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# Exploring induction and professional development opportunities for early career teachers in selected South African public schools

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A thesis submitted to the School of Education,

Faculty of Humanities,

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in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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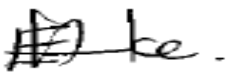
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# Declaration

I, Emure Kadenge, declare that this thesis is my own unaided work. It is submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, School of Education. It has not been submitted before for any other degree or examination in any other university

Signed:  Date: 25 September 2019

Emure Kadenge

# Acknowledgements and thanks

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I was also fortunate to have Dr Francine De Clercq as my supervisor during the initial stages of this PhD journey. I would want to thank Dr De Clercq, firstly, for instilling in me a passion for the field of teacher professional development. As her student over the years, I have seen her commitment to broadening knowledge on various aspects of teacher professional development and, I must say, her passion and commitment rubbed off on me. Secondly, I would want to thank her for guidance in this study, especially in ensuring that this study was well-formulated during its early stages.

I would also like to thank Dr Laura Dison, coordinator of the Wits School of Education Writing Centre. I really appreciate the opportunity she afforded me to work at the Writing Centre as a writing consultant. My experience as a writing consultant really came in handy during the thesis writing process.

I had a family at the Wits School of Education Writing Centre that always encouraged me to explore different ideas in the reading, thinking and writing process. Thank you Writing Centre family. I would also like to especially thank Esme Redfern, a Writing Centre colleague and friend, for always extending love and sharing light moments.

The PhD journey was a very lonely process where, more often than not, I had to figure things out on my own. I was, however, very fortunate to have colleagues that I would share my triumphs and struggles with and that collegiality made the process less lonely. While I had many colleagues, I would want to make a special mention of two ladies whose support was

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I would also like to express my heartfelt gratitude to my 'PhD baby', Ruzivo Margaret. The doctor announced she was on the way while I was grappling with the voluminous data for this study. For a while, I was devastated. What bad timing! I was, however, taken to a scripture which completely changed my way of looking at the whole 'PhD plus baby' situation as well as my general view of the world. The scripture read:

> *"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the Lord. "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts"* (Isaiah 55 verses 8-9, Holy Bible, New International Version).

It was then that I suddenly realised that 'PhD baby' was not coming erroneously, no. She was specifically coming at this time to drive the writing process. I had to progress fast with the thesis before her arrival! So, thank you Ruzivo for coming at this opportune time and giving me the apt nudge to work this thesis into completion. You were already a mover and shaker before you were born. Thank you my little champion!

Above all, I would want to thank God, my fortress and source of strength.

# List of Abbreviations

| | |
|---|---|
| AG | Advice and Guidance |
| 'A' Level | Advanced Level |
| AM | Assistant Mentor |
| ATP(s) | Annual Teaching Plan(s) |
| BA. | Bachelor of Arts |
| B.Ed. | Bachelor of Education |
| B.Com. | Bachelor of Commerce |
| B.Sc. | Bachelor of Science |
| CAPS | Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement |
| CAT | Computer Applications and Technology |
| CDE | Centre for Development and Enterprise |
| CES | Chief Education Specialist |
| CTPD | Continuous Teacher Professional Development |
| DBE | Department of Basic Education |
| DCES | Deputy Chief Education Specialist |
| DM | Dispute Management |
| DoE | Department of Education |
| DoHET | Department of Higher Education and Training |
| DP | Deputy Principal |
| ECT(s) | Early career teacher(s) |
| EGD | Engineering, Graphics and Designing |
| FET | Further Education and Training |
| GDE | Gauteng Department of Education |
| GPLMS | Gauteng Primary Language and Mathematics Strategy |
| HEI | Higher Education Institution |

| | |
|---|---|
| HDE | Higher Diploma in Education |
| HoD(s) | Head of Department(s) |
| HR | Human Resources |
| HRD | Human Resource Development |
| HRP | Human Resource Provisioning |
| Intersen | Intermediate and senior phase |
| ICT | Information and Communication Technology |
| IDSO | Institutional Development Support Officer |
| IQMS | Integrated Quality Management System |
| ISPFTED | Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development |
| IT | Information Technology |
| ITE | Initial Teacher Education |
| LSEN | Learners with Special Educational Needs |
| LTSM | Learner Teacher Support Material |
| MST | Maths, Science and Technology |
| M+3 | Matric plus three years tertiary education |
| NPFTED | National Policy Framework for Teacher Education and Development |
| NQT | Newly Qualified Teacher |
| NSC | National Senior Certificate |
| 'O' Level | Ordinary Level |
| PAM | Personnel Administrative Measures |
| PAT | Practical Assessment Tasks |
| PCK | Pedagogical Content Knowledge |
| PGM | Peer Group Mentoring |
| RDP | Reconstruction and Development Programme |
| PD | Professional Development |

| | |
|---|---|
| PDE | Provincial Department of Education |
| PGCE | Post-Graduate Certificate in Education |
| PhD | Doctor of Philosophy |
| PM | Principal Mentor |
| PS | Public Service |
| QTS | Qualified Teacher Status |
| SA | Subject Advisor |
| SACE | South African Council of Educators |
| SCK | Subject content knowledge |
| SES | Senior Educator Specialist |
| SGB | School Governing Body |
| SMT | School Management Team |
| SP | Senior Phase |
| SSIP | Secondary School Intervention Project |
| TDU | Teacher Development Unit |
| THRS | Transversal Human Resources Services |
| TP | Teaching Practicum |
| UCT | University of Cape Town |
| UK | United Kingdom |
| US | United States |
| WCLNS | Western Cape Literacy and Numeracy Strategy |

# Abstract

*This thesis intended to explore and develop an understanding of current practices and specific processes used to induct early career teachers in a few selected South African public schools. To develop this understanding, this study posed the question: What are the existing practices of induction and professional development available in selected South African public schools to provide early career teachers with learning opportunities to strengthen their repertoire of professional skills? This overarching question was explored through the following sub-questions: (i) What are the main on-the-job/professional challenges experienced by early career teachers? (ii) How are early career teachers inducted and professionally developed in their respective schools and district? (iii) How do existing practices of induction and professional development influence early career teachers' practices and commitment to the profession? And, (iv) How, if at all, can early career teacher induction and professional development practices be improved and sustained?*

*My research was an empirical phenomenological study that gathered data through focus group interviews, individual interviews, observations and document searches and analysis. The participants were 23 ECTs from five public high schools, which composed two township and three former Model C schools, three school-based mentors from one of the five schools and four district officials who were responsible for the induction of newly hired teachers in the district schools. I found, in response to sub-research question (i), that ECTs were facing serious challenges, especially with the technical aspects of their professional work such as disciplining learners, lesson planning, assessing learners, compiling statistics and managing time. They were also struggling with their respective schools' social politics outside the classroom where senior teacher colleagues were resentful and very hostile towards them and this phenomenon was particularly profound in the township schools' context. ECTs' challenges were worsened by the fact that schools were hardly supporting the ECTs and left them to devise their own survival strategies which were not always in the best interest of the learners, the teaching profession or the country as a whole. In response to sub-question (ii), the data showed that most schools do not have formal structures in place to induct and professionally develop ECTs. Of the five schools*

*that participated in the study, only one school (Peculiar High School) and the district office had formal ECT induction structures. In respect of these two, the data showed that the school largely conceived ECT induction as support by focusing on the acculturation of new teachers into the school community and providing guidance on various aspects related to the new teachers' professional duties. The district, on the other hand, seemed to conceive teacher induction as administrative monitoring with increased performance standards for teachers as their emphasis was on ensuring that the new teachers comply with various policy frameworks that govern their work. In response to sub- question (iii), the data showed that, because of the absence of well-conceived and systematic induction programmes, ECTs were largely dissatisfied with their job situations. As a result, the study identified three categories of ECTs in relation to their practices and their levels of commitment to the profession: (i) the turnover intents (ECTs who were dissatisfied that they were resolute on leaving the profession); (ii) the 'bad apples' who were intrinsically inclined to merely survive in the profession without the drive to positively impact their learners or the profession, and lastly, (iii) the 'agentic individuals' who were self-directed to stay in the profession and use their agency in a developmental way. For sub-question (iv), the data indicated that ECT induction programmes are definitely needed in South Africa. The data, however, pointed to two important considerations to carefully contemplate on: What should the induction focus on? And, how should the induction be organised (i.e. who is best positioned to facilitate the induction and where should it be done)? The study concluded that, at this point in time in South Africa, there is pressure to improve teacher and teaching quality hence the induction ought to focus on developing ECTs' professional skills needed for them to effectively perform their core teaching responsibilities. Although school-based induction that is done in the context of practice seemed more viable, the study ended up settling for an approach that acknowledges the important role played by both the school and the district in the proposed School-District-based ECT induction model.*

*My work contributes to the literatures on how ECT induction is conceptualised at the school and district levels in the South African context by reporting on how ECT induction was understood, enacted and the nature of social relationships that underpin it in these different sites. These findings could be of interest to policy makers who can use these insights to begin to think about how prefigured contextual conditions across the different school and district*

*contexts in South Africa will influence the manner in which nationwide ECT induction practices will most likely play out. The findings could also benefit schools and districts in as far as determining how best they can work together following the four steps of the School-District-based ECT induction model proposed in this study. As a result of my study, further research might well be conducted on the induction of ECTs in the South African public schooling context in order to understand the prefigured contextual conditions that are at play in the primary schooling context. This study has been a building block that has certainly opened up a new research agenda on early career teacher professional development through induction.*

**Keywords**: Early career teachers, teacher induction, teacher professional development, mentoring, South African public schools, education district

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# Chapter 1: Introduction to the study

## 1.1 Background

This research seeks to explore the intractable question of beginning teacher induction in selected public schools in South Africa. The number of new teachers graduating from South African Initial Teacher Education (ITE) institutions has been increasing significantly from 6,978 in 2009 to nearly doubling to 13,708 in 2012 (Centre for Development and Enterprise (CDE), 2015, p. 12).

The year 2011 saw 10 370 new teachers produced from public universities in comparison to the early to mid-2000s where between 5000 and 7000 new teachers were released into the profession per annum (Department of Education (DoE), 2005). This marked an astounding 74,5% increase and the Minister of Higher Education and Training in his Budget Speech at the National Council of Provinces mentioned that the department has speculations of producing well over 20 000 new teacher graduates by the year 2019 (Department of Higher Education and Training (DoHET), 2015). Although there is a severe lack of data on the nature of outputs from various ITE institutions into the system, a considerable number of the new teacher graduates are hired in the public schooling system.

In many of the world's best performing education systems, new teacher support is prioritised and formal induction programmes are made available to support beginning teachers as they learn to cope with the practicalities of teaching (Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Ingersoll & Smith, 2004). This formal induction has programmes which range from the management of learners in the classroom to the general adaptations and adjustments that beginning teachers experience in the new school environment (Ingersoll & Smith, 2004).

