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Exploring Culturally Responsive Teaching in Commerce Education in South African High Schools

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A dissertation submitted to the School of Education, Faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, in fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Master of Education by Dissertation

ABSTRACT

Significant research has been conducted in Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) in multiple contexts. However, there is a dearth of literature on CRT within the context of commerce teaching in South Africa. As such, the goals of this dissertation are fourfold: to explore Accounting and Economics teachers' understanding of Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT), to unpack their teaching practices that speak to the implementation of CRT in their subject contexts, to gain insight into the challenges faced by Accounting and Economics teachers in the successful implementation of CRT, and to understand the implications of the global COVID-19 pandemic on CRT in Accounting and Economics teaching. In order to achieve these goals, four research questions were posed: How is CRT understood by in-service teachers teaching FET Accounting and Economics in South African high schools?; What CRT principles and practices do Accounting and Economics teachers apply in teaching these subjects?; What challenges do these educators encounter in the successful implementation of CRT in their classrooms?; and What are the implications of the global COVID-19 pandemic on CRT in Accounting and Economics teaching?

This study employed a mixed methods approach conducted in two phases. The first, a quantitative Likert-Scale questionnaire completed by 37 respondents where they rated their CRT confidence responses on a scale of *strongly agree* to *strongly disagree*. The second - the qualitative phase of the study - was the carrying out of 12 semi-structured interviews with willing participants from the larger sample. A thematic analysis was conducted on the two datasets, and seven key themes that are central to understanding CRT in the context of commerce teaching in South Africa were found: acknowledging cultural differences and building relationships; building on existing knowledge and experiences; teaching learners in a way that they understand; navigating linguistic differences in the classroom; curriculum issues and accountability pressures; learner and teacher attitudes towards commerce subjects; and the need for continuous professional development. The results of this study have implications for teacher preparation programmes and in-service teacher development programmes tasked with supporting teachers in enacting CRT, as well as implications for education policy and planning for CRT in South Africa and globally.

KEYWORDS

Accounting, commerce education, COVID-19, culturally responsive teaching, economics**,** **e**quity, global pandemic, inclusivity, new normal, non-traditional schooling, pedagogy, quality, teaching practices, traditional schooling

DECLARATION

I Boitumelo Banini Khunou declare that this Dissertation is my own, unaided work. I understand what plagiarism is and I am aware of the University's policy in this regard. I have not used work(s) previously developed by others to hand in as my own work.

This dissertation is being submitted for the Degree of Master of Education at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at any other University.



Boitumelo Banini Khunou

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my mother, Ziphora Khunou. You have sacrificed so much for my education and for me to be where I am today. Your sacrifices have not been in vain.

To my husband, Simphiwe Nzima, and my daughter, Uthingolwenkosazana Nzima, thank you for your unwavering, unconditional love and support.

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To the Gauteng Department of Education and the University's Ethics committee, thank you for granting me the necessary permission to conduct this study.

To the teachers that willingly participated in this study, I thank you dearly for sharing your experiences with me.

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To my parents, Ziphora and Tshepo Khunou, my siblings, Bontle and Lebogang Khunou, and my in-laws, your support and encouragement means the world to me. To my husband, Simphiwe, and our daughter, Uthingolwenkosazana, thank you for being my biggest champions and for giving me all the time and space I needed to produce this body of work. I will forever be grateful.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ATP	Annual Teaching Plan
CAPS	Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement
CRT	Culturally Responsive Teaching
DBE	Department of Basic Education
EMS	Economics and Management Sciences
EQI	Equity, Quality and Inclusivity
FET	Further Education and Training (Grades 10-12)
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
ITE	Initial Teacher Education
NSC	National Senior Certificate
PD	Professional Developement
SJE	Social Justice Education

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

At the outset, this study set out to explore Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) in the context of Accounting and Economics (Commerce) teaching in the Further Education and Training (FET Phase) in South African high schools, taking into consideration traditional classroom contexts.

In achieving this primary aim, the focus of the study was on Accounting and Economics teachers' understanding of CRT, their teaching practices that speak to the implementation of CRT in their subject context, and the challenges faced by these teachers in the successful implementation of CRT. The study employed a mixed methods approach where a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods was used to investigate the research questions.

The first quantitative phase of the study was a Likert-scale questionnaire that was completed by 37 respondents. The questionnaire drew on literature to identify key principles and practices of CRT and the respondents were required to rate their confidence in each response item on a Likert scale ranging from *strongly agree* to *strongly disagree*. In the second, the qualitative phase of the study, 12 semi-structured interviews were conducted with a smaller sample of willing participants from the larger sample. The interviews explored their understanding of CRT and its application in their subject context, with reference to specific examples. A thematic analysis was conducted on both the qualitative and quantitative data and an overall interpretation is provided.

The recent COVID-19 global pandemic has caused major disruptions to teaching and learning worldwide. While this study was conducted prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, it has been extended to take into consideration the potential permanent impact of the pandemic on teaching and learning both locally and globally. As such, it looks at the relevance of CRT and its applicability in non-traditional teaching contexts. The significance of this study is that it will not only have implications for the teaching of commerce subjects in South Africa, but it will also contribute to the body of knowledge around commerce teacher education in traditional and non-traditional schooling. Furthermore, this study will contribute a conceptual framework that should be taken into consideration by researchers thinking about research in CRT in South Africa and globally.

1.1 Problem statement

The formal end of apartheid and the formation of a democratic government in 1994 presented an opportunity to learners of different cultures, ethnicities, races and languages to access schooling in South Africa like never before. This desegregation of South African schools was met with great expectations for the country's education system (Badat & Sayed, 2014).

The Department of Basic Education (DBE) has since envisioned a schooling system in which every learner receives a quality education (DBE, 2015). This is aligned with the *National Development Plan 2030* that ascertains that every child has the right to access a quality education, regardless of their gender, race, religion, culture or socioeconomic background, as education is central to the long-term development of South Africa (SA Government, 2013). The policy on *Inclusive Education* acknowledges that all learners are different and have different learning needs. As a result, there is a need to change the attitudes, behaviours, teaching methodologies and curricula in order to meet the needs of all learners and accommodate their differences (SA Government, 2013; Department of Education (DoE), 2001). Diversity has increased dramatically in South African schools, and new approaches to teaching are needed that accommodate the cultural experiences of all people (Meier & Hartell, 2009).

Accounting and Economics are amongst the gateway subjects prioritised by the DBE. However, there has been a significant decline in the number of learners taking the subjects over the last five years, with the Accounting figures at 128 853 in 2016, versus 80 110 in 2019. For Economics, the level of enrolment was 155 908 in 2016 and only 107 940 in 2019. See Table 1 below.

Table 1

Learner enrolment in Accounting and Economics over five years *(National Senior Certificate Examination (NSC) Report, 2019, p. 53).*

	2016	**2017**	**2018**	**2019**
Accounting	128 853	103 427	90 278	80 110
Economics	155 908	128 796	115 169	107 940

The concerns around the declining numbers of Accounting and Economics learners were raised as problematic in the 2018 National Senior Certificate (NSC) Diagnostic Report, which was

engaged with at the inception of this study. Similar concerns were further raised in the 2019 NSC Diagnostic Report.

Accounting and Economics candidates are said to be unable to grasp key concepts, leading to difficulty in engaging with more complex issues that arise in the content. They also struggle to apply knowledge and insight (higher order thinking skills), lack basic knowledge in daily economic issues, are unable to solve problems, state their opinions or evaluate data connected to their study material. Additionally, Accounting and Economics learners struggle to identify relevant information or to address the requirements of the questions posed to them. Most of these problems are due to poor comprehension skills and language barriers (NSC Diagnostic Report, 2018, pp. 9, 57).

The NSC Diagnostic Report (2018, p. 57) states that "teaching should take place in such a way that learners understand the content." It is in this context, and the evidences of the NSC diagnostic and examinations reports, that this stu dy is located - presenting CRT as an approach to teaching Accounting and Economics in South African high schools in order to achieve this goal.

CRT is rooted in fairness and equity (Ortiz, 2012) and is argued to be an effective teaching strategy in the teaching of diverse students (Averill, Anderson, & Drake, 2015; Gay, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1995) - which is the context in which we are teaching in South Africa. CRT is also said to lead to better student engagement in a subject, and enhances the chances of academic success (Gay, 2002).

Significant research in CRT has been done by various authors in multiple contexts over the last ten years (Ball, 2009; Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011; Ford, Stuart, & Vakil, 2014; Gay, 2015; Ortiz, 2012; Sisson, Whitington, & Shin, 2020; Walker, 2019). However, evidence from the literature shows a dearth of studies done in CRT within the context of Commerce education in South Africa. Gay (2015) argues that CRT can be applied across various contexts and must be aligned to suit the specific needs of different settings. It is for this reason that I have chosen to locate this study within the context of the problematic nature of Commerce teaching in South African high schools.

While the original context set out to explore CRT as it can be applied in traditional classrooms, the flexible nature of the pedagogical approach allows for its application in non-traditional contexts. Taking into consideration the permanent effects of the global COVID-19 pandemic on teaching and learning, I argue that CRT can be aligned with teaching under 'the new

normal'. In this study, I present the relevance of CRT in assisting with the effectiveness of Commerce teaching, as well as its applicability in multiple contexts.

1.2 Aims and objectives

This research study aims to:

1. Explore how CRT is understood by Accounting and Economics teachers in their subject context;
2. Explore how Accounting and Economics teachers implement CRT within their subject curriculum and their classrooms, giving specific examples;
3. Identify the challenges encountered by Accounting and Economics teachers in the successful implementation of CRT in their subject contexts;
4. Explore the implications of the global COVID-19 pandemic on CRT in Accounting and Economics teaching.

1.3 Research questions

The central research question posed in this study is:

> How is CRT understood by in-service teachers teaching FET Accounting and Economics in South African high schools?

This research question will be explored with reference to the following sub-questions:

- What CRT principles and practices do Accounting and Economics teachers apply in teaching these subjects?
- In cases where CRT has been used, what challenges do these educators encounter in the implementation of CRT in their classrooms?
- What are the implications of the global COVID-19 pandemic on CRT in Accounting and Economics teaching?

1.4 Overview of the methodology

In exploring the central research question and the first two sub-questions above, the study was conducted in two phases using a sequential, exploratory mixed methods design. In the first phase - the quantitative phase of the study - a Likert-scale questionnaire was completed by 37 respondents in which they rated their confidence in specific CRT principles and practices. This was analysed by measuring the frequency of each response item. The second phase - the

qualitative phase of the study - was informed by the first phase, where a smaller sample of 12 willing participants was selected for a semi-structured interview. A thematic analysis was then used to provide an overall analysis and interpretation of the data. Recent literature, together with the dataset, was used to explore the fourth, additional research question highlighting the implications of the COVID-19 global pandemic on CRT in Accounting and Economics.

1.5 Rationale and significance

Teaching matters. As a result of the importance of teaching in schools, understanding how to better teach learners within the context of racial, linguistic, socioeconomic and cultural diversities helps ascertain the goals of inclusive education as set out in the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) documents.

Since there is a gap in the literature about what we know about CRT in South African schools with specific relevance to Commerce education, one intended outcome of this study is to contribute to the body of knowledge on the topic and to offer insights into CRT practices within this context.

A second intended outcome is to contribute to teacher preparation discourses around preparing Accounting and Economics teachers for CRT in South African classrooms (both traditional and non-traditional classroom contexts), and ultimately improving learner performance.

Lastly, the third intended outcome of this study is to contribute a conceptual framework which can be used as a tool to make sense of what CRT in Commerce education means in the South African context and globally, taking into consideration different kinds of teaching contexts.

1.6 Role of the researcher

As the researcher, I was directly involved in conceptualising and planning the study. I collected, analysed and interpreted all the data, drawing relevant conclusions from the key findings.

1.7 Researcher assumptions

My initial assumption prior to conducting this study was that while Accounting and Economics teachers may not be explicitly aware of CRT as a concept, they should, to a large extent, be engaging in some CRT practices and principles in their teaching, as CRT is closely aligned with South Africa's inclusive education policy.

1.8 Organisation of the dissertation

This dissertation consists of six chapters. In Chapter 1, *Introduction,* I contextualised the problem and made a case for its significance. In doing this, the research aims and objectives were clearly stated, as were the three key questions under investigation that are central to this study.

In Chapter 2, *Literature Review*, I situate the current study in existing scholarly work, and justify the literature gap that this study intends to fill. I argue for the place of CRT in Accounting and Economics teaching. Furthermore, I situate the study within a specific theoretical framework, Social Justice Education (SJE), and thereafter provide a conceptual framework that is critical in framing this study.

In Chapter 3, *Methodology*, I outline the methodological traditions in which I have situated this study. Additionally, I describe and justify the research context, sample, data sources, data collection processes and methods of analysis. This chapter also details issues around ethics, reliability, validity, trustworthiness and limitations of the research.

Chapter 4 of this study, *Findings*, reports on the key findings and presents the relevant statistical quantitative and qualitative data.

Chapter 5, *Analysis and Synthesis*, synthesises the key findings in light of the research questions, literature review and the conceptual framework. In this chapter, I reflect on the practical and theoretical implications of the study.

Chapter 6, *Conclusion and Recommendations,* is the final chapter and presents a set of concluding statements based on the research findings. This chapter makes relevant recommendations that have implications for policy, and practice and suggests further research agendas.

CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In this study, I explore how Accounting and Economics teachers in South African high schools understand CRT in their subject contexts. Making reference to specific examples, I unpack the CRT practices within the Accounting and Economics subject curricula and in the classroom, as well as challenges faced by Accounting and Economics teachers in the successful implementation of CRT. Furthermore, I outline the implications of the global COVID-19 pandemic on teaching and learning as it pertains to Accounting and Economics teaching.

In the previous chapter, I outlined the key research questions that are central to this study:

> How is CRT understood by in-service teachers teaching FET Accounting and Economics in South African high schools?
> - What CRT principles and practices do Accounting and Economics teachers apply in teaching the subjects?
> - In cases where CRT has been used, what challenges do these educators encounter in the successful implementation of CRT in their classrooms?
> - What are the implications of the global COVID-19 pandemic on CRT in Accounting and Economics teaching?

In light of these research questions, the literature review that follows is a critical synthesis of scholarly work around CRT and Accounting and Economics education. First, I begin by setting the context of schooling in South Africa post-1994 and the unique challenges faced by the country's education system. This is followed by a presentation of Social Justice Education (SJE) as the theoretical framework that underpins this study. This framework draws specifically on the DBE's six social justice principles of education that are relevant to South Africa's context. I then review literature on CRT, drawing on its key practices and principles as outlined by seminal authors in the field. A presentation of scholarly work around Accounting and Economics teaching and learning follows, where I present CRT in this specific context, and explore it as the best approach in the teaching of these subjects. This is followed by a review of literature on teaching and learning under 'the new normal', and the opportunities for CRT in Accounting and Economics teaching in this new context. The literature review concludes

with an outline of the conceptual framework model that draws on the DBE's principles of social justice. This conceptual framework is what guided the study design outlined in Chapter 3, and is further used as a tool to make sense of the data analysis in Chapter 5.

2.2 A brief history of South African schooling

Prior to 1994, the apartheid government enforced a racially-based education system that denied the Black majority equal access to education and opportunities (Badat & Sayed, 2014; Hunter, 2015). The separate and unequal education system deliberately miseducated Blacks in order to prepare them for disempowering, underclass societal roles (Ball, 2006), and education was used as a tool to perpetuate inequalities and maintain the status quo (Mncube, 2008). The curriculum reflected and promoted a White worldview that excluded Black, African perspectives. This, despite Black Africans constituting 80,9% of the South African population (Stats SA, 2019). Additionally, schools in apartheid South Africa were not only racially segregated, but extraordinarily unequally resourced (Cappy, 2016; Hunter, 2015).

Post-apartheid South Africa was founded on the principles of inclusion and diversity (Modise, 2019). The newly elected democratic government called for a socially responsive education system that would afford all South African learners access to quality, equitable and democratic education (Mncube & Harber, 2010). This presented challenges to schools, learners and teachers in the context of change (Kapofu, 2019), necessitating that schools, through the curriculum, be more responsive to both local as well as national needs in the way they address societal issues (Kapofu, 2019; van Wyk & Alexande, 2010).

However, 25 years into democracy, inequalities still persist within South Africa's education system, with predominantly Black schools having unequal access to funding, overcrowded classrooms, inadequate infrastructure and facilities, as well as disengaging instructional policies and practices (Badat & Sayed, 2014; Ball, 2006) as opposed to their White counterparts. While more learners have access to school than ever before, there is still a high number of Black Africans that drop out of school with only a primary education, while Whites and Indians possess the largest number of post-secondary graduates (Stats SA, 2019). According to Motala and Sayed (2012), it is learners from the most marginalised, disadvantaged backgrounds that constitute a large part of South Africa's dropout rate. These major racial and socioeconomic inequalities in educational attainment continue to leave the bulk of South African citizens undereducated - particularly Black Africans. Currently, 7.1% of Black Africans have no schooling, compared to 2.8% of Coloureds, 2.5% of Indians and 1.6%

of Whites. Furthermore, Black Africans spend on average 8.3 years in schooling - the shortest time - compared to 11.4 years spent by Whites (Stats SA, 2019).

Racial inequality has been replaced by class inequality - presenting a major obstacle to attaining an equitable schooling system (Bryant, Berry, & Cevik, 2019). Kennemer and Knaus (2019) echo this view that South African schools still remain unequal, primarily because of the allocation of resources and funding. Cappy (2016), Motala and Sayed, (2012) and Spaull (2013a) argue that South Africa is now a tale of two types of schools – wealthier, more functional schools; and poorer, dysfunctional schools concentrated in disadvantaged, poor communities that struggle to equip learners with basic literacy and numeracy skills. This poor performance in South African schools reinforces societal inequalities and children, regardless of their motivation or abilities, inherit their parents' and family's social status (Spaull, 2013b). According to Motala (2014), children from poorer socioeconomic backgrounds are at a distinct disadvantage and are more likely to perform worse at school than their more privileged counterparts. If not adequately addressed, these patterns of disadvantage continue to persist throughout their schooling (Motala, 2014 p. 170). Evidently, social injustice still exists in South Africa today.

While South African schools are now more diverse in terms of learners' cultural backgrounds, religions, ethnicities, race, home languages and socioeconomic status (Prins, Joubert, Ferreira-Prevost, & Moen, 2019, p. 1), opportunity gaps continue to persist in the South African education system, with the wealthier, more functional schools outperforming poorer, dysfunctional schools. In traditional CRT literature, this gap in educational attainment is typically referred to as the 'achievement gap' (Griner & Stewart, 2013). However, in the South African context, it is important to frame this as an 'opportunity gap' due to the inequality in access to quality education and resources that are required for students to be academically successful.

While large sums of money continue to be spent on efforts to close these opportunity gaps in education, little attention is directed to the attitudes, perceptions and behaviours that teachers have towards racially, socioeconomically, linguistically and culturally diverse learners and the inherent cultures brought to schools and the learning environment (Mayfield & Garrison-Wade, 2015). In efforts to address the opportunity gaps, the DBE has prioritised education as a social justice issue, and continues to take active steps to provide quality, equal educational opportunities to all South African citizens. CRT literature reveals the importance of teacher

attitudes towards diverse learners and emphasises the importance of placing learners' cultures at the forefront of teaching and learning, valuing the contributions of cultural diversity in their lives and the lives of the learners (Prins et al., 2019). For this reason, the central research question of this study investigates teachers' understanding of CRT in their subject context.

2.3 Social Justice Education: A theoretical framework

Drawing on the literature on South Africa's historical background and current conditions of the education system, it is evident that social injustice is real and still exists today, resulting in unequal access between people (Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2014). In the context of this study, this injustice refers to the unequal access and resource provision between wealthier and poorer schools. In this section of the literature review, the choice of the theory of social justice education (SJE) is justified as a lens to frame this study.

According to Ayers, Quinn, and Stovall (2009), SJE can have various meanings and interpretations. While no single conception of social justice exists (Bialystok, 2014; Dimick, 2012), it has been characterised by certain features.

One of the key features of social justice is recognising that society operates in a manner that is unjust through relations of power and institutions that reinforce social inequalities like race, income, class or gender (Dimick, 2012). Post-apartheid education was tasked with the responsibility of addressing past injustices, overcoming inequalities and helping to achieve the democratic government's socioeconomic goals (Badat & Sayed, 2014). Essentially, education became a social justice issue, where new corrective measures that favour the previously disadvantaged had to be implemented.

Discourses around social justice have been centred around two claims - the politics of redistribution and the politics of recognition (Fraser, 1998). The politics of redistribution calls for a more just distribution of resources as a means to address past injustices (Fraser, 1998). In the context of South Africa, socioeconomic transformation was called upon to address the injustices of apartheid. All schools were formally desegregated (Badat & Sayed, 2014) in order to drive the new democratic government's transformation agenda. However, while schools are more inclusive and now formally desegregated, the literature has shown that there is still inequitable resource distribution in South African schools (Kennemer & Knaus, 2019; Spaull, 2015). The first claim in social justice discourse, the politics of redistribution (Fraser, 1998),

has not yet been met. However, it is beyond the scope of this study to contribute towards issues of redistribution in education.

The second social justice claim is the politics of recognition, which aims to revalue the unjust devaluing of minority cultures and identities and correcting cultural domination (Fraser, 1998). It is no longer acceptable to expect people who are different to assimilate towards the majority or dominant societal culture. It is therefore necessary that we recognise and value the differences (ethnic, racial, gender, sexual orientation and, specific to South Africa, linguistic differences) that people have (Fraser, 1998). This is one of the central purposes of CRT - to value the knowledge, experiences and cultures of students who were historically sidelined by the schooling system (Gay, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1995), rather than forcing these students to assimilate towards the dominant school culture.

This type of cultural domination subjects students to patterns of communication and interpretation associated with another culture that is foreign to their own (Fraser, 1998), essentially expecting students to divorce from their own culture (Gay, 2002). Through CRT, cultural diversity in schools and in the classroom becomes recognised and valued. While social justice discourse is increasingly relying on claims for recognition, Fraser (1998) argues that the pursuit of social justice requires both redistribution and recognition. However, the scope of this study only allows for a discussion around the politics of recognition. In essence, the argument is that CRT is a pedagogy that advocates for recognition in education.

Key authors in the field of CRT (Gay, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Villegas, 2007; Villegas & Lucas, 2002) have located their work within the framework of SJE, arguing that a central part of CRT entails being responsive to the needs of students who have been historically disadvantaged and left behind. This is in alignment with the goals of post-apartheid education in South Africa - to provide equitable education for all students and to implement corrective measures in favour of those who were previously disadvantaged (Badat & Sayed, 2014). This study hopes to contribute to the body of CRT literature that is located within the SJE framework.

2.3.1 South Africa's six principles of Social Justice Education

Motala, (2014, p. 160) argues that South Africa needs a "more explicit, proactive and equity driven approach which prioritises the neediest and most marginalised, so that we have an inclusive education system based on the principles of social justice and fairness." In its pursuit

of a more equitable, inclusive, quality education system, the South African DBE follows six social justice principles - access, redress, equity, efficiency, quality and inclusivity (NSC Examination Report, 2019, p. 74).

In this section, I discuss these six social justice principles that are the pinnacle of the South African education system.

1. *Access*

The principle of access refers to education opportunities presented to South African learners. According to the NSC Examinations Report (2019), access to education opportunities has increased over the years. South Africa spends a bigger share of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) on education than any other African country. Learners in the poorest communities have access to no-fee schooling - which has been the most visible evidence of change in post-apartheid South Africa (Badat & Sayed, 2014).

