

https://dspace.org/

# The influence of age and career phase in teachers' emotional responsiveness to curriculum changes in South Africa

**Nwachukwu, Chioma**

**2016-07-26**
http://hdl.handle.net/10539/20705

Downloaded from a DSpace repository. https://dspace.org/

**ABSTRACT**

This research report investigates the influence of age and career phase on South African teachers' emotional responses to curriculum change, particularly the transition to CAPS. It aims to find out how teachers of different ages at different phases of their career think and feel about the transition to CAPS, and if there are any discernible differences between the responses of older and younger teachers and what may be the causes for the patterns of the difference? A conceptual framework using Nussbaum's (2001) understanding that emotions are always directed at an "object" and Frijda's (1986) understanding that emotions are relevance signalling mechanisms was developed. This conceptual framework positions emotions as a conceptual and analytical lens for analysing data. Using a basic interpretive qualitative approach, the study focuses on ten teachers' experiences of the transition to CAPS. Individual interviews and focus group discussions provided most of the data for this study**.**

Key findings that arise from this study are: In the teachers' emotional reaction to curriculum change, there were distinct differences depending on which 'sub-object' they were talking about. Yet the emotional reason for accepting CAPS was when teachers could see how CAPS enabled learning in their learners. Even so, these teacher's emotions towards CAPS as a new curriculum was differentially shaped by their teacher education and years of experience. In addition, belonging to a community of practice enabled these teachers' sense making of CAPS and provided vital support to cope with the challenges of teaching. The key recommendation is that teachers should embrace their emotions, and can use their emotions as vehicles for action and social justice (Winograd 2003).