For many years, the case has been different in the South African teacher development context. The concept of beginning teacher induction has largely appeared only in teacher development policy frameworks and less in actual practice. The DoE, as is articulated in the National Policy Framework for Teacher Education and Development (NPFTED), acknowledges the need for inducting newly hired teachers and condemns "the practice of launching novice teachers into employment without explicit on-site induction" (DoE, 2005,

p.10). In its 'Teachers for the future' (2006) document, the DoE mandated that 'practical internship' through participating in a formal induction and/or mentoring programme at the local district or school site should be a prerequisite for all new teachers. It is somewhat disturbing to note that this countenance in South African teacher development policy frameworks has been, for a very long time, a mere rhetorical commitment that has not been actioned as the majority of beginning teachers are barely supported and left to device their own survival strategies (Steyn, 2004). Maringe and Prew (2015) point out that teacher induction as a field of practice in South Africa is generally poorly understood and has a very short history thus rarely practiced.

It is only recently that different stakeholders are seriously deliberating on the development and implementation of a context-appropriate and cost-effective teacher induction framework for the South African education system. According to the CDE (2017), the need for teacher induction in South Africa is now clear and broadly acknowledged and considerable activities are underway to put induction systems in place though they are still in their formative stages. As it stands, many schools are using ad-hoc, informal and unsystematic strategies to manage the process of inducting the less knowledgeable new teachers (Marie, 2012). It is often the case that newly hired teachers are 'lost at sea' where they are left alone within the confines of their classrooms to either succeed or fail (Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Ingersoll & Smith, 2004).

### 1.2 Problem statement

Beginning to practice as a professional teacher from initial teacher training is often a huge challenge for many new teacher graduates. The early career years present numerous challenges for beginning teachers as this is a period of "survival and discovery, adaptation and learning" (Feiman-Nemser, 2001, p. 1027). It is a time where school and classroom realities are encountered and often early career teachers, particularly the recently qualified ones, come up with survival strategies, which may not always be representative of best practice. Yet, the initial career experiences of early career teachers are so powerful that they have potential to significantly influence following career stages. According to Feiman-Nemser (2001, p.1026), the first year of teaching is actually "an intense and formative time

in learning to teach, influencing not only whether people remain in teaching but what kind of teacher they become". The question of what happens to early career teachers in their new work/school environment is a pertinent one since it influences their professional practice in subsequent years as well as their decisions to stay or leave the profession. What is of essence is also the nature of the schools' organisational contexts and other institutions such as the local education districts and the extent to which they nurture early career teachers into effective professional practitioners.

It is well established in literature that ITE does not adequately prepare teachers to function effectively in real classroom and school contexts (Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Darling-Hammond, 2006). After evaluating the delivery of the curriculum in five South African teacher training universities, Taylor (2014) concluded that ITE was generally of poor quality as it lacked in terms of equipping teachers with the required subject matter and pedagogical knowledge. These finding are consistent with Deacon (2016) who found from his study of newly qualified Intermediate Phase Teachers in South Africa that their training provided inadequate classroom-focused methodology or pedagogy as well as little opportunity to engagement with the current South African Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) curriculum.

The dissonance between ITE theory and real classroom practice seems to be worse for teacher graduates who qualify through distance learning as their training seriously lacks in situating theoretical coursework into real classroom contexts (Deacon, 2016). Failure to translate knowledge learnt during teacher training into the classroom means that there is a problematic compromise to the quality of instruction that early career teachers accord to learners. According to Zeichner and Tabachnick (1981), knowledge from university ITE seems to be 'washed out' by school reality experiences. This quandary renders induction support more pertinent as it enables beginning teachers' learning on the job and facilitates a better understanding of the curriculum and a sound grasp of both subject matter and pedagogical knowledge. Feiman-Nemser (2001) argues for strong induction structures and holds that teachers, regardless of how complete and comprehensive their academic training was, can only acquire and learn the skills of how to teach while they teach.

The efficacy of inducting early career teachers is well-documented in the literature (Arends & Rigazio-DiGilio, 2000; Fantili & McDougall, 2009; Feiman-Nemser, Schwille, Carver & Yusko, 1999; Ingersoll & Smith, 2004; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004; Wong, 2004). Of importance is Kelchtermans and Ballet's (2002) observation that beginning teacher induction facilitates meaningful interactions between beginning teachers and the school as an organisation with its many different actors. This is consistent with Ingersoll and Smith's (2004) remark that, through induction programmes, beginning teachers are assisted in coping with practicalities of teaching which range from learner management in the classroom to generally adjusting to the new school environment.

It is also important that beginning teachers have opportunities of accessing and emulating effective instructional practices from long serving teachers in their new school context. It is difficult for early career teachers to start and improve their teaching in isolation hence opportunities to discuss their teaching, analyse learners' work and examine problems with other colleagues need to be made available for them. It is through this collaborative space that beginning teachers are able to learn in and from practice the practical knowledge of teaching as they identify and consider alternative explanations and actions (Feiman-Nemser, 2001). Bartell (2005) rightly emphasises that long-serving experienced teachers have a responsibility to nurture and develop new entrants for the benefit of the profession in the long run.

This study is, therefore, aimed at exploring the nature and process of early career teacher learning in and from practice in the selected schools. This inquiry was especially important given the fact that the majority of long-serving teachers in the South African public schooling system were poorly trained and because of previous experience of poorly conceived and ineffective teacher development activities, most long-serving teachers have developed "ingrained negativity and scepticism" (De Clercq, 2013, p. 48) toward most teacher development initiatives. These very same teachers, as peers and informal or formally assigned mentors, are expected to play a role in facilitating the professional development of early career teachers. The school, therefore, has an important responsibility in supporting early career teachers through induction but it has to have the capacity to answer the challenges in navigating this process.

There is wide consensus that the South African education system needs to institute and promote ways of improving teacher and teaching quality. According to the CDE (2017), teacher quality basically considers the collection of a teachers' personal traits such as their knowledge, skills and dispositions. Teaching quality, on the other hand, is the nature of classroom instruction and the extent to which it enables a wide range of learners to learn. According to Shulman (1987), quality teaching requires teachers to select pedagogically sound teaching and learning strategies that enable rich learning. In fact, quality teachers and quality instruction are amongst the most researched factors that influence learning outcomes (Wong, 2004), and according to the CDE (2017), teaching quality is, to a large extent, influenced by teacher quality. In other words, quality teaching and learning depends on teacher capacity. This study was done against the backdrop of an enduring challenge of poor teacher quality which has been described as "the nub of the problem the South African Education system faces" (Prew, 2013, p 70). As a result of poor teacher quality, the quality of teaching in the majority of South African public schools has been appalling as teachers struggle with basic instructional practices (CDE, 2011; Chisholm, 2005).

While teacher quality influences the teaching quality, the context of instruction equally influences teaching and learning in South African classrooms. Public schools constitute more than 80% of the total number of schools in South Africa and the majority of these schools are poorly resourced; mostly serve black learners coming from multiple deprivation communities and generally have unstable teaching and learning environments (Christie, 2008; Maringe & Moletsane, 2015). Teaching conditions in such schools are often poor as the general context presents challenges such as large class sizes, inadequate learner teacher support material (LTSM) and learner indiscipline (CDE, 2017). The challenges with teacher and teaching quality and the difficulties embedded in the context of instruction are largely due to the legacy of the apartheid system of government in South Africa which lasted from 1948 to 1991 (Chisholm et al., 2005). In 1953, the apartheid system instated the Bantu education law which brought with it an inferior education system that was essentially designed to ensure that the majority of the Black population was disempowered and unable to meaningfully contribute to the country's economy (Chisholm, 2005; Christie, 2008; Sayed & Jansen, 2001). The majority of teachers, as a result, were educated and trained under "a

racially stratified teacher education system" (Sayed, 2002, p. 381) and up to this date, the country has not fully recovered from the prostration caused by this pre-independence education system. The quality of schooling in the majority of public schools, particularly former black schools, therefore, is still a remnant of the Bantu education impoverishment resembling low levels of teacher professional competencies and generally poor standards that continuously fail both learners and the country (Christie, 2008; Sayed, 2002; Sayed & Ahmed, 2011).

In view of this, this study explored the experiences of early career teachers during their early years of professional practice. More especially, this study investigated induction and professional development opportunities that are available for early career teachers in their new contexts of practice with the hope to understand how these support activities assist and nurture beginning teachers' use of educationally sound teaching and learning strategies.

What is important to note in the South African context is that little has been considered about the induction of beginning teachers which is endorsed in international literature as an important phase of early career professional development (Arends & Rigazio-DiGilio, 2000; Fantili & McDougall, 2009; Feiman-Nemser, Schwille, Carver & Yusko, 1999; Ingersoll & Smith, 2004; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004; Wong, 2004). This study sought to report on existing practices of early career teacher induction and professional development so as to provide insight into how the notion of induction is understood on the ground given the background where beginning teacher induction is endorsed and well-practiced in well-to-do education systems the world over and the matter is only beginning to take centre-stage in the South African teacher development context (CDE, 2017).

### 1.3 Research aim and objectives

The aim of this study was, primarily, to explore the ways in which early career teachers are supported in their new school contexts and the kinds of learning opportunities made available for them to enact and strengthen a repertoire of sound professional skills. Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) argue that patterns of interaction around core teaching duties among teachers and administrators within the school are important considerations for

sustainable school improvement. The nature of interactions between early career teachers and various personnel within their new working contexts constituted the spectrum of investigation of this study.

From this broad aim, this study had the following specific objectives:

- to understand the main on-the-job/professional challenges experienced by early career teachers;
- to explore and understand how early career teachers are being inducted and professionally developed in their respective schools and district;
- to explore how existing practices of induction and professional development influence early career teachers' practices and commitment to the profession, and finally;
- to explore the means through which early career teacher induction and professional development practices can be improved and sustained.

### 1.4 Research questions

In consideration of the above aim and specific research objectives, this study was guided by an overarching research question which read:

What are the existing practices of induction and professional development available in selected South African public schools to provide early career teachers with learning opportunities to strengthen their repertoire of professional skills?

This main question was explored through a consideration of the following sub-questions:

i) What are the main on-the-job/professional challenges experienced by early career teachers?
ii) How are early career teachers inducted and professionally developed in their respective schools and district?
iii) How and why do existing practices of induction and professional development influence early career teachers' practices and commitment to the profession?

iv) How, if at all, can early career teacher induction and professional development practices be improved and sustained?