2. *Redress*

Redressing socioeconomic disparities of the past is another one of the pillars of SJE in South Africa (NSC Examinations Report, 2019). A big component of implementing redress measures has been to use positive discrimination to favour those who were previously disadvantaged (Badat & Sayed, 2014). Redress measures are important in making sure that historically disadvantaged and marginalised groups are able to advance. While South Africa has implemented several redress measures, socioeconomic disparities still persist. Learners who attend poorly resourced schools are likely to remain in their current socioeconomic status, compared to their wealthier counterparts who have access to more opportunities (Spaull, 2013b).

3. *Equity*

Equity refers to "the levelling of the playing field in education with specific focus on all aspects of the system that perpetuated unfairness" (NSC Examinations Report, 2019, p. 75). Badat and Sayed (2014) argue that although we need equity, it cannot be achieved without addressing the inherent structural inequalities. There must be a distinct difference between equality and equity. Equality refers to sameness, uniformity, standardisation, while equity refers to fair and just treatment. Equity is needed to achieve equality (Badat & Sayed, 2014). According to Motala (2014), teachers are the most important tool in effecting equity for any country.

4. *Quality*

A good quality education is critical for social justice (Badat & Sayed, 2014). It is necessary to produce lifelong learners with intellectual capabilities, economically and socially productive people that participate actively and constructively in society (Badat & Sayed, 2014). This is clearly stated by the DBE in its 2019 NSC Examinations Report – "A good quality education is one that provides all learners with capabilities they require to become economically productive, develop sustainable livelihoods, contribute to peaceful and democratic societies and enhance individual wellbeing" (p. 75). While South Africa has done well in the areas of access and equity, there are still many debates around the quality of the public education system (Modisaotsile, 2012; Spaull, 2013b; Spaull, 2015).

5. *Efficiency*

An education system is considered to be efficient if its producers make the best possible use of available inputs (Witte & López-Torres, 2017, p. 5). The efficiency of the South African education system has improved over the years (NSC Examinations Report, 2019), although educational attainments still remain incredibly low relative to government expenditure on education.

6. *Inclusivity*

Polat (2011) provides a theoretical link between inclusive education and social justice. He argues that inclusive education practices are a step towards achieving SJE. Education White Paper 6 (DoE, 2001, p. 6) defines inclusive education as

- Acknowledging that all children and youth can learn and that all children and youth need support.
- Enabling education structures, systems and learning methodologies to meet the needs of all learners.
- Acknowledging and respecting differences in learners, whether due to age, gender, ethnicity, language, class, disability, HIV or other infectious diseases.
- Broader than formal schooling and acknowledging that learning also occurs in the home and community, and within formal and informal settings and structures.
- Changing attitudes, behaviour, teaching methods, curricula and environment to meet the needs of all learners.

- Maximising the participation of all learners in the culture and the curriculum of educational institutions and uncovering and minimising barriers to learning.

Although inclusive education in South Africa is still largely measured in terms of disabilities, I hold the view that disabilities are not the only basis by which learners can be excluded from the education system.

Despite all the redress measures in place, South Africa's education system remains extremely unequal and class-based (Badat & Sayed, 2014). There are two different public school systems in South Africa - the better performing system that accommodates the wealthiest 20%-25% of pupils in the country, and the largely underperforming schooling system that caters to the poorest 75%–80% of pupils (Spaull, 2013a). The doors of education still remain firmly shut for the majority of South Africans (Badat & Sayed, 2014).

In this study, I intend to show that CRT is a pedagogy that is centred around the principles of inclusive education, and as a result of this, promotes the principles of social justice.

2.4 Culturally Responsive Teaching

Culture is defined in the Cambridge Dictionary as "the way of life, especially the general customs and beliefs, of a particular group of people at a particular time." In this study, the term '*culturally diverse'* is used to describe students who come from historically marginalised races, ethnicities (this encompasses language) and disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds. This distinction is crucial to this study as, in the South African context, the education system discriminated against and continues to disadvantage these particular students.

Gay (2018) argues that cultural considerations are at the core of education - in administration, curriculum and instruction. According to Howard (2016), while we do not have a choice in diversity, we have a choice in how we respond to it. This study advocates for CRT as an effective approach to Commerce teaching in the context of South African high schools, where diversity and inclusion are highly regarded and the education system is in pursuit of social justice.

Much has been written about CRT in various subject areas and contexts (DeCapua, 2016; Mellom, Straubhaar, Balderas, Ariail, & Portes, 2018; Sisson, et al. 2020). CRT is defined as the use of prior experiences, frames of reference and cultural knowledge of students in order to make learning encounters more relevant (Gay, 2010; 2015). Ladson-Billings (1995 uses the

term '*culturally responsive'* to encompass the dynamic relationship between the home culture and school culture, where pedagogic bridges are built between what students know and believe, and new ideas that they encounter (Gay, 2002; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). According to Larson, Pas, Bradshaw, Rosenberg, and Day-Vines (2018), CRT refers to how we understand and incorporate students' cultures into the classroom. It is an approach that is supported by a growing body of literature, as an effective way of teaching diverse students (Abacioglu, Volman, & Fischer, 2019; Henkin, 2019; Moore, 2019).

Cultural diversity implies that learners grow up in different cultures which they bring to the classroom context. The cognitive development of learners takes place within the multiplicity of these cultures (Sosibo, 2013). Schools have their own culture and teachers also bring their own culture into the classroom. This may result in learners with home cultures that are significantly different to that of their teacher and the school (Sosibo, 2013; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). According to several studies, this disconnect that exists between the home and school culture results in high dropout rates, underachievement, and the disproportionate representation of culturally diverse students in special education programmes (Gay, 2002; Griner & Stewart, 2013; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). Consequently, this denies culturally diverse students an equal opportunity to learn and succeed in school (Gay, 2002; Richards, Brown, & Forde, 2007). Through CRT, we can begin to bridge this disconnect.

CRT emphasises teaching to cultural diversity and helps in the acquisition of accurate knowledge on the lives, cultures, experiences and contributions of different ethnic and racial groups. This knowledge is often not recognised in traditional schooling (Gay, 2013). When engaging in CRT, teachers are more sensitive to their students' backgrounds, and their teaching practices cannot be separate from the cultural aspect of their students' identities (Saint-Hilaire, 2014). The education of culturally diverse students must connect their in-school and out-of-school experiences to aid their learning. Learning encounters must be made more relevant through the use of their cultural filters as a base for teaching. According to Dimick (2012), pedagogies such as these that support active learning and draw on the resources and prior knowledge of students are a way of enacting SJE.

2.4.1 The Culturally Responsive Teacher

Various seminal authors in the CRT field have described the characteristics of a culturally responsive teacher (Gay, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Vavrus, 2008; Villegas & Lucas, 2002).

In this section, these are outlined and further elaborated on by engaging in more recent literature on CRT.

Knowing students

CRT is not just about learning about different cultures then applying particular practices to teaching those students; it is about getting to know the students and where they come from (Gay, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Sleeter, 2010; Vavrus, 2008; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). CRT begins with cultural competence, which teachers gain when they know their learners (Chen & Yang, 2017). The basic assumption is that teachers cannot teach or lead what they do not know, hence, many authors argue that the foundation of CRT begins with knowing and understanding your learners (Gay, 2002; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). This explicit knowledge of students and of cultural diversity is a prerequisite for CRT and enables teachers to meet students' needs.

SJE requires that reciprocal relationships are developed with students and their families (Sleeter, 2015). Knowledge of students' experiences, families and outside interests has direct implications in the teaching and learning process (Gay, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Villegas & Lucas, 2002), and culturally responsive teachers must recognise the impact that culture has on students' worldviews (DeCapua, 2016).

There are various activities that teachers can do in order to get to know their students. One such practice is giving students the opportunity to openly talk about their cultures and beliefs in various discussion topics (Chen & Yang, 2017).

Caring about students

CRT is not about merely 'doing activities'. Teachers need a firm foundation and deep perspective that truly supports CRT (Ebersole, Kanahele-Mossman, & Kawakami, 2015). Being culturally competent requires one to have a deeper understanding beyond cultural heroes and holidays (DeCapua, 2016). Culturally responsive teachers understand that the real work of social change and end to inequality happens when they engage the real-life experiences of their learners and, at the same time, critically examine how their own experiences shape their understanding of their learners (Fasching-Varner & Dodo Seriki, 2012).

Caring is therefore an inherent part of teaching, implying that the teacher acts in the best interests of her students. It is a moral imperative, social responsibility and a pedagogic necessity (Gay, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). Part of teaching as a

form of social responsibility is that culturally responsive teachers are a part of the community in which they teach, they see themselves as such and view teaching as giving back to the community (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Teachers should not operate under a 'context-neutral mindset'. They must take into consideration the communities in which they teach and how the aspect of community shapes students' backgrounds (Milner, 2010). This is the culturally responsive teacher's commitment and skill to act as a change agent (Villegas & Lucas, 2002).

Holding constructivist views of knowledge and learning

Culturally responsive teachers hold a particular view of knowledge and learning - that is, the belief that knowledge is constructed, shared, subject to change and must be viewed critically (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). One of the key principles of SJE is teaching students how to critique mainstream knowledge, and the understanding that knowledge is socially constructed (Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2014). CRT acknowledges that there are different ways of being, knowing, thinking and learning. Students are constantly generating meaning in response to new ideas and experiences they encounter at school. Through prior knowledge and experiences, they are able to make sense of new knowledge that they encounter (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). Students are seen as possessing cultural capital that is critical to learning, rather than as empty vessels to be poured into. In any given classroom, students will construct different understandings of the same topic because of their different experiences (Villegas & Lucas, 2002) as they are encouraged to construct their own knowledge relative to realistic situations that they encounter daily (van Wyk & Alexande, 2010).

Culturally responsive teachers who hold constructivist views of learning should use constructivist principles in teaching. In doing so, they elicit students' knowledge and beliefs, and are better able to connect new content to students' existing understandings (Epstein, Mayorga, & Nelson, 2011). This provides students with ongoing opportunities to "incorporate new and more complex concepts into existing frameworks." (Epstein et al., 2011, p. 54). When teachers engage students themselves, they are able to frame students as 'knowers' who are able to make valuable contributions (Fasching-Varner & Dodo Seriki, 2012).

Holding students to high expectations

Culturally responsive teachers genuinely believe in the academic success of their students and also hold the belief that all students are capable of academic success (Gay, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1995). By building on students' cultures, languages and prior experiences, teachers are able to teach to high academic expectations (Sleeter, 2015). There is no language of lack in

a culturally responsive classroom and students are not given the option to choose failure (Ladson-Billings, 1995). This is referred to by Gay (2002, p. 109) as "demonstrating cultural care". Gay (2002) argues that a cultural responsive teacher has to care about the academic achievement and performance of their students, expecting nothing less than success.

Villegas and Lucas (2002, p. 23) refer to this as having an "affirming attitude towards students from culturally diverse backgrounds". It is the teachers' attitude towards their students that shape the expectations of the students. Educators themselves need to examine their own expectations for diverse students and challenge the commonly held view that diverse students are underprivileged, powerless and disadvantaged (Gay, 2013; Sleeter, 2010, 2011). An affirmative attitude can be conveyed through the setting of high expectations (Gay, 2002; Villegas & Lucas, 2002), encouraging excellence, holding students accountable for meeting the set expectations (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Villegas & Lucas, 2002) as well as building on their cultural resources. The culturally responsive teacher empowers students academically through teaching them knowledge that is competitive and will enable them to participate meaningfully in schooling (Dimick, 2012), which is another tenet of SJE. Any teacher with a genuine commitment to creating equitable learning experiences and opportunities for their students will use the cultural capital of diverse students in their educational reform efforts (Gay, 2013; Sleeter, 2010).

Sociocultural and critical consciousness

The culturally responsive teacher must also understand differences in social status, the operation of social relations in society, as well as how inequalities are perpetuated and justified through the existing social order (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). The system of dominance and existing ideologies are crucial aspects to examine when engaging in culturally responsive teaching. Beliefs that are held about those thought to be 'smart' and are promised access to higher positions in society versus those found 'lacking in merit' (commonly culturally and linguistically diverse students) who are conditioned to believe they deserve lower positions must be taken into account (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). This is because it is these beliefs that shape what teachers believe about culturally diverse students and the attitudes they have towards them. The perceptions held about diverse learners also play a huge role (Meier & Hartell, 2009). Teachers enter the classroom with preconceived ideas about diverse students and their abilities that come from both their personal lived experiences as well as how they have been socialised. In a study conducted by Warren (2018) on teacher preparedness for CRT,

trends in teacher behaviours demonstrated evidence of their beliefs and attitudes as well as values towards differences in culture, the students being taught, and their home community. Without intentionally and consistently critiquing teacher beliefs and school practices, schools are more likely to continue to perpetuate oppressive sociocultural conditions that have continuously hindered academic achievement and positive identity development of Black students (Mayfield & Garrison-Wade, 2015).

In becoming conscious on a sociocultural level, the culturally responsive teachers must be aware of the complex interaction between schools and society and how schools reproduce existing inequalities (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). This is what the culturally responsive teacher ultimately wants students to be able to critique and question (Gay, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). Ladson-Billings (1995, p. 162) refers to this as "critical consciousness", citing that in as much as teachers need to encourage the academic success of their students, they must also assist students to critique current and social inequalities that exist. For this to take place, they must be aware of and have the ability to recognise social inequalities that exist in society (Ladson-Billings, 1995), as teachers are participants in a larger struggle for social justice. It is their actions that either support or challenge existing inequities (Villegas & Lucas, 2002).

Designing culturally relevant curricula

One of the key aims of this study was to explore how Accounting and Economics teachers implement CRT within the subject curriculum and in their classrooms. Engaging in CRT entails designing culturally relevant curricula where the cultural diversity knowledge base is turned into curriculum designs and instructional strategies that are culturally responsive (Gay, 2002). In order to do this, teachers must have mastery of the subject and content that they teach.

In South Africa, classroom teaching is guided by formal instructional plans that are approved by the Department of Basic Education and are governed by policy. The culturally responsive teacher needs to know how to determine the strengths and weaknesses of these plans and effect the necessary changes (Gay, 2002). This means focusing on the "quantity, accuracy, complexity, placement, purpose, variety, significance, and authenticity of the narrative texts, visual illustrations, learning activities, role models, and authorial sources used in the instructional materials" (Gay, 2002, p. 108). If students are to feel represented in the ideas they are learning about, the teacher must use materials that accurately depict the students and their lives (Ortiz, 2012).

CRT deals directly with controversial issues such as race, class, ethnicity and gender (Gay, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1995). It requires a transformation of the curriculum (Gay, 2002) which can be achieved by adding multicultural content to the curriculum, teaching teachers how to conduct deep cultural analyses of textbooks and other instructional materials, as well as how to tailor them for better representations of cultural diversity (Gay, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1995). What is useful for culturally responsive teachers to know are the contributions made by people of various ethnicities to their subject area (Gay, 2002); more specifically, in the South African context, the contributions made by Black South Africans to their subject area.

To also be taken into consideration in culturally responsive teaching is the societal curriculum and symbolic curriculum (Gay, 2002). What is portrayed about various cultures and ethnic groups through television, radio and other media is important, as these media portray particular ideologies, content, knowledge, values and attitudes (Gay, 2002). There are also different images, symbols, mottos, icons, awards and other artefacts that students encounter that teach them knowledge, morals and values. These messages, according to Gay (2002), are too important for culturally responsive teachers to ignore, as students value what they commonly see and devalue what they do not. The culturally responsive teacher must therefore ask themselves: What images/representations are my students engaging with regularly? The symbolic curriculum is an aspect that the teacher must be critically conscious of and it must be an extension of the formal curriculum that is being taught (Gay, 2002). This is the element of critical consciousness that is discussed by Ladson-Billings (1995). A culturally responsive teacher must always be critically conscious of what they are teaching.

Culturally responsive teaching techniques

CRT is not just about adopting a particular set of instructional techniques, but rather about combining all the elements of CRT (Villegas & Lucas, 2002) and adopting it as a pedagogy. It is once all the elements have been combined that the teacher is able to make pedagogic choices that adequately facilitate student learning (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). Actual instructional delivery or *cultural congruity in classroom instruction* refers to the matching of instructional techniques to suit the learning styles of students (Gay, 2002). Villegas and Lucas (2002) use the blanket term *culturally responsive teaching practices*. Culturally responsive teachers recognise that there are different ways of thinking and learning (DeCapua, 2016) and use their understanding to multiculturalise the teaching of diverse students, since culture is deeply embedded in all forms of teaching (Gay, 2002). The way in which a teacher modifies the

instructional strategies is dependent upon the cultural characteristics of the learners in the class and teachers use what they know about their students to give them access to learning opportunities (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). Chen and Yang (2017) advise that teachers should actively incorporate culture into activities done in the classroom in a manner that is relevant to students' past and future learning experiences.

When teachers have developed their cultural competence, they are able to deliver content through instruction that is culturally scaffolded (DeCapua, 2016). The culturally responsive teacher creates a classroom environment that encourages all students to make sense of new ideas (Gay, 2002; Villegas & Lucas, 2002) in their own way, supporting their construction of knowledge by engaging them in projects that are most meaningful to them (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). In Mayfield and Garrison-Wade's (2015) study of CRT as a whole school reform, one of their culturally responsive schools was identified as one that had a rich learning environment filled with cultural artefacts. In front of the school, there was a map delineating different places around the globe that represented where students at the school came from (Mayfield & Garrison-Wade, 2015, p. 11).

Representation matters in CRT. The use of pertinent examples and scenarios in the classroom is equally important (Gay, 2002; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). However, teachers must also ensure that they also provide additional examples outside the scope or familiarity of the students' cultures so as to widen their knowledge. Culturally appropriate examples should be used to aid understanding of core concepts and as a pedagogical bridge to connect prior knowledge to new knowledge (Gay, 2002). The best way for teachers to be more culturally responsive is to strive to create a supportive classroom environment that develops a sense of belonging for students (Prins et al., 2019).

Communicating across cultures

The ability to engage in cross-cultural communication is a big part of culturally responsive teaching (Gay, 2002). Various cultural characteristics exist within various ethnic groups and cannot be ignored (Gay, 2002). In South Africa, language in education has continuously been a subject under investigation (Nugraha, 2019). Language is an inherent part of one's culture and identity. This linguistic diversity should not be viewed as a deficit, but rather leveraged in teaching and learning. Some teachers engage in codeswitching in order to achieve their pedagogic goals (Probyn, 2009). The Constitution promotes additive bilingualism and the use of learners' home language in teaching and learning (Nugraha, 2019). However, English still

remains the dominant language of teaching and learning. Challenges in the language of teaching and learning remain a key area - identified by the DBE - that hinders the academic success of Accounting and Economics students, which I outlined in the problem statement in Chapter 1. Furthermore, Motala and Sayed (2012) argue that a low level of mastery in the language of teaching and learning is a major contribution to low learner achievement levels.

While language is undoubtedly critical to the success of culturally diverse students, and codeswitching is a skill that is useful for teachers to have, cross-cultural communication extends beyond codeswitching and speaking multiple languages. Having a sound knowledge of students, what they know and what they can do affects how well the teacher is able to communicate with them, as various cultures have different communication styles and communication codes (Gay, 2002). These shape the learning behaviours of the students and culturally responsive teachers are able to know how to better modify classroom interactions to accommodate them. Larson et al. (2018) suggest that teachers use different communication strategies to engage students such as humour, or providing clear, direct commands. Teachers must be aware of the protocols for participation in discourse (Gay, 2002) which vary across cultures, with some cultures being more active and participatory in the communication process, expecting engagement in speaking more than others.

2.5 Culturally Responsive Teaching: A South African application

While there is a growing body of work on CRT, there is significantly less research on CRT within the context of Accounting and Economics teaching. There is a pressing need for research that draws on the key principles of CRT, while exploring their applicability to South Africa's unique schooling context. According to Gay (2002), CRT is applicable to various contexts and within various subject disciplines.

Given South Africa's multicultural, multilingual schools, there is a need for teachers to be equipped to deliver quality, multicultural education that accommodates everyone's personal experiences (Meier & Hartell, 2009; Moloi, Gravett, & Petersen, 2009; Vandeyar, 2010). Thus, teacher preparation has been a key focus area of the country's educational policies (Lemmer & Meier, 2011).

The relevance of CRT within the South African context lies in the fact that it is an equal education opportunity that accepts the differences of all people and sees them as valuable, not just for their own personal development but for the development of society (Gay, 2013). This

is one of the major goals for South Africa's education system post-1994. For teachers to be able to deliver this kind of educational experience, they need to be equipped with the pedagogical strategies that are contextually relevant and address diversity (Robinson & Zinn, 2007; Sayed, Badroodien, Salmon, & McDonald, 2016).

The preparation of teachers for CRT has also been stressed throughout the CRT literature (Gay, 2002, 2013; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Villegas, 2016; Villegas & Lucas, 2002) where it is argued that preservice teachers must be adequately equipped with the specific knowledge, skills and dispositions required to successfully teach diverse students. However, in the context of South Africa, there has been little research into the incorporation of cultural diversity in teacher preparation programmes (Sosibo, 2013). This remains problematic because these are the very teachers that play a crucial role in the placement or displacement of diverse students in the classroom setting (Vandeyar, 2010). This further validates the need to engage in CRT in the context of teaching in South Africa.

While there is no body of literature that explicitly explores the use of CRT in South African classrooms, there has been research conducted that speaks to diversity and multicultural education in post-apartheid education (Meier & Hartell, 2009; Mncube & Harber, 2010; Sayed & Ahmed, 2011; Sosibo, 2013). One of the biggest trends in post-apartheid school integration has been the migration of largely Black students into predominately White (Model C) schools (Vandeyar, 2010). However, the desegregation of schools has not necessarily resulted in acceptance and understanding between teachers and students from different cultural backgrounds (Meier & Hartell, 2009; Vandeyar, 2010). This lack of understanding and acceptance of differences filters into pedagogic practice, which ultimately adversely affects the academic success of students who are not from the dominant school culture. In a study conducted by Chambers (2009) on the 'rechievement gap', only a small number of Black students were able to negotiate their own way into the school's dominant culture. This had a significant impact on their academic success (Chambers, 2009, p. 58).

Host schools have been known to expect Black learners to integrate themselves into the host culture, even in instances where Black learners form a numerical majority (Sayed & Ahmed, 2011). This is referred to as an assimilationist approach to handling diversity, necessitating that culturally diverse learners adapt to the existing, dominant school culture and curriculum that were initially designed for a specific learner population (Meier & Hartell, 2009). This can be equated to forcing students to divorce from their home cultures to assimilate towards the school

culture, which not only has an impact on their academic performance, but has also been a great contributor to the growing disparities in performance between Black and White students (Gay, 2002, 2013). Closely linked to the expectation of assimilation, is the colour-blind approach, where educators claim to not see differences between learners and claim to treat all learners the same (Meier & Hartell, 2009; Vandeyar, 2010). This is a damaging view that fails to address the needs of diverse students and assumes that making efforts to accommodate them compromises educational standards (Meier & Hartell, 2009). In order to address diversity effectively, educators need to be aware and conscious of the differences that exist within their communities, schools and classrooms (Meier & Hartell, 2009).

It is suggested that curriculum reform is required in order to successfully deal with cultural diversity in the classroom (Meier & Hartell, 2009). Consequently, the culturally responsive teacher must continuously monitor how students develop new ideas and continuously adjust teaching methods to meet the needs of the students. This is supported by Gay (2002) and Villegas and Lucas (2002) who argue that CRT will, to a large extent, require the adjustment of standard school and classroom practices. Post-apartheid education in South Africa has undergone various curriculum reforms in efforts to address the legacies of apartheid education (Bantwini, 2010) and to be more inclusive. However, more recent literature suggests that South Africa has not yet successfully mastered how to effectively deal with diversity in schools and classrooms post-1994 (Lemmer & Meier, 2011; Sosibo, 2013). My hope in conducting this research is to contribute a view from the global south that engages CRT in the context of FET Accounting and Economics teaching in South Africa.

