influence, which is the fourth and last component, requires that a leader serves as a role model and a person with integrity, whom their followers could respect and admire (Bass, 1999). Bass (1995) contends that such admiration and respect would likely translate into followers identifying with their leaders and, possibly, emulating their behaviours. For example, within the context of this study, an orientation programme could be drawn by the SMT, in which novice educators could be assigned mentors. As part of establishing mentoring relationships, mentors could then serve as immediate leaders for novice educators, who would be expected to behave in a way that would make their followers want to emulate their professional behaviours (Stewart, 2006).

For this study, I viewed transformational leadership as appropriate for navigating and understanding complexities in individuals' and groups' behaviours and points of view (Bass & Riggio, 2010). For instance, for this study, it was found that novice educators may be looking for just that from their experiences with their leaders and the teaching profession, especially during their initial years of teaching.

#### **2.4.2 Socio-cultural theory of learning**

To further look at the induction of novice educators by SMTs, I also borrowed from the socio-cultural theory of learning (Vygotsky, 1978). Although novice educators have undergone teacher training and are qualified educators, they must still learn for them to successfully navigate the realities of the teaching profession. Vygotsky's sociocultural theory of human learning describes learning as a social process and the origination of human intelligence in society or culture (Vygotsky, 1978). The socio-cultural theory is based on the assumption that a learners' environment plays a pivotal role in their learning development. Vygotsky (1978) posits that the learning process involves three constructs, namely, culture, language and the zone of proximal development. Within Vygotsky's (1978) socio-cultural theory, learning takes place through interaction with others, who may be members of our communities, our peers, adults, educators and mentors. Therefore, according to Vygotsky (1978), cognitive functions, even those that are carried out alone, are affected by the beliefs, values and

tools involved in the adaptation of a culture or cultures in which an individual develops. That is, cognitive functions are, therefore, socio-culturally determined (Vygotsky, 1978).

Vygotsky (1978) contends that most of the learning by the child occurs through social interaction, mostly with a skilful or more competent other, who may be their mentor in the instance of this study. For instance, in the context of this study, a mentor may model particular behaviours which are regarded as desirable and worth learning through specific instructions to the novice educator during a learning process. Vygotsky (1978) refers to this as a cooperative or collaborative dialogue of learning. For this study, for instance, such a dialogue would involve novice educators learning through their interactions with their mentors, their SMT and experienced colleagues. In this instance, a novice educator may seek to make sense of the actions and instructions by the SMTs, internalising the information provided in the process, and using it to guide and regulate their learning.

To make sense of Vygotsky's (1978) theory of cognitive development, I decided to focus on two concepts from his work, namely, More Knowledgeable Other (MKO) and Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). The notion of MKO refers to someone who has a better understanding or more competence than a learner regarding a particular task, process, or concept (McLeod, 2018). Although one may conclude that an SMT member or an experienced colleague is always an expert, this may not always be the case according to Vygotsky (1978). For instance, a novice educator may be knowledgeable in a specific area, for instance, regarding the use of technology to support learning, in which an SMT member may be a novice. Thus learning may not always be according to the time an individual joined the teaching profession; it may also be determined by exposure to the specific aspects of learning, making the process of learning mutual.

The notion of ZPD, on the other hand, refers to the difference between what a novice educator can achieve independently and what they can achieve with guidance and encouragement from a skilled or more knowledgeable other (Vygotsky, 1978). An MKO in the instance of this study could be an experienced educator, an SMT member or a novice educator, depending on the area of focus. If the MKO is an experienced

educator, this would involve a novice educator guided by an MKO until they can perform the activity on their own and become autonomous, and be able to perform the task without assistance from their MKO.

## **2.5 CONCLUSION**

This chapter presented and discussed literature relevant to the focus and objectives of this study. The chapter also presented and discussed the theoretical and conceptual frameworks that were used as a lens for understanding the phenomenon under investigation in this study.

The next chapter will discuss considerations made in respect of methodology and research design.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

This presents and discusses considerations made in respect of the research methodology and design for this study. The chapter presents and discusses the research methodology and design that was used to investigate the key research questions of this study. Thus, the chapter discusses, explains and analyses the key aspects methodology and design of the study, including the paradigmatic location of the study, the sampling procedures, research methods, the approach to the analysis of the data generated, the limitations encountered in the study, as well as the considerations made in respect of the ethical issues for the study.

#### **3.2 LOCATING THE STUDY WITHIN THE INTERPRETIVE PARADIGM**

A paradigm is a way of looking at the world or a research phenomenon (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011). This research study is aligned with the interpretive paradigm, which focuses on individuals and their actions. As a novice researcher in the quest of trying to understand the phenomenon in question, I decided to use the interpretive paradigm. The interpretive paradigm is characterised by its concern for an individual and seeks to understand their specific social world and experience (Cohen et al., 2011). The interpretive paradigm seeks to understand the phenomenon being studied or investigated from the point of view of research participants (Mertens, 2005). To this end, interpretivists make meaning of phenomena through their research participant's eyes, within their social context, and develop patterns of meaning from the data collected (Maree, 2007). Hence, this study focused on the experiences of the participants and the meanings they attached to their social world and experiences (Cohen, Manion, and Morrison, 2018).

As a result, for this study, I endeavoured to get inside the participants' world through their eyes and to understand these from their perspectives (Cohen et al., 2011). The intention was to understand the participants' experiences from their points of view. In this case, the intention was to explore the SMT members' roles in the induction of novice educators and the challenges they encountered in formulating appropriate

induction programmes, from the perspective of the participants for this study. The interpretive paradigm was thus chosen because it enabled me to interact closely with the SMT members, who were the participants of this study. This enabled me a glimpse into the challenges and successes the SMT members, who were participants in this study, experienced during the implementation of induction programmes in their schooling contexts.

### **3.3 RESEARCH APPROACH**

The study adopted a qualitative approach to obtain an understanding of the participants' experiences and challenges in implementing and formulating and being part of an induction programme, from their perspectives. Qualitative research is characterised by the views of participants gathered as words from research participants (Creswell, 2012). The rationale for using a qualitative approach was that it allowed for an in-depth understanding of the participants' views (Cohen et al., 2018). For this study, the intention was to explore the individual SMT member's role in inducting novice educators, their experiences to be exact, and the challenges they encountered in implementing induction programmes for novice educators. Therefore, exploring how SMT members, who were participants for this study, mitigated the challenges that they encountered was an important aspect of this study. The intention was not to prescribe what should emerge from the study, but to allow for understandings to emerge from the responses of the participants, what Larsson (2010) refers to as the inductive approach.

### **3.4 QUALITATIVE CASE STUDY RESEARCH DESIGN**

A case study is often used as one of the methods of generating data within a qualitative research context. An interpretive paradigm often underpins case study research designs, as the researcher, in this instance, endeavours to view events and situations through the eyes of the participants (Cohen et al., 2018). A case study is often defined as a systematic and in-depth study or examination of a case (Rule & John, 2011; McMillan and Schumacher, 2001). In this study, the understanding of the role and experiences of SMT members in inducting novice educators was the case.

Case studies are bounded by systems that are confined to specific settings, people, or communities (Rule & John, 2011). This study was an in-depth investigation of the SMT's role in the induction of novice educators and the challenges they encountered in implementing induction programmes in their schooling contexts. Interpretivists contend that the notion of truth is relative and dependent on an individual's perspective (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Therefore, for this study, it was relevant for me to consider a case study approach, as the study focused on the 'how' or 'what' questions in respect of the phenomenon under investigation. A case in this study was the two schools with novice educators.

### **3.5 SAMPLING OF PARTICIPANTS**

Sampling involves selecting an individual or a group of people as a source or source of information for a study (Maree, 2007). There are two main categories of sampling techniques, namely, probability and non-probability sampling (Cohen et al., 2018). Non-probability sampling focuses on a particular group, which may not be representative of a wider population (Cohen et al., 2018). In the instance of probability sampling, this suggests that some members stand a better chance of being selected than others. Thus, the intention in this instance is, therefore, not to generalise findings to a wider population or other contexts; the intention is to understand in-depth the experiences of those who participated in the study. Some examples of non-probability sampling are convenience, quota, snowball, and purposive sampling (Cohen et al., 2018).

Purposive non-probability sampling and convenience sampling were adopted for this study. This type of sampling involves identifying and selecting participants with relevant knowledge and experience about the phenomenon being studied (Palinkas, et al., 2013). Purposive sampling is a qualitative sampling procedure in which researchers intentionally select individuals and sites to learn or understand a central phenomenon (Creswell, 2012). This method of sampling was relevant to the decision to adopt an interpretive research paradigm, as it enabled me to select a specific group of individuals who had information on the subject that was being investigated and enabled me to conduct an in-depth study of the case from the participants' points of view (Mertens, 2012).

This research study sought to understand the role played by SMT members in the induction of novice educators. Therefore, it seemed logical that I began by requesting participation from the Principals as they are the heads of schools. After receiving a positive response regarding their participation, I asked the Departmental Heads whose role is to manage the curriculum, and as a result, work closely with the novice educators. The participants in this study were SMT members of secondary schools from uThukela District, province of KwaZulu-Natal. The sample of participants initially consisted of six participants (that is, two school principals and four departmental heads from two schools). However, one departmental head withdrew from participating in the study. For this study, I specifically selected SMT members who had novice educators who had recently joined the schools. I got the names of the novice educators from the orientation workshop that is held for educators at the beginning of each year.

I taught in the same district where the study was undertaken and was thus familiar with the location of the schools and knew and had met the novice educators from the chosen schools. Therefore, convenience sampling was used for selecting schools that participated in the study. This enabled me to obtain relatively easy access to the schools and participants. That is, this sampling method provided me with an opportunity to select suitable participants with desired experience and expertise.

Table 1 below presents some key aspects of the profiles of the participants:

*Table 1: Profiles of participants*

SCHOOL	PARTICIPANTS	GENDER	PSEUDONYM
<b>School A</b>	Principal	Female	Miss Morris
	Departmental Head	Male	Mr Vulindlela
	Departmental Head	Female	Mrs Mthimkhulu
<b>School B</b>	Principal	Male	Mr Mabele
	Departmental Head	Male	Mr Jones
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>5</b>

### 3.6 DATA GENERATION

To generate data to respond to the key research questions, semi-structured interviews and document analysis were used in the study. These two instruments were suitable

and relevant for generating qualitative data. The strength of using a case study method was in its potential to enable the use of multiple sources and techniques in the data generation process (Maree, 2011). Hence, for this study, semi-structured interviews were used as data generation method for the investigation of the phenomenon under study.