The first sub-question called for an exploration of the main challenges experienced by early career teachers as they assumed full professional teacher responsibilities. The teaching job, other than the core activities of lesson preparation, planning and delivery, involves a magnitude of other duties that include administration-related activities such as assessment, evaluation, drafting reports, record keeping, extra and co-curricular activities and many other duties (Chisholm et al., 2005). Some of these duties are part of initial teacher training and some are encountered for the first time on the job and there is consensus in the literature that first time teachers find many of these duties very complex and difficult (Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Chisholm et al., 2005; Steyn, 2004).

Making sound pedagogical choices has also been cited as one of the main challenges that beginning teachers face for lack of wisdom from experience (Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Marie, 2012; Steyn, 2004). Sound pedagogy involves the selection of appropriate teaching and learning strategies and, according to Shulman (1987), teachers have a special way of talking, showing and representing ideas that are key to getting the unknowing knowing. In other words, representing and selecting ways of packaging knowledge in ways that enable learner understanding are skills that are still foreign to many early career teachers. It is of utmost importance to inquire and be well aware of the specific challenges faced by early career teachers in South African public schools. Understanding challenges unique to a context is often the best way to begin to support and develop beginning teachers for enhanced quality teaching.

The second sub-question sought to develop insight into the nature of existing teacher induction practices provided for in the selected public schools and by the schools' local education district. Through this question, this study had the intent of coming up with a vivid description of the available induction initiatives in terms of their organisational form and their foci (content) as well as an explanation of how the induction activities were enacted. According to De Clercq and Shalem (2014), different teacher learning activities differ in terms of their form and teaching foci i.e. their content. The form basically considers

organisational aspects such as duration and pacing of the teacher induction, resources and artefacts used, the selection of participants as well as location, either off-site or on-site. Teaching foci, on the other hand, pays attention to the key content that is focused on in the induction. The purpose of an induction often determines the form and foci in which it will be offered and Maringe and Prew (2015) identify four rationales for teacher induction: enhancing teacher effectiveness, strengthening their pedagogical knowledge, socialising new teachers and/or retaining them into the profession. The existing practices of teacher induction were thus looked at in terms of their purpose, form and content.

Of most importance in this study was establishing how the available induction systems and structures assisted early career teachers with the enactment of professional practices. Feiman-Nemser (2001) argues that early career teachers must collate their content knowledge and their knowledge of learners in order to make appropriate instructional moves. This kind of knowledge-in-practice is best learnt in and from practice with more knowledgeable colleagues.

Literature (Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Darling-Hammond, 2006) clearly indicates that not even the best pre-service teacher education can adequately prepare new teachers for classroom and school environment realities, "some things can only be learned on the job" (Feiman-Nemser, 2001, p.1026). Although there are considerable efforts to thoroughly ground new teachers in subject matter and pedagogical knowledge in the Bachelor of Education degree (B.Ed.) and the Post-Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) programmes, teacher education can never produce a 'finished product' (Deacon, 2016; Taylor, 2014).

The challenge in South Africa is exacerbated by the fact that, for a long time, there has not been a policy framework that guides schools and districts on how to induct and professionally develop its early career teachers into instructionally competent professionals. This second sub-question therefore guided this research inquiry into understanding how early career teachers are nurtured and supported into enacting effective professional instruction and the many other teacher responsibilities such as classroom management, lesson planning, assessing learners as well as lead the learning process through the use of a wide repertoire of strategies (Darling-Hammond, 2006).

The third sub-question sought to establish the extent to which the existing conceptualisations of the idea of induction and the current induction practices in the selected South African public schools create opportunities for teacher learning on and from the job (Feiman-Nemser, 2001). According to Bartel (2005), early career professional development through carefully designed, context-specific induction help keep teachers in the profession, improve their instruction and enhance routines that give way to long-term career development. In other words, patterns and practices that teachers establish during their early career years are often the ones that they keep throughout their career lives. As it stands, the South African teaching profession seems to be in a vicious cycle that continuously regenerates teachers of poor quality. This suggests that new teachers into the system are largely exposed to patterns and practices that do not enhance their professional skills. It is for this reason that exploring existing practices of teacher induction at this point in time is imperative so as to identify and harness any possibilities of continued new teacher learning and development on-the-job that are being provided through them.

While the third sub-question was useful in framing the forms of new teacher learning, it also enabled an explication of what those experiences are like for early career teachers. More specifically, this sub-question invited an inquiry into how early career teachers perceived their experiences of induction and support. The focus here was on eliciting early career teachers' perceptions about how their experiences of induction had influenced or continued to influence their practices as professional teachers as well as their level of commitment to the profession. What early career teachers do, or do not do, is to a large extent shaped by the prevailing learning cultures at their new school environments (Flores, 2004). Confailt (2015) argues that school level support determines teachers' future development. This is particularly true for early career teachers as the pedagogical activities they participate in as developing professionals "mould their thinking which then serves as a foundation for their reasoning as teachers" (Confailt, 2015, p. 4). It is also the case that this study elicited the perceptions of teacher colleagues and mentors who were informally or formally assigned to support early career teachers in the selected schools. Their thoughts, reflections and views about current induction practices were useful in developing a holistic understanding of the

contextual constraints or enabling factors that ought to be considered where school-based support such as mentoring was concerned.

Finally, the last sub-question, informed by the literature and mapped against current induction practices, was an endeavour to synthesise the information gathered from the above sub-questions and formulate a possible formal, well-conceived framework for beginning teacher induction for South African public schools as well as the form it should take. In other words, an eclectic approach was suggested as information was elicited from the participants' views as well as from a range of induction programmes across the world, with the proviso that a potentially viable framework could be customised for South African public school early career teachers.

The responses to the above sub-questions worked together to respond to the overarching research question. Overall, this study intended to explore and develop an understanding of current practices and specific processes used to induct early career teachers in the few selected South African public schools. At the time of writing this thesis, the Department of Education (DBE) was in the process of formulating teacher induction structures as well as laying out an implementing plan. While this was going on, this study was cognisant of the fact that there was some evidence of formal teacher induction as well as certain forms of informal and incidental induction or "induction by default" (Feiman-Nemser, 2001, p. 1030) in some South African public schools. This meant that certain mechanisms were being used in schools to guide and support early career teachers and it was these practices that this study investigated so as to understand how the idea of induction was being conceptualised on the ground. What is the nature of pedagogical support made available for these beginning teachers within the new school environments and how is this support helping early career teachers with the use of sound teaching and learning strategies? To what extent do current induction practices serve to replicate existing instructional practices, sometimes problematic and ineffective, or introduce better ones? Such questions were at the heart of this study as they allowed the identification of the necessary threads required to improve the nature, focus and process of new teacher learning in and from practice in South African public schools. Information gathered with regards to this main question was believed to potentially make a useful contribution towards current discussions around developing a

teacher learning continuum framework from preparation, induction and early career professional development for South African early career teachers.

### 1.5 Personal motivation

It is perhaps important at this early stage into the study that I share my personal motivation in pursuing a study of this nature and to do so, I briefly provide some background of whom I am as a person and from which vantage point I conducted this study.

I did my first degree at the University of Zimbabwe and in 2006 I graduated with a Bachelor of Arts Honours in Linguistics degree. I had wanted to immediately pursue a Master's degree in Linguistics but at that time, the Zimbabwean economic crisis was heightening hence pursuing further studies became financially and logistically impossible. Holding a BA degree, the next option was to look for a job. At that time the easiest profession to penetrate was teaching as there was a serious shortage of teachers. The country had suffered, and continued to suffer, from massive brain drain as a lot of qualified professionals were leaving the country for higher salaries and better working conditions overseas or in neighbouring countries. Teachers were amongst the highest number of professionals leaving the country mainly because the status of teaching in the country was generally very low. At that time, teachers' dignity was deteriorating due to the many problems defining the profession such as poor salaries, lack of resources, poor working conditions, lack of respect from learners and the general populace and political harassment and victimisation of teachers, especially in rural areas.

I was successful and found a job at a private school where I was to teach Ordinary and Advanced Level Geography. There I was, a young graduate without any teacher training getting into the classroom for the first time to teach a subject that I had only done during my time as a high school learner. A heavy weight was placed on my shoulders as I was to teach learners who were sitting for the national examinations in the following year yet I had no idea where to begin. In fact, I was clueless. All I had were vague ideas about the subject matter knowledge as I had done really well in both my 'O' Level and 'A' Level examinations. Pedagogy was the biggest challenge as I had never heard of learning theories such as Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory of learning, Piaget's theory of cognitive development,

Bloom's taxonomy, Gardners' ideas about multiple intelligences, Shulman's model of Pedagogical Reasoning and Action or had learnt how to develop a lesson plan. My theory of teaching and learning was what I had observed my teachers do when I was a learner. The deputy principal merely showed me my teaching load on the timetable which was stuck on the staffroom wall, handed me a heap of textbooks to use, introduced me to the school during assembly and that was it. I remember that deputy principal saying, "*Eeh, muchambodonha pano nepapo but after the first week you'll be fine*" (you are going to stumble and fall here and there but after the first week you'll be fine). With that, the expectation was that I perform full professional teacher responsibilities. I was basically thrown into the deep end where I was either going to sink or swim.

It was very difficult to develop competency in my role as a Geography teacher but with some help from my Head of Department (HoD) and other teacher colleagues, soon I knew my way around the school and could do many of the tasks without help. I spent the next two years teaching at this school and managed to produce good results. However, upon reflecting some three years later when I had enrolled for a Bachelor of Education Honours degree in South Africa at the University of the Witwatersrand, I felt sick to my stomach realising that with some structured guidance and systematic support I could have offered those learners much more than I did. I acknowledge that many of the challenges that I encountered were due to the fact that I was an unqualified teacher in the first place. Of course, but surely the school could have assisted in a great way so that I could work with the subject matter knowledge that I possessed to comprehend and transform it in ways that learners could easily access. My personal experience as a first time teacher and the course content I engaged with during my studies in the Honours class made me wonder how best in-service teachers could be developed into becoming more professionally competent, especially with regards to their classroom instructional practices.

Entering into the Master's class, I was keener to understand this phenomenon of in-service teacher professional development especially after learning that the South African education system was facing serious challenges with teacher and teaching quality. For my Master's research project, I investigated the experiences of teachers who were being professionally developed through an intervention programme called the Gauteng Primary Literacy and

Mathematics Strategy (GPLMS). The GPLMS intervention was a highly prescriptive intervention that provided teachers in poorly performing schools with scripted lesson plans, teaching materials and on-site instructional coaches who ensured that teachers adhered to the specified content and instructional routines of the programme. One major finding from this study was that teachers did not take ownership of their learning through the intervention. Rather, the compulsory and prescriptive nature of the intervention strategy incited a lot of resistance as teachers, especially the older and more experienced ones, felt they were being denied a chance to exercise autonomous professional judgements and self-regulation. This sparked a deepened interest in me to further explore in-service teacher professional development.