2.6 The nature of Accounting and Economics teaching

Every subject is compatible with cultural diversity (Gay, 2002). While CRT has been studied in various subject contexts - Music (Principe, 2015), History (Epstein et al., 2011), Mathematics (Bonner & Adams, 2012), English Second Language (Chen & Yang, 2017) - within this growing body of literature, there is a dearth of studies investigating CRT in the context of Accounting and Economics teaching.

Accounting and Economics are gateway subjects that have a unique place in the curriculum because they offer students the opportunity to interact with issues that are real and relevant to the South African context (Akerman, 2012). South Africa is a complex society, one of the most unequal in the world, which to this day remains faced with major economic challenges. In order

to understand this, students require education in basic economic concepts as well as basic accounting skills, and the ability to apply these skills in the real-life context (van Wyk, 2012). However, Accounting and Economics education in South Africa remains a problematic area, crippled with declining enrolment rates across all the subjects over the years, as well as declining pass rates in the NSC examinations (NSC Diagnostic Report, 2017-2019).

The DBE has called on teachers of FET commerce subjects to improve their teaching strategies and to teach in such a way that learners understand the content. They also call for teachers to aid students in learning to understand, as well as learning to apply their knowledge in real-life contexts or case studies (NSC Diagnostic Report Part 1, 2017). However, literature shows that there are various challenges faced by commerce teachers in schools.

2.6.1 Challenges in Accounting teaching

There are several challenges faced in the teaching of Accounting as an FET subject. One such challenge is that learners are not adequately introduced to critical Accounting concepts when they are taught EMS in the Senior Phase (Modise, 2016). Added to this, many poorly resourced schools lack resources such as financial calculators and other accounting stationery that would enable teachers to give learners more concrete experiences of real life accounting practices and concepts (Modise, 2016; Kwarteng, 2019).

Another challenge in Accounting teaching is students' proficiency in Mathematics, where Accounting students struggle to undertake basic calculations (Mkhize & Maistry, 2017; Kwarteng, 2019). Additionally, success in Accounting also requires a certain level of communication skills, which many students struggle with (Tailab, 2013). As outlined in the problem statement, this is one of the challenges that has been identified by the DBE that affects the academic performance in Accounting.

Poor instructional quality has also been cited as a major obstacle to effective Accounting teaching (Kwarteng, 2019). In a study conducted by Fouché (2013), it was found that Accounting teaching still focuses on the transference of knowledge to learners and offers little innovation. It also does not take into consideration the new kind of learners that are in schools. Similarly, a study conducted by Kwarteng (2019) found that Accounting teachers experienced difficulty teaching topics that are abstract, complex and technical in nature. This resulted in students struggling to learn some topics due to the teachers' inability to meet their needs and their understanding (Kwarteng, 2019, p. 1).

Linked to instructional quality, is mastery of the curriculum content. According to Ngwenya, (2014), teachers' content knowledge of Accounting affects the quality of their teaching. A teacher that lacks content knowledge will struggle to explain or represent concepts in a way that makes sense to learners. Accounting teachers need to have a deep conceptual understanding of the curriculum and the subject content and should be able to fit this content to students' understanding (Kwarteng, 2019). This is the same principle that CRT advocates.

Students also have perceptions that Accounting is boring due to misinformation about the subject (Kwarteng, 2019). The teaching of Accounting requires methods that promote active student learning. This can be achieved through various methods such as case study analyses, problem-solving, group and individual projects, role plays, as well as presenting students with real-life scenarios (Ngwenya, 2014). Ngwenya and Maistry (2012) argue that for Accounting learners to perform successfully, they need to be provided with multiple opportunities to practice as well as opportunities to work together in groups. Working in groups enables learners to work together to solve problems, as well as build on their own and each other's knowledge and, subsequently, develop coherent thinking skills in Accounting. This group work approach advocated by Ngwenya and Maistry (2012) is consistent with CRT, which values group work and collaborative learning.

The challenges that arise in the teaching of Accounting and the proposed measures for promoting active student learning in the subject are similar to those faced in Economics, which are discussed in more detail below.

2.6.2 Challenges in Economics teaching

Economics teaching challenges are similar to those faced in Accounting, with teachers facing resource constraints that would otherwise enable them to teach Economics and economic concepts in a more lived, concrete way.

Excellence in teaching requires a variety of teaching strategies, techniques and devices (van Wyk, 2011). This is a core principle of CRT, that teachers need to use a variety of teaching methods and strategies in order to reach their learners (Gay, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). Increasing the achievement of Economics students requires that teaching be meaningful, relevant and empowering. One such example is van Wyk's (2011) investigation into the use of economic cartoons in order to engage learners, encourage critical thinking around economics issues, as well as spark an interest in Economics.

He argues that the effectiveness lies in the immediate visual impact of cartoons, thus enabling all students to respond to the point that is being made. In his study, he found that the use of cartoons not only created more positive classroom experiences and increased students' motivation for participation, but they improved students' competences to socialise and collaborate in the classroom, accommodated different learning styles, and, most importantly, increased the academic achievement of the students (van Wyk, 2011). All of these outcomes, reached through the use of cartoons in classroom teaching, are the intended outcomes of CRT (Au, 2009; Averill et al., 2015; Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011; Gay, 2002; 2013; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Villegas, 2016; Villegas & Lucas, 2002).

As with Accounting, Economics teachers' attitudes play a huge role in learners' attitudes towards Economics. Teachers should know their subject content and curriculum well, and be able to provide accurate, constructive information on the subject (van Wyk, 2012). One of the key findings detailed in Chapter 4 of this study is around learner and teacher attitudes towards Commerce subjects, which affect both the enrolment and performance levels in the subject. This study has also found that students' motivation to learn and do well in the subject is based on how teachers themselves view the subject.

Conclusion

CRT is a unique approach to teaching that is responsive to the unique needs of culturally diverse learners. The literature on Accounting and Economics teaching practices shows that there are opportunities for CRT as an approach to the successful teaching of Accounting and Economics. Existing teaching practices in the subjects are consistent with some of the principles of CRT. How commerce teachers understand the relevance of culture in learning affects classroom instruction. Through CRT, teachers hold the belief that all students can learn Accounting and Economics, and that cultural diversity is valued and appreciated in commerce classrooms as it enhances learning.

2.7 Culturally Responsive Teaching under 'the new normal': COVID-19 and beyond

The COVID-19 pandemic has raised significant challenges for schooling communities all over the world. UNESCO (2020) has estimated that the pandemic affected 90% of the world's student population and revealed the fragility of education systems throughout the world. While many institutions rapidly turned to distance education, it posed a great challenge for governments to ensure continued education for all learners due to issues such as connectivity,

equipment and direct student-teacher interaction. As a result, pre-existing inequalities were magnified and the most vulnerable students placed at a further disadvantage. Furthermore, there has since been an increase in the number of students who have either dropped out of school or are continuing to do so (UNESCO, 2020, p. 7). These are all challenges that were highlighted at the onset of this literature review, pertaining to the current status of education in South Africa, that are now being magnified by the COVID-19 pandemic. During this time, caring and support have to be normalised, and educators cannot shy away from the emotional impact of the pandemic on students (Motala & Menon, 2020). This aspect of care is consistent with CRT principles and literature reviewed earlier in this chapter that suggest that caring is an inherent part of teaching, and one cannot be a culturally responsive teacher without the element of care.

According to Motala and Menon (2020), the pandemic has no end in sight, and the disruptions it has caused to education in South Africa, and globally are likely to continue for the foreseeable future. Ferdig, Baumgartner, Hartshorne, Kaplan-Rawoski and Mouza (2020) argue that "nothing is more permanent than temporary" (p. 586) and that the COVID-19 pandemic has shaped the way that education will look forever. While this study was conducted prior to the global pandemic, it is evident that the pandemic undoubtedly has implications for the way we teach, particularly in South Africa, under an already very fragile education system that is extraordinarily unequal.

In this literature review, I have outlined various challenges currently faced by Accounting and Economics teachers in their subject contexts. These are challenges such as resource constraints, where poorly resourced schools hinder the ability of teachers to teach Accounting and Economics in a more lived, concrete way, which students desperately need. Furthermore, the literature argues that the teaching of Commerce subjects requires methods that promote active student learning, suggesting that methods such as problem solving, role plays, and group work be used (Ngwenya, 2014). For students to be successful in these subjects, they need to be presented with multiple opportunities to practice in these settings. This presents a challenge to schools that are privileged enough to continue with education during this time, as remote teaching and learning would make the effective implementation of these methods difficult. Students from underprivileged public schools that have not had access to remote teaching and learning would be further disadvantaged where these methods would not have been able to be implemented at all.

As detailed in this next section of this chapter, while this study acknowledges issues of access in education and the effects these issues have on the quality of teaching and learning, it is beyond the scope of this study to address these issues. At some point, schooling will fully reopen. However, the uncertainty is around what teaching and learning will look like going forward under 'the new normal'.

Van Wyk (2011) argues that excellence in teaching requires a variety of teaching strategies, techniques, and devices. The COVID-19 global pandemic has undoubtedly catapulted schools and education departments into rethinking traditional vs non-traditional classroom contexts. This presents an opportunity for CRT, which advocates for the use of a variety of teaching methods and strategies to reach learners (Gay, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Villegas & Lucas, 2002), to manifest itself in these different contexts.

2.8 Key Concepts: Equity, Quality and Inclusivity

According to Maxwell (2005), the conceptual framework of a study is a key part of the study's design. It is encompassing of "the system of concepts, assumptions, expectations, beliefs and theories that support and inform your research" (Maxwell, 2005, p. 39). An extensive review of the literature has enabled me to select equity, quality and inclusivity as the key concepts that frame this study. These are also three of the DBE's six principles of SJE that apply to the field of CRT. The remaining principles - redress, access and efficiency - lie beyond the scope of this study on CRT classroom practices and must be addressed at a more macro level.

Equity

Equity has remained a primary focus of the South African education system post-1994, mainly because of the democratic government's transformation agenda to help correct the racial injustices of the past. Schooling in South Africa strives for education that is equitable, where all learners have equal access to quality schooling

However, equity remains inextricably linked to cultural diversity, where well into democracy, access to equal, quality education is still determined largely by race (implicitly) and, more explicitly, a learner's socioeconomic background. Equity is one of the key foundations of CRT (Ladson-Billings, 1995).

Equity pedagogy is a component that is essential to multicultural education (McGee Banks & Banks, 1995). It assumes that if teachers and schools do not make a conscious attempt to go

against injustices, then they support them (Hyland, 2010). Injustices are reinforced by societal structures and, in order to counter this, conscious attempts need to be made by teachers to examine their existing practices and the way they support or privilege one group over another (Hyland, 2010). Schools must reform for educational equality (Saint-Hilaire, 2014) and embody multiple perspectives from different groups in the curriculum and in the classroom experience.

Through equity pedagogy, teachers use strategies and create a classroom environment that specifically assists students from diverse backgrounds (racial, ethnic, linguistic, cultural) to attain the knowledge, skills and attitudes in order to function in a democratic society (McGee Banks & Banks, 1995; Saint-Hilaire, 2014). Teachers themselves also need to be aware of their personal beliefs and attitudes towards different cultures and marginalised groups, as these attitudes inform their teaching practice (Hyland, 2010). At all times, teachers must be conscious of the messages they communicate to their students about race, class, gender, various languages and cultures. These messages can be explicit or implicit, and thus also require an examination of the hidden curriculum (Ladson-Billings, 1995). CRT is an equity-driven movement that ascertains that all students, regardless of their cultural, racial, ethnic and linguistic differences, have the right to equality in education (Bannister, 2016; Hyland, 2010) and must be equally represented in the classroom and in the schooling system.

Quality

According to the DBE, a good quality education is one that ensures that all learners receive an education that enables them to be economically productive citizens, and educational quality must be implemented at all levels of education (NSC Examination Report, 2019). This study focuses on ensuring education quality at the classroom level, and how, through effective implementation of CRT in the teaching of Accounting and Economics, teachers are able to achieve these aims. Motala and Sayed (2012, p. 114) argue that the poorer, marginalised learners need "varied and challenging curricula and forms of pedagogy that suit their particular contexts and circumstances" rather than a uniform, utilitarian approach to education. This view is consistent with the key principles of CRT.

Inclusivity

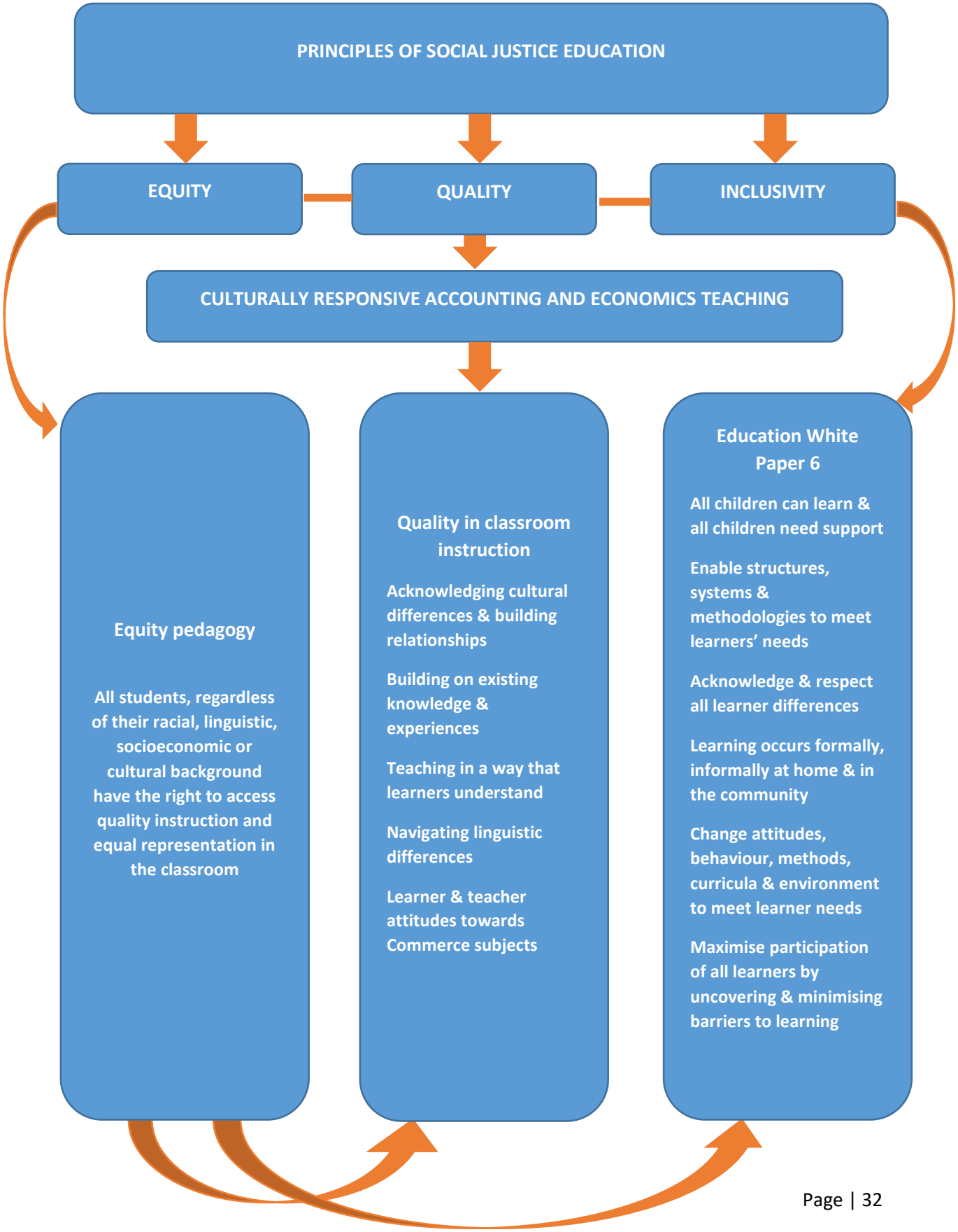
Through its policy on Inclusive Education (DoE, 2001), South Africa strives to ensure that historically disadvantaged students are no longer disadvantaged in the schooling system because of their cultural diversity. Inclusivity is strongly linked to SJE and Polat) (2011) argues

that inclusive education practices are a step towards achieving SJE. In its Education White Paper 6 (DoE, 2001, p. 6), inclusivity is largely focused on the inclusion of learners with special needs and disabilities. While this is an important mandate of any education system, for the purposes of this study, the focus is on inclusivity from a diversity standpoint. The study accepts these specific definitions of inclusivity:

- Acknowledging that all children and youth can learn and that all children and youth need support.
- Enabling education structures, systems and learning methodologies to meet the needs of all learners.
- Acknowledging nd respecting all differences in learners.
- Broader than formal schooling and acknowledging that learning also occurs in the home and community, and within formal and informal settings and structures.
- Changing attitudes, behaviour, teaching methods, curricula and environment to meet the needs of all learners.
- Maximising the participation of all learners in the culture and the curriculum of educational institutions and uncovering and minimising barriers to learning.

Figure 1

Concept Map for understanding CRT in the context of FET Accounting and Economics teaching in South African high schools



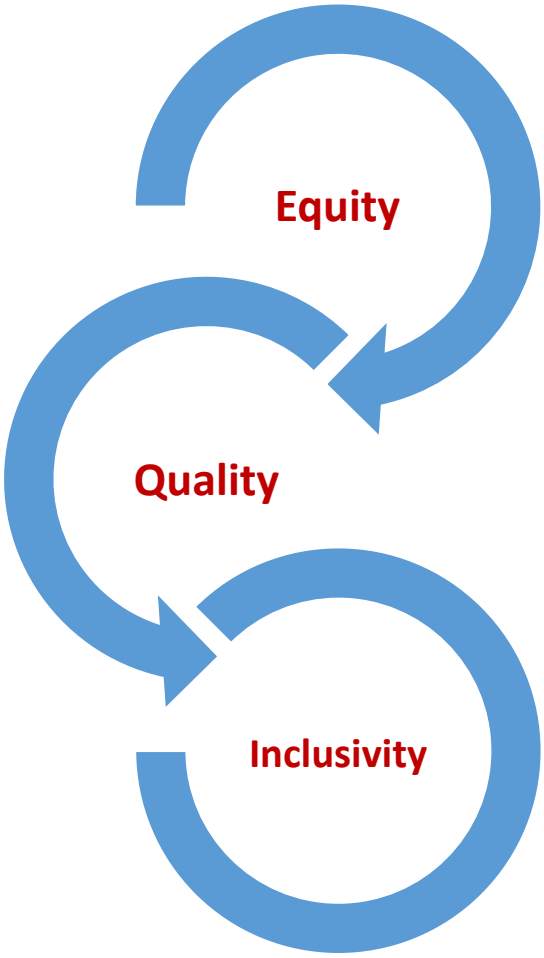
2.8.1 An explanation of the concept map

SJE is the overarching theory that underpins this study. Three key concepts that are most relevant to CRT were selected from the DBE's six social justice principles of education - equity, quality and inclusivity. This study looks at how CRT enables teachers to enact the selected principles of SJE. The principle of equity refers to equity pedagogy as a whole. I argue that culturally responsive pedagogy is a type of equity pedagogy that advocates that all students, regardless of their racial, linguistic, socioeconomic or cultural background have the right to access equal, quality schooling and instruction. Equity pedagogy is enacted through the provision of quality instruction at the level of the classroom. These are the actual CRT practices that Accounting and Economics teachers engage with. These five practices were the key findings from the data. Quality Accounting and Economics instruction, in the context of this study, is measured by how well teachers of these subjects carry out these practices. Equity pedagogy is also enacted through inclusivity. Inclusivity is defined in terms of Education White Paper 6, which is South Africa's policy on inclusive education. Essentially, in order to adopt a social justice approach to Accounting and Economics teaching in the South African context, one needs to engage in equity pedagogy at the level of the classroom (through quality, culturally responsive instruction) and at the level of policy (through compliance with the inclusive education policy).

2.9 Equity, Quality and Inclusivity (EQI) Culturally Responsive Teaching Conceptual Framework

Figure 2

Equity, Quality and Inclusivity (EQI)- Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) Conceptual Framework



Equity, quality and inclusivity are the three concepts that have been identified as critical to this study. The EQI framework presented above is applicable to both traditional (pre-COVID-19) and non-traditional (in the context of COVID-19, now the reality of hybrid teaching and learning). This EQI-CRT framework is a model that can be used by other researchers thinking about research in CRT in South Africa and globally.

2.10 Conclusion

This study seeks to uncover the pedagogic choices Accounting and Economics teachers make that value the cultural diversity of learners and hopes to contribute to the growing body of literature on diversity education, multicultural education and inclusivity education in South Africa.

At the start of this literature review, I outlined the South African schooling context and the need for cultural diversity to be a key priority area in teaching and learning. I also presented SJE as the theoretical framework that underpins this study because of its applicability to CRT as well as it being regarded as the pillar of post-apartheid education in South Africa. This was followed by a review of literature on CRT, highlighting the views of seminal authors in the field, as well as an overview of what constitutes a CRT practice.

I then presented an overview of Accounting and Economics education, highlighting the challenges faced in the teaching of these subjects, and proposed that CRT can help in the successful teaching of these subjects and ultimately leading to improved learner performance. I then outlined the role of CRT under 'the new normal' and the impact of the global COVID-19 pandemic on teaching and learning in South Africa and worldwide. The literature review concluded with the chosen key concepts at the heart of this study, drawn from the literature and from the DBE's six social justice principles of education. These were further illustrated and explained in the form of a concept map.

Equity considerations are important now more than ever. CRT is a pedagogy that is deeply rooted in equity. Teachers, schools, and schooling communities need to think deeply about how to ensure equity in teaching and learning during this time, and beyond the global COVID-19 pandemic. Equity, quality and inclusivity in education enable structures, systems and methodologies to meet the needs of all learners, particularly those that have been previously marginalised by the schooling system. The EQI-CRT Conceptual Framework model presented in this chapter is a model that can be used by researchers thinking about research in CRT both in the South African context and globally.

The claim for this literature review is that CRT is an important tool for Commerce teachers, regardless of the teaching context. In the following chapter, I describe, in detail, the chosen methodological approach to this study and its rationale.

CHAPTER 3
METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The aim of this study is to understand CRT within the context of Accounting and Economics teaching in South African secondary schools in the province of Gauteng. In this chapter, I describe the rationale for the chosen research approach - a mixed methods study - as well as the research paradigm and traditions within which this study is located. This is followed by a description of the research setting and context. I then justify my choice of the research sample and sources of data. I also shed light on the ethical considerations when collecting my data. This section is followed by an outline of the data collection methods and a description of the tools used in the analysis of the data. I discuss considerations of validity and reliability under issues of trustworthiness, as well as any limitations and delimitations of the study. While the data collection happened in the context of a traditional teaching environment, there are insights from the data that are useful in understanding non-traditional teaching environments.