### **3.6.1 Semi-structured interviews**

Interviews can be defined as two-way communication, in which an interviewer asks questions to generate data and learn from the participants' responses (Maree, 2011). Interviews are thus intended to generate rich descriptive data, which can be used to understand participants' constructions of their social realities. Therefore, an interview is somewhat a form of constructed rather than a naturally occurring situation (Cohen et al., 2018). In addition, an interview allows for probing by the researcher to ensure that participants are correctly understood.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the participants and audio-recorded with the participants' permission. The intention of audio-recording the interviews was to free the interviewer to ensure they could pay undivided attention to what the participants were saying and probe where necessary (Rule & John, 2011). The other reason for recording the interviews was to ensure the participants' responses were accurately captured since it is not always possible to write all the points down while the interview is in progress. After the interviews, the recordings were then transcribed verbatim. Once I had transcribed the data from the interviews, each interview was allocated a specific code (number) to facilitate easy reference.

## **3.7 DATA ANALYSIS**

Data analysis is a process in which data is arranged into categories and patterns and relationships are identified to make meaning thereof (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001). Analysis of qualitative data involves the interpretation of data to understand participants' worlds as they construct them (Maree, 2007). The first step began by organising and preparing data for analysis. During this step, I transcribed the interviews and listened again to the audio recording, read and reviewed interview

transcripts individually and made notes in the margins (Creswell, 2013). I then looked and read the data to see general ideas and credibility. I then reviewed my writing in the margins and looked for explicit and implicit references to the SMTs' understanding of their role as well as their practices. In the second step, I read all the data to reflect on the overall meanings and to gain a general sense of the data and thoughts from the participants. This is the qualitative data analysis stage that (Merriam, 2009) refers to as having a conversation with the data, during which the researcher reflectively interacts with the data, asks questions and makes comments. I then began the coding process by following Creswell's (2012) guidance of organising material into segments by taking textual data and segmenting sentences into codes. I labelled the codes with terms based on the actual language from the participants' responses.

During the fourth step, after working through several pieces of data as described above, following multiple cycles of coding, I then grouped open codes into categories. Throughout this stage of analysis, I was mindful that categories needed to be responsive and conceptually consistent with the purpose of the study. During the fifth stage, I made interpretations of the data. At this stage of data analysis, I drafted a graphic presentation to assist in conceptualising how categories might be related to one another and respond to the research questions. Finally, the qualitative narrative included the description of the themes by weaving the emergent themes into narrative passages so that the findings would logically emerge from the participants' responses (Creswell, 2014). This helped me to interpret the meanings generated from the data.

### **3.7.1 Issues of trustworthiness**

To ensure the trustworthiness of the findings and processes of the study, I used ways and mechanisms used for enhancing trustworthiness in qualitative research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). These mechanisms and ways included dependability, confirmability, transferability, and credibility, which are briefly discussed in the section below.

#### **3.7.1.1 Credibility**

Credibility is a declaration by a researcher that the conclusions of the study are from the data collected (Maree, 2007). The findings should reflect the situation being studied. For this study, audio recordings from the interviews with the participants

ensured credibility for my study. To ensure credibility after transcribing what was said in the interviews, the participants were allowed to read through the transcripts and verify if this was a true reflection of what had happened and what they had said. The detailed description of the school context, participants and the location of the schools which participated in the study, somewhat enhanced the credibility of the study.

### **3.7.1.2 Transferability**

Transferability refers to the extent to which research findings could be transferred to other similar contexts (Lincoln & Guba, 1981). That is, transferability refers to the extent to which research findings can be applied to other situations. For this study, rich descriptions of procedures and processes were provided to enable transferability, where necessary and applicable.

### **3.7.1.3 Confirmability**

Confirmability “addresses concerns about the researcher’s influences and biases on the study” (Rule & John, 2011, p.107). For confirmability in this study, I ensured that I was not intrusive when dealing with the participants to minimise the risk of bias and my influences. In addition, to enhance the confirmability of the findings, participants were allowed the opportunity to verify the accuracy of the captured data and the analysis and interpretation of findings were counter-checked by my peers and supervisor (Rule & John, 2011).

## **3.8 ETHICAL ISSUES**

Ethical clearance was obtained from the Research Ethics Committee of the University of KwaZulu-Natal. The request to conduct the study in the selected public schools was requested and obtained from the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education. Permission to conduct the research was also obtained from the selected schools. In respect of the participants, consent was, after being made aware of the purpose of the study and their right to withdraw at any time (autonomy), requested and recorded through them completing and signing consent forms. This was done in line with what Hammersley and Traianou (2012) have cautioned, that, as a researcher, I had to respect the autonomy of the participants. As part of this, participants were treated with respect and as equals in the project instead of my subordinates.

All audio recordings were only captured after permission had been sought from and granted by the participants. Interview transcriptions were shared with the participants for verification, using member checking, as advised by Guba (1981). The information that could potentially identify individual participants was either removed or protected using pseudonyms and other means of concealing identities. In addition, all information pertaining to the participants was stored under lock and safeguarded with password protection. Where a third party was requested to assist with certain things, such a party was made to commit to specific terms of reference in respect of the protection of data and the confidentiality of the responses of the participants. This was done by requesting the party to sign a declaration of secrecy or confidentiality, barring them from sharing any aspect of the data in which they were involved.

### **3.9 LIMITATIONS**

The year 2020, during which this study was conducted, was an extremely difficult year during which to undertake a research study, especially with all the restrictions that prohibited face-to-face interactions. The fear of contracting the deadly coronavirus practically stalled everything. For this study, I continued with the face-to-face interviews, while ensuring that all the protocols were observed, even though there was still some fear among participants of contracting the coronavirus.

### **3.10 CONCLUSION**

In this chapter, I discussed the research methodology and design considerations, which were followed in this study. The chapter also discussed limitations in respect of the methodological and design choices made and how these were managed in each case.

The following chapter presents, discusses, analyses and interprets the findings that emerged from the investigation of the key research questions as outlined at the beginning of this research report.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS**

#### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

The previous chapter discussed the research design and methodology used to generate data for this study. This chapter presents, discusses, analyses and interprets the data generated through the semi-structured interviews with five (5) participants: two (2) principals and three (3) Departmental Heads from two High Schools, and the review and analysis of key documents relating to the implementation of induction programmes. The presentation of the data and discussion of the findings are driven by the key research questions of the study, as restated below:

1. What roles do members of the SMT play in the induction of novice educators?
2. What are the experiences of SMT members in their roles of inducting novice educators?
3. How do SMT members mitigate challenges experienced while inducting novice educators?

#### **4.2 PROFILES OF THE PARTICIPANTS**

I conducted semi-structured interviews with five participants from two (2) different secondary schools within the jurisdiction of UThukela District, KwaZulu-Natal. The participants comprised two (2) school principals, three (3) departmental heads (DHs) [two (2) from school A and one (1) from school B]. The participants had a teaching experience ranging from 18 to 28 years and were serving as SMT members in their schools. In the section below, a brief profile of each of the participants is provided.

##### **a) Miss Morris**

Miss Morris has been in the teaching profession for 28 years and has been teaching at the same school. She was trained as a teacher at Bechet College and then continued to Natal College, where she completed her Further Diploma in Education in English Reading Teaching. She then completed her studies in the Bachelor of Education Honours at the University of Natal, and an Advanced Certificate in Education in

Education Leadership and Policy with the University of South Africa (UNISA). This was followed by a Master's in Education, specialising in Teacher Development Studies, and a Certificate in Research, Monitoring, and Evaluation with the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Miss Morris was promoted from Departmental Head to Deputy Principal and is now serving as a School Principal at the same school where she started teaching 28 years ago. She is passionate about teacher professional development. Hence, she is currently enrolled for her PhD in Teacher Development Studies.

**b) Mr Mabele**

Mr Mabele went to a technical high school, where he did technical subjects. He developed a love to study the field of electrical engineering but was unsuccessful in getting admitted after obtaining his matric certificate. His parents, who were educators at the time, convinced him to pursue studies toward a career in teaching, in which he majored in technical subjects. He qualified as a teacher at Indumiso College of Education, in Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal. He then did a course in Information Studies with the University of KwaZulu-Natal. He has been working in the same school for 29 years, where he started as a Post Level 1 Educator, then Departmental Head, Deputy Principal, and now School Principal.

**c) Mr Jones**

Before he was trained as a teacher, Mr Jones studied for a Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree in Communications at the University of South Africa. He then obtained a degree in Psychology from the same university, which had nothing to do with teaching. He was employed at ML Sultan Primary School, using his qualification in Psychology, where he taught English. His love for teaching grew from there. He then decided to enrol with UNISA to pursue a Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE). He has been employed in this school for 18 years. As an English educator, he was nominated as a Subject Head for English. He was recently appointed as a Departmental Head for Languages at the same school.

**d) Mrs Mthimkhulu**

Mrs Mthimkhulu was trained as a teacher at Tshiya College of Education, where she obtained a Secondary Educators Diploma (STD). She then furthered her studies

through the University of Pretoria, where she obtained a Further Education Diploma (FED). Mrs Mthimkhulu has been a teacher for 26 years. She has been a Departmental Head for 14 years in her current school.

**e) Mr Vulindlela**

Mr Vulindlela obtained his Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree from the University of the North. Hereafter, he branched to teaching, obtaining a Higher Education Diploma (HED) with the University of the North in 2000. He has been teaching for 18 years and has been a Departmental Head for six (6) years.

Table 2 below provides a summary of the profiles of the participants.

*Table 2: Profiles of participants*

<b>PARTICIPANT</b>	<b>EXPERIENCE IN YEARS</b>	<b>NO OF YEARS IN THE CURRENT POST</b>	<b>POSITION</b>	<b>AGE RANGE IN YEARS</b>	<b>SCHOOL</b>
1. Miss Morris	28	8	Principal	50s	A
2. Mr Mabele	28	14	Principal	50s	B
3. Mrs Mthimkhulu	26	16	Departmental Head	40s	A
4. Mr Vulindlela	18	6	Departmental Head	40s	A
5. Mr Jones	18	5	Departmental Head	40s	B

**Source:** Research data

**4.3 UNDERSTANDING OF THE ROLE OF INDUCTING NOVICE EDUCATORS**

Upon engaging with the participants, they seemed to be confident with what they understood to be their role in respect of the induction of novice educators. Although they provided wide-ranging responses, they all referred to the processes they followed and the documents/policies they used for the induction of novice educators. This theme: Understanding of the role of inducting novice educators, was divided into two sub-themes, namely, (1) Orientation of novice educators; and (2) Mentoring as part of the induction programme.