While my journey throughout my Master's studies was useful in foregrounding another journey in pursuit of a PhD, my experience of it was more of an awakening. I suddenly realised that the challenge of teacher and teaching quality in the South African education system was grave and multitudinous. The voluminous literature I had engaged with indicated that there was much concern about improving the professional competencies of in-service teachers hence a lot of research had been done about their professional development. One problem that I noticed, however, was that most interventions assumed one-size-fits-all approaches that failed to recognise the diversity of needs amongst teachers. Taking, for example, teachers with different years of experience in the teaching profession would be at different career stages thus have different professional development needs. I thought about the teachers that participated in my Master's research; there were certainly a mix of teachers from those in their early career stage to those close to retirement yet they were subjected to the similar GPLMS intervention. I was convinced that in-service teacher professional development needed to be mindful of teachers' career stages. Immediately, I was made to reflect on my first time teaching experience and I wondered if the case was any different for beginning teachers in the South African context. I went to the literature and realised the serious vacuity on career stage specific teacher professional development in South Africa. It was heart-warming to realise that while I was pondering on how to structure my study, numerous government commissioned research initiatives were also beginning to look into the matter. Research institutes like BRIDGE, Zenex Foundation and the Centre for

Development and Enterprise (CDE) were on task researching the pathways towards beginning teacher induction in South Africa and since then this issue has been on the table and is increasingly gaining recognition as a national educational priority. In a nutshell, that is how I ended up exploring the existing practices of induction and professional development available in selected South African public schools to provide early career teachers with learning opportunities to strengthen their repertoire of professional skills.

### 1.6 Significance of the study: anticipated contribution

While I was personally motivated to carry out this study as outlined in section 1.5 above, it was also important to think about why this work could be important above and beyond my own interests. According to Thompson (2015), a successful research has to justify its own existence by asking and answering the following important questions: Why is this research important to our understanding of the world? Who needs this research and what will they do once they know its results? What will change or be different if this research is done? How does it stand to inform public policy? What are the implications of doing it? From these questions, I particularly considered how my research could be of use for others in the field and for the general public. I thus reflected on what new perspectives I could bring on the topic of teacher induction, new methodological approaches in the field of qualitative research and how this study could influence public policy in South Africa as well as change early career teacher support practices in South African public schools.

Most importantly, this study envisaged making a contribution in the theorisation of the idea of teacher induction by advancing knowledge on the topic of teacher induction. There seems to be a huge knowledge gap, especially in South Africa, and there is an obvious scarcity of literature on the topic (Maringe & Prew, 2015). According to Feiman-Nemser (2001), new teacher induction is an important component of continuous teacher learning through initiating early career professional development yet very little about it is understood in South Africa. Maringe and Prew (2015) indicate that the history of new teacher induction in South Africa is relatively short and the topic is under-theorised. More studies on the induction of early career teachers in the South African context are therefore needed given

that much literature endorses induction arguing that it holds much promise in improving teacher quality and consequently learner performance. This study was therefore an attempt to making an important contribution by providing the empirical and theoretical clarity much needed in the field.

As was indicated earlier, for a long time there has not been a policy framework in South Africa that guides schools and districts on how to induct and professionally develop beginning teachers. The field of teacher induction in South Africa, at the time of writing, was in the process of working out an appropriate induction framework and introducing it to schools and districts. This study was thus timely as it reported on already existing practices of teacher induction in some South African public institutions. According to Smith and Ingersoll (2004), teacher developers have to be concerned with "what kinds of induction programmes exist and to what extent they help" (Smith & Ingersoll, 2004, p. 683). They further argue that these are clearly "fundamental questions for the field and for policy makers faced with decisions about supporting such programmes" (Smith & Ingersoll, 2004, p. 683). Similarly, this study was concerned with exploring what was available in South African public schools in terms of early career teacher support and how that support influenced the teachers' professional practices.

Education systems the world over are keen on discovering what seems to work and what does not and Smith and Ingersoll (2004) further indicate that there is a growing interest in empirical research on both the variety of induction initiatives as well as their effects. This empirical study was designed on the premise of reporting on the nature of existing teacher induction practices in South African public schools with the main agenda of sifting out what works and what does not work from those practices. Such evidence-based research is seriously needed in South Africa, especially at a time when the DBE is busy conceptualising the idea of ECT induction and putting together a framework for South African schools. This research was also useful in providing insight in terms of how the idea of teacher induction is being conceptualised by schools and districts as key teacher induction implementing agents. Insights from already existing practices serve as an important contribution that could

influence teacher induction policy in South Africa as well as change practice in schools and in districts.

Given that the nature of early career experiences are an important factor in determining the quality of professional practice of South Africa's new generation of teachers, this study was appropriate and well-timed in providing an understanding of the experiences of beginning teachers in South African public schools. While this may not be new, reporting on the experiences of new teachers is still important in answering the question on the needs of early career teachers. Empirical research is thus needed for clarity on what is happening in various school contexts and this study crucially zooms in on the experiences of early career teachers in township and former Model C[1] schools. These type of schools constitutes the larger population of South African public schools hence this study adds important contextual insights to the current intellectual discourse on the development of an "appropriate, affordable and effective induction model for South Africa" (Maringe & Prew, 2015, p.4).

This study is therefore timely and brings in a new dimension of conceptualising new teacher learning and professional development in specific contexts as a time of intentional, rather than incidental learning (Feiman-Nemser, 2010, p.18). In other words, this study makes an invaluable contribution that opens up a discussion of early career teachers' needs in varying South African contexts which in turn facilitates thinking about the shaping of induction purpose, form and content making a critical departure from previous patchy and context-insensitive professional development initiatives in South Africa (Maistry, 2008; Welch, 2012).

This study was also significant given that in-service teacher professional development in South Africa remains a serious challenge. Much research alludes to the concerns that many strategies used are either inappropriate for the South African teachers' context or not

[1] During apartheid, schools were racially stratified and Model C schools were whites-only schools that had a quasi-private structure with high autonomy as they received little subsidies from the state. Racial segregation in schools was abolished post-apartheid and these former whites-only government schools are now commonly referred to as former or ex-Model C schools.

sustainable (Adler & Reed, 2002; Day & Sachs, 2004; De Clercq & Shalem, 2014; Maistry, 2008; Taylor, 2008; Welch, 2012). The most prevalent teacher development activities have been off-site, non-school-based, short orientation workshops or formal university programmes with little follow-ups (Maistry, 2008; Taylor & Vinjevold, 1999). These programmes have been assessed in various documentations as having little impact on improving teachers' professional practices.

Of concern is also the fact that these do not take into consideration early career teachers learning and development which is in dire need of attention. On the other hand, research seems to indicate that new teacher induction is a compelling trajectory with much promise to solve recurring challenges of teacher and teaching quality in South Africa. Feiman-Nemser (2001) pointed out that powerful learning opportunities need to be made available for teachers during their early career years if deep student learning is to be achieved. In other words, the more research explores alternatives to improve teacher and teaching quality, the more we will move towards better teacher development strategies that enhance learning outcomes. Such an inquiry was relevant and pertinent in enabling the design of new and more viable teacher development programmes in South Africa given the current challenges of poor learner attainment, poor teacher quality and high levels of young teachers leaving the profession (Bertram, Appleton, Muthukrishna & Wedekind, 2006).

### 1.7 Brief overview of research design and methodological approach

This study was done within the Interpretivist research paradigm (also referred to as social constructivism) which basically explores how people interpret and make sense of their experiences and how the contexts of events and situations impact on people's constructed meanings (Creswell, 2013; Grbich, 2013). In this study, this design was used to explore how ECTs in selected South African public schools interpreted and made sense of their early career experiences and how their new school contexts and experiences of induction support have influenced their constructed meanings of the teaching profession. The social world, from an interpretivist standpoint, is best understood from the subjective viewpoint of the

individuals who are part of the ongoing social activity being investigated (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011) thus the views of the participants centrally gave meaning to this study.

Methodologically, the study adopted an empirical phenomenological approach where the main focus of the study was to describe the lived experiences of participants and the meanings they ascribed to their experiences (Creswell, 2013; Grbich, 2013). Data were gathered through a number of qualitative instruments. Firstly, focus group interviews were conducted with early career teachers from five public schools (i.e. two township and three former Model C high schools). Secondly, individual interviews were held with early career teachers and inducting personnel form one of the five schools that was seen to have a formally structured induction programme. District officials from the participating district were also interviewed. Thirdly, data were gathered by observations of school-based and district-based teacher induction workshops, and lastly, searches and analysis of documents that were used in relation to the induction of early career teachers.

### 1.8 Outline of chapters

My intention was that this thesis reads like a story and to achieve this, this thesis was organised into eight chapters and below is an encapsulation of what is contained in each chapter.

**Chapter 1** introduces the study by mapping the issues surrounding the induction of early career teachers in the South African public schooling context. It then provides the aim of this study as well as explain why this study was worthwhile.

**Chapter 2** locates this study in the broader literature of teacher professional development and beginning teachers' learning. This review of related literature basically establishes the missing pieces in the literature and ends with a conceptualisation of how this study intends to fill that gap.

**Chapter 3** follows with a discussion of the theoretical framework chosen for this study, the Theory of Practice Architectures (Kemmis & Groetenboer, 2008). This chapter unpacks this

theoretical lens in terms of its affordances and how it illuminated on the understanding of induction as a social practice embedded in sayings, doings and relatings.

**Chapter 4** basically exposes what I did, all the procedures I undertook to design and conduct this study. It, in detail, explains the research design and the methodological choices that were made in this study. This chapter ends with a consideration of the ethical and legal aspects that were considered to ensure that the conclusions drawn in this study are credible.

**Chapter 5** is somewhat an extension of chapter four in that it elaborates details about the institutions and individuals who participated in this study. This chapter also discusses the contextual factors that surrounded the participants and generally opened up a window to begin to understand the practices that are reported about in the following chapters.

**Chapter 6** generally presents the findings of this study by foregrounding the voices of the participants. This is done by the extensive use of excerpts from the various data sources.

**Chapter 7** is a discussion of the study's findings. In this chapter, I return to the key problem addressed in this study and interpret the results using the lens provided by the literature and the theoretical framework proposed in Chapter 3.

**Chapter 8** concludes this thesis by providing a summary of the whole research, reflecting on the lessons learnt and the implications of those key lessons on policy and practice. The main contribution of this study is explored in-depth in this chapter. This final chapter ends with a reflection on unanswered questions and pointing towards future research budding from this study.