3.2 Rationale for the research approach

This study is underpinned by a pragmatic research paradigm, an alternative approach to the more traditional research approaches such as positivism, post-positivism and constructivism. Teddlie & Tashakkori (2009) define pragmatism as a deconstructive paradigm that focuses on what works as the truth regarding the research questions being investigated, as opposed to the explicit concepts of 'truth' and 'reality'. A pragmatic approach to research focuses on the research problem and the consequences of the research (Feilzer, 2010). Pragmatists call for a convergence of both qualitative and quantitative research methods, which frees the researcher from being confined to a particular research method (Feilzer, 2010). In this approach, research is not just about representing reality in the most accurate way possible, but is about its usefulness. It is real-world, practice oriented. This study employs a pragmatic approach to research as it seeks to unpack CRT in the context of Accounting and Economics teaching in the FET phase. The design of this study draws on the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative approaches and is driven by the following research questions that were posed in Chapter 1:

1. How is CRT understood by in-service teachers teaching FET Accounting and Economics in South African high schools?

2. What CRT principles and practices do Accounting and Economics teachers apply in teaching these subjects?
3. In cases where CRT has been used, what challenges do these educators encounter in the implementation of CRT in their classrooms?
4. What are the implications of the global COVID-19 pandemic on CRT in Accounting and Economics teaching?

3.3 A mixed-methods design

According to Fielding (2012), we mix in order to integrate two fundamental ways of thinking about social phenomena, rather than because there is something distinctive about qualitative or quantitative data. In its integration of both qualitative and quantitative methods, this study acknowledges the value of each method. A mixed methods design recognises that both qualitative and quantitative methods are important (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, & Turner, 2007), thus the need to use them in the same inquiry (Venkatesh, Brown, & Bala, 2013). While a qualitative research design aims to provide an in-depth understanding of the perspectives of the research participants (Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholls, & Ormston, 2013), the quantitative aspect complements the qualitative data. A mixed methods design advocates for the use of whatever methodological tools are required to explore the research questions (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009), with its ultimate aim being to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomena in question (Johnson et al., 2007).

As standalone methods, both qualitative and quantitative approaches have advantages and disadvantages. A mixed methods design offsets these disadvantages by offering better insights into the research questions that one method could not offer on its own. The research questions that drive this study are represented in both narrative and numerical form. This is well-suited to a mixed methods design where, according to Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009), the research questions are a combination of separate qualitative and quantitative components, as well as subsequent questions that may emerge.

Conclusions drawn from a mixed methods study can be complementary or contradictory (Venkatesh et al., 2013). While complementary findings are valuable because they offer a more holistic view of the phenomenon in question, divergent findings also have value as they allow the researcher to re-examine the conceptual framework and assumptions made in the design of the study (Venkatesh et al., 2013). Through a mixed methods design, the researcher has the opportunity to obtain a complete picture of the phenomenon in question. It is for these reasons

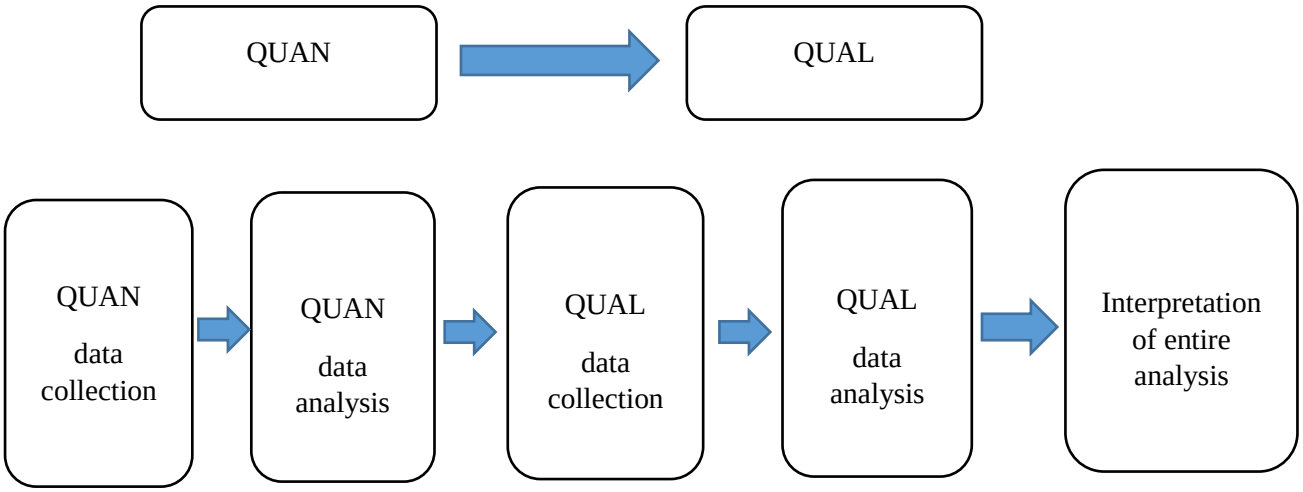
that I believed that a mixed methods design was the best study design that would enable me to draw the most comprehensive conclusions about CRT practices within the context of FET Accounting and Economics teaching.

3.3.1 An explanatory sequential design

Explanatory mixed methods designs are usually characterised by an extensive quantitative phase, followed by a subsequent qualitative phase (Borrego, Douglas, & Amelink, 2009). This kind of design uses a quantitative study as a basis to identify problem areas and research questions which need further investigation with the help of a qualitative study (Kelle, 2006). This study employed a sequential explanatory design that occured in two phases (see Figure 3. In the first phase, quantitative data was collected from a large database of FET Commerce teachers. The results of the first phase were then analysed and used to inform the second phase - the collection of qualitative data from a smaller sample through in-depth, semi-structured interviews. According to Feilzer (2010), a two-phase design offers flexibility as the second stage can be adapted to the findings from the first stage where the quantitative data is used to generate the qualitative sample (Fetters, Curry, & Creswell, 2013). The phase 1 and phase 2 data was then integrated through merging - bringing the two databases together for analysis and comparison (Fetters et al., 2013).

Figure 3

An explanatory sequential design model (Creswell & Creswell, 2017, p. 209)



3.4 Research setting and context

This study was set in the context of the FET commerce stream, in the teaching of Accounting and Economics. As detailed in the problem statement in Chapter 1, Accounting and Economics are numerate subjects in the commerce stream. As such, learner performance in these subjects can be linked to their performance in Mathematics (Mkhize & Maistry, 2017). Performance in Mathematics remains incredibly low, with only 37.1% and 35% of learners achieving 40% in Mathematics in 2018 and 2019 respectively. As a result, learner performance at the 40% level and above in Economics and Accounting remains incredibly low (see Tables 2 and 3 below). These tables justify my choice to investigate CRT in the context of Accounting and Economics and how CRT could improve teaching in these subjects.

Table 2

Candidates' performance at the 30% level and above 2015-2019 (NSC Examinations Report, 2019, p. 8)

Subjects	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Accounting	59.6	69.1	66.1	72.5	78.4
Economics	68.2	65.3	71.0	73.3	69.3
Mathematics	49.1	51.1	51.9	58.0	54.6

Table 3

Candidates' performance at the 40% level in 2018 and 2019 (NSC Examinations Report, 2019, p. 57)

Subjects	2018	2019
Accounting	48.6	52.6
Economics	44.8	39.9
Mathematics	37.1	35.0

3.5 Research sample and data source

Selecting a research sample involves identifying a portion of the population that will provide the most rich and comprehensive information in relation to the research questions posed (Ritchie et al., 2013). Sampling must be conducted in a way that enables the researcher to address the extent to which the findings of the study will or will not generalise across groups (Tillman, Clemence, & Stevens, 2011). In this study, I used convenience sampling for both phases of the research. According to Etikan, Musa and Alkassim (2016), convenience sampling is a type of sampling where members of the target population that meet certain partical criteria are used. In this study, the sample selected was due to easy accessibility and the willingness to participate.

Phase 1 Sampling

The representative sample for the quantitative phase of this study was from a database of roughly 400 teachers that were involved in a large-scale Economics and Management Sciences (EMS) training in Gauteng. I was able to gain access to this database through my supervisor, who was directly involved in the project. Some of the EMS teachers were also teachers of Accounting and Economics and I believed this sample would best aid me in exploring the quantitative aspect of my three research questions: What culturally responsive teaching practices and principles do Accounting and Economics teachers apply in the teaching of these subjects?

Table 4

Demographics of participants in the study

Teacher Characteristic	**n (%) n = 37**
Age	
25-30	9 (24)
31-35	7 (19)
36-40	3 (8)
41-45	4 (11)
46-50	9 (24)
>50	5 (14)
Gender	
Male	12 (32)
Female	25 (68)
Race/Ethnicity	
Black	30 (82)
Indian	2 (5)
Coloured	2 (5)
White	1 (3)
Other (1 Khoisan & 1 Mixed Race)	2 (5)
Years in Accounting teaching role	
0-3	20 (54)
4-6	3 (8)
7-10	4 (11)
>10	10 (27)
Years in Economics teaching role	
0-3	25 (67)
4-6	6 (16)
7-10	1 (3)
>10	5 (14)

The total number of participants (n = 37) comprised Accounting and/or Economics teachers. Participant demographics included female (n=25) and male (n=12). Thirty (82%) of participants (n=30) were Black, and the remaining were from other races - Indian (n=2), Coloured (n=2), Mixed Race (n=1), Khoisan (n=1) and White (n=1). The years of teaching experience in each subject ranged from 0 to >10 years, with 54% of the participants being novice Accounting and 67% being novice Economics teachers with 0-3 years teaching experience in each subject.

Phase 2 Sampling

In a sequential quantitative-qualitative design, the research can assist in guiding the selection of cases for the qualitative study (Kelle, 2006). For phase 2, the representative sample was a subset of the larger sample used in phase 1. I selected 12 educators that were willing to complete semi-structured interviews. The twelve educators comprised three male Accounting teachers, three female Accounting teachers, three male Economics teachers and three female Economics teachers. This was done in order to achieve a gender balance and equal subject differentiation.

3.6 Ethical Considerations

Because this study involved human participants, I first applied for ethics clearance from the university's ethics committee as well as from the DBE to conduct the research. For phase 1, I attached an information letter to the questionnaire, outlining the role of participants in the study and what would be required from them. Participants were also given a consent form, in which they were informed that participation in the study was entirely voluntary, and that they were allowed to withdraw from the study at any time. The same procedure was followed for phase 2, when conducting the semi-structured interviews. Participants were required to give informed consent for the interviews to be recorded, and the interview protocols were thoroughly explained to them.

The risk to participants was low and all that was required was their time. Phase 1 of the study was conducted partially online (some participants completed an online questionnaire), while the remainder of the questionnaires were issued to participants in various schools. Phase 2 of the study was conducted at the various schools where the teachers taught.

Confidentiality was ensured by informing participants that the data would only be used for the purposes of this study. The information collected would be kept in a secure environment and the data analysed in a way that would de-identify participants. To ensure anonymity, the names and identities of participants were not be revealed, neither were any personal identifying characteristics used. The raw data was transferred, stored electronically and will be destroyed five years following the research project.

3.7 Data Collection Methods

Mixed methods procedures

Creswell and Creswell (2017) outline four main mixed methods procedures that should be considered when designing a mixed method study - timing, weighting, mixing and theorising.

Timing requires the researcher to consider whether the data will be collected concurrently or sequentially (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). This study used a sequence in the data collection process as the data was collected in two phases. In the first phase, quantitative data was collected through a Likert-scale questionnaire, followed by the second phase - semi-structured interviews. This was crucial to do in this study as the first phase was used to inform the second phase of data collection.

Weighting refers to the approach that dominates the study or whether both qualitative and quantitative approaches are seen as equal (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). A priority for one type is dependent on the researcher's interests. In this study, more weighting was placed on the qualitative aspect as the main research question driving the study was qualitative – How is CRT understood by in-service educators teaching in the FET Commerce stream (Accounting and Economics) in South African high schools?

Mixing can occur at different stages - during the data collection stage, the data analysis stage or the interpretation stage (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). In this study, the mixing occurred in the interpretation stage, where I examined the results of both the qualitative and quantitative data together. Here, I merged the two datasets and brought the separate results together into one overall interpretation, where I related the quantitative findings to the qualitative findings.

Theorising is the final mixed methods procedure to consider. It outlines the theoretical perspectives that guide the design of the study (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). The theoretical underpinning of this research design was the theory of SJE, which is detailed in Chapter 2,

Social Justice Education: A Theoretical Framework. According to Fielding (2012, p. 65) a mixed methods study promotes social justice.

Research questions and data sources

For a mixed methods study, the data source is both narrative and numeric (Tillman et al., 2011). The data collection sources and procedure were driven by the three research questions that are central to this study. How I answered each of these speaks to the mix between obtaining my data both qualitatively and quantitatively (See Table 5 below).

Table 5

Data sources

Research Questions	**Data source 1 Likert-scale questionnaire**	**Data source 2 Semi-structured interviews**	**Data Source 3 Literature**
1. How is CRT understood by in-service teachers teaching FET Accounting and Economics in South African high schools?;		X	
2. What culturally responsive teaching practices and principles do Accounting and Economics teachers apply in the teaching of these subjects?	X		
3. In cases where CRT has been used, what challenges do these educators encounter in the implementation of CRT in their classrooms?		X	
4. What are the implications of the global COVID-19 pandemic on CRT in Accounting and Economics teaching?			X

Phase 1 of the study was driven by the second research question: What culturally responsive teaching practices and principles do Accounting and Economics teachers apply in the teaching of these subjects?

This was explored using a Likert-scale questionnaire. The use of questionnaires as a quantitative method is convenient and often favoured by researchers as it provides precise, unambiguous data (Feilzer, 2010). This method has been used in various studies of CRT (Heitner & Jennings, 2016; Ortiz, 2012; Principe, 2015). The expectation is that the respondents understand the items that are listed on the questionnaire, hold views on the items raised and are prepared to share those views with the researcher (Feilzer, 2010). Commonly used in education research (Sullivan & Artino Jr, 2013), the Likert-scale questionnaire assists in combining the responses from a series of questions in order to create a measurement scale (Boone & Boone, 2012). This measurement scale is what enabled me to measure the CRT practices that Accounting and Economics teachers engage with.

A Likert-scale is a five or a seven-point ordinal scale in which respondents rate the degree to which they agree or disagree with a particular statement (Croasmun & Ostrom, 2011; Ortiz, 2012; Sullivan & Artino Jr, 2013). This study used a five point Likert-scale questionnaire, where respondents were given five possibilities to choose from: 1 (*strongly disagree)*; 2 *(disagree)*; 3 *(neutral)*; 4 *(agree)*; and, 5 *(strongly agree)* (Croasmun & Ostrom, 2011; Ortiz, 2012). According to Harpe (2015), it is common to use rating scales and rubrics as measurement tools in educational contexts. The data in the Likert-scale is analysed based on the composite score from the questions represented in the scale, rather than according to individual questions (Boone & Boone, 2012). Both Principe (2015) and Ortiz (2012) used a Likert-scale questionnaire in their CRT research, where respondents had to decide the level to which they agreed or disagreed with a response item. This is similar to the instrument I chose to use in this study. However, the specific instrument used for this study was based on, and informed by, key principles and practices of CRT as stated by key authors in the field - (Gay, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1995 and Villegas and Lucas, 2002). In identifying these key principles and practices that would form the response items for the questionnaire, I was also guided by the three key concepts of social justice as outlined in my Conceptual framework in Chapter 1 of this study - equity, quality and inclusivity.

Initially, the questionnaire was sent online to a database of about 400 teachers from Gauteng. Unfortunately, this method yielded only 16 responses, despite many efforts to try and get Accounting and Economics teachers to complete the online questionnaire. This was a challenge that I had not anticipated as I had made the assumption that an online questionnaire would be the most convenient for teachers. As a second measure, hard copies of the questionnaires were printed and issued physically to teachers in 10 schools in Johannesburg. This yielded a further 21 responses. In total, I had 37 responses to the questionnaire. A sample of the questionnaire items is displayed in Table 6 below.

Piloting the study

According to Maxwell (2005), pilot studies are designed to test ideas or methods and to explore their implications (p. 66).

Prior to embarking on the first phase of data collection, the Likert-scale questionnaire instrument was piloted with a sample of about 60 teachers. Permission to test the instrument with these participants was granted, and they were told that the data would not be used in the actual study, but rather to inform the final instrument to be used in the study. Piloting the initial Likert-scale questionnaire assisted in the compilation of the final questionnaire that was issued to Accounting and Economics teachers for completion. It also assisted in ensuring reliability and validity of the instrument used.

Table 6

Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices response items

Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices
1. I make an effort to get to know my students' families and backgrounds (Evans, 2017; Gay, 2002; Rhodes, 2017)
2. I know how to communicate with culturally diverse students and their parents/guardians (Hsiao, 2015; Aganza, 2008)
3. I actively involve parents/guardians in their cildren's learning (Hsiao, 2015)
4. I validate my students' languages and cultures (Aganza, 2008)
5. My classroom environment is nurturing and encourages active participation from students (Gay, 2002; Hsiao, 2015; Aganza, 2008)

6. I develop and maintain positive, meaningful, trusting and caring relationships with students (Hsiao, 2015)
7. I encourage communication across cultures in my classroom, using mixed-language & mixed-culture pairings in class (Gay, 2002; Rhodes, 2017)
8. I ask for my students' input when planning lessons and activities (Rhodes, 2017)
9. I communicate expectations of success to culturally diverse students (Gay, 2002; Hsiao, 2015)
10. I understand the cultural contributions of the cultures represented in my classroom in Economics/Accounting (Evans, 2017; Gay, 2002)
11. Work samples that reflect students' cultures are displayed in my classroom (Gay, 2002; Aganza, 2008)
12. I infuse the Economics/Accounting curriculum with the cultures of students that are represented in my classroom (Evans, 2017; Hsiao, 2015)
13. I supplement the curriculum with lessons about international current events (Rhodes, 2017; Aganza, 2008)
14. I relate current events to the topic and how it relates to students (Aganza, 2008)
15. I use a variety of instructional methods to match my students' learning preferences in learning Economics/Accounting & maintain their interest in learning (Evans, 2017; Hsiao, 2015; Aganza, 2008)
16. I use instructional examples that are culturally familiar to learners to serve as scaffolding for learners (Evans, 2017; Hsiao, 2015; Onorato, 2017)
17. I examine materials for culturally appropriate images and themes. (Gay, 2002; Rhodes, 2017)
18. I encourage students to use cross-cultural comparisons when analysing material (Rhodes, 2017)
19. I include open discussions of historical, cultural and political influences of the topic discussed (Aganza, 2008)
20. I use a variety of assessment techniques that are designed to evaluate students' performance in favour of cultural diversity (Evans, 2017; Hsiao, 2015; Rhodes, 2017)

Phase 2 of this study was driven by all three research questions, but specifically geared towards exploring Accounting and Economics teachers' understanding of CRT, as well as the challenges they face in the implementation of CRT practices. This process was the qualitative part of the study. According to Rabionet (2011, p. 563), qualitative interviewing is a "flexible and powerful tool used to capture the voices and ways in which people make meaning of their experience." Following the administration of the Likert-scale questionnaire and analysis of the data, I then decided on the interview questions. The initial plan was to conduct paired

interviews with one Accounting and one Economics teacher at a time. However, after administering the questionnaire, this was no longer feasible. There was no way of knowing which teachers were from which school as there was no section in the questionnaire that required participants to disclose their school. This was also done to protect the identity of participants. There also was not necessarily two participants - one Accounting and one Economics teacher from each school - who were willing to participate in an interview.

Semi-structured interviews

For this part of the study, I used the procedure outlined by Rabionet (2011) to design my interview. This involved six distinct stages.

Stage 1 - Selecting the kind of interview

Due to the challenges experienced with the proposed data collection method, the decision was taken to conduct semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured interviews "are designed to ascertain subjective responses from persons regarding a particular phenomenon or situation they have experienced" (McIntosh & Morse, 2015, p. 1). They may be used when there is objective knowledge of a phenomenon, but the subjective knowledge is lacking (McIntosh & Morse, 2015). In the case of this study, objective knowledge about CRT was known, but the subject of investigation was the unique experiences of Accounting and Economics teachers in their implementation of CRT, as well as any challenges they faced in the implementation. A semi-structured interview enables the researcher to narrow down specific areas or topics closely related to the research questions under consideration that they would like to explore with participants (Rabionet, 2011).

In a semi-structured interview, the participant is free to respond as they wish to open-ended questions and the researcher may further probe these responses (McIntosh & Morse, 2015). The respondents from my interviews were participants that were willing to be interviewed. However, I did ensure that I had a gender balance and equal representation from each subject context. I used sequential sampling to select 12 interview participants from the sample used in the first, quantitative phase of the study. This type of sequential sampling is when the first phase informs the second phase (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Three female Accounting teachers, three male Accounting teachers, three female Economics teachers and three male Economics teachers.

Stage 2 - Establishing ethical guidelines

When a researcher enters the lives of others, there are ethical guidelines that need to be considered (Rabionet, 2011). Prior to conducting the interviews, ethical clearance was obtained from both the university, as well as from the DBE.

Stage 3 - Crafting the interview protocol

This aspect has two important components : how the researcher introduces themselves to the interviewees, and the actual questions to be asked in the interview (Rabionet, 2011). When introducing myself to each interviewee, I introduced the background and purpose of my study. I also included a statement on confidentiality, consent, the option of the interviewee to withdraw at any point in the interview, as well as how the data would be used.

The following three questions were asked in each interview:

- Do you implement Culturally Responsive Teaching in your subject context and in your classroom? Can you give specific examples of this?
- What are some of the challenges that you face in your implementation of Culturally Responsive Teaching in your subject context and within your classroom?
- Do you think that more successful implementation of Culturally Responsive Teaching practices could improve teaching in your subject context? Why or why not?

Stage 4 - Conducting and recording the interview

I set up an appointment with each teacher and travelled to each school to conduct the interviews. I used audio recording from my cellphone to record each interview. Each participant completed the consent form and gave consent for the interview tonbe recorded. According to Rabionet (2011), literature recommends audio recording as the preferred method of recording interviews. The quality of the recordings was quite good. The only challenge faced in this regard was the setting. For some participants, it was difficult to find a quiet space to conduct the interview and there were several interruptions, which interrupted the flow of the interview.

Stage 5 - Analysis and summarising the interview

Coding and a thematic analysis was used to analyse the interviews. The reasons and justifications for this are outlined in the next section, Data Analysis Methods.

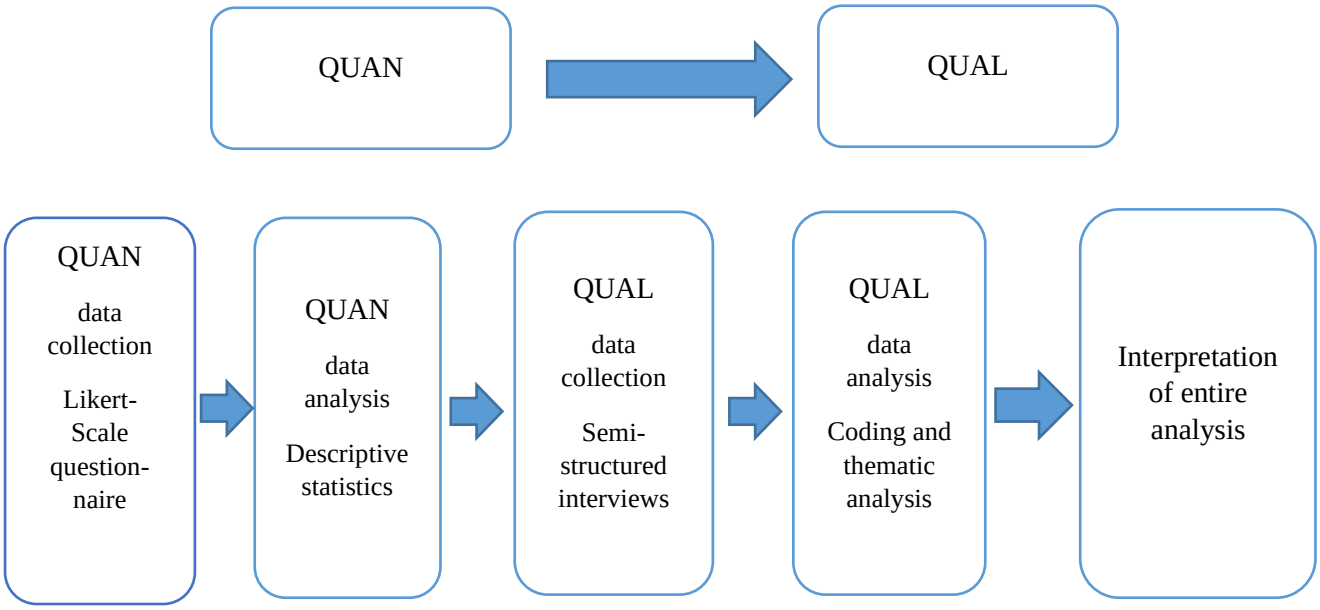
Stage 6 - Report the findings

This process will be outlined in more detail in the Findings chapter, Chapter 4.