#### 4.3.1 Induction of novice educators

All participants reported that they were performing what they understood to be their role in respect of the orientation of novice educators. Nevertheless, the methods and means applied during orientation differed from one school to the other. In addition, SMT members, who were the participants for this study, did not use the same documents during the orientation period but reported that they provided orientation, which was both formal and informal. One of the participants from School B, when asked whether the school had an orientation or induction policy, responded as follows:

*Except the use of things like (abo) the Schools Act, those are just policies in education in general but there is no other document that speaks specifically to the induction that one has been exposed to. No, our school does not have one. It just happens informally; we do not have a specific document designed to say this is what we specifically use for induction.*

(Mr Mabele)

Similarly, Ms Morris, a school principal for School A, reported they did not have a policy for the orientation of novice educators in their school, but that they were using available documents that they found useful for this purpose. In this regard, Ms Morris responded as follows:

*No, we do not have a specific induction policy, we do have a staff code of conduct and a learners' code of conduct. So procedurally when a new person arrives, they will be given copies of the above-mentioned policies but to say that there is a specific policy for induction no we do not have one.*

(Ms Morris)

Participants reported that they were using policies that were available at their schools for the orientation of novice educators. That is, the absence of an orientation policy in their schools did not stop them from carrying out the task as they knew it. Participants also reported that the initial meetings they held with a novice educator played an important part in the orientation, and were not just for handing out documents and

resources, but served as the first step toward knowing who the new educator was. This is what Mr Vulindlela (DH School A) had to say in this regard:

*Ok, the first thing that we normally to do is to check the majors of the teacher and check what is it that a teacher was appointed to teach. The novice educator will then be given the resource material like the files and textbooks, showing the teacher the rooms in which they will be teaching and then we take it from there.*

(Mr Vulindlela)

Similarly, Mrs Mthimkhulu, a DH from School A, was specific about the documents that were given to novice educators when they joined their school:

*I must just make sure that the person is provided with relevant annual teaching plans (ATP's). I ensure that the novice educator is provided with the relevant timetable and the person understands clearly, of what is really needed of them. What is important is that he or she needs to be able to teach in fact even the assessment, school-based assessments that person needs to be conversant with everything. In other words, the tasks for the term, what type of tasks the marks, etc. The novice educator needs to know what is happening even before they go to that classroom. In addition, if the individual has a problem with a certain aspect from the discussion of the ATP, this meeting serves as an opportunity to address the problems.*

(Mrs Mthimkhulu)

While some participants reported that the initial meeting was important, because it allowed them an opportunity to share key documents with the novice educators, Miss Morris, on the other hand, underlined that the importance of this meeting lay in that it allowed SMT members an opportunity to get to know the new educator better:

*Well, when the new person arrives, we normally have a sit-down session where we prepare a file for the person. So, within that file there is a personal information sheet, so I would then sit down with that person, and we would go through the personal information sheet; what are your*

*qualifications, where do you live, how are they travelling to work? Therefore, it is just basic information like getting to know from the educator the subjects they majored in. That kind of thing. Therefore, you sort of get an idea as to what the person's skills are what their level of knowledge is, and where they could best fit in within the school curriculum.*  
(Miss Morris)

Below, this participant maintained that the initial meeting helped in assessing the new educator, because “one's CV may be different from what the actual person is”. In this regard, the participant responded as follows:

*Usually, we will have already worked out the timetable in terms of that person fitting in. However, when you have that opportunity to sit down with somebody, then you truly can assess what that person has to offer because often within the interview that you have, people fabricate or stretch their abilities and I do think that the process that the employer uses in terms of the appointment is very flawed. They make use of resolution no. 11 of 1997, which everybody has access to, and so often people come in and they sing the tune of what you want to hear in an interview and often what you employ on the day has none of the skills that they have sung so beautifully on the day of the interview.*  
(Miss Morris)

According to the participants, the initial meeting with novice educators did not only allow them an opportunity to know them; it also allowed novice educators to be introduced to other educators with whom they would be working within their department. This is what Mrs Mthimkhulu had to say in this regard:

*Ok, as soon as I know that a new educator will join us, I make sure that proper introduction is made. So that the novice educator is aware of the educators in his/her department. The meeting is also important in order to determine the major subjects of the educator.*  
(Mrs Mthimkhulu)

Mr Mabele slightly differed from the other participants on the issues discussed in the initial meeting with a novice educator. Mr Mabele responded as follows:

*I would say maybe the meeting one would have with the educator deals specifically with the school rules and regulations, times for coming in, and knocking off times, the manner in which we expect an educator to conduct themselves. I will deal with that.*

(Mr Mabele)

Ms Morris, on the other hand, maintained that as much as the meeting was important for ensuring that the school principal provided general orientation, the meeting could also be used to ensure that the novice educator had adequate skills as per the needs of the school for the post in which they have been appointed. In this regard, she reported as follows:

*Well, when the teacher comes, I would say the main thing is in terms of curriculum needs of the school, so you are not planning in terms of that individual person but rather in terms of the skill that this person has been appointed in. Therefore, if you were expecting a language teacher, your orientation or induction is going to be from the subject head of that specific department. Our orientation focuses more on what that teacher can bring to the table in terms of their qualification. Therefore, the focus would be on the skills required in terms of timetabling. Furthermore, how that person is going to fit into the curriculum needs of the school.*

(Miss Morris)

Mr Jones, a DH from School B, supported what Miss Morris had mentioned. In this regard, he said:

*I meet with the novice educators, and we have an informal discussion on what is required. Most importantly, what is required in the department, and the subject allocated to them to teach.*

(Mr Jones)

Participants raised concern about the fact that sometimes there was a lack of communication between the departmental officials and schools. According to them, sometimes educators were just sent to schools with no prior communication with the school, which left schools with limited time for preparing for the orientation of new educators. For them, given the fact that the novice educator had already been placed in their school, all that was left for them was to adapt to the situation to ensure that the new educator did not feel out of place. This is what Miss Morris had to say in this regard:

*We've had occasions where a teacher has knocked on my door with a letter of appointment to say "I've been appointed to come to this school" ... from out of the blue, we did not know this person that had arrived. So, on the day the person came was the day we had to sort of now start planning to assimilate this new person on to the staff.*

(Miss Morris)

Mr. Mabele concurred with what was reported by Miss Morris, and shared a similar experience:

*It does happen where you get a teacher with a letter, that "I'm placed here" more especially educators who are displaced... so when they have identified the person who was displaced from another school we were not informed before that the educators were coming. I only saw the teacher here with a letter.*

(Mr. Mabele)

Participants reported that the focus then became the curriculum needs of the school before anything else. What the teacher brought to the school in terms of skills and qualifications was reported as of utmost importance in respect of the needs of the school. Participants held strong opinions regarding the fact that there must always be a teacher in every class. Sometimes this was prioritised at the expense of the orientation of novice educators. The skills and the qualifications that novice educators possessed were regarded as of vital importance, given the fact that participants held that curriculum delivery was the core function of the school. On the other hand, Mr

Vulindlela felt that over and above providing orientation and sharing expectations with the novice educator, sharing general information about the school was important. He pointed out that:

*Ok, I use to take the teacher to the classrooms, show them the classrooms, and then and then maybe for the first two days just take the teacher will observe and then, then... and then we take it from there.*

(Mr Vulindlela)

Mrs Mthimkhulu concurred regarding the importance of showing a novice educator around the school, as was reported by Mr Vulindlela when she mentioned that:

*...practically I take the educator concerned to physically showing them around the school and the classes that they are going to teach. The areas around the school, the number of classes he/she is going to teach. The purpose is to make sure that the novice educators know what is happening around the school.*

(Mrs Mthimkhulu)

As much as the participants acknowledged the importance of these formal briefing sessions, they sometimes had to work under pressure due to their heavy teaching loads, as reported by Mr Jones below:

*I meet with them, and we have an informal discussion on what is required. But mainly what is required in the department, and the subject that they teach.*

(Mr Jones)

In the same vein, Mrs Mthimkhulu also pointed out that due to time constraints, the meeting with a novice educator was sometimes conducted informally:

*Sometimes one does not have enough time to formally meet with the novice educator because there is already a class without a teacher. Therefore, there is no time to sit down with the relevant educator explain to him or*

*her nice on what is going on. The meeting becomes rushed and informally held with the novice educator.*

(Mrs Mthimkhulu)

From the above excerpts, it is evident that the participants conducted the orientation of novice educators, though informally carried out, they tried to ensure that orientation happened. However, there were factors which hindered the effective implementation of orientation programmes, including pressures of time, the needs of the school and lack of communication from the Department of Education in notifying schools in time of an educator who had been appointed to their school. It must be noted that it is the responsibility of the SMT, especially the school principal, to provide support to novice educators, as soon as they arrive at their school (Department of Basic Education, 2011). However, participants reported that sometimes educators were assigned to their schools without prior communication with them so that they could expect and prepare for the arrival of the educator. According to them, this often left the school with less or no time to prepare for the orientation of novice educators.

From the above, SMT members seemed to follow their instincts or use trial and error or common sense in performing their roles in the induction of novice educators. This may harm the professional growth of novice educators since it may cause a delay in the ability of SMT members to identify areas in which novice educators require development. According to transformational leadership theory (Bass, 1985), individualised consideration as a component refers to the degree to which a leader attends to each follower's needs, acts as a mentor or coach to the follower and listens to the follower's concerns and needs. The novice educators may not be afforded an opportunity to ask a question or even raise their concerns if orientation does not take place, which may adversely affect their growth professionally.

The *Employment of Educators Act (76 of 1998)* states that one of the responsibilities of SMT members is to develop professional development programmes, including the orientation and induction of novice educators (Department of Education, 1998a). To assist educators, particularly those that are new and inexperienced, in developing and achieving educational objectives in accordance with the needs of the school, SMTs must be informed in time for them to prepare for the arrival of educators. This is of the

utmost importance given the role of the SMT to ensure that novice educators receive adequate orientation and induction.

#### **4.3.2 Mentoring as part of an induction programme**

It was evident from the participants' responses that they understood the meaning of the concept of mentoring. The responses differed, but they nonetheless all held positive convictions on what mentoring meant to them. Below is what Mr Jones said when asked about what mentoring meant to him:

*Mentoring I would say is showing a novice teacher the ropes, showing them what needs to be done and explaining to them. I don't believe mentoring is teaching somebody, because when you're coming from university and stuff you've already learnt, so now you need to practice what you learn so I need to show you what needs to be done.*

(Mr Jones).

According to Mr Jones, the knowledge obtained by novice educators from university was sufficient to provide them with the required foundation for their teaching career. For him, all he had to do for them was to let them know of the expectations of the school and they could then take it from there. In the same vein, Mr Mabele also viewed mentoring as a process whereby an experienced educator helped a novice educator to adjust to the new environment, as illustrated in his response below:

*Mentoring. It is where a senior person or an experienced person is assisting a new person or a person with less experience in gaining knowledge, and also the skills necessary in the teaching environment.*

(Mr Mabele)

This is similar to how Mr Vulindlela reported his understanding of mentoring to be "... mentoring means to guide or give someone guidance or help" (Mr Vulindlela). Mrs Mthimkhulu's view on the meaning of mentoring concurred with that of the other two participants: "*Mentoring for me means working hand in hand with a person*

*grabbing him/her in your hand and not letting the person get lost. You are just always that” (Mrs Mthimkhulu).*

Mentoring, according to the participants ensured that novice educators knew what was expected from them. This means that they understood that they always had to be available to assist each time a novice educator required guidance. This, according to the participants, was carried out to ensure that the new educator was well acquainted with their new working environment. On the other hand, Mukeredzi et al. (2015) have argued that mentoring conceived as a one to one relationship between a novice educator and a competent, experienced educator (mentor) has some limitations. For them, this type of conceptualisation perpetuates traditional teaching practices and minimises the mentee’s convictions about learner-centred pedagogies (Mukeredzi et al., 2015). In other words, such a conceptualisation misses the point that novice educators, for instance, can also teach experienced educators.