## 1.9 Chapter conclusion

This chapter has introduced the study by outlining the context, focus and purpose of this study. It was made evident in this chapter that this study was centrally focused on exploring the nature and process of early career teacher induction in a few public high schools in South Africa. This exploration was done against a background of poor take-up from teacher

professional development initiatives and sheer absence of teacher induction in the majority of schools in South Africa. This chapter has thus demonstrated the need for understanding current early career teacher induction practices with the view to make a context appropriate induction model for South African early career teachers. The following chapter discusses literature that underpinned this study.

# Chapter 2: Review of related literature

## 2 Introduction

While the previous chapter introduced this study, this chapter discusses the key theoretical, conceptual and empirical debates that framed this study and is organised into three main parts. The first part is a review of literature in the field of general teacher professional development. The second part examines international, regional and local debates around early career teacher induction in terms of its purposes, form and content. In this review, a range of theoretical perspectives previously applied to teacher induction are discussed and a number of empirical studies on teacher induction are presented. The third part concludes this chapter with a diagrammatic representation of a conceptual framework developed from the reviewed literature.

Before turning to the review of literature, a brief explanation and clarification of how certain concepts were used in this study is essential.

## 2.1 Elusive terminology: operationalisation of concepts

The intent of this section is twofold. Firstly, it briefly provides an explanation of key concepts as they are used in literature as well as how they are used in this study. Secondly, this section serves to clarify some technically complex concepts that are related but are commonly misunderstood due to their relation. The concepts to be considered here are newly qualified teachers and early career teachers; induction and mentoring; professional practice; being professional and being a professional.

There are many terms in the literature that are used to refer to teachers who are in the early stage of their career such as beginning teachers, novice teachers, newly qualified teachers (henceforth NQTs) and early career teachers (henceforth ECTs). The terms beginning and novice teachers simply denote that teachers are at the start of their careers and generally lack experience in most of the duties expected of a professional teacher. This study perhaps needed to clarify between the terms NQTs and ECTs, as these are often used interchangeably because of the subtleness of their difference. NQT(s) is a narrow description that is widely

used in the literature to refer to beginning teachers who have just completed their ITE and are in their first year of teaching. ECTs, on the other hand, is a much broader description of beginning teachers which is used to refer to new entrants to the profession who are still in the early years of their teaching and these may range between the first and fifth year of teaching (Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Wong, 2004). While some of the participants in this study fit the category of NQTs as they were within their first year of teaching, this study has preferably adopted and widely used the lexis ECTs because the sample of beginning teachers that participated in this study were ranging between the first and fifth year of teaching.

Induction and mentoring are concepts that are widely used in the field of teacher professional development yet, to some extent, these concepts are misunderstood and incorrectly used interchangeably. Induction, on one hand, is a "comprehensive, coherent, and sustained professional development process" often organised to train and support new teachers (Wong, 2004, p. 42). This is consistent with Feiman-Nemser's (2010) conception of induction as an extension of initial teacher education and a bridge to in-service professional development. This extension in teacher learning is often organised into a well-structured programme that has many activities that include lectures, workshops, seminars and mentoring (Ingersoll & Smith, 2004). Mentoring, on the other hand, is one of the many parts of induction and this distinction is categorically made by Wong (2004) who says that mentoring is, maybe, the most important component of an induction programme that involves veteran teachers supporting ECTs in a number of ways, ranging from emotional to technical support. Literature thus markedly distinguishes mentoring from induction and it is in this way that these concepts are used in this study

Professional practice, being professional and being a professional are quite related concepts yet allude to different aspects in the literature as well as in this study. Professional practice, according to Green (2009), is a construct that links two concepts that are highly contested in literature: 'professional' and 'practice'. The concept professional has notions of 'being professional' and 'being a professional'. 'Being professional' is about teachers' behaviour as well as the rationale behind their behaviour in their work environments (Evans, 2011; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). 'Being a professional', on the other hand, has to do with external

perceptions about the status of a profession particularly the profession's sphere of activities and responsibilities.

The other key term, 'practice' is an equally contested term but will be operationalised in this study to mean actions or activities that teachers engage in to accomplish the teaching and learning goal (Green, 2009; Kemmis, 2005). Professional practice can therefore be understood as practising teaching in a way that is expected of professionals in the field.

According to Darling-Hammond and Hyler (2013), professional teachers possess deep knowledge about how students learn using a repertoire of sophisticated skills deployed through professional judgement. In a nutshell, it is about what teachers do, how they perceive themselves and how they are perceived by others, a matter of practice and identity (Green, 2009). Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) emphasise that being professional centres on what teachers do in their working context and how they behave as practitioners. More succinctly, being professional relates to what teachers know and understand, how and why they exercise that knowledge and understanding as well as the kinds of attitudes that drive their behaviour (Evans, 2011). In other words, professional teachers are morally committed to the welfare of their learners and other stakeholders they serve and they deliver this commitment through specialised knowledge and skills.

## 2.2 Teacher professional development

Teacher professional development constitutes a whole field of educational research and the literature on this topic is vast. Despite the vastness of literature in this field, the concept of teacher professional development remains unclear and imprecise. According to Evans (2002), the concept of teacher professional development is widely used, yet, poorly explored in terms of its definition and parameters. The field is marred with conceptual imprecision (Evans, 2002) as teacher professional development occurs through numerous aspects of teachers' practice making it generally difficult to explicate the concept of teacher professional development (Desimone, 2009). There is, however, some agreement in the field that teacher professional development is meant to enhance teachers' skills and knowledge

in various aspects of their practice and is facilitated through various staff development activities (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Evans, 2002; Fullan, 2002; Guskey, 2002; Welch, 2012).

Instead of illuminating on the concept of teacher professional development, Garet et al. (2001) argue that it is more pressing to explore what it is that makes professional development effective for the sake of improving teaching practice and student achievement. In agreement, Desimone (2009) propounds that teacher development is complex, dynamic and highly embedded in teachers' daily lives hence it is more important to focus on the critical features of teacher's learning that impact on their professional practice. These schools of thought have the highest regard for teacher professional development that centers on teachers' professional practice.

Teaching essentially requires teachers to have a specialised kind of knowledge that enables them to make knowledge easily accessible to learners. To begin with, an in-depth understanding of the subject matter to be taught is an integral part of the knowledge of a professional teacher. Every learning area constitutes important concepts, skills, purposes, processes, attitudes and values that underlie it and these have to be identified and understood by the teacher before they can be taught. Before teachers can begin teaching, "some sort of comprehension will always initiate teaching" (Shulman, 1987, p. 245). This subject matter knowledge has to be packaged and delivered in a manner that learners understand. Teaching is thus a knowledge-based profession that requires teachers to "transform understanding, performance skills, or desired attitudes or values into pedagogical representations and actions" (Shulman, 1987, p. 227). In other words, teachers need another kind of knowledge, the pedagogical content knowledge, to find ways of transforming content knowledge into forms that learners are able to understand and relate to.

An important aspect of pedagogical content knowledge, imperative in professional practice, is the teacher's ability to address learners' challenges and misconceptions. This requires an understanding of content/subject matter knowledge, curriculum knowledge coupled with an understanding of learner's cognitive characteristics. The representation of knowledge and other learning material is adapted in consideration to aspects of learner diversity such

as prior knowledge, gender, ability, culture and language. This responsive instruction (Feiman-Nemser, 2001) is central to professional decision-making as appropriate pedagogical moves are generated after a careful elicitation and interpretation of learners' ideas.

Teaching is, therefore, a knowledge-based profession and, as is well recorded in the literature, many teacher professional development programmes and activities generally focus specifically on the different kinds of knowledge essential for professional practice (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Fullan, 2002). This has seen the adoption of a range of initiatives varying in form and content.

According to Kennedy (2005), there is a wide spectrum of teacher professional development models depending on the circumstances under which the different models are adopted as well as the form(s) of knowledge they foreground. Teacher development in South Africa, for example, has seen many turns with the view to improve teacher performance. Popular amongst the many adopted in South Africa has been the training model which is off-site and conducted by 'experts' from the department of education. This type of model has been largely criticised for its lack of connection to the classroom context reality and its failure to recognise teachers' input as it generally perceives them as blank slates or passive receivers of knowledge (Kennedy, 2005).

Another model closely similar to the training model that is widely used in South Africa is the cascade model which Kennedy (2005) describe as one where individual teachers attend training and they disseminate information to their teacher colleagues. While both the training and the cascade model have been applauded for their ability to get information to many teachers quickly, they have also been seem to be ineffective in as far as inculcating content knowledge, general pedagogical knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge in teachers (Christie, Harley & Penny, 2005; De Clercq, 2013; De Clercq & Phiri, 2013).

The 2007 NPFTED is a policy that targeted the improvement of South African teacher education and development and attempts to provide greater direction, focus and coherence to the field because of the previous fragmented and ad hoc basis on which teacher development interventions occurred. The policy specifies that the DoE has a pivotal role in

supporting systemic teacher development activities while the South African Council of Educators (SACE) is mandated to coordinate, manage, implement as well as quality assure all continuous teacher professional development (CTPD) activities. While these policy developments seemed promising and progressive, little consideration and commitment was given explicitly to developing teachers' intellectual, behavioural and attitudinal well-being, which are central to the life of effective teachers (Evans, 2011; De Clercq, 2013). The policy imperatives were particularly lacking in distinguishing "the teacher subject matter knowledge, preferred ways of teaching and curriculum sequencing and pacing which were totally back-grounded" (De Clercq & Shalem, 2014, p. 156).

In a nutshell, a lot of effort and resources have been disbursed in attempts to professionally develop South African teachers through various intervention programmes and activities (Maistry, 2008; Taylor, 2008, 2011; Welch, 2012). The disturbing reality, however, is that the majority of teachers seem not to benefit from these or show great take-up as they still struggle with content knowledge and its delivery, or what De Clercq and Shalem (2014) call basic content and pedagogical content knowledge.

## 2.3 Career stage teacher development perspectives

While individual teachers follow different career growth patterns, it is important to highlight that there are generic stages of growth that most teachers go through. Understanding the characteristics of each of these stages of development is important. Stage theories within the field of teacher professional development have evolved over time.

Initially, teacher development was conceived as going through fixed, almost inflexible established stages. The work of Katz (1979) and Burden (1980), to name a few examples, determined that teachers generally developed through the initial stage of survival where they employed make-do strategies to cope with their new responsibilities; secondly they moved to an adjustment stage where they settle better into their teacher roles; and lastly they get into the maturity stage as more competent professionals.