3.8 Data Analysis Methods

Figure 4

Data sources and analysis



3.8.1 Quantitative data analysis

The initial quantitative phase of the study involved issuing a Likert-scale questionnaire that reflected various CRT practices and principles drawn from key literature. The approach to the quantitative data analysis of the Likert-scale questionnaires was drawn from that of Ortiz (2012) in her study of CRT. Once the Likert-scale questionnaires were all completed, the next step was to calculate the overall response rate for each item. I also measured the frequency of each response – *strongly agree*, *agree*, *neutral*, *disagree* and *strongly disagree* - for each of the 20 items on the questionnaire.

Following this process, I calculated the total response percentages for each item. This enabled me to measure and compare the items that had the highest confidence response, lowest confidence response and most neutral confidence response, depending on the percentage that was displayed. This was a critical step that would enable me to know what kind of information to probe for in the semi-structured interviews, as well as to make the necessary comparisons with the qualitative data in the overall interpretation.

3.8.2 Qualitative data analysis

For the qualitative part of the study, I used a thematic analysis. This is a type of qualitative analysis used to analyse data and present themes or patterns that relate to that data (Alhojailan, 2012). According to Braun & Clarke (2012, p. 56), a thematic analysis is a flexible, accessible and increasingly popular method of qualitative data analysis. When conducting a thematic analysis, the researcher systematically identifies, organises and offers insight into patterns or themes (meanings) across a data set (Braun & Clarke, 2012). This focus on themes or meaning across the data set allows the researcher to be able to make sense of collective shared meaning and experiences. Essentially, a thematic analysis is about identifying what is common in the way a topic is spoken about (Braun & Clarke, 2012). The purpose of the thematic analysis is identifying patterns that are relevant to answering a particular research question (Braun & Clarke, 2012). The analysis of the interview data follows the six-phase approach to thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2012).

Phase 1 - Familiarising yourself with the data

The ability of a researcher to generate ideas and make sense of the data depends on how closely they have immersed themselves with the data (Vaismoradi, Jones, Turunen, & Snelgrove, 2016). The researcher needs to familiarise themselves with the data by reading and rereading interview transcripts, and listening to the audio data. According to Braun and Clarke (2006), it is ideal to read through the data set at least once prior to coding. This is because the researcher's ideas are shaped as they read through the data. During this stage, it is important to make notes of the data as you read the transcript or listen to the audio (Braun & Clarke, 2012). Making notes in this way helps the researcher to read the data in a manner that is analytical and critical. In this first phase, the researcher becomes 'intimately familiar' with the data set and is able to begin to notice aspects of it that may be relevant to the research questions. Because my data transcription was outsourced, this first phase involved me spending a significant amount of time becoming familiar with the data, reading and re-reading the transcripts and checking them back against the audio to ensure accuracy. This step comes highly recommended (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2012). Once this is done, the process of generating codes can begin.

Phase 2 – Generating initial codes

This is the start of the systematic data analysis through coding (Braun & Clarke, 2012). The main purpose of coding in a thematic analysis is for the researcher to make connections between different parts of the data (Alhojailan, 2012). According to Vaismoradi et al. (2016), coding reduces the amount of raw data to what is relevant to the research question, breaking the data down into manageable sections. In this study, my specific approach to coding the data was to code around my research questions. "Codes identify and provide a label for features of the data that are potentially relevant to the research question" (Braun & Clarke, 2012, p. 61). Every time the researcher identifies something that is potentially relevant to the research question, this should be coded. While coding can be done in large or smaller chunks, some chunks will not be coded at all (Braun & Clarke, 2012).

In generating the initial codes, I identified, and highlighted, from each transcript, aspects of the data that I thought were potentially relevant to the research questions posed in this study. I then extracted those specific excerpts into a new Microsoft Word file, keeping an accurate record of where each excerpt came from. This is one of the data reduction methods highlighted by Alhojailan (2012). This was followed by more re-reading of the data to keep identifying more potentially relevant excerpts and making decisions as to whether I could apply existing codes to these excerpts or generate new codes to capture that data. This process was repeated for the entire dataset and ended when all the data was fully coded (Braun & Clarke, 2012). Ultimately, what the researcher wants is "enough codes to capture both the diversity, and the patterns within the data, and codes should appear across more than one data item" (Braun & Clarke, 2012, p. 63).

Phase 3 – Searching for themes

Once all the data has been initially coded, it is then sorted into potential themes. This is known as the third phase in the data reduction process (Alhojailan, 2012). In this phase, I used the highlighted sentences and broke them down into smaller segments or themes. Themes capture important aspects of the data in relation to the research question (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2012). The process of searching for themes is considered an active process where the researcher generates the themes rather than it being a process of discovering themes (Braun & Clarke, 2012). A thematic analysis requires more involvement from the researcher (Guest et al., 2012).

In this phase, I reviewed the coded data to identify areas between codes that were similar or overlapped. These were broad topics under which the codes clustered (Braun & Clarke, 2012).

Codes that shared similar features were clustered together to describe and reflect a meaningful pattern in the data. In this stage, another important element is exploring the relationship between different themes and seeing how these can work together to tell an overall story about the data. Together, themes form a piece of a larger puzzle and should tell a meaningful story about the data (Braun & Clarke, 2012). In this stage, codes that did not fit in with any theme, as well as themes that did not fit with the overall analysis were discarded. This also forms an important part of the data analysis process (Braun & Clarke, 2012). When analysing data, the purpose is "to tell a particular story about the data, that answers your research question" and not necessarily to report or represent everything that was said in the data (Braun & Clarke, 2012, p. 65). This phase of the data analysis ends with a thematic map that outlines all the themes. This is presented in the next chapter, Chapter 4, Findings.

Phase 4 - Reviewing potential themes

The themes identified in Phase 3 are refined. While some themes might overlap with one another, others may need to be broken down into several themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). According to Braun and Clarke (2012), this phase is also about quality checking - that is, checking the themes against the data extracts and ensuring that the themes work in relation to the data. An analysis should not be forced into coherence, and the researcher needs to make decisions about each theme relating to the quality of the themes, the boundaries of each theme, and whether or not there is enough data to support each theme. This is to ensure that each theme is neither too thick nor too thin (Braun & Clarke, 2012).

Once I had established the themes and ensured that they worked in relation to each data extract that had been coded, the next task was to review the themes in relation to the entire data set. In doing this, the aim was to look for themes that captured the overall tone of the data in relation to the research questions that are central to the study.

Phase 5 – Defining and naming the themes

Defining themes involves clearly stating what is unique and specific about each theme (Braun & Clarke, 2012). These are the themes that will be used in the final analysis. In this phase, I also selected the relevant extracts that I presented in my analysis, drawing from across the data set to show a holistic coverage of the theme. The extracts selected are critically important, as they provide the structure of the analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2012). In this stage, the data was also connected not only to my research questions, but also to the literature within which this study is located.

Phase 6 - Producing the report

The most important part of this phase is the order in which the themes are presented. They have to be presented in a logical, coherent and meaningful way (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2012). The purpose is to tell the story of your data "in a way that convinces the reader of the merit and validity of your analysis" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p.23). In this write up, I ensured that I provided sufficient evidence of the theme within the data.

3.9 Data Integration

In this study, I applied data integration through connecting, a method where one type of data links with the other through the sampling frame used (Fetters et al., 2013). In this case, the interview participants selected for the semi-structured interviews were selected from the larger sample of participants that completed the Likert-scale questionnaire.

Integration also occurred through merging - where in Chapter 5, I bring the two databases from phase 1 and phase 2 together for an overall analysis and interpretation. According to (Fetters et al., 2013), merging typically occurs after the statistical analysis of the quantitative data and the qualitative analysis of the textual data.

3.10 Issues of trustworthiness

One of the key advantages of a mixed methods research design is that it offers the benefit of the combined strength of validity from the qualitative aspect, and the reliability from the quantitative aspect (Tillman et al., 2011).

For the first, quantitative phase of the study, I first conducted a pilot study of the proposed questionnaire. Through this, I was able to refine the items on the questionnaire prior to sending it out for the actual data collection and this strengthened the credibility of the data collection instrument.

For the qualitative phase of the study, extensive measures were taken in the data analysis to ensure dependability and reliability. One of these measures was the re-reading of the interview transcripts at the onset of the analysis and ensuring that the transcripts accurately reflected the audio recordings. While one of the drawbacks of a thematic analysis is that it is subject to a lot of interpretation on the part of the researcher, completing this process thoroughly ensures the credibility and dependability of the data that is presented.

3.11 Limitations and delimitations

The scope of the study was only limited to teachers in Gauteng and problematised within the context of Gauteng. Therefore, one cannot assume that the findings can be applied across the other provinces.

3.12 Conclusion

In this chapter, I situated my study within a particular methodological tradition - a sequential exploratory mixed methods study situated within a pragmatic research paradigm. The chapter also provided a rationale for the chosen research approach, and the suitability of a mixed methods study as the best design to investigate the research questions. The chapter outlined the research setting and context, further problematising Accounting and Economics teaching in the FET phase in Gauteng - thus warranting its investigation. Sampling procedures, techniques and data sources were outlined and justified, followed by an in-depth discussion on the data collection methods for both the quantitative and qualitative phases of the study. Data analysis procedures were also presented for each of these phases. The Likert-scale questionnaires were analysed by calculating the confidence responses for each item, while a thematic analysis was used to analyse the semi-structured interviews. Issues of trustworthiness and limitations of the study were also outlined. In the following chapter, I present and report on the key findings of the study.

CHAPTER 4
FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This study sought to explore FET Accounting and Economics teachers' understanding of CRT within their subject contexts. In doing this, I aimed to explore the CRT principles and practices that these teachers apply in their subject contexts, as well as challenges that they may face in the successful implementation of CRT. In order to achieve these aims, a two-phase study was designed that involved the completion of a Likert-scale questionnaire, and subsequent semi-structured interviews with a smaller sample of Commerce teachers. The previous chapter, Chapter 3, outlined in detail the rationale for the chosen methodological approach. In this chapter, I present the study's main findings from the two data sources. First, I present the findings from the Likert-scale questionnaire using a basic statistical analysis. This is followed by a presentation of the findings from the semi-structured interviews using an in-depth thematic analysis. The overall interpretation of the key findings will be discussed in Chapter 5.

While the data collection for this study happened in the context of a traditional teaching environment, there are insights from this data that are useful in understanding CRT in a non-traditional teaching environment. These are discussed at the end of the chapter.

4.2 Phase 1: Quantitative Data - Likert-scale questionnaires

The aim of the first, quantitative data collection through the Likert scale questionnaire was to respond to the second research question: What Culturally Responsive Teaching principles and practices do Accounting and Economics teachers apply in teaching the subjects? Below is a table detailing the total percentage response items, followed by items that had the highest confidence responses.

Table 7

Total Response Percentages

	n	strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	strongly disagree
1. I make an effort to get to know my students' families and backgrounds	37	32%	32%	24%	8%	4%
2. I know how to communicate with culturally diverse students and their parents/guardians	37	38%	49%	13%	0%	0%
3. I actively involve parents/guardians in their children's learning	37	27%	49%	16%	5%	3%
4. I validate my students' languages and cultures	37	19%	46%	35%	0%	0%
5. My classroom environment is nurturing and encourages active participation from students	37	38%	43%	11%	8%	0%
6. I develop and maintain positive, meaningful, trusting and caring relationships with students	37	68%	22%	3%	5%	2%
7. I encourage communication across cultures in my classroom, using mixed-language & mixed-culture pairings in class	37	35%	38%	27%	0%	0%
8. I ask for my students' input when planning lessons and activities	37	11%	19%	46%	19%	5%
9. I communicate expectations of success to culturally diverse students	37	30%	41%	24%	5%	0%
10. I understand the cultural contributions of the cultures represented in my classroom in Economics/Accounting	37	22%	46%	24%	8%	0%
11. Work samples that reflect students' cultures are displayed in my classroom	37	11%	30%	19%	32%	8%
12. I infuse the Economics/Accounting curriculum with the cultures of students that are represented in my classroom	37	14%	59%	16%	8%	3%
13. I supplement the curriculum with lessons about international current events	37	41%	43%	14%	2%	0%
14. I relate current events to the topic and how it relates to students	37	54%	41%	5%	0%	0%
15. I use a variety of instructional methods to match my students' learning preferences in learning Economics/Accounting & maintain their interest in learning	37	35%	41%	19%	3%	2%
16. I use instructional examples that are culturally familiar to learners to serve as scaffolding for learners	37	41%	41%	15%	3%	0%
17. I examine materials for culturally appropriate images and themes	37	24%	32%	32%	8%	4%
18. I encourage students to use cross-cultural comparisons when analysing material	37	16%	46%	32%	6%	0%
19. I include open discussions of historical, cultural and political influences of the topic discussed	37	38%	38%	19%	3%	2%
20. I use a variety of assessment techniques that are designed to evaluate students' performance in favour of cultural diversity	37	22%	46%	19%	11%	2%

Table 8

Highest Confidence Responses - Strongly Agree and Agree

Item Number	Item	Percentage
6	I develop and maintain positive, meaningful, trusting and caring relationships with students	68%
12	I infuse the Economics/Accounting curriculum with the cultures of students that are represented in my classroom	59%
14	I relate current events to the topic and how it relates to students	54%

Reviewing of item 6 showed that 68% of respondents strongly agreed with the importance of maintaining positive, meaningful, trusting and caring relationships with students and that they implement this within their classrooms. Reviewing of item number 14 showed that 54% of teachers relate current events to the topic they are teaching and also show how it relates to the students. There was not a strong response for any item under *strongly disagree* or *disagree*. This indicates that to a very large extent, Accounting and Economics teachers are implementing CRT practices. This was one of the underlying assumptions of my study, which I stated in Chapter 1.

4.3 Phase 2: Qualitative Data - Semi-structured interviews

The data from the semi-structured interviews was analysed using the six steps to conducting a thematic analysis as outlined by Braun and Clarke, (2006, 2012).

Step 1: First I familiarised myself with the data by reading the interview transcripts multiple times. During this process, I made notes on my initial thoughts of the data on each interview transcript.

Step 2: This involved generating initial codes and making connections between the different parts of the data. These initial codes are illustrated in three tables below with illustrative data extracts. These are organised according to the first three research questions that are central to this study:

- How is CRT understood by in-service teachers teaching FET Accounting and Economics in South African high schools?

- What Culturally Responsive Teaching principles and practices do Accounting and Economics teachers apply in teaching the subjects?
- In cases where CRT has been used, what challenges do these educators encounter in the implementation of CRT in their classrooms?

Steps 3 and 4: These involved sorting the coded data into potential themes. In doing this, I identified codes that were similar or overlapped and sorted them into seven themes that I believed best described and reflected a meaningful pattern in the data.

Step 5: In this step, I defined each theme by stating clearly what was specific and unique about each of the seven themes. These are the themes that were used in the final analysis and are detailed in the section titled ‘definitions and labels for selected themes’.

Step 6: In this final step, I present a final write-up of each theme in a logical and coherent order, with supporting evidence from the data.

Table 9

Table of initial codes 1 with illustrative data extracts (direct quotes): CRT principles

Acknowledging differences	Knowing your learners	Building relationships with learners	Relating content to learners' lives	Building on prior knowledge
…we come from different backgrounds, different communities, different socioeconomic backgrounds… so many things make up a human. (P8) … learners are not the same, they come from different backgrounds. (P7) Cultures vary, which means learner attitudes also vary. (P4) It is important to accommodate diversity in your class in order for the classroom to be more effective. (P2)	Start knowing your learners… (P3) Knowing their background, I think also helps. (P7) I make sure that I get to know my learners. (P11) Make time in your class to get to know these learners. (P9) … getting to know your learners individually. To know when this person struggles with this, this person is strong at this … it's very beneficial for me. (P1) … it's just a thing of trying to figure out who they are, what they relate to and how I can get through to this child. (P8)	In order for learning to be effective, there needs to be a connection or relationship between the teacher and learners. (P2) Establishing relationships in class… If your learners are doing something positive, you know, say it in class, make them aware that "I see you and I appreciate what you're doing." (P9) It's very easy to learn from someone who you know that this person actually cares about me. (P1) It is amazing. It is amazing. They love me. They enjoy being close to me. What else can I say? They worry themselves about the marks that they get from me. (P6)	When you teach, you need to relate what you're teaching to what the learner knows and have seen… it's important to relate with what they know, and they've seen in order for them to get what you're trying to teach them. (P2) Obviously if they can't relate to it, they close off, they are not interested. (P3) … making sure that what you're teaching becomes meaningful to learners. (P6) They will be interested in that subject. I think they can even excel in that because they can relate to that. It talks to them, it talks to their values, how do they relate, how do they live. (P3) We need to adopt the culture we're living in. (P4)	A culturally responsive teacher, I guess, is a teacher that can build from the prior knowledge. (P6) We tell them that "When you come here… you are not empty heads. You know something." (P3)

Table 10

Table of initial codes 2 with illustrative data extracts (direct quotes): CRT in practice

Collaborative learning	Explaining in a way that learners understand	Using different teaching methods	Using technology	Codeswitching
I put my learners in groups… other days, we talk as a class for learners to actually learn from each other. If they hear different voices, if they hear different opinions from their peers, it becomes easy for them to understand. (P1) I pick one of their peers… when there's a learner that doesn't understand, there'll be a learner that will stand up and facilitate the discussion in class. We as teachers may think that we know the learner's background, but the person who knows them better is their peer. (P6) To know when this person struggles with this, this person is strong at this. If I can use him to help other kids, it's very beneficial for me. (P1) The nice thing is that if the friend got it, and explained it to someone else, it's easier to hear something from your peer than your teacher. (P8)	Some of the examples that I use in my classroom, I can't use for everyone else. I have to explain it in a different way so that everyone can understand it in their own perspective. And, I feel like if… because what I'm seeing in other classrooms is that teachers explain in one way. It's either you get it, or you don't and then we move on. I feel like every child deserves the opportunity to be taught in a way that they understand. (P8) It's sad. I think a lot of learners would actually understand accounting if we explained it in a way that they would understand. (P8) If you teach me in a way that I'm able to learn, I would grasp a lot. I would understand a lot in a very short space of time because you're teaching towards my learning style. (P11)	I change my teaching methods. (P1) I play. I play. I think I enjoy accounting a lot. I use colours, I use pictures, I use all these weird and wonderful things. (P8) … using exit tickets to check where learners are at… (P2) … making sure that my learners are more active than I am... sometimes I let them own the class. (P1) Making use of visual aids, because you find out some learners learn more when they see. Or, at least, maybe, I try to find maybe a song, like, on the topic that I'm going to teach. That might also be valuable to the learners because learners of today they like music. (P2) I try my best using different material, going to internet and doing more research, giving learners what is not in the textbooks, in order for them to understand the content more broadly. (P11)	We must maximise what we do with the technology, such that we can talk about what is there to the benefit of these learners. (P3) So, what I found, that has really worked for them, is videos. Play them a video, even if it's a YouTube clip, play them a video of someone else explaining the concept. Someone else who's not me. (P8) It can be videos of certain topics. Just to play it first, learners see it how it works and then, I come and explain. (P7)	We have different languages... I try my best to use their language. (P4) … code-switching, I used code-switching. (P6) I codeswitch a lot. (P7)

Small group discussions, those also help. (P1) When I first started teaching them, they used to separate themselves. So, I had to mix them in order for them to gel with one another and to learn from other people's cultures. (P5)	I used debates yesterday. Even that learner that cannot write coherently nor give enough ideas when they are writing, the ideas that they give out orally are real. (P6) I'll introduce the concepts, I'll introduce new terms and things that we going to work with and do an exercise based on the introduction of the lesson. Then, as they are working, I will walk around because it's easier for other kids – Black children (more especially) – to ask me questions when I am close to them. (P8)

Table 11

Table of initial codes 2 with illustrative data extracts (direct quotes): CRT in practice continued

Using relevant, real-life examples			
Some of the examples that I use in my classroom, I can't use for everyone else. (P8) You might find out when you teach that you use some examples that might hurt other learners. Reason being, you don't know your learners. (P2) As an educator have to prepare more. You must start imagining more, start knowing your learners, that will help you to have information. Maybe to put yourself in their shoes. Try to understand it better in order to reach them. (P3) Go back to the concept, to find ways even what is existing in the community, in such a way that you can relate to it to the learners. (P3) When they can relate, they start getting used to the terms and the language of accounting. (P8) When you make an example and you try to make it relevant to their context then I think it's much better. (P9) I motivate them. I encourage them. I make sure that I take things into real life… We have updates of news every day they can see that it is real life, I'm not just talking about theory. We're talking about something which is practical, something which is happening. (P4) I used real-life examples because when I came in, I told them that economics is abstract from the textbook… I'll even try things like… try to use real examples with tangible items. I tried to make economics be some sort of a lab. There was once a time that I came with a tomato and a tomato sauce to explain the difference between productivity and production. (P6)			

Table 12

Table of initial codes 3 with illustrative data extracts (direct quotes): challenges implementing CRT

Language differences	Disconnect between learner-teacher cultures	CAPS policy, the Curriculum and ATP	Accountability pressures	Time constraints
They are very shy even to talk in English because most of their classes, they are used to speaking Setswana. (P1) I started teaching here in February and I used to code-switch a lot. The biggest challenge is the language barrier. (P6) Learners lack comprehension skills. They'll say, "We didn't forget but we didn't understand this question. Since you broke down the question, now we can understand." You wouldn't be able to apply that knowledge if you have a language problem. (P6) It's a challenge because sometimes when you teach those learners, let's say you speak English, and somebody speaks let's say in Tsonga, so now, I don't know what to say in Tsonga.	It seems as if we cannot reach the learners. Something is wrong somewhere, we don't know where. These learners are not reachable. (P10) Communication with the different cultures, it's very different. Whereas the White children, they are prone to ask questions if they don't understand, they are quick to ask questions because that's how they are raised… And, with the Black children, it's much more difficult because I think that in our homes we are taught not to ask questions – if you're asking questions then you are a defiant child. (P8) Maybe there is something that I'm missing… It's new. It's strange. But if it's how things are done here, it means that it's culture. It means I can see it as disrespectful but, maybe, you don't see it as disrespectful. (P3)	The South African curriculum is not real. If we don't change the curriculum, let's just forget. (P3) When we talk about cultural responsiveness, it needs to be reflected in the curriculum. (P6) There is too much content that these kids have to learn. (P12) The problem is in the curriculum and this ATP… I'll blame the curriculum. The curriculum doesn't speak to the needs of today's generation. The current generation is very intelligent. Very innovative. And they are very creative with ideas. Our education is very standardised. (P6) The curriculum. Yeah, it's still old-school... I'm not the one who created the curriculum. So, I wish there can be room to be culturally responsive, but I don't see a room for enforcing it. (P4)	The state doesn't have trust in the teachers. The only time that they'll see that you're working is by results. That thing creates a lot of emotions for teachers. Those emotions pour over to the learners… If everyday teaching is all about examination, then teaching becomes less interesting. (P6) Even if you want creativity to be in your class, it is kept to a minimal. It's all about accountability. I was shocked when a facilitator arrived for the other subjects, not economics. He counted the number of tasks that I did. And then, he was like, "Mr X, you're not teaching." (P6) And, if you move slow, marks are needed. (P1) You need to teach towards the examination. And, if you teach towards examination, you're removing the meaningfulness of the knowledge that you're imparting. (P11)	We have a small period of time to actually talk to learners individually. I need to move fast because there's no time. And, if you move slow, marks are needed. The time that you need to spend on one topic is very limited so it's very hard to accommodate diversity in my classroom. (P1) We don't get time to actually sit down with learners to actually get to know them, their backgrounds. You just view them from a distance by, maybe, the way they wear, how they respond to people – situations, or their facial expressions. You just don't get time to sit down and actually talk. (P12) You have 45 learners in your class, and you have to teach for 30 mins. So, it becomes a bit more challenging. (P2) I think the most challenging thing for me is the time that I'm allocated to teach... I find that I don't have that much time to go