In line with Mukeredzi et al. (2015) argument, Miss Morris, on the other hand, argued that, in the process of mentoring, it was not only the novice educator that learned from the experienced educator (mentee), but that the learning relationship was reciprocal. She pointed out:

*I think the term mentoring for me, I see it as the transfer of knowledge and skills where the mentor and the mentee sort of are paired together to assist, I wouldn’t say the one to the other but to assist each other.*  
(Miss Morris)

Miss Morris went on to emphasise her argument about the mentoring relationship and said:

*I also think that it does not have anything to do with the number of years of experience but rather what a person can bring to the table. You know somebody might be only teaching for eight years but has a specific skill that they can share with somebody. You know so I would say it is an expert and a novice I wouldn’t say an older person and a younger person. So whatever expertise can feed a mentor can share with a novice. I think*

*mentoring is both ways. I think the idea of lifelong learning means that we are always learning. You can never learn enough, and nobody stops learning because learning is a lifelong thing. I think that knowledge flows both ways.*

(Miss Morris)

The above excerpts reveal that mentoring was sometimes understood as a process whereby an experienced educator gives guidance to the novice educator, a process in which the goals and expectations are discussed, and mentors are always available to assist should the novice educator require guidance. On the other hand, two participants argued that mentoring was a two-way process. That is, for them, it was not always true that the mentee (novice educator) always learned from the experienced educator (mentor), but that the mentor could also learn from a novice educator. This corroborates Vygotsky's (1978) argument in respect of the sociocultural theory of learning regarding the more knowledgeable other (MKO). The MKO refers to someone who has a better understanding or higher ability level than the learner, concerning a particular task, process, or concept. In this case, the learner is the novice educator and they are the ones being mentored. However, the participants, in line with Mukeredzi et al's. (2015) argument, argued that in some cases, the more experienced educator would be learning from a novice educator and vice versa. This suggests that these participants understood the mentoring relationship to be a reciprocal process, with both the mentor and mentee learning from each other.

Callahan (2016) has argued that a mentoring relationship is as strong as its members. Therefore, from the findings, it is clear that, within the context of these participants, there is a need for a strong professional development mechanism, with carefully-thought out structured mentoring programmes. This is because the mentoring relationship is a complex endeavour that must take into account its varied manifestations and dynamics. Therefore, whoever is developing mentoring programmes must consider the arguments raised by the participants in this study.

#### **4.4 EXPERIENCES OF SMT MEMBERS OF THE INDUCTION OF NOVICE EDUCATORS**

From the participants' experiences of inducting novice educators, it was evident that they were facing some challenges. They had different responses. However, most of them spoke about insufficient and inadequate training and lack of support regarding the induction of novice educators. While they went through similar experiences of not having received any training from the Department of Education, they differed in the knowledge of induction they had received from other channels. The section below discusses findings under the above theme, namely, experiences of SMT members of the induction of novice educators.

##### **4.4.1 Insufficient training and support**

From the participants' responses, it was evident that the training they received on the induction of novice educators was limited if any at all. Participants shared different experiences regarding the knowledge they had gained on the induction of novice educators in their schools. When asked whether he had received training on the induction of novice educators, Mr Vulindlela, a Departmental Head from School A, responded as follows:

*Absolutely not. I remember when I first came here, we were supposed to have an induction but unfortunately, people who were supposed to induct us did not come. The officials from the Department of Education were supposed to come and give us an induction, but it never happened. Mind you, the induction I am referring to was for me as a then novice educator. In fact, I was never inducted as a departmental head nor received any training on how to induct novice educators.*

(Mr Vulindlela)

Mr Vulindlela also reported that he practised what he had learned from observing his SMT when he started teaching:

*Honestly speaking it is what I could say, something I learnt from other departmental heads when coming into the field. If I can make an example*

*the school where I started, I was a subject head because there was no departmental head. I learnt from those people, as to how to, I mean, I learnt it from those departmental heads' practices.*

(Mr Vulindlela)

Sharing a slightly different experience, Mr Mabele, a principal from School B pointed out the following:

*No not exactly. There was no formal workshop that was ever given to us. We only know what we are supposed to do, as one has been a member of SMT in this school for quite some time now. As a manager, you are only aware of what qualifications and major subjects a person possesses and you start creating your own expectations. However, because I was inducted yes, as a PL1 educator by the then principal. Therefore, yes even though it was in informal but I kind of use the experience gained from there to induct my novice educators.*

(Mr Mabele)

Ms Morris, a School Principal of School A, shared a different experience regarding the induction of novice educators. She seemed to have insights into the induction of novice educators, even though it had not come from training by the Department of Education:

*Ok yes, within my personal studies, I have read up on the induction and orientation of novice educators but from my employer I have never had any training. Within my own studies, in terms of my honour's degree and my Master's, there was a module on which I did on mentoring and within my own master's degree which was on CPTD there was a bit of research that was done on mentoring and induction of novice educators. No formal training from my employer.*

(Ms Morris)

Participants' experiences in respect of training on induction varied from none to informal training, except for one participant who had undergone some training while

pursuing their studies. SMTs are responsible for ensuring that schools are functional (Harju & Niemi, 2020). For instance, SMT members are expected to perform several tasks as part of their daily activities, including the induction of novice educators (Department of Basic Education, 2016). The revised *Personnel Administrative Measures* states that SMTs are responsible for the development of staff training programmes to assist educators, particularly new, inexperienced educators, in developing and achieving educational objectives in accordance with the school's needs (Department of Basic Education, 2016). As reported by Mosoge and Mataboge (2021), participants in this study, who were SMT members, were explicit on what they understood to be their duty and role in respect of the induction of novice educators. However, they were often hindered by, amongst other things, inadequate training and administrative duties.

In addition to inadequate training, participants also reported that they required support from the Department of Education regarding the induction of novice educators. The findings of this study revealed that the support received focused on other managerial duties of the SMT, but none was specifically on the induction of novice educators, as pointed out by Mrs Mthimkhulu below:

*We normally attend workshops though they are, not related to induction of novice educators, we go and attend workshops that are based on curriculum matters for all educators in general. How to handle people in your department how to give them support you know but it is not based on the fact that they are novice educators. Not at all. The workshops are only curriculum based and how to manage curriculum coverage.*

(Mrs Mthimkhulu)

Mr Vulindlela shared a similar experience, when he said:

*I would say the support would be around the subjects' content, but in general, there is nothing because they expect us as the managers at school to induct the new educators on other things but when it comes to the content there is, there is yes.*

(Mr Vulindlela)

Ms Morris had a different view regarding support from the Department of Education:

*Well, they do have... I think they call the new educators to an orientation workshop, but I always question the quality of the workshop. It's more like to check a box rather than to actually properly induct or orientate them into their role. Ja and the principals haven't been called to a workshop to say, "This is the procedure in terms of orientation or induction".*

(Ms Morris)

When participants were asked if there was any document or policy formulated by either their school or Department of Education to support the induction of novice educators, this is what Mr Mabele said:

*Except to use (ama) the – things like (abo) the Schools' Act, those are just laws that apply in education but there is no other document that speaks specifically to the induction that one has been exposed to. No, we do not have it. We do not have a specific document designed for induction in our school.*

(Mr Mabele)

Taking from the above excerpts from the participants, the members of the SMT, who participated in this study, had not received any training, support or policy to enable them to induct the novice educators, which may have impacted negatively on both their roles and the novice educators' experiences of the initial years of teaching. According to the Transformational Leadership Theory (Burns, 1978), individualised consideration entails paying attention to the needs of the followers and the potential for their development. The data from this study reveals that the SMT members of the selected schools did orientate the novice educators on matters such as administrative and policy procedures and that they introduced the novice educators to stakeholders and afforded them a tour around the school, while also orientating them on academic matters such as work programmes, lesson plans, ATP's and resources. This absence of a programme in a critical area of induction is unfortunate as it has the potential to compromise the quality of learning and teaching.

#### 4.4.2 Transition from pre-service to in-service educator

The findings of this study revealed that as much as participants were concerned with the fact that novice educators were qualified to teach the subjects in which they had majored, such training did not sufficiently equip them with the skills required to face the realities of teaching in their schools. This is what Ms Morris shared in this regard:

*I think the biggest challenge that I have concerning novice educators is that often when they come into the school, they are very poorly trained. Not only in terms of curriculum and teaching abilities but also with regards to socialisation within the school.*

(Miss Morris)

Ms Morris argued that the type of training some educators had received pointed to gaps between teacher training programmes and realities in schools and classrooms:

*They have a very poor foundational knowledge as to what it takes to be a teacher, and I definitely feel, strongly, that a lot of it has to do with the educators that have come in training in isolation within their homes, possibly doing other work and not really having the communicative practice of being in a school.*

(Miss Morris)

Miss Morris continued:

*Therefore, they come in, very ill prepared. Their only knowledge of the working of a school was their actual schooling when they were in school, and so within their tertiary training it was done in isolation and through distance, and so there's a big gap and it will require now a lot of mentoring – which we don't have time for within the school. Mentoring and coaching which should have been done during training now has to be done by the school in practice. This becomes a challenge. There is a huge difference from those that were in training college or university and had the luxury*

*of being immersed within their education. I think we need to do something to bridge the gap, absolutely.*

(Miss Morris)

Mr Vulindlela was of a similar opinion on the fact that educator training provided novice educators with sufficient content knowledge for them to be able to teach. However, the skill on how to present the knowledge was lacking. This is what Mr Vulindlela had to say regarding this:

*Normally most of them are shy because their exposure to the real classroom situation is a new experience. The skill to deal with discipline is still lacking, and learners tend to take advantage of that. Even in terms of content, you would find that the novice educator has an excellent knowledge of the subject content but gets overwhelmed by the learners' behaviour. So, some learners like to take advantage of the fact that the teacher is new.*

(Mr Vulindlela)

Mr Mabele reported that time was a scarce resource in trying to induct novice educators since he also had a teaching load:

*The problem would be time. There is no time because I am also a subject teacher, so at times, you want to help the educator but because you are also teaching, one is busy with other things. I think that becomes my biggest challenge.*

(Mr Mabele)

In addition to time pressures, Mr Jones also pointed out that he had experienced shortcomings regarding subject specifics:

*Well, I experience a major challenge because I am the Departmental Head for languages, and I am overseeing the different languages. However, I am only English so even though I give the ATP and the programme of assessment I cannot provide a good understanding or a good explanation*

*as to how it is supposed to be done in the other two learning areas (languages).*

(Mr Jones)

The above findings point to several important considerations, which literature has alluded to, in respect of the role of the SMT in the induction of novice educators. For instance, the transition from being a student to being an educator has been reported in terms of a reality shock (Marz & Kelchtermans, 2020) since the expectations developed during teacher training often do not match the full reality of the workplace. This echoes what has been argued by Marzano (2014) that teacher training programmes must focus more on classroom management so that first-year educators are prepared from day one to manage potential classroom disruptions. It must be remembered that, like all educators, SMT members have teaching loads, which places time pressure if they are also expected to induct novice educators.