These earlier works were extended and reconceptualised into less inflexible and more comprehensive stage theories that took into consideration teacher's needs, interests, attitudes as well as other external factors that implicated teachers' different stages of development. For example, Fessler and Christiansen (1992) proposed a teacher career cycle model of eight stages: pre-service; induction; competency building; enthusiastic and growing; career frustration; career stability; career wind down and career exit (Bartell, 2005, p. 25). They further argue that teacher development is iterative in that internal and external factors influence movement within these varied stages of development. A teacher could, for instance, move from 'career frustration' back to an earlier 'competency building' stage or completely skip a stage. Bartell (2005) emphasises that the revisions of earlier stage theories are also quite compelling in that they are non-linear and quite independent of the number of years spent in the profession.

More contemporary work by Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) identify three key phases that critically affect teachers' proficiency as well as their dedication to the profession. Firstly, teachers' stage of life affects their energy levels and the degree to which they are open to changes in their work; secondly, the career stage affects teachers' responsibilities and the expertise they acquire; and finally, the generation to which they belong influence how they perceive the profession. Teacher's life, career and generational stages are important dimensions that have to be factored in whenever there is a discussion concerning their professional development.

What is however consistent across the different versions of stage theories of teacher development, and perhaps most important for this study, is that all teachers begin as novices, uncertain of their full teaching and work responsibilities and hence they need support to shape and develop their understanding of the profession. Moir (1999) cited in Bartell (2005) postulates that beginning teachers start with almost a romanticised view of the profession where they anticipate great success as teachers. The realities of the classroom and of the new teacher responsibilities soon overwhelm them and they move into survival mode where survival strategies are employed, which, often do not resemble best practice. What is, however, lacking in the literature is the focus and form of teacher development interventions that are designed around these different stages of development.

South African teacher development interventions have failed to address specific teacher needs which are related to the career stage of their development. De Clercq and Shalem (2014) review the landscape of teacher professional development in Gauteng and identify two important paradigm shifts in the way teacher professional development has been conceptualised. The first period, from the early 2000s until 2009, was characterised by great fragmentation, poor conceptualisation and coordination as most professional development activities were driven by immediate needs of the ever changing curriculum and overlooked the enduring challenges linked to teachers' poor content, curricular and pedagogical content knowledge (Fleisch, 2008; De Clercq & Shalem, 2014; Welch, 2012).

From 2009 to date, teacher development took different forms, content and emphasis, where a more prescriptive approach was assumed with scripted lesson plans and teaching routines. This new approach to teacher learning and development saw the inception of the 2006 Western Cape Literacy and Numeracy Strategy, 2010 Secondary School Intervention Project (SSIP) in Gauteng, and the 2011 Gauteng Primary Language and Mathematics Strategy (GPLMS), to name a few, which were focused on improving teachers' practices to improve learners' results. Again, there were problems in assuming a 'one-size-fits-all' approach which undermined teacher agency and failed to deal with teachers' comprehension of subject knowledge for teaching (De Clercq & Shalem, 2014).

Evidently, more needs to be done in refocusing teacher development in the South African context in order to carefully consider the different stages of teacher development as well as teachers' different developmental needs. This is indicative of the need to tailor-make various teacher development programmes to the specific stage in which a teacher is in. This study is an inquiry into professional development opportunities specific for ECTs at the school and district levels in order to explore the possibilities of an approach to their professional development which seems befitting and well-timed.

### 2.4 ECT induction and professional development

The concept of beginning teacher induction is widely explored in the literature given the multiplicity of definitions available (Ingersoll & Smith, 2004; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Smith

& Ingersoll, 2004; Wong, 2004). Induction is essentially designed for teachers who have completed initial teacher education and in South Africa such teachers would have attained either a B.Ed. degree or a PGCE qualification. Largely from a deficit approach, there is substantial literature indicating that early career teachers, particularly NQTs, face many challenges as they begin their careers and there is general consensus that initial teacher education does not fully prepare beginning teachers for classroom realities and certainly other school demands (Arends & Rigazio-DiGilio, 2000; Feiman-Nemser et al., 1999; Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002; Wong, 2004). Induction is mainly conceived as a way of providing guidance and support for new entrants to the profession and in other education systems it is a fully-fledged support structure for ECTs as it stretches up to three years (Feiman-Nemser, 2001, 2010; Ingersoll & Smith, 2004; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011).

This study was concerned with school and district-based professional development opportunities specifically designed for early career teachers through induction, hence took a slight departure from the previously held one-size-fits-all conception of teacher professional development in South Africa. To understand the nature and role of induction, a clarification of the relationship between professional development and induction is warranted. According to Wong (2004), induction is a training and support process that seamlessly becomes part of lifelong teacher professional development. Put differently, Feiman-Nemser (2001) describes induction as a phase in a continuum of teacher learning through developing a beginning repertoire that is continuously shaped in subsequent phases of ongoing teacher development. This means that induction is enclosed within the broad professional development scheme and is a component of teacher professional development that is specifically designed for teachers in the early stages of their career. Other activities can be organised within the induction such as mentoring, lesson critiques, lesson study groups and many other activities.

### 2.4.1 Purpose of ECT induction

A general finding, and in some cases a hypothesis, in induction literature is that the aim of a well-conceived and well-implemented induction programme is to improve the way new teachers teach, to ease them better into the school system, to attain early job satisfaction and

consequently influence their decision to stay in the profession (Arends & Rigazio-DiGilio, 2000; Feiman-Nemser et al., 1999; Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002; Wong, 2004). In their summary of induction literature, Maringe and Prew (2015) identify four main purposes of teacher induction, namely; to enhance teacher effectiveness and learner results; to strengthen pedagogical practices and particularly teacher's pedagogical content knowledge; to socialise new entrants into the profession and finally to retain teachers into the profession.

Literature convincingly shows that, among many other purposes, induction is used to enhance the effectiveness of new teachers who are generally conceived to be less effective in the practical delivery of content knowledge (PCK); classroom management and the promotion of effective learning. Substantial evidence (Darling-Hammond & Youngs, 2002; Wong, 2004) indicates that effective teachers are those able to create meaningful learning experiences for learners and produce good learner outcomes, irrespective of the challenging contextual circumstances such as large class sizes, anomalous learner diversity and inadequate learner teacher support material (LTSM). In order to facilitate the development of new teachers into effective new practitioners, induction has been used as a process to train and support new teachers' improvement into more capable effective practitioners (Wong, 2004).

Regarding the focus of induction, it is well established in the literature that the majority of ECTs need support to strengthen their pedagogical and instructional strategies and techniques (Fantili & McDougall, 2009; Wong, Britton & Ganser, 2005). Many ECTs have little understanding of the structures of the subject matter and the different ways of representing this subject matter to learners in comprehensible and appropriately paced and sequenced ways as well as a nuanced understanding of what makes the learning of specific content knowledge easy or difficult (Shulman, 1986).

Limited pedagogical content knowledge has considerable and enduring negative effects on the quality of teaching and learning. This position is perhaps the most elaborate in literature as there is agreement that what teachers do in the classroom to deliver school knowledge has the greatest impact on student learning (Arends & Rigazio-DiGilio, 2000; Fantili & McDougall, 2009; Feiman-Nemser et al., 1999; Ingersoll & Smith, 2004; Kelchtermans &

Ballet, 2002; Wong, 2004; Wong et al., 2005). The ultimate purpose of teacher professional development initiatives is to get to teach more effectively with better pedagogical content knowledge to ensure learner success and achievement. This may explain why many educational systems have ascribed to induction programmes that target the improvement of new teachers' instructional practices, particularly helping them to link theory and practice in order to achieve better learning experiences and outcomes for learners (Feiman-Nemser et al., 1999; Wechsler, Caspary, Humphrey & Matsko, 2010; Wong et al., 2005).

Induction programmes have also considered the emotional and affective elements of early career teachers' experiences and much has been done to ensure that early career teachers are smoothly socialised into the new working environment (Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Flores & Day, 2006; Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002; Menon, 2012). Menon's (2012) study on early career teachers' experiences of support from headteachers in Cyprus largely indicates that early career teachers are suffering from isolation, hostility from other teachers and lack of support from headteachers. Another study by Wong (2004) reported that early career teachers across the United States (US) complain about isolation and the lack of collegial interchange where they can feel as belonging to a group and a network. Such hostile working environments result in several teacher-related problems such as stress, low morale and job dissatisfaction which ultimately lead to high attrition rates.

Therefore, beyond enhancing new teachers' effectiveness by strengthening their pedagogical practices and other technical aspects of teaching, induction should also enable ECTs to become part of a community where they are able to access meaningful interactions that contribute to their well-being as people in an organisation. In other words, the socialisation of early career teachers into the organisational framework is as an important focus as supporting their actual teaching practice (Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002).

Although teacher attrition has not yet been much of a challenge in South Africa where it is below 7% per annum (Pitsoe, 2013; Teachers for the future, DBE, 2005; Xaba, 2003), other education systems have turned to induction to reduce the high rates of new teachers' exits from the profession. Struyven and Vanthournout (2014) distinguish between teachers who choose to leave the profession and those who exit due to 'natural causes', such as retiring,

resigning, maternal or temporary leave and unexpected career interruptions. They show that many educational systems are concerned with the first kind of turnover when teachers leave the profession to pursue other careers (Ingersoll, 2001). The United Kingdom (UK), Australia and Norway, for example, have recorded between 30 and 40% of ECT loss per annum and close to 50% exit in Germany, Italy, Netherlands and the US (Ingersoll & Kralik, 2004; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Ingersoll & Perda, 2010). These losses are quite costly to both the schools and the education system, hence the attempt to reduce high attrition through systematic induction and support. This is consistent with Ingersoll and Strong's (2011) finding that well thought-out induction programmes can successfully help increase teacher efficacy, job satisfaction and consequently retain teachers.

### 2.4.2 The organisational form and foci of ECT induction

While there are various motivations for implementing induction programmes, a link should exist between the role of an induction programme and its content, emphasis and form. De Clercq and Shalem (2014) argue that different teacher learning activities differ in terms of their form and teaching foci i.e. their content. Consequently, whether an induction programme is purposed to enhance teacher effectiveness, strengthen pedagogical content knowledge, socialise new teachers or to retain them into the profession; the organisational arrangements for that programme ought to be appropriately tailor-made for its particular purpose and focus.

A very important factor to look at besides the content of an induction programme is its organisational form. According to De Clercq and Shalem (2014), form is the manner in which teacher learning in a professional development programme is organised. This then refers to programmatic organisational aspects such as duration and pacing of the teacher learning, resources and artefact for the learning, selection of participants as well as location and whether the learning will be off-site or on-site. These are important considerations if a teacher development programme is to be effective in addressing the purpose for which it was designed.