You then have to elaborate, explain, to get examples that they can relate to. Sometimes you can't find any, in terms of the language they are speaking. (P3) There's the issue of languages... undermining other languages because of lack of understanding and lack of knowledge. We need to come together. Language is not a barrier. They have to understand that knowing other languages benefits them. (P5)	It's difficult because you have kids who can't find themselves in the sense of culturally because they've moved around a lot so they can't identify themselves in… they've been to different schools, they've been to different countries; so it's just a thing of trying to figure out who they are, what they relate to and how I can get through to this child. (P8)	I'll look at CAPS alongside the ATP. It doesn't give us enough opportunities, as teachers, to allow learners the chance to relate their background to the content we're teaching because that consumes time. (P12) These learners learn better when they see something. And, they are very innovative, they are very very creative, but the room is not there because we're rushing the ATP. (P6) One of the struggles that I have is that my mentor would say that I'm slow, I need to catch up because of the annual teaching plan… it's very difficult to go with the annual teaching plan and, again, my learners don't understand. I mean, that's very pointless to go on and the learners don't understand what they were being taught. So, it's very difficult. Sometimes, you just push because marks are wanted. (P1)		deep, in the ways that I want to explain the knowledge because there just isn't enough time. (P8)

Table 13

Table of initial codes 3 with illustrative data extracts (direct quotes): challenges implementing CRT continued

Learner and teacher attitudes towards commerce subjects	Parental involvement	Resources	ITE & continued in-service PD
It's just the way these learners are being taught from primary that commerce is very difficult. Learners know and they are afraid that they will fail if they go to a commerce stream. There isn't anyone actually promoting these group of subjects, they don't know the opportunities. (P1) There's a negative attitude towards commercial subjects. (P6) It's just difficult to teach learners something that they have no interest because they don't feel that it's part of their life or livelihood. I think that is why children find Economics so hard. It's because they don't understand it, they don't understand the need for it. And therefore, it's just that abstract thing they need to know; but once they understand the need for it then they'll want to know and then they'll understand. (P9) If you, as a teacher, are not interested, then automatically, learners will not be interested in what you are saying. (P6)	I feel like if we had cooperation from parents; this relationship of teacher, learner and parents is, somehow, lacking. (P1) Support is very key, especially when it comes from home, where the child comes from. Very important, parents need to support these learners. (P10)	With the school, it's… it doesn't have such resources. (P10) Others you find that they don't have the materials, especially the calculators, when teaching accounting. (P7) Overcrowding in our classes. It's very difficult to give individual attention. (P10) The number of learners, it's too much – you even forget their names. Remember, culturally responsive teaching requires you to know their names. (P6)	There is a huge gap between teacher training and the real experience that we get from the classroom. (P6) Where I work, I've never attended one workshop for accounting. Workshops. I think teachers need to be taught how to teach accounting and how to approach certain things. (P8) Train teachers. … To apply the knowledge. (P6) Just workshops by the way. To get workshops from department. And also, to have some materials which will also help in a class. (P7)

4.4 Definitions and labels for selected themes

Theme 1: *"So many things make up a human"*: Acknowledging cultural differences and building relationships

This theme relates to one of the key principles of CRT; firstly, that the teacher acknowledges that cultural differences exist in their classroom. Both learners and teachers bring their own cultures, personal experiences and backgrounds to the classroom context. Teaching and learning takes place within these complex dynamics. In order to meet learners' needs, teachers need to have explicit knowledge of cultural diversity and of their learners (Gay, 2002). Therefore, a conscious effort needs to be made to build relationships and learn about students in order to be able to meet their needs.

Theme 2: *"You are not empty heads":* Building on existing knowledge and experiences

This theme outlines the notion that CRT is based on constructivist views of knowledge and learning. Because of their differences, and unique background experiences, learners already come to the classroom context with pre-existing knowledge that is based on those experiences. Therefore, part of being culturally responsive in teaching requires that the teacher constantly and consistently builds on what the learners already know in order to help them better grasp the new concepts they are being taught.

Theme 3: *"If you teach me in a way that I'm able to learn, I would grasp a lot":* Teaching learners in a way that they understand

In its NSC Diagnostic Report (2018, p. 57), the DBE explicitly states that teaching should take place in a way that learners understand the content. This theme encapsulates this, and is about teaching learners in the way that best suits them. This involves using a variety of teaching aids and methods in order to accommodate different learning styles, as well as teaching through the cultural filters of students. When teaching is done this way and more effort is made to meet learners at their level, they are more likely to achieve academic success.

Theme 4: *"Language is not a barrier":* Navigating linguistic differences in the classroom

In South Africa's unique context, where there are 11 official languages, teachers are often faced with situations where they have learners from multiple cultures, who speak different languages in the classroom. This theme explores what has come out from the data in terms of how teachers can navigate their way through these contexts.

Theme 5: *"The state doesn't trust us. If you're being culturally responsive, you're not teaching":* Curriculum issues and accountability pressures

This theme focuses on teachers' daily struggles with accountability pressures, while at the same time trying to act in the best interests of their learners. CRT proposes that teachers put learners at the centre of the teaching and learning process. However, teachers are expected to conduct standardised tests, regardless of the level of the learners, and to produce results. When teachers do not produce the desired results, or evidence of the required number of activities, they are 'not teaching'. Additionally, teachers are confined to a rigid curriculum and relatively fixed Annual Teaching Plan (ATP) where, regardless of the pace or level of the learners in a particular class, teaching and learning must occur at the pace of the ATP.

Theme 6: *"I think I enjoy Accounting a lot!":* Learner and teacher attitudes towards Commerce subjects

This study is set within the context of the problematic nature of Accounting and Economics teaching. In Chapter 1, I outlined some of these issues, such as the declining performance in both these subjects over the last five years, as well as the increasingly declining number of learners taking commerce subjects at the FET level. This last theme explores learner and teacher attitudes towards Accounting and Economics and how these attitudes impact on teaching, learning, and ultimately learner performance in both subject areas.

Theme 7: *"Where I work, I've never attended one workshop for Accounting":* The need for continuous professional development

This theme highlights the need for adequate preparation at the initial teacher education (ITE) level when it comes to dealing with diversity in the classroom. Additionally, it highlights the need for continuous in-service teacher support and professional development in both Accounting and Economics. If teachers are to be successful in their implementation of CRT, then they require ongoing in-service support.

4.5 Conclusion

The first data source revealed that Accounting and Economics teachers do implement CRT practices, as indicated by the lack of response items that were rated *disagreed* or *strongly disagreed*. This finding is consistent with the initial assumption made at the start of this research project. The thematic analysis of the data from semi-structured interviews revealed seven key themes that are central to Accounting and Economics teachers' understanding and

enactment of CRT, as well as the challenges they face in the successful implementation of CRT practices. These themes were: acknowledging cultural differences and building relationships; building on existing knowledge and experiences; teaching learners in a way that they understand; navigating linguistic differences in the classroom; curriculum issues and accountability pressures; learner and teacher attitudes towards commerce subjects; and the need for continuous professional development. In the next chapter, I conduct the final stage of the thematic analysis, where I provide a more detailed report on each theme. In doing this, I link the data to the relevant scholarly literature around CRT and Accounting and Economics teaching. It is also at this stage where data integration occurs - where I merge the two datasets to provide an overall analysis.

CHAPTER 5
ANALYSIS AND SYNTHESIS

5.1 Introduction

This study set out to explore FET Accounting and Economics teachers' understanding of CRT as it applies to their subject context. In achieving this aim, the study investigated the CRT practices and principles applied by FET Accounting and Economics teachers in their subject context. Challenges faced by these teachers in the successful implementation of CRT were also explored. In the previous chapter, Chapter 4, I presented the study's key findings from the two data sources - the Likert-scale questionnaire and the semi-structured interviews.

In this chapter, I conduct the final stage of the thematic analysis - providing a detailed report on each of the seven key themes. In doing this, I link the results from the thematic analysis with those from the Likert-scale questionnaire, where relevant. The thematic analysis results are also discussed in light of the research questions, scholarly work around CRT and commerce teaching, as well as in light of the conceptual framework.

5.2 A report on each theme

Theme 1: Acknowledging cultural differences and building relationships

Acknowledging cultural differences and building relationships came out quite strongly in the interview data, with most of the participants citing the importance of this element of CRT. The various cultures that students bring with them to the classroom context have direct implications for any teaching and learning that occurs within that context. The literature also shows that what happens in the classroom is shaped by teachers' understanding of their own culture, as well as how comfortable they are with the cultures of their learners (Gay, 2018; Kapofu, 2019; Ladson-Billings, 1995). Therefore, it is important that teachers are able to acknowledge these cultural differences. Participant 8 (P8) was quoted saying:

> *We come from different backgrounds, different communities, different socioeconomic backgrounds… so many things make up a human.*

Teachers must explicitly get to know their learners, their socioeconomic backgrounds and communities that they come from, as these aspects have implications for teaching and learning. Having this explicit knowledge of learners allows teachers to understand how this impacts on

learners' worldviews (DeCapua, 2016). In order to teach culturally diverse learners effectively, teachers must have an understanding of how their learners think and behave (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). This is further outlined by P8:

> *... it's just a thing of trying to figure out who they are, what they relate to and how I can get through to this child.*

In the questionnaire, the first response item was *I make an effort to get to know my students' families and backgrounds* – which was geared towards this theme of acknowledging differences and building relationships. The responses to this item received a relatively positive response, with 32% of teachers strongly agreeing with the item and 32% agreeing that they make a significant effort to get to know their students' backgrounds.

Specific time needs to be spent in getting to know learners and building solid relationships with learners. Most participants recognised the importance of relationship-building as it came out strongly in a number of interviews. This aspect also comes out strongly in key CRT literature, that cites that caring and relationship-building is an inherent part of teaching. Caring teachers, according to Gay (2018), are teachers that focus more on the wellbeing of students and building relationships. When teachers care about their students, they will always act in their best interests. Caring is a pedagogic necessity (Gay, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). For learning to be effective, according to P2,

> *there needs to be a connection or relationship between the teacher and learners.*

Teachers that demonstrate care for their students, thus are always acting in their best interests, and also have high expectations for their students. They are committed to their students' success, encourage excellence and hold their students accountable for meeting those expectations (Gay, 2002, 2013). Teachers who genuinely care about their students "generate higher levels of all kinds of success than those who do not" (Gay, 2018, p. 60). Participant 6 had an experience of this with his learners:

> *It is amazing. It is amazing. They love me. They enjoy being close to me. What else can I say? They worry themselves about the marks that they get from me.*

A similar item was posed in the questionnaire on building relationships - *I develop and maintain positive, meaningful, trusting and caring relationships with students.* Sixty-eight per cent of respondents said they strongly agree. This was the highest confidence response item in the questionnaire, indicating that most commerce teachers believe that it is important to

establish and maintain good relationships with their learners. This care for students is shown to have a long-lasting impact on students well beyond their school years and prompts effort as well as achievement (Gay, 2018).

Theme 2: Building on existing knowledge and experiences

> *A culturally responsive teacher, I guess, is a teacher that can build from the prior knowledge. (P6)*

Culturally responsive pedagogy is one that believes in a constructivist view of knowledge and learning. This means understanding that every student in the classroom knows something. It opposes the 'banking theory of education'- that learners are empty vessels that we just pour knowledge into, but rather proposes that we build on the existing knowledge, backgrounds and experiences that learners bring to the classroom context. It is these prior experiences that help learners to be able to make sense of any new knowledge that they encounter. This is referred to as 'cultural capital' and is central to the learning process (Gay, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). Because of these different experiences, students make sense of knowledge in different ways. When teaching,

> *you need to relate what you're teaching to what the learner knows and has seen… It's important to relate with what they know and they've seen in order for them to get what you're trying to teach them. (P2)*

The culturally responsive teacher must therefore encourage students to construct their own knowledge relative to situations that they encounter in their daily lives (van Wyk & Alexande, 2010). The role of the teacher is to help students connect the new content to their existing understandings (Epstein et al., 2011). In order to do that successfully, they must first know what those existing understandings are and be able to elicit them from students. In a constructivist approach to teaching and learning, learners construct knowledge through their personal experiences, rather than through learning abstract concepts (Semerci & Batdi, 2015). When teachers see their students as 'knowers' who possess an existing knowledge base, they allow for students to make valuable contributions to the teaching and learning context.

When learners play an active role in the classroom and in constructing and reconstructing knowledge, the new concepts that they learn and are able to make sense of through their experiences become more permanent. This has a resulting positive impact on learner success and achievement (Semerci & Batdi, 2015).

Theme 3: Teaching learners in a way that they understand

A mismatch in teaching and learning styles easily results in the underperformance of students (Visser, McChlery, & Vreken, 2006). Culturally responsive teachers make conscious efforts to use different teaching strategies that enable them to reach students and meet students where they are. These various instructional strategies are connected to different learning styles (Bottiani, Larson, Debnam, Bischoff, & Bradshaw, 2018).

Participants spoke extensively about the importance of relating the content to learners' lives, and making use of relevant, culturally sensitive examples in the classroom. Participants also acknowledged that not all learners, and not all classes, are the same - therefore not all strategies are applicable in the same way in the same subject context. One particular strategy that a lot of the participants emphasised that they were implementing was that of collaborative learning - either in the form of group work, group discussions or peer teaching.

> *I put my learners in groups… other days, we talk as a class for learners to actually learn from each other. If they hear different voices, if they hear different opinions from their peers, it becomes easy for them to understand. (P1)*

> *I pick one of their peers… when there's a learner that doesn't understand, there'll be a learner that will stand up and facilitate the discussion in class. We as teachers may think that we know the learner's background but the person who knows them better is their peer. (P6)*

For both participants 1 and 6, the feeling is that peers are sometimes in a better position to explain challenging concepts to each other in a way that a teacher may not be able to. Sometimes it is useful for a struggling learner to hear the concept re-explained from someone else - a different voice or different perspective. Participant 1 said that she sometimes uses learners who are particularly strong in one area to assist those who are struggling, and finds this beneficial:

> *To know when this person struggles with this, this person is strong at this. If I can use him to help other kids, it's very beneficial for me.*

CRT supports collaborative learning and considers it critical that learners engage and participate in reciprocal dialogue, as it is central to the acquisition of learning and demonstration of learning (Gay, 2018). When students work in small groups, they are encouraged to help one another. These group interactions also enhance creativity and an

exchange of ideas (Zraa, Kavanagh, & Hartle, 2011) and are particularly useful in the teaching of Accounting and Economics (Fouché, 2013).

Another participant (P5) used groups in a different way in her classroom - which was to bring learners of different cultures together when she noticed segregation amongst different linguistic groups:

> *When I first started teaching them, they used to separate themselves like Zulus aside, Tswanas aside or Sothos aside, Tsongas aside. So, I had to mix them in order for them to gel with one another and to learn from other people's cultures.*

She felt that there was a strong sense of undermining of other languages and cultures because of a lack of understanding of the differences. According to literature, it is common for learners to have preconceived ideas and misconceptions about other cultures, as each learner has their own unique cultural identity and worldview (Moore, 2019). Using these mixed cultural pairings not only encourages tolerance and understanding of others, but it also helps students maximise their human potential as they learn how to be 'in community' with others (Gay, 2018).

Teaching learners in a way that they understand means getting learners to relate to the subject, ensuring that the subject *"talks to their values and how they live" (P3)*. In this way, learners become more interested in the subject and will be in a better position to excel. Engaging students where they are, and meeting them where they are is a part of a liberating educational practice that is in the interests of SJE (Naidoo, 2015).

Theme 4: Navigating linguistic differences in the classroom

Language issues were a serious challenge for Accounting and Economics teachers in their implementation of CRT. All participants worked in diverse schools and classrooms where there were learners from different cultures, who spoke different languages. Codeswitching was the go-to strategy to navigate these linguistic differences, but remained a challenge for educators who did not know how to speak all the languages in their classroom.

Linguistic differences also extended to the significant difference between the language of teaching and learning (English) and learners' home languages. This mismatch in the home language and 'school language' directly impacts on academic performance, as learners are formally assessed in English. Participant 1 felt strongly about the issue:

> *They are very shy even to talk in English because most of their classes, they are used to speaking Setswana, even though it's an English class… I don't like it, but what I do is… because I don't allow myself to speak Setswana. Because I think these learners are used to being taught in Setswana and when they go and write, it's very difficult; their sentence constructions, they don't make sense. Even though you're not teaching English, we also look at grammar in accounting. Even though I'm not going to mark it, but I need to make sense of what the learner is writing. So, I don't like it because it's very difficult for them to go back and have to write in English whereas we communicate in Setswana. It's very difficult, it makes them… I don't know… confused. (P1)*

Language plays an important role in comprehension and academic achievement (Charamba, 2019). South Africa has 11 official languages and, while its language in education policy embraces multilingualism, many schools today still conduct teaching and learning only in English, which is different to most learners' home languages (Charamba, 2019; Nugraha, 2019). This significantly disadvantages the learner as it is an additional area that disconnects learners from the schooling experience.

> *I started teaching here in February and I used to codeswitch a lot. The biggest challenge is the language barrier. Learners lack comprehension skills. They'll say, "We didn't forget but we didn't understand this question. Since you broke down the question, now we can understand." You wouldn't be able to apply that knowledge if you have a language problem. (P6)*

This means that learners are examined and expected to respond to questions in English, whereas it is not their home language. As a result, they struggle to understand the requirements of the question when it comes to formal assessments. However, when the teacher, who understands and can relate to the learners and speaks the same language, unpacks the question, they are then able to understand. In the 2018 NSC diagnostic report (pp. 9, 57), when reflecting on challenges experienced by learners in relation to commerce subjects, the DBE cited that learners struggle to address the requirements of the question, which is largely due to poor comprehension skills and language barriers.

In a recent study on the role of language in physics education, Charamba (2017) states that language is crucial in the comprehension of Physics content, providing correct responses to Physics questions and providing adequate explanations of Physics phenomena. Therefore, language is central to the academic achievement of Physics learners. I hold the view that this

is applicable to the context of teaching Accounting and Economics - that the language of teaching and learning is a critical determiner of success for Accounting and Economics students. Being able to successfully bridge the 'language gap' will help learners be better able to grasp key concepts and apply knowledge and insight into more complex issues in the two subject contexts.

Interesting to note is that 49% of respondents agreed, while 38% strongly agreed in the questionnaire that they know how to communicate with culturally diverse students and their languages. This could be due to the fact that 30 out of the 37 respondents were Black Africans, who worked in schools with very large Black student populations. While being a Black African does not equate to being a culturally responsive teacher (Moore, 2019), it does give a certain leverage in the classroom in terms of being able to identify with students who share the same culture, or language - which results in better cultural sensitivity, less biases and prejudice against students who are culturally diverse and makes it easier to navigate the linguistic differences that exist in classrooms.

One of the aims of South Africa's language in education policy is "to counter the disadvantages resulting from different kinds of mismatches between home languages and languages of teaching and learning" (Nugraha, 2019, p.570). In a multicultural society such as South Africa, language diversity is central to educational outcomes (Charamba, 2017).

Theme 5: Curriculum issues and accountability pressures

What emerged strongly from the interview data was issues around the curriculum, accountability and time pressure that Accounting and Economics teachers felt were obstacles to the effective implementation of CRT. One participant (P6) said:

> *When we talk about cultural responsiveness, it needs to be reflected in the curriculum.*

There is a large body of literature advocating that CRT must be reflected in the curriculum and to a large extent, if we are to be truly culturally responsive in our teaching, it necessitates curriculum reform (Gay, 2013; Mayfield & Garrison-Wade, 2015; Meier & Hartell, 2009). Another frustration with the curriculum was highlighted by participant 6:

> *The problem is in the curriculum and this ATP… I'll blame the curriculum. The curriculum doesn't speak to the needs of today's generation. The current generation is very intelligent. Very innovative. And they are very creative with ideas. Our education is very standardised.*

Sleeter (2015) argues that standardised curricula divert attention away from student-centred approaches to teaching such as CRT. This may be better summarised by participant 3, who boldly stated that

> *The South African curriculum is not real. If we don't change the curriculum, let's just forget.*

There was also a sense of powerlessness amongst teachers when talking about the curriculum; a feeling that the curriculum is something that is fixed and beyond their control. They see the curriculum as something that does not allow them to be culturally responsive teachers:

> *The curriculum. Yeah, it's still old-school... I'm not the one who created the curriculum. So, I wish there can be room to be culturally responsive, but I don't see a room for enforcing it. (P4)*

> *I'll look at CAPS alongside the ATP. It doesn't give us enough opportunities, as teachers, to allow learners the chance to relate their background to the content we're teaching because that consumes time. (P12)*

Directly linked to the curriculum were issues around the Annual Teaching Plan (ATP), that states the required number of activities and time frames in which teachers need to complete various activities relating to their subject areas. Respondents felt that CRT required time for teachers to actually get to know their learners, to meet learners at their level and be better able to respond to learners' needs.

> *We have a small period of time to actually talk to learners individually. I need to move fast because there's no time. And, if you move slow, marks are needed. The time that you need to spend on one topic is very limited so it's very hard to accommodate diversity in my classroom. One of the struggles that I have is that my mentor would say that I'm slow, I need to catch up because of the annual teaching plan… it's very difficult to go with the annual teaching plan and, again, my learners don't understand. I mean, that's very pointless to go on and the learners don't understand what they were being taught. So, it's very difficult. Sometimes, you just push because marks are wanted. (P1)*

> *I think the most challenging thing for me is the time that I'm allocated to teach... I find that I don't have that much time to go deep, in the ways that I want to explain the knowledge because there just isn't enough time. (P8)*

Regardless of where learners are in terms of their understanding of the content, teachers are required to move at a specific pace and cover all the content.

> *Even if you want creativity to be in your class, it is kept to a minimal. It's all about accountability. I was shocked when a facilitator arrived for the other subjects, not Economics. He counted the number of tasks that I did. And then he was like, "Mr X, you're not teaching." (P6)*

As a result of accountability pressures, teachers feel that they have to teach to the exam, produce evidence of 'teaching' (in the form of the number of activities required for each subject area) and to just produce results.