#### **4.5 MITIGATION OF THE CHALLENGES IN THE INDUCTION OF NOVICE EDUCATORS**

From the experiences of the participants of the induction of novice, educators emerged both challenges and good practices. For instance, participants reported having put in place mitigation strategies to ensure the fulfilment of their role of inducting novice educators. Taking from data generated by the participants, the mitigation of challenges was identified as a theme comprising specific sub-themes, namely, subject meetings, allocation of workloads and class visits.

##### **4.5.1 Subject meetings: A means for collaboration**

Generated data from this study revealed that participants held subject meetings that were used as platforms for the discussion of a variety of issues, ranging from setting goals at the beginning of the year to evaluating results at the end of each term. These meetings were used as a basis for collaboration among educators teaching the same subjects and in the same department. All the participants reported having had a minimum of one subject/departmental meeting per term:

*We have as per policy, the minimum of one per term, and SMT meetings are once a week and staff meetings are once a month and governing body meetings are once a term. So, we do follow the prescribed policy.*

(Miss Morris)

*Departmental meetings are quarterly and the SMT meetings are fourth nightly. The DH chairs the meetings, but the floor is open for the ideas from all the educators.*

(Mrs Mthimkhulu)

Similarly, Mr Mabele reported that they held one departmental meeting per term:

*We do have (ama) departmental meetings. The meetings are held once a term, not unless there is an emergency but generally, they are once per term.*

(Mr Mabele)

When asked about the matters discussed in those departmental meetings, he responded:

*The strategies of how we are going to go about in the next term rectifying what went wrong in the previous term. Unless if there some problems that are cropping up that require maybe an urgent meeting, but otherwise meetings are held once per quarter.*

(Mr Mabele)

Mr Vulindlela also pointed out that in his case, the meetings were not subject meetings per se, but departmental meetings:

*We normally have departmental meetings versus just subject meetings. We hold one departmental meeting once per quarter that is once in every three months. We hold our first meeting at the beginning of the year after allocating the duty load. This meeting serves as means of welcoming the educators, both novice and experienced educators. We then hold a second meeting which is held after the first term. This meeting serves a platform*

*to review the results and come up with the turnaround strategies to improve the performance.*

(Mr Vulindlela)

Likewise, Mr Jones also reported that the subject meetings they held were about agreeing on their strategic direction at the beginning of the year, and they were going to operationalise this:

*We do, we have subject meetings every term nevertheless, this year because of the COVID-19 we only had one in the first term, and we had another one now in the second... or the third term, but what I know is that we only had one for those two terms. Well, the first one was chaired the departmental head to give a blanket idea of what is expected from everyone in the department. The DH does not only chair the meeting but also participates because they are also subject educators. The main focus of the meeting is the curriculum and the progression of the learners and methods in which we can achieve a good pass rate.*

(Mr Jones)

Mrs Mthimkhulu, while sharing similar sentiments, reported as follows:

*... for communication purposes and again is just to check if everyone is on par and everyone is sure on what to do. It is for guidance and gives the opportunity to determine whether there is an educator in need of assistance. We use the meetings as platforms for sharing challenges that we might have had from the previous term and find ways to deal with those challenges. Sometimes even using the meetings as accountability sessions where each teacher must account for the results that their learners have received.*

(Mrs Mthimkhulu)

Mrs Mthimkhulu also stated that the participation by novice educators in these subject meetings was vital, as the meetings enabled collaboration among educators:

*Novices are expected to participate to a greater extent because we want them to develop. I firstly create an atmosphere where I know that they will feel welcome.*

(Mrs Mthimkhulu)

On the other hand, Miss Morris shared a slightly different view regarding the participation of novice educators in meetings:

*I don't think novices contribute that much to the meetings; however, I do think that by being part of the collective they do sublimely take in the information that is shared and as time goes on, they do feel confident to contribute to the meetings unless of course, you have the young millennial who like to share. It depends on the generation.*

(Miss Morris)

Miss Morris's argument is similar to that of Mr Vulindlela, who believed that novice educators did not need to actively make contributions in the subject meetings. For them, their attendance was participation enough for them to observe, while learning from the experiences of their other colleagues who were more experienced:

*I think what is important to novice educators is to just listen and learn from what is happening. Novice educators benefit a lot because from being part of the subject and departmental meetings because whatever is discussed in those meetings does not only relate to experienced educators. We assist even when it comes to the diagnostic analysis of the assessment tasks and examinations. After all, it gives you direction as to where you are going. They learn. Because this is where we are looking for the results for each and every teacher and then we go back and check what went wrong if maybe the results are not good and if it is good what is it that we need to do in order to maintain that best level of the learning area.*

(Mr Vulindlela)

In contrast, Mr Jones argued that if novice educators were present in subject meetings and were just passive, that could defeat the purpose of orientation, because they would

not be sharing the challenges they experienced. However, he stated that if they made contributions, then other educators could provide more accurate responses to their issues, including how they could deal with situations:

*...if novice educators do not participate and ask questions from their colleagues and they do not tell me where experiencing problems, we may not know that there is a problem that requires assistance from all the educators in the department. Basically, in the meeting, we may be discussing issues that they have already mastered the skill to deal with. Things which they probably already know.*

(Mr Jones)

Participants maintained that they used subject and departmental meetings to identify problems experienced by novice educators. They also reported that everyone shared how they dealt with problems and in some way, which helped to guide novice educators in respect of the problems they encountered. These meetings were regarded as platforms for ensuring collaboration among educators, both novice and experienced, teaching in the same department. This finding supports findings from the study by Ntsoane (2017) on using subject meetings as means for inducting novice educators.

From the above, subject meetings enabled educators to achieve consistency in their judgements of learners' work against common, externally set features of quality (Ntsoane, 2017). These meetings also ensured an improved understanding of standards and expectations that would develop over time as educators collaborated professionally to discuss and reflect on the quality of their own learners' work. This corroborated with Vygotsky's (1987) socio-cultural theory's concept of the zone of proximal development (ZPD). This concept relates to the difference between what a learner can achieve independently and what a learner can achieve with guidance and encouragement from a skilled partner. Subject meetings in this case allowed novice educators to assess what they could achieve independently and areas where they required assistance from experienced educators and SMT members.

Participants reported that participation by novice educators in these subject meetings was inadequate, although they still had something to learn when other educators were

sharing their experiences. From participants' responses, SMT members created a platform for formulating professional learning communities (PLCs) for educators teaching the same subject. This was a way of ensuring that professionals learned new teaching practices (Harris & Jones, 2016). From the participants' view, the presence of novice educators in meetings ensured that they learned from their more experienced colleagues while discussing the challenges they faced in the profession and the mitigation thereof. From the findings of this study, it is thus important for SMTs to understand that beginner educators do not possess the same skills that their experienced colleagues have (Kearney, 2015).

#### **4.5.2 Distribution of the workloads**

Participants reported that the workloads of novice educators were often determined by the needs of their post and what is stipulated in the Personnel Administrative Measures (PAM) document (Department of Basic Education, 2016). For instance, Mr Mabele reported that the duty load of an educator was not determined by the experience of an educator, but by the conditions as set out in the PAM document:

*We are actually guided by (u) PAM document in terms of the number of periods one should teach, but we do not say that "because this one is new there must be a specific way of giving the subjects. We allocate the duty load equitable to all educators irrespective of whether they are new or experienced educators. Ja it's fairly done.*

(Mr Mabele)

Mr Jones added that as much as the workload is determined by the needs of the post, in their school, the difference was the grade that a novice educator had to teach:

*The workload for the novice educators and the educators that have been here for long are the same. The difference becomes the grade that they teach. The novice educators are generally placed on the lower grades because in those grades there are fewer problems like behavioural problems. We do not assign a lighter load. It is not a lighter load it is just the lower grades. Besides, we all have to take on an extra subject, so the*

*novice educators pick up lighter subjects rather than core subjects until they adjust. Because of the COVID-19 this year the load is the same for novice educators and experienced educators due to the number of classes and social distancing and all that.*

(Mr Jones)

Mr Vulindlela reported that the load was not made light based on the fact that an educator was new. His response supported what was reported by other participants, but added that the difference was guidance received from a Departmental Head:

*I think the curriculum guide will tell you exactly what is supposed to be the load of the novice and then from time to time, the DH should work hand in hand with the novice to guide and check if the novice is still in line with what is expected.*

(Mr Vulindlela)

Mrs Mthimkhulu also added in this regard that the major subjects of an educator determined their workload in line with the needs of the school: “*We look at their major subjects and distribute subjects to be taught as per their qualifications. That’s how we allocate their workload*” (Mrs Mthimkhulu).

Similarly, Miss Morris did not believe that a novice educator had to be allocated a lighter workload just because they were new. Miss Morris had confidence in the Timetabling Committee in her school, which dealt with these matters. Miss Morris pointed out that in the case of her school, the allocation of duties was based on the qualifications, needs of the school and policy stipulations. In this regard, Miss Morris said:

*You know the workload of the novice I think it is determined by the subjects that they teach and the needs of the school. I think the needs of the school in terms of the hmm the curriculum and the timetable are going to dictate the workload. I think the timetabling committee does an excellent job in trying to balance the load between individuals and to be cognisant of the marking and the load and administrative burden that every teacher has. I*

*think the timetabling committee here does an excellent job. Everybody has an equitable workload (both novices and experienced educators).*

(Miss Morris)

Miss Morris added that she believed that not giving a lighter workload to novice educators helped them to showcase the skills they were qualified for:

*I think the best way is that when the novice teacher comes in, they need to hit the ground running. I don't believe in giving them less of a load because it allows them to come in with a very lackadaisical attitude towards teaching. But they must come and pull their weight from day one. It is also my firm belief that if you have qualified for a job, you must be able to do that job. For example, if I become a principal, I cannot say that for the first six months that I am still finding my feet. The fact that I have been appointed in that position means I must hit the ground running from day one. You cannot say I am new because you applied for the job, and you are expected to perform at that particular level. I think the same thing must apply to the novice educators they should not come into a job and be given a flag because they are new. You applied for the job, and you have qualified for the job you need to hit the ground running that is just my personal belief. I think it might deviate from research but that is what I believe in.*

(Miss Morris)

All participants agreed that their schools did not allocate duty loads based on whether an educator was a novice. That is, they took into consideration issues such as qualifications and policy and ensured fairness in the sense that the duty loads must be allocated equitably among all educators. This supports the individualised consideration component of transformational leadership (Burns, 1978). This component means that a leader should be people-driven and possess a genuine concern for the needs of their followers. Participants believed that when the SMT ensured that individual qualifications were taken into consideration when allocating duty loads, they ensured that these were not allocated to educators based on the fact that were new.