A huge debate in the literature has been on the efficacy of off-site teacher professional development activities (Christie et al., 2005; De Clercq & Phiri, 2013; De Clercq & Shalem, 2014; Kennedy, 2005; Maistry, 2008). Such programmes are often facilitated by officials from the local education district or other experts, conducted in a district venue outside of the school and mostly packaged in the form of workshops, seminars or short courses. These district-based teacher development activities have been hailed for strengths such as being effective platforms for the dissemination of information and creating opportunities for teachers to develop intellectual communities for sharing practice outside of their schools (Lieberman, 1995; Leu, 2004). An off-site induction programme involving several institutions like the cases of China (Shanghai) and France, for example, were reported to be extremely useful in exposing early career teachers to varied practice through sharing practices (Wong, 2004; Wong et al., 2005).

Although effective in these regards, context-removed teacher professional development activities have been seriously critiqued for failing to prioritise the knowledge areas teachers needed for effective professional practice and failing to situate knowledge in the context of practice (Christie et al., 2005; De Clercq & Phiri, 2013; De Clercq & Shalem, 2014). There is an obvious bias in the literature for school-based teacher professional development activities as they are argued to be highly effective in facilitating the development of what Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999) call 'knowledge-in-practice' where most essential knowledge for teaching or practical knowledge is embedded in practice and the opportunities to reflect on practice are plentiful. On the whole, sustained professional teacher learning requires more comprehensive, systematic and well-coordinated activities that ensure follow up (Britton et al., 2003; Wong et al., 2005).

## 2.5 Examples of ECT induction programmes

Previous research has shown that many international education systems are concerned with their early career teachers hence recognise induction as a course of action imperative for the professional growth of these teachers. A significant number of studies have looked at different dimensions of induction and the abundance of literature is indicative of the fact that

induction has a fairly long history in international literature (Arends, & Rigazio-DiGilio, 2000; Britton et al., 2003; Wang et al., 2003; Wang et al., 2008; Wong et al., 2005). The literature is so expansive that much of the current research is evaluative where multiple approaches are being considered in order to refine and tighten the design and implementation so that the induction programmes are enhanced to yield the best results in terms of teacher performance and learner achievement (Confailt, 2015; Darling-Hammond, 2000, 2003; Feiman-Nemser et al., 1999).

A wealth of literature, however, indicates that some well-funded educational systems have had challenges with their induction programmes and are desperately trying to reconceptualise their approaches so as to enhance the impact it has on teachers' practices as well as learners' experiences of schooling. The US for instance has challenges structuring consistent induction that is focused on the professional learning of its ECTs (Wong et al., 2005).

### 2.5.1 Examples of successful induction

Britton et al. (2003) present the cases of five countries, namely; China (Shanghai), France, Japan, New Zealand, and Switzerland, whose induction programmes are generally conceived as highly organised, comprehensive and systematic as they have been successfully incorporated into sustained teacher professional development programmes. The Chinese (Shanghai) induction programme has an array of new teacher learning activities but they essentially emphasise engaging early career teachers in research groups and collective lesson planning where all teachers, beginning and veteran, observe lessons and have discussions around instruction. Somewhat similar to the approach in Switzerland, early career teachers are put in structured practice groups that are facilitated by professionally trained team heads where they network to learn effective problem solving. Out of the practice groups, early career teachers are offered individual mentoring and counselling as well as obligatory and optional courses that target short-term needs.

While some courses are optional in Switzerland, the French education system provides compulsory learning for *stagiaires* (a French term for NQTs) in a number of institutional

settings where they observe lessons of different *formateurs* i.e. pedagogical advisors or subject specialists (Wong et al., 2005). *Stagiaires* are thus afforded rich and varied practical knowledge as they are not restricted to one mentor in a single institution. Similarly, early career teacher induction in Japan is viewed as a public and collective activity that involves teachers from different institutions. The focus is on strengthening pedagogical content knowledge and this is done through what they call 'formal public lesson'. Here, early career teachers are required to conduct a formal lesson while being observed and critiqued by colleagues (Wong et al., 2005).

There are commonalities in the induction processes across these five countries. In all these examples, induction is well thought-out, comprehensive, systematic and well-coordinated. According to Wong et al. (2005), these induction programmes have a particular strength and are rigorous in that they are seriously monitored through well-defined roles of facilitators committed to maintain teaching as a high-status profession that it is in these contexts. Important to note as well is that these programmes are sustained and stretch from at least the first two years and sometimes up to five years as in the case of New Zealand. Early career teachers also add value as they seriously participate in these programmes, perhaps because they are formal policy mandates that constitute a certification level of learning to teach. New Zealand, for example, has the Advice and Guidance (AG) programme where provisionally registered candidates participate in for two years before they can be certified as qualified teachers (Wong et al., 2005). The UK is another example where an induction period precedes the granting of the Qualified Teacher Status (QTS).

What is perhaps more important to highlight across these five examples is that they all focus and emphasise on the central aspects of instruction such as content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge. Whether in a lesson study group, collective lesson planning, practice group or counselling session; early career teachers in these five examples are continuously encouraged to enact sound teaching and learning strategies. In other words, they focus on what Cohen, Raudenbush and Ball (2003) call 'the instructional core' where the teacher-learner-content relationship is the centre of analysis and discussions are fixated on how best these can be infused together to enhance substantive learning.

### 2.5.2 ECT induction in African contexts

The literature has also convincingly shown that, with regards to the induction of early career teachers, little, and in most cases nothing, is being done in the majority of African countries (Maringe & Prew, 2015). Literature on induction is scarcely available suggesting that induction practices are non-existent in some contexts, and where it is happening, it is largely informal and ad hoc (Maringe & Prew, 2015). Empirical research conducted in counties such as Ghana (Cobbold, 2007), Kenya (Dawo, 2011; Indoshi, 2003; Simatwa, 2010) and Zimbabwe (Magudu, 2014) indicate that basic orientation formalities where NQTs are given information on the social and procedural issues about the school tend to be prevalent. Indications from these studies, however, seem to suggest that the majority of early career teachers in these contexts face challenges with time management, classroom management, lesson planning, learner assessment, record keeping and generally translating and using pedagogical strategies learnt from pre-service training in their daily practices.

An empirical study that provides insight into ways of supporting early career teachers given these challenges in any African context at this point in time is needed. This suggests that induction needs to be seriously considered in African education systems and there is considerable agreement that early career teachers stand to benefit if systematic and sustained induction programmes are put in place (Magudu, 2014; Maringe & Prew, 2015).

Similarly, there is very little literature to rely on to understand induction practices in South African public schools, hence the need for more empirical research in this area. Maringe and Prew (2015) in their review of literature of trends of induction in Africa confirm that the field is under-theorised and the dearth of empirical studies in South Africa attests the need for research to take that direction. Much of what is available at the departmental level so far is 'lip-service' as there has not been much initiative to reckon with towards realising the coordination, management and implementation of formal induction in public schools.

The National Policy Framework for Teacher Education and Development (NPFTED) (DoE, 2007) and the Integrated Strategic Policy Framework for Teacher Education and Development (ISPFTED) (DBE, 2011), for example, guide the professional development activities in South Africa and these documents both stipulate that formal induction and/or

mentoring are prerequisites for new teachers for at least two years. These intentions have been, for a long time, policy imperatives only on paper without accompanying action. In the meantime, the majority of schools are using ad-hoc induction practices. The present study becomes quite relevant as it is concerned with the different ways selected public schools in South Africa induct and support early career teachers especially in enhancing their professional practices. This study particularly sought to illuminate on current induction practices in the selected South African public schools with the hope of contributing towards an understanding of the form, content and the kinds of matters to be emphasised in an induction programme for South African teachers. More specifically, the findings of this study will be useful in contributing to current discussions and debates around a context-specific induction framework for early career teachers in South African.

## 2.6 The conceptual framework

The reviewed literature in this chapter mainly focused on the conceptualisation of the idea of ECT induction. The meanings, definitions, purposes and models of induction were amongst the most important issues about ECT induction that were discussed. From this discussion of related literature, a better understanding of the idea of ECT induction was provided in terms of its relationship with teacher preparation and continuing teacher professional development.

Another important strand of understanding that was developed was how well-conceived induction can facilitate ECTs' learning of a wide range of professional skills and how that facilitates their development into competent professionals. A number of key concepts emerged from this discussion of related literature and below is Figure 1 showing a diagrammatical representation of the interrelatedness of these key concepts:

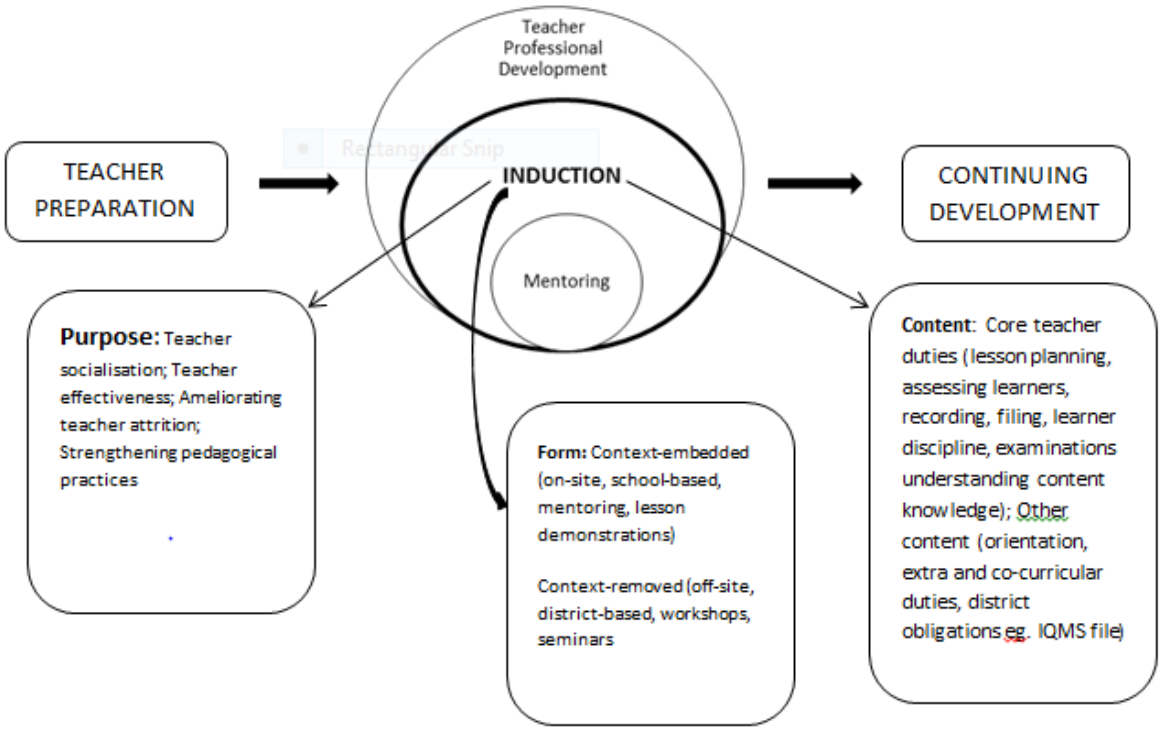



**Figure 1: Conceptual framework: the interrelationship of key concepts**

## 2.7 Chapter conclusion

This chapter has mapped out the terrain of teacher professional development and the specific phase of new teacher learning: induction. It was established in this chapter that teacher induction is an important process that initiates early teacher professional development and it comes highly endorsed in both local and international literature. This chapter, however, established also that teacher induction is poorly understood and far from being practiced in meaningful ways in many African contexts including South Africa. A huge gap in the literature was thus identified and this study is an attempt to fill this gap by contributing to a better understanding of how teacher induction is understood and enacted in some South African public schools. The following chapter discusses the theoretical lens that was used to explore ECT induction practices in this study.