> *You need to teach towards the examination. And, if you teach towards examination, you're removing the meaningfulness of the knowledge that you're imparting. (P11)*

When teachers are cornered into drilling routinely over the curriculum and teaching to the examination, students are likely to find the content disengaging and boring, reinforcing their deficit views about their intellectual capabilities on the subject (Sleeter, 2015). Strangely, 59% of the respondents in the questionnaire agreed that they *'infuse the Economics/Accounting curriculum with the cultures of students that are represented in my classroom'*. This is an indication that they may not necessarily feel as limited or restricted by the curriculum as was revealed in the semi-structured interview data. Forty-three per cent of the respondents agreed, while 41% strongly agreed that they '*supplement the curriculum with lessons about international current events'*; again indicating that the curriculum is viewed as something that can be added on to the benefit of the learners. Forty-six per cent of respondents cited that they '*use a variety of assessment techniques that are designed to evaluate students' performance in favour of cultural diversity'.* Unfortunately, the questionnaire data did not reveal whether these were formative or summative assessments, where teachers felt they had more freedom to tailor their assessments to suit the specific needs of learners in their classroom.

Theme 6: Learner and teacher attitudes towards Commerce subjects

This theme relates to learner and teacher attitudes towards commerce subjects. One participant (P1) commented on learner attitudes towards commerce subjects in general:

> *It's just the way these learners are being taught from primary that commerce is very difficult. Even in sciences, there was a stigma that science is very difficult. But now, there are extra classes. Like, they take the time to actually promote sciences unlike with*

commerce. Learners know and they are afraid that they will fail if they go to a commerce stream. There isn't anyone actually promoting these group of subjects, they don't know the opportunities.

There appeared to be a frustration with commerce subjects not being promoted or prioritised like other subjects such as science. Evidences from NSC Examinations Report (2019, p. 53) indicate that there is a rapidly declining number of students taking Accounting and Economics at FET level. Another participant (P6) stated that

there is a negative attitude towards commercial subjects.

This was attributed to a lack of learner and teacher interest in the subject:

It's just difficult to teach learners something that they have no interest because they don't feel that it's part of their life or livelihood. I think that is why children find Economics so hard. It's because they don't understand it, they don't understand the need for it. And therefore, it's just that abstract thing they need to know; but once they understand the need for it then they'll want to know and then they'll understand. (P9)

If you, as a teacher, are not interested, then, automatically, learners will not be interested in what you are saying. (P6)

Regardless of these challenges, participants reported using several strategies to spark learners' interest in the subject. These were strategies such as using visual aids, leveraging off of technology (playing videos) and daily news reports in the classroom. An Accounting teacher (P8) said that she makes her subject fun by playing a lot of games. She also boldly stated that she loves her subject:

I play. I play. I think I enjoy accounting a lot. I use colours, I use pictures, I use all these weird and wonderful things.

It is also important to note that this teacher was particularly positive towards her students, active in seeking out ways to connect and engage with them and most confident in her ability to engage in CRT. This could also be attributed to the love and interest that she has for her subject area, and wishes to share it with learners. The same applies to participant 6, who also spoke enthusiastically about his passion for Economics. Van Wyk (2011) explores the use of economics cartoons as a strategy to engage learners, encourage critical thinking around economic issues, as well as spark an overall interest in Economics.

Theme 7: A need for continuous professional development

To successfully implement CRT, teachers need to actively develop their skills and awareness through continuous professional development (Chen & Yang, 2017). While some participants stated that ITE prepared them to teach culturally diverse learners, there is a significant difference between what they were prepared for and what they actually experience daily in their practice. One such participant, P6, outlined this, saying,

> *There is a huge gap between teacher training and the real experience that we get from the classroom.*

Another participant (P12) felt that it would be better if more practical modules were offered at ITE level to help teachers be able to "address such issues" -

> *Some modules address such issues and how to deal with such issues, but if it was more practical, it would have been okay… Like, teaching what you see. Like, they demonstrate or have different people come in to demonstrate because like, they might tell you this is the only route to take, but for you it doesn't work.*

ITE remains a key focus area of educational policies, stressing the need to adequately equip teachers with pedagogical strategies that are contextually relevant to address diversity (Meier & Hartell, 2009; Sayed et al., 2016). Not only must teachers be better prepared at pre-service teacher level for CRT, but continuous, in-service teacher support and professional development is required to support the successful implementation of CRT. One Accounting teacher (P8) reported that she had never attended an Accounting workshop, despite having taught at her school for over three years:

> *Where I work, I've never attended one workshop for accounting. Workshops. I think teachers need to be taught how to teach accounting and how to approach certain things.*

Another participant (P6) felt that teachers need to be better trained to apply knowledge and that more workshops were required to support teachers (P7):

> *Train teachers. … To apply the knowledge. (P6)*

> *Just workshops by the way. To get workshops from department. And also, to have some materials which will also help in a class. (P7)*

The permanent disruptions caused by COVID-19 to teaching and learning have further escalated the need for professional development initiatives to support teachers in their

implementation of CRT. Taking into account 'the new normal' and non-traditional teaching contexts, Ferdig et al. (2020) echo the view that professional development is paramount - particularly for teachers who were not traditionally trained to teach online. There is now a huge demand for professional development to take a different turn, not just to support Accounting and Economics teachers on teaching the subjects, but teaching the subjects in this new context, without compromising the goals of CRT. To achieve this, Ferdig et al. (2020, p. 576) advocate for just-in-time, context-specific professional development.

5.3 Conclusion

In this chapter, I presented the final step of the thematic analysis - a detailed report on each of the seven themes, linking them to the quantitative data and to the CRT literature. While the data presented in this chapter was collected and analysed on the basis of the traditional classroom context, one cannot ignore the permanent disruptions caused by COVID-19 and its implications on teaching and learning. According to Motala and Menon (2020, p. 91), pedagogical practices for remote learning are much different to those in the contact learning mode.

In the next chapter, I present key conclusions drawn from the study, drawing on the theoretical and conceptual frameworks. I show how the EQI-CRT conceptual framework model presented in this study can assist researchers in understanding CRT in both traditional and non-traditional contexts.

CHAPTER 6
CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

This study aimed to explore FET Accounting and Economics teachers' understanding of CRT, their CRT teaching practices and principles that apply to their teaching contexts, as well as the challenges faced by Accounting and Economics teachers in the successful implementation of CRT. In this final chapter, I engage the research questions central to this study and present the key connections from each of the chapters in the thesis. This is followed by a summary of the empirical findings, and the implications of CRT in supporting teaching in South Africa and globally. In concluding the chapter, I provide the necessary recommendations, drawing from the empirical work.

6.2 Research questions and key connections

Chapter 1 of this study set the context and justified, through a comprehensive problem statement, why this study is situated within the context of the problematic nature of Accounting and Economics. Accounting and Economics are considered gateway subjects in the South African schooling system, however, they have been facing declining enrolment rates and increasing levels of underperformance over the last five years. The DBE advocates that due to their complex nature, these subjects must be taught in such a way that learners understand the content (NSC Examinations Report, 2019). This necessitates the exploration of alternative teaching approaches in the teaching of Accounting and Economics that not only speak to this mandate, but also speak to the context of teaching in the South African classroom.

In light of this, the study set out to explore CRT, a multidisciplinary approach to teaching, rooted in fairness and equity that has been shown to be effective in the teaching of culturally diverse students, which is the current South African schooling context.

In pursuit of the aims of the study, four key research questions were posed:

1. How is CRT understood by in-service teachers teaching FET Accounting and Economics in South African high schools?
2. What CRT principles and practices do Accounting and Economics teachers apply in teaching the subjects?

3. In cases where CRT has been used, what challenges do these educators encounter in the successful implementation of CRT in their classrooms?
4. What are the implications of the COVID-19 global pandemic on CRT in Accounting and Economics teaching?

The intended outcomes of this study, outlined in Chapter 1, were to contribute to the body of knowledge on CRT practices within the context of Accounting and Economics teaching, since there is a literature gap in what we know about CRT in these subject contexts. The second intended outcome was to contribute towards the discourse around teacher preparation of Accounting and Economics teachers for CRT in the South African classroom.

In light of the aims of the study, and the research questions posed in Chapter 1, Chapter 2 provided a critical synthesis of the scholarly work around CRT and Accounting and Economics education. First, the chapter outlined the history of South African schooling, which was critical in understanding the cultural diversity that exists in schools today. Pertinent points were raised, such as South Africa's formerly racially-based education system that denied the Black majority equal access to educational opportunities (Badat & Sayed, 2014; Hunter, 2015). Additionally, schools were extraordinarily unequally resourced (Cappy, 2016; Hunter, 2015), with a curriculum that largely excluded Black African perspectives. The current educational landscape is one that is still crippled by inequalities in funding, infrastructure, and instructional policies and practices (Badat & Sayed, 2014; Ball, 2006), despite schools no longer being racially segregated. The 'new' desegregated education system called for a more socially responsive education system that would afford all South Africans access to quality, equitable, and democratic education (Mncube & Harber, 2010), presenting a challenge to schools in the context of change. The South African education system was tasked with the responsibility of addressing past injustices, overcoming inequalities and helping to achieve the democratic government's socioeconomic goals (Badat & Sayed, 2014). Essentially, education became a social justice issue.

Based on this context, in Chapter 2.2, I provided the theoretical lens that framed this study - the theory of SJE. This study used Fraser's (1998) definition of social justice that has two key claims – the first being the politics of recognition, which is one of the core principles of CRT, to value the knowledge, experiences and cultures of minority students who were historically sidelined by the schooling system (Gay, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1995). The second claim is the politics of redistribution, which calls for a more just distribution of resources as a means to

address past injustices (Fraser, 1998). While the pursuit of social justice requires both recognition and redistribution, the politics of redistribution lie outside the scope of this study.

South Africa continues to be in pursuit of an equitable, inclusive, quality education system and in doing this, the DBE has six key principles for SJE that are the benchmark for education - access, redress, equity, efficiency, quality and inclusivity (NSC Examination Report 2019, p. 74). From these principles of social justice, I proposed a framework that draws specifically on the principles of equity, quality and inclusivity, as key concepts to support the research, as those were within the scope of this study, and address the politics of recognition claim. Here, I argued that CRT is a way in which we can enact the principles of SJE in the specific context of FET Accounting and Economics teaching in South Africa.

Additionally, Chapter 2 drew on the work of seminal authors in the field of CRT such as Gay (2002, 2008 & 2010), Ladson-Billings (1995); Villegas and Lucas (2002), as well as other authors from both the global north and global south - to outline the CRT practices and principles that I set out to investigate in my research question. I then reviewed literature on the nature of Accounting and Economics and the challenges faced in each subject. These challenges, such as the inability of teachers to provide concrete experiences in the subjects (Kwarteng, 2019); learners not being adequately introduced to critical concepts (Modise, 2016); proficiency in mathematics; language issues (Mkhize & Maistry, 2017; Kwarteng, 2019); learner perceptions about the subject, and generally poor instructional quality that can be linked to gaps in subject content knowledge (Fouché, 2013), are consistent with the key problem areas outlined in Chapter 1. The literature suggests that both subjects require a unique teaching approach that is adequately able to meet the needs of Accounting and Economics students. Therefore, this study proposes that CRT is that unique approach that can contribute to the effective teaching of Accounting and Economics.

Chapter 3 detailed the methodological approach used to investigate the research questions. I adopted a pragmatic approach to this study that was driven by the research problem and research questions (Feilzer, 2010). I further presented an explanatory sequential design model, drawing on the work of Cresswell and Cresswell (2017), which described the study design. I used a mixed methods study that was designed in two phases. The first phase was a quantitative approach that entailed the issuing of a Likert-scale questionnaire to a combination of 37 Accounting and Economics teachers. This questionnaire required participants to rate their confidence scores on a scale of 1 – 5 *(strongly disagree – strongly agree)* on certain CRT

practices and principles. The CRT practices and principles that formed the questionnaire items were drawn from the CRT literature reviewed in Chapter 2.

The second, qualitative phase of the study was conducting semi-structured interviews. In planning for these interviews, I used Rabionet's (2011) sixstep interview design, described in Chapter 3.7. The interviews were conducted with a combination of 12 Accounting and Economics teachers. These respondents were teachers drawn from the initial sample of 37 who were willing and able to participate in the interviews. To ensure both a subject and a gender balance, six participants were Accounting teachers, three of which were male and three female; and the remaining six were Economics teachers, three male and three female. The interviews engaged the participants on the first research question: How is CRT understood by in-service teachers teaching FET Accounting and Economics in South African high schools? and the third research question: In cases where CRT has been used, what challenges do these educators encounter in the successful implementation of CRT in their classrooms*?* Based on the first, quantitative phase of the study, the data revealed that all the respondents were engaging in, and upholding, CRT practices and principles on some level. The participants were able to discuss in detail the various challenges that they faced in the successful implementation of CRT, which are presented in the findings in Chapter 4.

Chapter 3 also detailed the data analysis methods used for each phase of the study - descriptive statistics in the analysis of the Likert-scale questionnaire responses, drawing on the work of Ortiz (2011). For the analysis of the semi-structured interviews, Braun and Clarke's (2006, 2012) six-step thematic analysis was used. Both datasets would be merged and integrated to provide an overall interpretation. Ethical considerations, issues of trustworthiness, validity and reliability were also discussed in this chapter.

Chapter 4 presented the key findings of the study, drawing on both the quantitative and qualitative data collected by the methods specified in Chapter 3. Using a basic statistical analysis by reporting on the total response percentages for each Likert-scale item, I first presented the findings from the first, quantitative phase of the study that sought to gain insight into the specific CRT principles and practices that Accounting and Economics teachers engaged with in their subject contexts. Their lack of lowest confidence response items indicated that the Accounting and Economics teachers in question engaged with CRT in their teaching of the subjects. This is consistent with the initial assumption made at the onset of the study, that Accounting and Economics teachers are engaging in CRT by virtue of being teachers in

South Africa that are mandated to comply with the country's inclusive education policy. I then reported on the findings from the second phase of the study, by presenting the initial codes with data extracts and the key themes.

Chapter 5 provided a detailed report on the key findings presented in Chapter 4, which is the final step of a thematic analysis. Here, the findings from the two phases of the study were integrated and reported on together. Additionally, these findings were linked to the scholarly work on CRT, and Accounting and Economics education.

In this final chapter, Chapter 6, I summarise the empirical findings from each phase of data collection. These findings are also discussed in light of the research questions and conceptual framework. This final chapter is where I draw the relevant conclusions on the basis of the study's findings, discuss the implications of the study and provide the necessary recommendations, drawing on the empirical work.

6.3 Summary of the empirical findings

6.3.1 Phase 1

The aim of the first quantitative phase of data collection was to explore the research question: What CRT principles and practices do Accounting and Economics teachers apply in teaching the subjects? In doing this, Likert-scale questionnaires were completed by 37 respondents who constituted Accounting and/or Economics teachers.

- Three items had the highest confidence responses (above 50%), which respondents rated the most as *'strongly agree'* or *'agree'* with principles and practices of CRT in the context of Accounting and Economics teaching:
    - Developing and maintaining meaningful, trusting and caring relationships with students; and
    - Relating current events to the topic being taught and how it relates to students;
    - Infusing the Economics/Accounting curriculum with the cultures of students that are represented in the classroom.
- No items had a lowest confidence response score (above 50%), indicating that the respondents do implement CRT practices and principles in the teaching of Accounting and Economics.

6.3.2 Phase 2

The aim of the second phase of the data collection process was to respond to the first and third research questions:

How is CRT understood by in-service teachers teaching FET Accounting and Economics in South African high schools?; and In cases where CRT has been used, what challenges do these educators encounter in the successful implementation of CRT in their classrooms?

This data, collected through semi-structured interviews, was coded and analysed using a thematic analysis. Seven key themes were found in this dataset that speak to how Accounting and Economics teachers view CRT and the challenges that they face in the implementation of CRT:

1. **Acknowledging cultural differences and building relationships**

The respondents felt that CRT begins with having an explicit knowledge of the cultural diversity and needs of their learners (Chapter 5, p. 71). This is consistent with the CRT literature that states that this knowledge of learners and relationship-building in the classroom is a prerequisite to implementing CRT in any context.

2. **Building on existing knowledge and experiences**

CRT advocates for a constructivist view of knowledge and learning. Respondents acknowledged that Accounting and Economics learners have pre-existing knowledge and experiences that need to be built on when teaching (Chapter 5, p.73).

3. **Teaching learners in a way that they understand**

Respondents reported the use of a variety of teaching methods and strategies to 'reach' their learners and to meet them at their level (Chapter 5, p. 74). These are strategies such as collaborative learning, group work, peer teaching and cross-cultural pairing, which are regarded as effective CRT practices in the CRT literature.

4. **Navigating linguistic differences in the classroom**

Respondents use codeswitching to navigate around linguistic differences; however this can be challenging due to the multiple cultures and languages that may exist in one classroom. Culturally diverse learners also struggle with the language of teaching and learning, which is significantly different from their home language, and subsequently affects academic performance (Chapter 5, p. 75). This was also identified as a challenge at the outset of this

study when describing the current problems facing the teaching of Accounting and Economics in Chapter 1.

5. **Curriculum issues and accountability pressures**

CRT is not reflected in the curriculum and work still needs to be done in terms of curriculum reform to support CRT. The standardised curriculum is currently removed from the experiences of the kinds of learners in schools today. Added to this, a tight ATP stresses the need for teachers to 'get things done' at a fast pace and account for curriculum coverage, rather than focusing on meeting students at their level (Chapter 5, p.77).

6. **Learner and teacher attitudes towards commerce subjects**

Accounting and Economics are not promoted as desirable subjects, and this affects the willingness of learners to take these as FET subjects. This is reflected in the declining enrolment rates in Accounting and Economics over the last five years, as problematised in Chapter 1. Both teacher and learner attitudes towards the subject affect instructional quality and, consequently, academic performance (Chapter 5, p. 80).

7. **The need for continuous professional development**

Successful implementation of CRT requires adequate support for teachers and continuous professional development. Accounting and Economics teachers interviewed in this study cited a disconnect between what they learnt about cultural diversity in their ITE, and what they experience daily in their practice. Additionally, Accounting and Economics teachers would appreciate more workshops and in-service professional development to capacitate them for CRT (Chapter 5, p. 81).

6.4 Linking of research questions, aims, findings and key literature

The table below links the four key research questions and research aims with the key findings and literature that speaks specifically to the research findings.

Table 14

Linking of the research questions, aims, findings and literature

Research Questions	Research Aim	Findings	Literature
1. How is CRT understood by in-service teachers teaching FET Accounting and Economics in South African high schools?;	Explore the understanding of CRT by Accounting and Economics teachers in their subject context.	**Theme 1: Acknowledging cultural differences and building relationships.** We are complex beings, and at the heart of CRT is building relationships with students and a deep understanding of cultural differences. **Theme 2: Building on existing knowledge and experiences.** Learners do not come to the schooling context as empty vessels. CRT is about building on their existing knowledge and experiences. **Theme 3: Teaching learners in a way that they understand.** CRT is a student-centred pedagogy that is about teaching learners in a way that best responds to their needs.	The literature shows that what happens in the classroom is shaped by a teacher's understanding of their own culture, as well as how comfortable they are with the cultures of their learners (Gay, 2018; Kapofu, 2019; Ladson-Billings, 1995). Therefore, it is important that teachers are able to acknowledge these cultural differences. Culturally responsive teachers use the prior experiences of learners to help them to be able to make sense of any new knowledge that they encounter. This is referred to as 'cultural capital' and is central to the learning process (Gay, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). A mismatch in teaching and learning styles easily results in the underperformance of students (Visser, McChlery, & Vreken, 2006). Culturally responsive teachers make conscious efforts to use different teaching strategies that enable them to reach students and meet students where they are. These various

			instructional strategies are connected to different learning styles (Bottiani, Larson, Debnam, Bischoff, & Bradshaw, 2018).
2. What CRT principles and practices do Accounting and Economics teachers apply in teaching these subjects?	Explore how Accounting and Economics teachers implement CRT within their subject curriculum and their classrooms, giving specific examples.	**CRT Principles** • Communicating well with culturally diverse students and their parents (Gay, 2002; Hsiao, 2015). • Developing and maintaining positive, meaningful, trusting and caring relationships with students (Gay, 2002; Hsiao, 2015). • Validating students' languages and cultures (DoE, Education White Paper 6, 2001; Charamba, 2019; Nugraha, 2019). • Understanding the cultural contributions of the cultures represented in the classroom in Accounting or Economics (Evans, 2017; Gay, 2002). • Infusing the Accounting or Economics curriculum with cultures of students that are represented in the classroom (Evans, 2017; Hsiao, 2015, Onorato, 2017). **CRT Practices** • Actively involving parents in their children's learning. (Hsiao, 2015). • Engaging in collaborative learning - either in the form of group work, group discussions or peer teaching (Gay, 2018; Zraa et al., 2011). • Cross-cultural pairings in the classroom to foster an understanding of cultural differences (Gay, 2002, 2010). • Codeswitching (Probyn, 2009; Gay, 2002).	

		• Using visual aids, leveraging off technology (playing videos), playing games and daily news reports in the classroom (DoE, Education White Paper 6, 2001; van Wyk, 2011; Villegas & Lucas, 2002).	
3. What challenges do these educators encounter in the successful implementation of CRT in their classrooms?	Identify the challenges encountered by Accounting and Economics teachers in the successful implementation of CRT in their subject contexts.	• **Theme 4: Navigating linguistic differences in the classroom.** In a country with 11 official languages, it can be challenging for any teacher to find their way and to navigate linguistic differences in the classroom.	• Many Accounting and Economics students struggle because of language barriers (NSC Diagnostic Report, 2018, pp. 9, 57). In South Africa, language in education has continuously been a subject under investigation (Nugraha, 2019). Language is an inherent part of one's culture and identity. This linguistic diversity should not be viewed as a deficit, but rather leveraged in teaching and learning.
		• **Theme 5: Curriculum issues and accountability pressures.** Accounting and Economics teachers are faced with daily accountability pressures, having to cover a rigid curriculum in the expected amount of time, and standardised testing, regardless of whether or not they believe it is in the interests of the learners.	• CRT should be reflected in the curriculum (Gay, 2013; Mayfield & Garrison-Wade, 2015; Meier & Hartell, 2009). Standardised curricula that are not centred around CRT take away from CRT's student-centred approach.

		• **Theme 6: Learner and teacher attitudes towards Commerce subjects** Learner and teacher attitudes towards Accounting and Economics are a critical factor in determining academic success in these subjects. Students' motivation to learn and do well in the subject is based on how teachers themselves view the subject.	• Adverse attitudes towards a subject can lead to incorrect perceptions and misinformation about the subject (Kwarteng, 2019). Teachers' attitudes play a huge role in learners' attitudes towards a subject. Teachers should have a mastery of the subject content and curriculum and be confident in their ability to provide accurate and constructive information on the subject as this affects learners' engagement, and subsequent performance in the subject (van Wyk, 2012).
		• **Theme 7: The need for continuous professional development.** Accounting and Economics teachers need support in the implementation of CRT. Currently, there is not enough professional development targeted at supporting Accounting and Economics teachers in implementing CRT.	• To successfully implement CRT in any subject area, teachers need to actively develop their skills and awareness of CRT through continuous professional development (Chen & Yang, 2017).
4. What are the implications of the global COVID-19 pandemic on CRT	Understand the implications of the current global COVID-19 pandemic	• The COVID-19 global pandemic has caused permanent disruptions to teaching and learning worldwide and has shaped the way teaching and learning will look in the future (Motala & Menon, 2020; Ferdig et al., 2020).	

in Accounting and Economics teaching?	on CRT in the context of Accounting and Economics teaching.	• The pandemic has heightened challenges already faced by teachers in traditional schooling contexts highlighted in research question 3 above. • There is now a dire need for teacher professional development support initiatives for Accounting and Economics teachers to support them in the implementation of CRT, ensuring that the inclusive education goals are still met under 'the new normal'. • CRT is highly flexible and has value in both traditional and non-traditional schooling contexts.