Instead, participants reported that the subjects that they were qualified to teach played an important role.

Participants also reported that, as means for mitigating challenges encountered during induction, they ensured that novice educators had administrative periods, which they used for induction purposes. Mr Mabele, for instance, suggested that Departmental Heads must ensure that these periods are not regarded as free periods by the novice educators, but used productively for activities such as planning together for lessons, especially if educators shared the teaching of a subject:

*I would say mostly it would be that maybe they've got (ama) task that needs to be marked, those are the periods that they need to use and also for planning and preparing. I always request the departmental heads to ensure that if there are educators maybe who are sharing a grade, they try and have them meet so that (i) planning (yakhona) can be correct.*

(Mr Mabele)

Mr Vulindlela agreed with what was reported by Mr Mabele and added that these administration periods must be used to remind novice educators of some policies that their school have:

*Isn't the administration period where the teacher is given some time to mark the work to record the work that has been done by the learners and so on. It is to give the novice educator let's say your task was written maybe on a Monday...In our school, we have that policy that says it should only take three days to mark the work. Initially, you are supposed to give novice educators a time frame to say you are given this period to finish marking your work.*

(Mr Vulindlela)

Mrs Mthimkhulu shared similar sentiments:

*I just keep on reminding them of the duties at hand. Their marking needs to be done. Their lesson preparation also needs to be done. Remind them*

*that we need to use the time to do other administrative duties during this period that will help improve our teaching and learning.*

(Mrs Mthimkhulu)

*The only thing that I can tell them is that when you have an administrative period this is what you need to do but I cannot guarantee what they are doing because I have a full load myself. There is no way of monitoring what they are doing in their admin periods.*

(Mr Jones)

Miss Morris, on the other hand, argued that the administration period was just a luxury to educators in her school and, according to her, the country in general. She stated that the administrative period depended on the needs of the school:

*It is very difficult to do. That is a luxury of any teacher, not just the novice educator, benefiting from the administrative periods. I think with regards to the way the PPN is structured within our country our schools are severely understaffed. Our class sizes are way over what the PPN dictates. Also, with the rate of absenteeism of educators especially now during COVID-19 you know having an admin period is a luxury because at the end of the day the need of the learner takes precedence of the need of the teacher, and we can never have any unattended class. So, if there is somebody with an admin period the priority is to make sure that there is a warm body in front of a child than a teacher seating in the staffroom and marking. Therefore, I think admin periods in our school and in South Africa are a luxury because of the staffing situation within our country. And this is not only for novice educators but educators in general.*

(Miss Morris)

Participants emphasised the fact that the administration periods were used for the induction of novice educators, especially on policies and lesson planning. However, they also underlined the fact that the onus was on novice educators to use the periods productively. This supports Kearney's (2017) argument that structured time release from classes is a vital aspect of an induction programme.

Participants also mentioned that the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) assisted in the induction of novice educators, especially as it related to classroom visits. In this regard, Mr Mabele commented as follows:

*Yes, to a certain extent it does because if you take for example the day when the educator will be visited, you see the kind of preparation that he's done. So only, what you need to do now is to encourage them to do that kind of preparation every day. Ja, ja, yes. You will find that on that day the teaching is done more properly than other days, yes.*

(Mr Mabele)

Mr Jones agreed with what Mr Mabele had mentioned and added that IQMS helped in the identification of areas for development:

*Ok because they are novice educators, they are not too familiar with the filling system the administration, classroom discipline, or staff like that. Therefore, when I visit the class for IQMS and identify the shortcomings, I can now assist with those shortcomings they are experiencing.*

(Mr Jones)

Mr Vulindlela stated that the need and purpose of IQMS must be clarified to novice educators in order to ensure that they understand its critical element of development:

*In fact, everyone does IQMS. It is a matter of must that everyone does IQMS. Because at the end of the day IQMS is like a yardstick to check, it is developmental in fact you cannot say you have experience because from time to time you need to be sharpening your skills.*

(Mr Vulindlela)

He went on and added:

*Another way to encourage a novice teacher to do IQMS is to invite them when you are teaching so that person is going to be free whenever you are*

*visiting him/her in his class. Invite the novice teacher to your class and later on, you visit him or her. (...). I think it prepares them a lot because they learn a lot from it. After all, this is where we talk about discipline and so on and we learn from others how to maintain the discipline. When you talk about IQMS, it is where we are sharing our problems in the classroom. It is where you realise that I am using this strategy and teacher so and so is using this strategy then let me try to use this strategy maybe it will work for me. I think it will help them and at the same time, it is developing them.*

(Mr Vulindlela)

Mrs Mthimkhulu argued for the importance of class visit in IQMS and added that, in addition to this, regular class visits worked for her:

*What is really works for me are the classroom visits. Regular liaison with the teacher and just working hand in hand with the novice. Regular classroom visits outside the IQMS. With IQMS, there is usually tension, so it does not really work. Only the classroom visits and some other sources.*

(Mrs. Mthimkhulu)

Similarly, Miss Morris maintained that regular class visits were more important compared to waiting for IQMS, which was conducted only twice a year:

*I do not know how much IQMS itself as a strategy is helpful, but I did say that there are more classroom visits. The classroom visits form part of the IQMS. So, by visiting the classroom more often, I think that it is helpful because the feedback that you give which is part of the IQMS does help in that regard. I think also with regards to IQMS I wouldn't use IQMS in isolation but monitoring and evaluation, I think it is part of the whole school monitoring and evaluation. I don't think it should be looked at in isolation because often when you go for an IQMS lesson, that lesson is going to be photo shopped or window dressed for that particular score that you are going to get. I think it is important that it is not seen as an event but as developmental. The reason why it is important to have those*

*classroom visits and the learners' books checked must be seen, as a continuous thing and not an event.*

(Miss Morris)

Most of the participants reported that IQMS helped with the induction of novice educators, including the professional development of educators. They reported that they used IQMS to identify areas of development, on which educators and the school needed to focus. However, the participants, to a certain degree, disagreed with the notion that IQMS could assist with the induction and professional development of novice educators, as educators were often well prepared for those one or two lessons for appraisal, but not for their teaching on a normal day that is without observation. This suggests that, according to the participants, educators often viewed IQMS as an event instead of a process leading to their continuing professional development.

The above finding supports what Queen-Mary and Mtapuri (2014) have argued that educators' morale seems to be low when it comes to IQMS. For instance, some educators reported that IQMS did not meet their expectations for professional development because, at times, even the appraisers did not have the right answers to their challenges. For instance, participants believed that structured classroom visits outside IQMS processes could assist, as novice educators became aware of the fact that the visits are for support and professional development. Participants also pointed out that these structured observations were not only intended for novice educators to be visited for lesson observations but they were also invited to observe lessons taught by their DHs and other experienced educators. This is in line with Shabani's (2016) definition of observation as a form of professional development through which colleagues learn from each other. For this study, class observations allowed novice educators to observe their senior colleagues and learn from them. According to Transformational Leadership Theory, inspirational motivation refers to the degree to which the leader articulates a vision that is appealing and inspiring to their followers (Bass, 1985). DHs with inspirational motivation challenge, novice educators with setting high standards while providing meaning for the task at hand. Demonstrations on how to manage the classroom in the presence of a novice educator during a formal classroom observation may inspire novice educators to also learn and master the same skill.

## **4.6 CONCLUSION**

In this chapter, I analysed, presented, analysed, discussed and interpreted data generated in the study. The discussion followed three main themes and six sub-themes, namely, (1) Understanding the role of SMT members in the induction of novice educators, with sub-themes as: 1.1 training and support, 1.2 time and personal attributes; (2) Experiences of SMT members of the induction of novice educators, with sub-themes as 2.1 orientation; 2.2 mentoring; and (3) Mitigation of challenges encountered during induction, with sub-themes as 3.1 subject meetings and collaboration; 3.2 distribution of workload and professional development.

The next chapter presents a summary of the key findings of the study, and presents recommendations and concluding remarks, based on the findings of the study.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY OF THE STUDY AND CONCLUSIONS**

#### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

This study sought to explore the role of SMT members in the induction of novice educators and to investigate the challenges that they encountered in the implementation of induction programmes. This was explored as understood and experienced by the SMT members from two secondary schools in uThukela District, KwaZulu-Natal province. The study was carried out under the premise that, at the school level, SMT members have been entrusted with an important role of ensuring that novice educators joining the teaching profession are provided with effective induction. This premise was based on the role of the SMT members as outlined in the PAM document (Department of Basic Education, 2011).

An SMT, which consists of the School Principal, Deputy Principal (where a school qualifies for it in terms of its learner enrolment), and Departmental Heads, have the responsibility to mentor and coach less experienced and novice educators. The SMT must also support educators in respect of instructional procedures and professional growth. Novice educators, therefore, rely on the effectiveness of the SMT for support in mitigating the challenges that they encounter, especially during their initial years of teaching. It is under their leadership and guidance that novice educators may develop and grow professionally.

This chapter traces and reflects on the research journey for this study. Therefore, in this chapter, I will summarise and present the themes that emerged, the theoretical framework and a review of relevant literature, which provided the foundation for reading, understanding and making sense of the research findings for this study. This is followed by the lessons learnt from this journey, and what could be done by other researchers with an interest in the area of research this study sought to investigate. Finally, I present closing remarks, based on the findings of this study.

## **5.2 THE RESEARCH JOURNEY**

This journey for this study has not been easy, especially when the country and the whole world were experiencing a worldwide pandemic, namely, COVID-19. When social activities and interactions were restricted due to the country going into lockdown to reduce the spread of the virus and keeping people safe. Conducting face-to-face interviews within this context, with strict protocols on social distancing, was almost impossible. However, as the lockdown protocols were eased, it is then that it was possible to conduct the interviews as planned, following strict pharmaceutical precautions of hand washing/sanitising, wearing masks, ensuring adequate ventilation and observing social distancing. This means that although I was eventually able to continue with the conduct of the study, I experienced significant delays in the implementation of the research programme for this study.

In the section below, I present a summary of the key findings.

## **5.3 SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS**

This section reflects on the journey of this study and a summary of the main findings. The focus of discussion on the key findings focuses on the role and experiences of the SMT members in the induction of novice educators, the challenges they encountered in fulfilling this role, and the mitigation strategies they used to ensure the effective induction of novice educators.

### **5.3.1 The role of SMTs in inducting novice educators**

The first research question of this study was: *How do SMT members induct novice educators?* SMTs have a responsibility of inducting novice educators, as set out in the *Personnel Administrative Measures* (Department of Basic Education, 2016). The responsibility of mentoring novice educators relates to the study conducted by Harju and Niemi (2020) on the importance of supporting novice educators. In this study, Harju and Niemi (2020) underlined the fact that support for novice educators from their colleagues, especially SMT members, is key to the effective induction of novice educators. This means that the effectiveness of SMTs in this regard potentially has a significant influence on novice educators' experiences, confidence, learning and professional growth.

Taking from what transpired in the interviews with the members of the SMTs who participated in this study, participants reported that they ensured that novice educators went through some form of orientation as part of their induction programme. However, participants reported that most of the orientation was conducted informally. Participants attributed this to the fact that the Department of Education did not have a structured orientation and induction programme for novice educators. Often, participants reported that schools were required to develop their orientation and induction programmes, without any structured guidance from the Department of Education.

According to Naidoo (2019), SMT members must provide an environment that allows for and enables effective teaching and learning and be in a position to ensure effective curriculum delivery by providing adequate professional guidance for novice educators. However, for this study, despite the absence of policy and guidance for SMTs and schools on the induction of novice educators, participants reported that using what they knew and their experience as educators, they conducted such induction. In this respect, participants reported that they provided key documents and guidance that they believed would be useful for supporting novice and less experienced educators with their teaching. Documents such as school policies, annual teaching plans, lesson plans and programmes of assessment were shared with novice and less experienced educators. Participants believed that the sharing of these documents and professional guidance with these educators would help them understand what SMTs and schools expected from them.

### **5.3.2 SMTs' experiences of the induction of novice educators**

Participants reported that they had not received any training from the Departmental of Education on the induction of novice educators. From their responses, the induction they conducted depended on the exposure of SMT members to induction programmes through which they went as novice educators. Some participants reported having had to use the knowledge and skills that they had gained from observing their senior educators conducting induction. On the other hand, one participant reported that she

had obtained knowledge of induction from her studies, which contained topics on the mentoring and induction of novice educators.

According to the *New Teacher Induction Guideline for the Orientation Programme*, a Circuit Manager must support school principals, SMTs, and governing bodies in the management, administration, and governance of the schools (Department of Basic Education, 2017). However, the findings of this study suggest that such support was inadequate in respect of the SMTs members who participated in this study. This observation is concerning given the importance of the induction of novice educators to the quality of service they can render to their learners. This is even more worrying in a context where the roles of SMT members are multi-faceted, and their responsibilities have become more and more demanding and challenging and, at times complicated, overloaded, and unclear (Naidoo, 2019).

### **5.3.3 Strategies adopted for overcoming challenges encountered during induction**

Participants reported having encountered challenges regarding performing their role of inducting novice educators. Among the challenges they reported was the lack of training on the induction of novice educators. However, responses from the participants suggested that they did not only complain about the challenges that they experienced, but they had responded by putting measures in place to mitigate them. The mitigation strategies that had been put in place included establishing PLCs as a means for collaboration and the active use of departmental meetings as a platform and mechanism for making available and accessible opportunities for professional development for educators, especially novice educators.

The subject meetings, which they held once per term, were used as a platform for educators to engage on the challenges they experienced and share some of the strategies they used to deal with them. These subject meetings helped novice educators to express their concerns and learn from their experienced colleagues (Pyrko et al., 2017). For the participants, these subject meetings served as professional learning spaces, where even if there was no formal meeting, relationships were established, which assisted novice educators to access support from their more experienced

colleagues. The transition from pre-service to in-service educator was also reported as a challenge by the participants. For instance, participants reported that although novice educators were qualified to teach the subjects that they majored in, they struggled to cope with the realities of teaching and learning contexts in their schools. As mitigation, participants reported that they were using the administration period allocated to novice educators to assist them to develop the skills required to cope with the realities of their school contexts.

#### **5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS**

The following recommendations are made based on the findings of the study:

- **Compulsory induction programme for SMTs:** Participants reported that the Department of Education did not have a structured programme for the preparation of SMTs for the orientation and induction of novice educators. To this end, the Department of Education must consider developing a structured compulsory programme for building the capacity of SMT members to conduct orientation and induction of novice educators.
- **Continuing professional teacher development programmes:** Participants reported that novice educators often struggled with the transition from pre-service to in-service educator and that they seemed not to have been adequately prepared for the realities of the teaching and learning contexts in their schools. To this end, the Department of Education, working through schools and other service providers, must schedule refresher workshops to assist educators with the ropes of navigating contextual complexities in their schools. These could be subject-based refresher workshops to assist educators with teaching techniques and support for learners who are struggling for various reasons. These workshops would serve as a platform for educators, including SMT members, for sharing ways of navigating their contexts and ensuring quality learning for their learners.

## **5.5 IDEAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made for future research in respect of the roles of SMT members in respect of the induction of novice educators:

- Participants reported that, in the absence of a structured induction programme from the Department of Education, they used their own experience to formulate induction activities for novice educators in their schools. There is a need to explore what SMT members and schools in other contexts are doing to ensure that novice educators are properly orientated and inducted. This would assist in formulating context-based induction programmes, capable of speaking to real issues and challenges in schools.
- SMT members who participated in this study reported receiving inadequate support from the Department of Education in respect of their role in the induction of novice educators. This suggests that the effectiveness of support provided by the Department of Education to SMT members in this regard may need to be investigated and, where it is found to be deficient, ways of strengthening it must be explored.
- The study only covered the experiences of SMT members in their role in the induction of novice educators. There may be a need to also investigate the experiences of novice educators of induction programmes and activities in their schools.

## **5.6 CONCLUSION**

This chapter presented a summary of the research journey, key findings, and conclusions of the study. Finally, recommendations for further research on the phenomenon under investigation were provided.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix A: Interview schedule

#### Research Questions

1. What roles do the SMT members play in the novice educator induction?
2. What are the experiences of the SMT members in their role of inducting novice educators?
3. How do SMT members navigate through those challenges?

#### Interview Questions

##### A. GENERAL INTRODUCTORY AND BIOGRAPHICAL QUESTIONS

1. How many years of experience do you have:
  - i. In education?
  - ii. As a principal? / Departmental head?
2. How long have you been employed at this school:
  - i. In total?
  - ii. As the principal? / Departmental head?
3. Have you ever received any training in the induction and orientation of novice educators? If so, when and by whom? What was the nature of this training?
4. What support, if any, do you receive from the Department of Education related to the process of orientating novice educators?
5. Does your school have a policy on the induction of novice educators? If so, what does this policy prescribe?

##### B. PHASE 1: ANTICIPATORY SOCIALIZATION/ORIENTATION

1. Please explain how you plan for the arrival of the novice teacher in your school.
2. How do you go about conducting the orientation and induction of your novice educators? Describe the process of orientation in as much detail as possible.
3. Which other role players are involved in this orientation programme? Please explain the roles of each of these members of staff.
4. What documents do you use to assist in the orientation of the novice educators?
5. Which challenges, if any, do you experience in orientating your novice educators? Please give details.

6. Does your school use a staff manual for educators? If yes, who developed this manual?
7. Apart from the process you described in your answer to question 3, which other methods or strategies do you employ to orientate and induct your novice educators? Describe these methods or strategies in detail.
8. In your opinion, is the orientation you conduct helpful to the novice educators? Why, or why not?

### **C. PHASE 2: THE ENCOUNTER**

1. Research has shown that novice educators experience challenges in the first few years of teaching. What strategies do you have in place at your school to assist novice educators with the challenges they experience once they begin teaching?
2. What is your understanding of the term mentoring?
3. Does your school make use of mentoring for novice educators? If so, how are mentors assigned? What is included in your mentoring process?
4. Do you personally mentor novice educators? If so, how do you go about mentoring them?
5. If you are acting as a mentor, what challenges do you encounter with this mentoring?
6. Does your school make use of departmental or subject meetings? If so, how often are these meetings conducted? Who chairs these meetings? What is the main focus of these meetings? What roles are novice educators expected to play in these meetings? How, in your opinion, do novice educators benefit from their participation in these meetings?
7. How do you engage and orientate your novice educators for their participation in extramural and extracurricular activities?
8. How do you determine the workload of your novice educators?
9. How do you ensure that novice educators benefit from the administrative periods (non-teaching periods) that are included in their timetables?
10. Do you have a staff wellness programme? If so, how are novice educators included in this programme?
11. How do you prepare and induct your novice educators for participation in IQMS?

12. How, in your opinion, does participation in IQMS prepare novice educators to overcome the challenges they encounter in the first few years of teaching?
13. In your opinion will you say that your school is successful in inducting novice educators?

## Appendix B: Letter to the Principal



### MASTERS IN EDUCATION RESEARCH

**Researcher:** Mrs B. L. Mlambo

**Supervisor** Dr P. E. Mthembu

The Principal

Name of the School

I, Bongekile Lynn Mlambo, am a Masters of Education (MEd) student in the School of Education, at the University of KwaZulu Natal. My research project titled: *Exploring the role of the school management teams in inducting novice educators.*

The project aims to interrogate the leadership roles and practices prevalent among the School Management Teams (SMTs) in the process of inducting novice educators. The vexing question is: How do SMTs induct novice educators? Novice educators experience challenges in their first few years of teaching. These challenges lead to high attrition rates among novice educators and have a negative effect on quality teaching and learning.

The study will involve gathering data through semi-structured interviews and document analysis. The semi-structured interview will be conducted outside teaching time and will take approximately 60 minutes. This will be recorded using an audiotape with your permission. Additional interviews will be conducted only if there is a need for clarification of any aspect.

Documents analysis will be conducted outside your normal teaching programme and another work schedule. I will request copies of the relevant documentation to analyse after the interview. I will also request the necessary information about the timetable and work schedule early in the year.

Your participation in this study is voluntary and there will be no monetary gain from participating in this research project. If you take part in the study, you have the right to check and make any amendments to the transcripts of your interview. You will be able to withdraw from the research at any time during the study with no negative consequence. You can ask any further questions about the study during your participation and you will be given access to a summary of findings from the research when it is concluded.

All the information about you and your school will be kept confidential and only I, and my supervisor, can access it. The findings will be presented in such a way that you cannot be identified. The notes and recordings will be stored at UKZN for 5 years before they are destroyed.

Please read through this information carefully and then sign the consent form on the next page. If you have any questions or concerns about participating in this study, please feel free to contact me, or my supervisor at the numbers listed below:

I trust that my request will be favourably considered.

You may contact my supervisor, the Research Office, or me should you have any queries or questions: Supervisor:

Dr Pinkie Mthembu

Tel. 033 260 8177

E-mail: [Mthembup@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:Mthembup@ukzn.ac.za)

**UKZN Research Office**

**Mr P. Mohun**

**HSSREC Research Office Ethics**

**Tel: 031 260 4557**

**E-mail: [mohunp@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:mohunp@ukzn.ac.za) or [hssrec@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:hssrec@ukzn.ac.za)**

**My contact number:**

**Cell: 0782107248**

**Email: [bongihlongwane29@gmail.com](mailto:bongihlongwane29@gmail.com)**

Your positive response in this regard will be highly respected.