6.5 Discussing the research questions, aims, key findings, and literature

Table 14 above presented the link between the research questions, aims, key findings, and the literature. At the outset of this study, I presented four key research questions which are discussed below:

6.5.1 Research question 1

How is CRT understood by in-service teachers teaching FET Accounting and Economics in South African high schools?

The aim of this research question was to explore the understanding of CRT of Accounting and Economics teachers in their subject context. The key findings from this study indicated that Accounting and Economics teachers understand CRT to be based on the following:

Acknowledging cultural differences and building relationships. This is one of the key principles of CRT - that culturally responsive teachers need to first acknowledge that cultural differences exist in their classrooms, and that these differences must be acknowledged, and centred (Gay, 2018; Kapofu, 2019; Ladson-Billings, 1995). Furthermore, culturally responsive teaching places tremendous value on building relationships with culturally diverse students and their families (Gay, 2002; Hsiao, 2015; Sleeter, 2015).

Secondly, Accounting and Economics teachers understood CRT to be about building on existing knowledge and experiences of students. This places value on the cultural capital that students bring with them to the classroom and the acknowledgement that culturally diverse students have valuable experiences and prior knowledge that must be used as a springboard for teaching. This is consistent with seminal work on CRT that advocates for the centring of the knowledge and experiences of culturally diverse students (Gay, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Villegas & Lucas, 2002).

Thirdly, CRT is about teaching learners in the way that they understand. This makes it a student-centred pedagogy that emphasises meeting students where they are and using different methods and techniques to reach them. The DBE states explicitly that teaching must take place in such a way that learners understand the content (NSC Diagnostic Report, 2018, p. 57). When teachers teach through the cultural filters of students, and meet students where they are, this is more likely to result in academic success (Gay, 2002, 2010).

6.5.2 Research question 2

What CRT principles and practices do Accounting and Economics teachers apply in teaching these subjects?

The aim of this second research question was to explore how Accounting and Economics teachers implement CRT within their subject curriculum and classrooms, drawing on specific examples.

In Chapter 4 of this study, Table 7, I presented the Likert-scale questionnaire response items that indicated the degree to which Accounting and Economics teachers implemented a specific CRT practice or principle. These Likert items were drawn from CRT literature engaged with in Chapter 2 of this study.

Accounting and Economics teachers implemented the following CRT Principles:

- Communicating well with culturally diverse students and their parents (Gay, 2002; Hsiao, 2015).
- Developing and maintaining positive, meaningful, trusting and caring relationships with students (Gay, 2002; Hsiao, 2015).
- Validating students' languages and cultures (DoE, Education White Paper 6, 2001; Charamba, 2019; Nugraha, 2019).
- Understanding the cultural contributions of the cultures represented in the classroom in Accounting or Economics (Evans, 2017; Gay, 2002).
- Infusing the Accounting or Economics curriculum with cultures of students that are represented in the classroom (Evans, 2017; Hsiao, 2015, Onorato, 2017).

Accounting and Economics teachers implemented the following CRT Practices:

- Actively involving parents in their students' learning. (Hsiao, 2015)
- Engaging in collaborative learning - in the form of group work, group discussions or peer teaching (Gay, 2018; Zraa et al., 2011).
- Cross-cultural pairings in the classroom to foster an understanding of cultural differences (Gay, 2002, 2010).
- Codeswitching (Probyn, 2009; Gay, 2002).
- Using visual aids, leveraging off technology (playing videos), playing games and daily news reports in the classroom (DoE, Education White Paper 6, 2001; van Wyk, 2011; Villegas & Lucas, 2002).

These findings were consistent with the assumption made in Chapter 1 that Accounting and Economics teachers would, to some degree, be implementing CRT in their subjects as the principles of CRT are consistent with the legislated Inclusive Education Policy (Education White Paper 6).

6.5.3 Research question 3

What challenges do these educators encounter in the successful implementation of CRT in their classrooms?

The aim of this third research question was to identify the challenges encountered by Accounting and Economics teachers in the successful implementation of CRT in their subject contexts. These challenges were identified under themes 4, 5, 6, and 7 in Chapter 4.

The following were challenges faced by Accounting and Economics teachers:

Navigating linguistic differences - Many students' home languages are different to the language of teaching and learning. Most often, a teacher is faced with students from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds, which presents a challenge in the classroom. According to the DBE, many Accounting and Economics students struggle because of language differences (NSC Diagnostic Report, 2018, pp. 9, 57).

Curriculum issues and accountability pressures - Accounting and Economics teachers in this study argued that 'there is no room for CRT' due to the increased pressure to cover the curriculum and teach at a consistently fast pace, regardless of the needs or interests of the learners. CRT literature argues that while curriculum is necessary, CRT must be reflected in the curriculum so that it does not take away from its student-centredness (Gay, 2013; Mayfield & Garrison-Wade, 2015; Meier & Hartell, 2009).

Learner and teacher attitudes towards Accounting and Economics - Students' motivation to learn is affected by the teacher's attitude towards that particular subject. Teachers in the study who had a more positive outlook towards their subject cited an increased interest on the part of the learners and increased engagement. Adverse attitudes towards Accounting or Economics can not only lead to misinformation about the subject, but to lower engagement and achievement levels (Kwarteng, 2019; van Wyk, 2012).

The need for professional development - A lack of professional development opportunities for Accounting and Economics teachers was cited by teachers in this study as a problem. Currently, there is not enough professional development targeted at supporting Accounting and

Economics teachers in implementing CRT. To successfully implement CRT in any subject area, teachers need to actively develop their skills and awareness of CRT through continuous professional development (Chen & Yang, 2017).

6.5.4 Research question 4

What are the implications of the COVID-19 global pandemic on CRT in Accounting and Economics teaching?

The recent COVID-19 global pandemic has undoubtedly caused major disruptions to teaching and learning that are likely to have a long-lasting impact. While this study was originally conducted in the context of a traditional schooling context and classroom environment, its research aims were extended to encompass the current, and future impact of the global pandemic on teaching and learning. As such, the aim of the fourth and final research question was to explore the implications of the COVID-19 global pandemic on CRT in Accounting and Economics teaching.

Drawing on recent literature, in Chapter 2 of this study I discussed some of the challenges presented by the current pandemic on teaching and learning. From the data collected in this study, one can conclude that existing challenges faced by teachers and schools in the implementation of CRT will be heightened and, subsequently, efforts to mitigate these challenges must be increased, particularly for the poorer, less advantaged public schools that have been the hardest hit by the global pandemic. Challenges Accounting and Economics teachers face such as curriculum coverage and accountability pressures will undoubtedly increase, due to the near six months of teaching and learning time that was completely lost.

Teachers that cited that there was a lack of professional development support with regard to Accounting and Economics teaching are more likely to feel overwhelmed and frustrated. Added to the dire need for professional development opportunities for teaching these subjects, is now the need for capacitating teachers with skills for effectively teaching these subjects in non-traditional classroom contexts and ensuring the academic success of already vulnerable, marginalised students under ‘the new normal’.

Despite these challenges, CRT has shown itself to be a pedagogical approach to teaching that is learner-centred, highly flexible and puts the needs of learners first. Now more than ever, a great deal of cultural responsiveness, and cultural sensitivity is needed in the way that we teach if we are to ensure the success of diverse students.

6.6 Building the Conceptual Framework

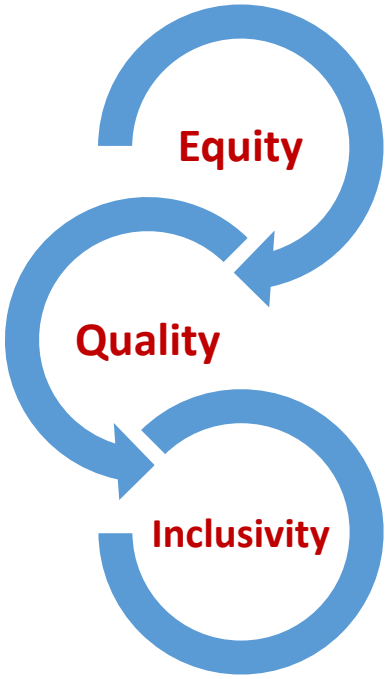
One of the major contributions of this study is a conceptual framework model that can be used by researchers to make sense of CRT in the South African context.

This study was framed around the theory of SJE. In defining SJE, I drew specifically on the DBE's six principles of SJE as outlined in policy documents. These six principles were: access, redress, efficiency, equity, quality, and inclusivity. Drawing on the work of Fraser (1998), I outlined the two key tenets of SJE - its call for recognition and its call for redistribution (detailed in Chapter 2). Issues of redistribution speak to issues of access, redress, and efficiency of the education system, which are outside the scope of this study, while issues of recognition speak to equity, quality and inclusivity which are concepts that are within the scope of this study. These are concepts that I felt could be impacted by pedagogy and were thus the key concepts that I chose as a basis for building a conceptual framework.

This conceptual framework model below identifies the principles of SJE as equity, quality, and inclusivity.

Figure 5

The EQI-CRT Conceptual Framework Model



Equity was defined on the basis of its general principle - that all students, regardless of their racial, linguistic and socioeconomic or cultural background have the right to access quality instruction and equal representation in the classroom.

While most teachers do not have control over equity matters from an access to schooling point of view, they are in a position to ensure that their classroom practices are such that every single learner, regardless of their race, language, socioeconomic or cultural background, is treated fairly and is given equal access to quality instruction in the classroom. Accounting and Economics teachers in this study did not dwell on the issue of race - perhaps because things have changed drastically since 1994 - the majority Black African children now have access to South African government schools, as stated in the literature review when setting the context of this study. Today, teachers are rather faced with learners from different cultures, languages and socioeconomic backgrounds - a unique form of cultural diversity than that which dominates CRT literature in the global north.

Quality as a key concept in FET Accounting and Economics teaching relates to actual teaching practices in the classroom - which are CRT practices. The Likert-scale questionnaire data revealed that the majority of Accounting and Economics teachers do implement CRT practices, as initially assumed in Chapter 1. Some principles and practices appeared more strongly than others (See Findings, Chapter 4). What defines quality in the teaching of Accounting and Economics is when teachers do the following:

- Acknowledge cultural differences and build relationships with students and their families.
- Build on students' existing knowledge and experiences.
- Use a variation of teaching methods and strategies to teach students in the way that they best understand.
- Use strategies to help students navigate linguistic differences.
- Have a positive attitude towards the subject that filters through to the students.

Inclusivity in this model is defined according to South Africa's Inclusive Education Policy and described in Education White Paper 6. The data from this study revealed that teachers actively work to include all learners in their classrooms, and to build a sense of tolerance and community in their classrooms. Definitions and descriptions of CRT are consistent with the principles stated in the Inclusive Education policy.

The results of this study have shown that CRT strongly supports both the principle of equity and the principles of inclusive education. Strengthening the quality of the implementation of CRT in the classroom will further support and strengthen South Africa's education mandate to provide equitable, quality and inclusive education for all learners, regardless of their racial, linguistic, socioeconomic or cultural background. In order to adopt a social justice approach to Accounting and Economics teaching in the South African context, one needs to engage in equity pedagogy at the level of the classroom (through quality, culturally responsive instruction) and at the level of policy (through compliance with the inclusive education policy).

6.7 Implications of Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) in supporting teaching in South Africa and globally

The key findings of this study revealed that South African Accounting and Economics teachers do implement CRT practices and uphold CRT principles in the teaching of these subjects. This is possibly the result of South Africa's inclusive education policy which I have shown in Chapter 2 to be closely aligned to the values and principles of CRT. There are, however, various factors that affect the successful implementation of CRT in Accounting and Economics teaching in the South African classroom. These challenges are around linguistic differences, curriculum overload and accountability pressures, and the general attitude of learners and teachers towards Accounting and Economics. Added to this, there are insufficient professional development initiatives to capacitate teachers on how to become more culturally responsive teachers when teaching these subjects. The recent COVID-19 global pandemic is likely to have resulted in a heightening of these challenges, forcing already inadequately supported teachers in poorly resourced schools to adjust to teaching under 'the new normal'.

The results of this study have implications for teacher preparation institutions that are tasked with the responsibility of preparing future teachers to teach in the culturally diverse contexts we have today. This study also has implications for current implementers of in-service teacher support programmes that are responsible for providing ongoing support to in-service teachers. Additionally, the results of this study have implications for education policy and curriculum planning in South Africa, and possibly globally - that we need to be more explicit about advocating for CRT not just in policy, but filtering it down to subject-specific CAPS documents and ATPs.

This study will contribute to conceptualising how we make sense of CRT within the unique context of teaching in South Africa in both traditional and non-traditional schooling contexts. While this study directly contributes to CRT literature in Accounting and Economics, CRT can be applied across various subject contexts and the implications are more wide-reaching than the two subjects and the context under investigation.

As with any study, this study has its limitations. One such limitation is the lack of literature on CRT in the context of teaching Accounting and Economics. Although information could be found on Accounting and Economics and the challenges facing each subject, there is limited literature available on CRT as it is applied in the context of teaching Accounting and Economics in South Africa.

Another limitation is the fact that this was a small-scale study conducted with a small sample of teachers in two specific subject contexts. The study only included 37 Accounting and or Economics teachers from Gauteng. This presents opportunities for further investigation into CRT in Accounting and Economics teaching on a larger scale. Furthermore, the recent COVID-19 global pandemic presents an opportunity to research the application of CRT in teaching in South African schools in both traditional and non-traditional classroom contexts.

6.8 Recommendations

Drawing on the key findings, implications and limitations of this study, a number of recommendations for future research and future action can be made.

- A similar study can be conducted on a larger scale with a larger sample of Accounting and Economics teachers. This study could also include Business Studies, which is also a Commerce subject but was outside the scope of this study.
- Future research can be conducted into the subject-specific practices that constitute as CRT. What does CRT look like in an Accounting or Economics classroom? This is due to the fact that this study found that while the respondents generally talked about principles of CRT, there was a lack in the discussion around subject-specific practices that show how Accounting and Economics teachers enact CRT.
- Studies can be conducted on how CRT is applied in other subjects in the South African context and whether it leads to increased student outcomes.
- Teachers need to be supported for CRT as early as in their preservice teacher training. Additionally, there must be support measures in place for in-service teachers in the form

of professional development, to support them in the implementation of CRT. Teacher support networks should be investigated as a more sustainable and consistent support structure for Accounting and Economics teachers. Since this study has shown that the principles of CRT are consistent with the principles of Inclusive Education, teacher education institutions need to capacitate teachers beyond theory on how to implement CRT in their teaching practice. Professional development initiatives for in-service teachers must not only focus on improving teachers' content knowledge, but on improving their practice and supporting teachers on the specific CRT practices they can implement in their subject areas, and in their classrooms (in both traditional, and non-traditional classroom contexts).

- Teachers, schools and higher education institutions should take active steps towards promoting Accounting and Economics as school subjects and making Commerce education attractive, just as is being done with promoting Mathematics and Physical Sciences. Improving learner and teacher attitudes will go a long way in turning around the declining enrolment numbers and declining performance.
- There must be a place for CRT in the curriculum. While we have a policy on Inclusive Education, this is not adequately or practically reflected in the curriculum and does not filter through to the ATP; curriculum planners and policy makers must consider putting CRT at the centre of implementation. Teachers should not be conflicted about whether to be culturally responsive or whether they should focus more on the curriculum and curriculum coverage. The curriculum goals must be culturally responsive in curriculum delivery and the two must speak to each other.

6.9 Concluding remarks

The main of this study was to explore the understanding of CRT in the context of teaching Accounting and Economics in South Africa, the teaching practices that speak to the implementation of CRT in the specific subject contexts, as well as the challenges faced by Accounting and Economics teachers in the teaching of these subjects. In light of the recent COVID-19 global pandemic that has caused major disruptions to teaching and learning worldwide, the aim of this study was also to understand the implications of the pandemic on CRT in Accounting and Economics teaching.

Based on the findings, implications and conclusions drawn from the empirical study, as discussed in this chapter, it can be accepted that the aims of the study have been achieved. This

study has shown that implementing CRT is in the interests of the country's mandate to pursue SJE and also in the interests of enacting the Inclusive Education policy. Furthermore, this is an all-encompassing, flexible approach that has proven its value in teaching in both traditional and non-traditional schooling contexts. The results of this study contribute to the body of knowledge of CRT within the context of teaching in South Africa and globally, as well as approaches for teaching Accounting and Economics in a way that not only responds to the diverse needs of learners, but also fulfils the mandate of the DBE to provide quality, equitable, inclusive education within the framework of social justice.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Likert-Scale Questionnaire

Dear Colleagues,

BRIEF INFORMATION

This is a short questionnaire to explore your understanding and practices of Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) in Commerce Teaching in the FET phase.

All information you provide will be kept strictly confidential and under no circumstances will your individual responses be released outside this programme. Your participation in responding to this questionnaire is voluntary and you are free to discontinue at any time. However, your experiences and opinions are crucial in helping us plan and deliver on this capacity building exercise.

I greatly appreciate your time to complete this questionnaire.

Thank you.

Ms. Boitumelo Khunou (Master's Student & Researcher)

School of Education,

University of the Witwatersrand (Wits)

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Please mark the appropriate box with an X.

Gender

Male	
Female	

Ethnicity

Black African	
Coloured	
White	
Indian	
Other. Please specify.	

Age

25-30	
31-35	
36-40	
41-45	
46-50	
>50	

Highest Qualification

Bachelor of Education	
Honours	
Masters	
PhD	
Other. Please specify.	

In which year did you qualify with your highest qualification?

Are you currently undertaking study?

Yes	
No	

If so, at what level?

Not applicable	
Honours	
Masters	

PhD	
Other. Please specify.	

How long have you been teaching as an Accounting Educator in grades 10-12?

0-3 years	
4-6 years	
7-10 years	
>10 years	

How long have you been teaching as an Economics Educator in grades 10-12?

0-3 years	
4-6 years	
7-10 years	
>10 years	

QUESTIONNAIRE

Please rate on the scale the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement using an X.

Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices	**Strongly Agree**	**Agree**	**Neutral**	**Disagree**	**Strongly Disagree**
I make an effort to get to know my students' families and backgrounds					
I know how to communicate with culturally diverse students and their parents/guardians					
I actively involve parents/guardians in their children's learning					
I validate my students' languages and cultures					
My classroom environment is nurturing and encourages active participation from students					
I develop and maintain positive, meaningful, trusting and caring relationships with students					
I encourage communication across cultures in my classroom, using mixed-language & mixed-culture pairings in class					

I ask for my students' input when planning lessons and activities					
I communicate expectations of success to culturally diverse students					
I understand the cultural contributions of the cultures represented in my classroom in Economics/Accounting					
Work samples that reflect students' cultures are displayed in my classroom					
I infuse the Economics/Accounting curriculum with the cultures of students that are represented in my classroom					
I supplement the curriculum with lessons about international current events					
I relate current events to the topic and how it relates to students					
I use a variety of instructional methods to match my students' learning preferences in learning Economics/Accounting & maintain their interest in learning					
I use instructional examples that are culturally familiar to learners to serve as scaffolding for learners					
I examine materials for culturally appropriate images and themes					
I encourage students to use cross-cultural comparisons when analysing material					
I include open discussions of historical, cultural and political influences of the topic discussed					
I use a variety of assessment techniques that are designed to evaluate students' performance in favour of cultural diversity					

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME!

Appendix B: Interview Questions

This interview is a follow-up on the Likert-Scale questionnaire that was completed on the Culturally Responsive Teaching practices of commerce teachers. The purpose of this interview is to gain a deeper understanding of subject-specific Culturally Responsive Teaching practices and any challenges that affect the successful implementation of Culturally Responsive Teaching in commerce subjects.

1. Do you implement Culturally Responsive Teaching in your subject context and in your classroom? Can you give specific examples of this?

2. What are some of the challenges that you face in your implementation of Culturally Responsive Teaching in your subject context and within your classroom?

3. Do you think that more successful implementation of Culturally Responsive Teaching practices could improve teaching in your subject context? Why or why not?

Appendix C: Ethics Forms
LETTER TO THE PRINCIPAL

30 August 2018

Dear Madam/Sir

My name is Boitumelo Khunou. I am a Masters student in the School of Education at the University of the Witwatersrand.

I am doing research on Exploring Culturally Responsive Teaching in Commerce Education in South African high schools.

My investigation involves conducting an audiotaped semi-structured interview with an Economics teacher as well as an Accounting teacher from your school to explore their understanding of Culturally Responsive Teaching. This interview should take no more than 20 minutes. This is followed by a 10-minute completion of a Likert-scale questionnaire in which the teachers will reflect on the extent to which they engage in Culturally Responsive Teaching practices in their teaching.

The reason why I have chosen your school is because it is conveniently located, as well as offering both Economics and Accounting as subjects.

I am inviting your school to participate in this research.

The research participants will not be advantaged or disadvantaged in any way. They will be reassured that they can withdraw their permission at any time during this project without any penalty. There are no foreseeable risks in participating in this study. The participants will not be paid for this study.

The names of the research participants and identity of the school will be kept confidential at all times and in all academic writing about the study. Their individual privacy will be maintained in all published and written data resulting from the study.

All research data will be destroyed 5 years after completion of the project.

Please let me know if you require any further information. I look forward to your response as soon as is convenient.

Yours sincerely,

Boitumelo Khunou

957 Tau Street Naledi Extension 2, Soweto

1479921@students.wits.ac.za

0824003851

INFORMATION SHEET FOR TEACHERS

30 August 2018

Dear Educator

My name is Boitumelo Khunou and I am a Masters student in the School of Education at the University of the Witwatersrand.

I am doing research on Exploring Culturally Responsive Teaching in Commerce Education in South African high schools.

My investigation involves conducting an audiotaped semi-structured interview with you (an Economics or Accounting teacher) to explore your understanding of Culturally Responsive Teaching. This should take no more than 20 minutes. This will be followed by a 10 minute completion of a Likert-scale questionnaire in which you reflect on the extent to which you engage in Culturally Responsive Teaching practices in your teaching.

I would like you to participate in the interview and the questionnaire. Your participation is voluntary. If you decide halfway that you prefer to stop, this is completely your choice and will not affect you negatively in any way.

I will not be using your own name but I will make one up so no one can identify you. All information about you will be kept confidential in all my writing about the study. Additionally, all collected information will be stored safely and destroyed 5 years after I have completed my project.

I look forward to working with you!

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Thank you

Boitumelo Banini Khunou

957 Tau Street Naledi Extension 2, Soweto

1479921@students.wits.ac.za

0824003851

TEACHERS' CONSENT FORM

Please fill in and return the reply slip below indicating your willingness to be a participant in my voluntary research project called: *Exploring Culturally Responsive Teaching in Commerce Education in South African High Schools.*

I, _____give my consent for the following:

Circle one

Permission to be audiotaped

I agree to be audiotaped during the paired interview
YES/NO

I know that the audiotapes will be used for this project only
YES/NO

Permission to be interviewed

I would like to be interviewed for this study.
YES/NO

I know that I can stop the interview at any time and don't have to

answer all the questions asked.
YES/NO

Permission for questionnaire

I agree to fill in a questionnaire for this study.
YES/NO

Informed Consent

I understand that:

- my name and information will be kept confidential and safe and that my name and the name of my school will not be revealed.
- I do not have to answer every question and can withdraw from the study at any time.
- I can ask not to be audiotaped, photographed and/or videotaped.

- all the data collected during this study will be destroyed within 5 years after completion of my project.

Sign_____ Date_____