Yours faithfully

Bongekile Mlambo

**DECLARATION**

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

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

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Appendix C: Participant's consent letter



# MASTERS IN EDUCATION RESEARCH

**Researcher:** Mrs B. L. Mlambo

**Supervisor** Dr P. E. Mthembu

Dear participant,

I, Bongekile Lynn Mlambo, am a Masters of Education (MEd) student in the School of Education, at the University of KwaZulu Natal. My research project entitled: *Exploring the role of the school management teams in inducting novice educators.*

The project aims to interrogate the leadership roles and practices prevalent among the School Management Teams (SMTs) in the process of inducting novice educators. The vexing question is: How do SMTs induct novice educators? Novice educators experience challenges in their first few years of teaching. These challenges lead to high attrition rates among novice educators and have a negative effect on quality teaching and learning.

The study will involve gathering data through semi-structured interviews and document analysis. The semi-structured interview will be conducted outside teaching time and will take approximately 60 minutes. This will be recorded using an audiotape with your permission. Additional interviews will be conducted only if there is a need for clarification of any aspect.

Documents analysis will be conducted outside your normal teaching programme and other work schedules. I will request copies of the relevant documentation to analyse after the interview. I will also request the necessary information concerning the timetable and work schedule early in the year.

Your participation in this study is voluntary and there will be no monetary gain from participating in this research project. If you take part in the study, you have the right to check and make any amendments to the transcripts of your interview. You will be able to withdraw from the research at any time during the study with no negative consequence. You can ask any further questions about the study during your participation, and you will be given access to a summary of findings from the research when it is concluded.

All the information about you and your school will be kept confidential and only I, and my supervisor, can access it. The findings will be presented in such a way that you cannot be identified. The notes and recordings will be stored at UKZN for 5 years before they are destroyed.

Please read through this information carefully and then sign the consent form on the next page. If you have any questions or concerns about participating in this study, please feel free to contact me, or my supervisor at the numbers listed below:

I trust that my request will be favourably considered.

You may contact my supervisor, the Research Office, or me should you have any queries or questions: **Supervisor:**

**Dr Pinkie Mthembu**

Tel. 033 260 8177

E-mail: [Mthembup@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:Mthembup@ukzn.ac.za)

**UKZN Research Office**

**Mr P. Mohun**

**HSSREC Research Office Ethics**

**Tel: 031 260 4557**

**E-mail: [mohunp@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:mohunp@ukzn.ac.za) or [hssrec@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:hssrec@ukzn.ac.za)**

**My contact number:**

**Cell: 0782107248**

**Email: [bongihlongwane29@gmail.com](mailto:bongihlongwane29@gmail.com)**

Your positive response in this regard will be highly respected.

Yours faithfully  
Bongekile Mlambo

**DECLARATION**

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

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Additional consent, where applicable.**

I hereby provide consent to:

Audio – record my interview

YES

NO

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Appendix D: Permission from Department of Education



education

Department:  
Education  
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

Enquiries: Phindile Duma/Buyi Ntuli

Tel: 033 392 1063/51

Ref.:2/4/8/4086

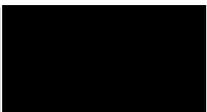
Mrs Bongekile Lynn Mlambo  
P.O. Box 686  
ESTCOURT  
3310

Dear Mrs Mlambo

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

Your application to conduct research entitled: **“EXPLORING THE TOLE OF THE SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAMS IN INDUCTING NOVICE EDUCATORS”**, 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 02 March 2020 to 10 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/Mrs Buyi Ntuli at the contact numbers above.
9. Upon completion of the research, a brief summary of the findings, recommendations or a full report/dissertation/thesis must be submitted to the research office of the Department. Please address it to The Office of the HOD, Private Bag X9137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200.
10. Please note that your research and interviews will be limited to schools and institutions in KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education.

  
Dr. EV Nzama  
Head of Department: Education  
Date: 02 March 2020

...Leading Social Compact and Economic Emancipation  
Through a Revolutionary Education for all...

#### KWAZULU-NATAL DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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

Physical Address: 228 Pietermaritz Street • Ex-NED Building • Pietermaritzburg • 3201

Tel.: +27 33 3921063 • Fax: +27 033 3921203 • Email: Phindile.duma@kzndoe.gov.za • Web: www.kzndoe.gov.za

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

## Appendix E: Ethical clearance



12 June 2020

Mrs Bongekile Lynn Mlambo (217058141)  
School Of Education  
Pietermaritzburg Campus

Dear Mrs Mlambo,

Protocol reference number: HSSREC/00001462/2020

Project title: EXPLORING THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAMS IN INDUCTING NOVICE EDUCATORS

Degree: Masters

### Approval Notification – Expedited Application

This letter serves to notify you that your application received on 08 June 2020 in connection with the above, was reviewed by the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (HSSREC) and the protocol has been granted **FULL APPROVAL**

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

This approval is valid until 12 June 2021.

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

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

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

Yours sincerely,



Professor Dipane Hlalele (Chair)

/dd

---

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee  
UKZN Research Ethics Office Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building  
Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban 4000  
Tel: +27 31 260 8350 / 4557 / 3587  
Website: <http://research.ukzn.ac.za/Research-Ethics/>

Founding Campuses: Edgewood Howard College Medical School Pietermaritzburg Westville

## Appendix F: Certificate from Language Editor

# Ntwintwi

Proofreading and Editing Solutions

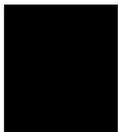
Date: 08 February 2022

### CERTIFICATE OF LANGUAGE EDITING TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This is to certify that the thesis bearing the provisional title ***Exploring the role of the school management teams in inducting novice educators***, to be submitted by **Bongekile Lynn Mlambo** has been edited for language correctness and spelling, consistency (i.e. repetition, long sentences and logical flow), and completeness of the list of references and cited authors, by Ntwintwi Proofreading and Editing Solutions. Neither the research content and substance nor the author's intentions were altered in any way during the editing process.

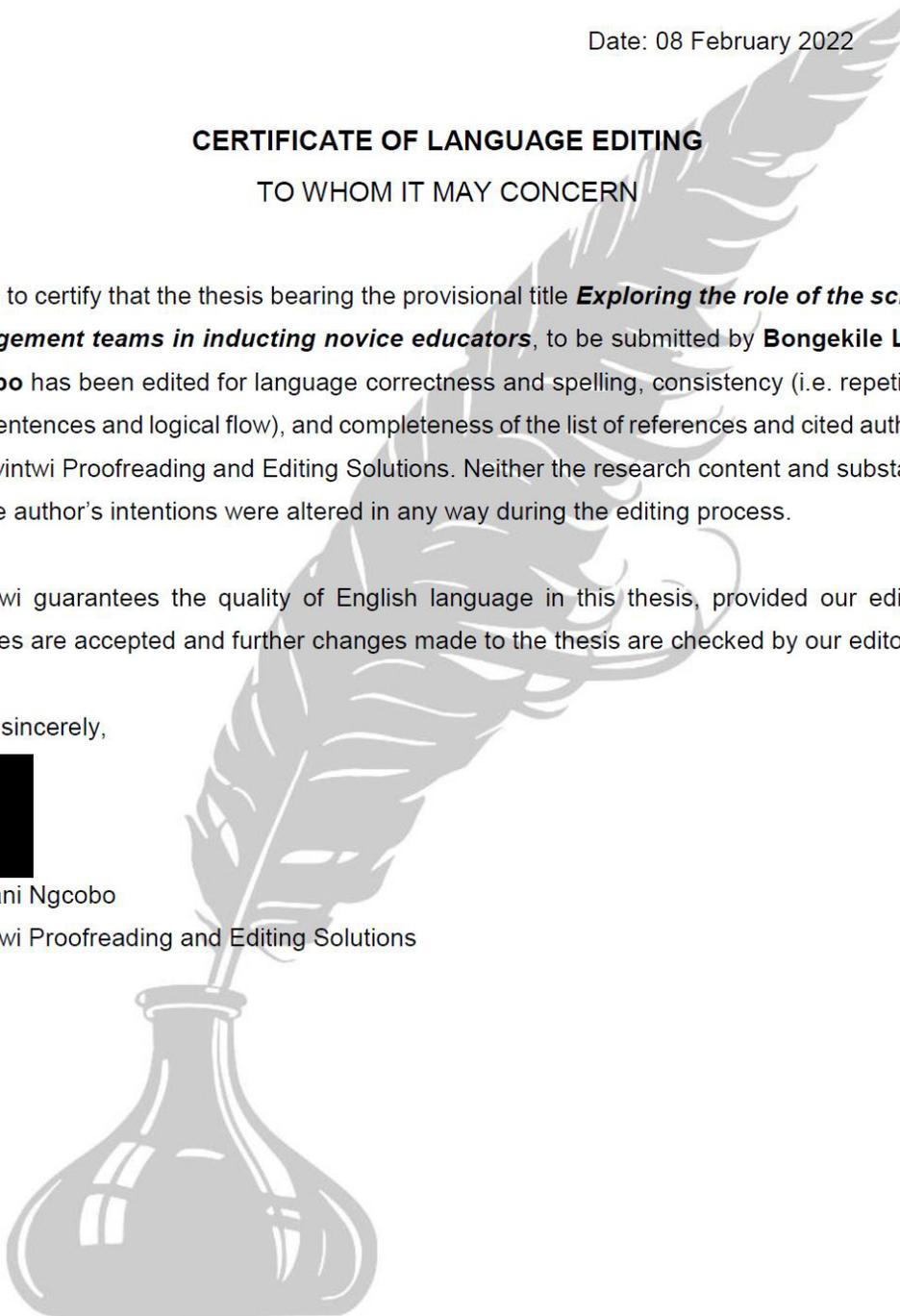
Ntwintwi guarantees the quality of English language in this thesis, provided our editor's changes are accepted and further changes made to the thesis are checked by our editor.

Yours sincerely,



Jabulani Ngcobo

Ntwintwi Proofreading and Editing Solutions



# Appendix G: Originality report

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**CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY**

**1.1 INTRODUCTION**

Novice educators encounter problems in their early careers, leading to growing rates of attrition. Kearney (2014) states that high rates of attrition, coupled with the ageing teacher population in many countries in the developed world, may cause a teacher shortage crisis in the coming years. Beginning teacher induction is an imperative process in acculturating teachers to their new careers and helping them overcome the adversities of teaching and the accreditation process. In this chapter, the background and rationale for the study is firstly introduced. Thereafter the policy and empirical issues, personal and professional motivation, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, clarification of concepts, significance of the study and limitation outlined.

**1. BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY**

Match Overview

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