# Chapter 3: Theoretical framework

## 3 Introduction

The previous chapter reviewed literature related to the idea of teacher induction and the review demonstrated that little about this concept is known and understood in the South African context. This chapter adds to the theorisation of the idea of teacher induction by providing background information as well as discussing key concepts that underpin the theoretical lens that informed the analysis of data and the interpretation of findings of the study.

The central theoretical work that informed this study is that of social theorists, Stephen Kemmis and Peter Grootenboer as articulated in their Theory of Practice Architectures (Kemmis & Grootenboer, 2008). In addition to providing the background to the theory and discussing its key concepts, this chapter provides a detailed explanation of how the Theory of Practice Architectures was useful in illuminating on early career teacher induction practices identified in this study.

### 3.1 Background to the Theory of Practice Architectures

This study was theoretically conceptualised using the Theory of Practice Architectures, a social theory founded within the traditions of Practice Theory. Practice Theory is a school of thought that belongs to the branch of social and cultural theories that are intently concerned with accounting for the relationship between humans as social beings and their social environment (Nicolini, 2017). Practice Theory posits that humans are social beings whose actions shape and transform society; and in turn, society shapes and transforms human actions. According to Reckwitz (2002), Practice Theory is a type of Cultural Theory and its key focus is highlighting the significance of collective symbolic structures of knowledge in order to develop an understanding of human actions as well as the social order.

The Theory of Practice Architectures can best be described as an eclectic theoretical perspective as it builds on the work of several cultural and practice theorists. Key pillars of the theory were drawn from Pierre Bourdieu (1986), Anthony Giddens (1979, 1984) and

Theodore Schatzki (1996, 2002). Bourdieu's Reproduction Theory posits that aspects of culture are transmitted through generations facilitating the maintenance of particular social structures. Kemmis and Grootenboer use Bourdieu's Reproduction Theory to explain the formation of practice over time where certain ways of doing things are handed down to new generations as they become part of the group adopting the ways of saying and doing things and relating with others. These practices are social and, according to Antony Giddens' Structuration Theory (1984), they are linked and are comprehended in a relationship of interdependency between action and social structure. This means that human agency (agency is realised in human action) and social structure are in a reciprocal relationship where each act as an enabling condition for the other (Giddens, 1984). In other words, social structures make social action possible, and at the same time social action creates those very structures. This 'duality of structure' propels social reproduction across time and space.

To elaborate on his Structuration Theory, Giddens (1984) proposes three domains where social structure is actualised: cultural, economic and political domain. These domains are adopted in the Theory of Practice Architectures to explain the arrangements or set-ups within a site that either enable or constrain a practice. Kemmis and Grootenboer (2008) used Giddens' notion of the cultural domain to illustrate the space where people exchange cultural ideas as they say things in a practice. They argue that certain cultural discursive arrangements on a site influence ideas shared through language as and when people engage with one another in a practice. For example, in this study, I was concerned with the kinds of conversations different role players have about and with early career teachers in their institutions. The kinds of dialogue prevalent in the five schools and at the district were treated as indicators of whether early career teacher induction was understood, valued, prioritised or even enacted.

Similar adaptations of Giddens's notions of economic and political domains are evident in the material-economic and social-political arrangements within the Theory of Practice Architectures. Material-economic arrangements basically allude to the actual activities done and the resources that are used within a site of a practice (Kemmis & Grootenboer, 2008). In this study, I was able to identify how the different induction activities were organised, where the induction workshops were facilitated and the resources allocated for those activities.

These activities are embedded within social relationships and these are either enabled or constrained by the social-political arrangements within a practice. Social-political arrangements are basically the enabling or constraining factors in a social space that influence how people within a practice relate to one another. This enabled an analysis of how early career teachers were socialised in their new school environments as well as provide insights into the levels of collaboration amongst teachers themselves and the nature of relationships that existed between the schools and district officials at D district.

The Theory of Practice Architectures also draws substantially from the work of Theodore Schatzki, another sociologist who theorises the social. According to Schatzki (2002), we are constituted by our social practices and social life unfolds in "sets of hierarchically organised doings, sayings, tasks and projects" (Schatzki, 2002, p. 73). Kemmis and Grootenboer build on Schatzki's idea of conceptualising practice in sets of practice elements or as nexuses that are interconnected. In other words, practice architectures/arrangements are relational to one another. There is an overlap between sayings, doings and relatings because what people say as an expression of their thoughts and ways of understanding imprints itself in what they actually do, what is done is in itself is a product of the way people relate to one another in that particular context. In fact, Schatzki (2002) acknowledges this overlap and describes sayings as a sub-class of doings.

While theorising the concept of education in terms of what it is and its key purposes, Stephen Kemmis and Peter Grootenboer developed the Theory of Practice Architectures. In this education research, they came to believe that education is a project of outcomes that are significant for the whole world as well as for individual participants within it. In other words, education fundamentally shapes people's individual as well as their collective destinies. They also reached the conclusion that the key purpose of education was to "help people live well in a world worth living in" (Kemmis & Grootenboer, 2008, p. 25).

The big question for Kemmis and Grootenboer (2008) in their theorisation of education was; what actions should be taken to achieve this educational purpose? In response to this, they proposed that in order for education to produce people who 'live well in a world worth living

in', people should take action that is informed by moral values and committed to upholding those values, what they call 'praxis'. Praxis, in other words, is the desired outcome of education, the ideal of what should happen where individuals act in the best interests of others (Kemmis & Grootenboer, 2008). To achieve this praxis, Kemmis and Grootenboer (2008) place teachers at the core of the education project as the key agents tasked with the responsibility of developing learners who are capable of saying things well, doing things well as well as relating well with others and the world at large.

According to Kemmis and Grootenboer (2008), practices do not happen in a vacuum; rather they occur in a context; 'the site of the social' in Schatzki's (2002) terms. The context is the background against which praxis might be enabled and occurs or one where it is constrained and might not occur. In other words, practices are constituted within particular systems that hold them up. For example, humans say things in the cultural-discursive world using language in the semantic space; they do things in the material economic world where they use objects in space and time; and they relate in the social-political world using power and solidarity in society (Kemmis & Grootenboer, 2008). The Theory of Practice Architectures therefore offers "a site ontological account" (Grootenboer, Edwards-Grooves & Choy, 2017, p.109) of human actions as contained in what they say, do and how they relate. This trichotomy of spaces and systems within which humans engage in practice are called practice architectures (Kemmis & Grootenboer, 2008). Figure 2 below illustrates practice sites and practice arrangements that either enable or constrain a practice:

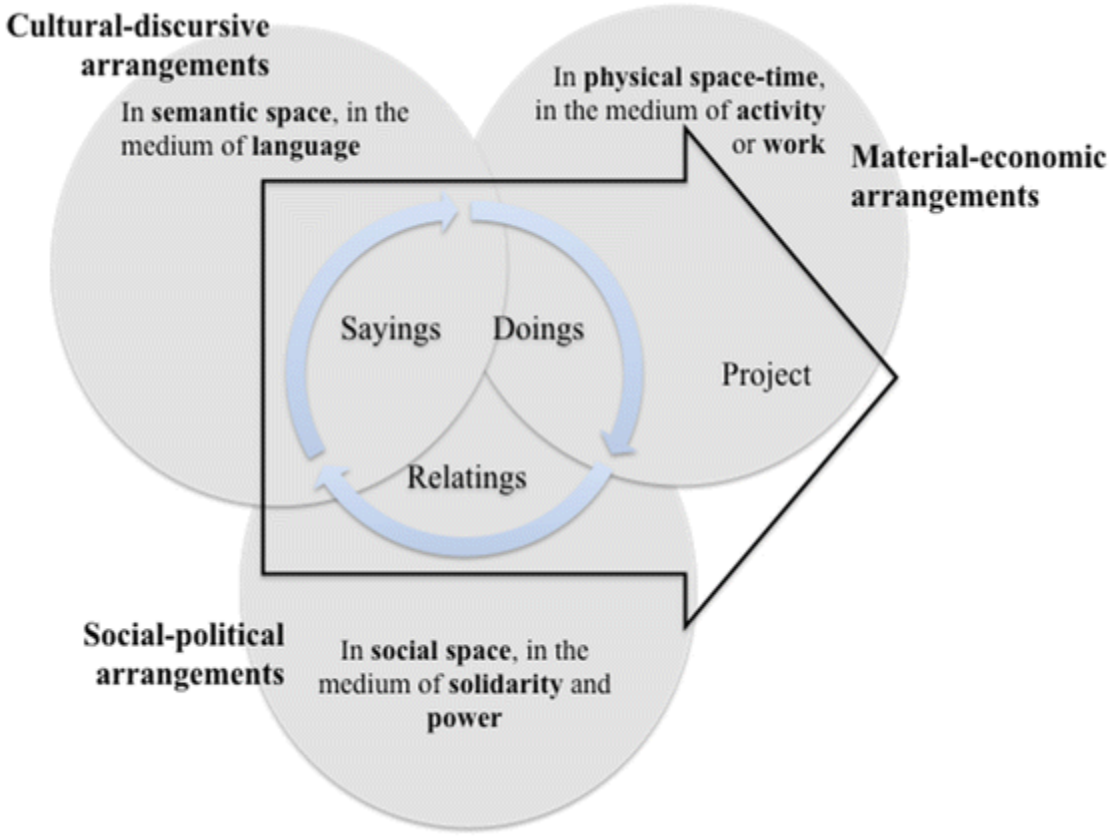



**Figure 2: Practice sites and practice arrangements that either enable or constrain a practice** (Kemmis, Heikkinen, Aspfors, Fransson & Edwards-Groves, 2014, p 34).

### 3.2 Understanding ECT induction through the Theory of Practice Architectures

The Theory of Practice Architectures was selected because it has been widely used, and effectively so, to explore professional educational practices. It arguably tells us more about practices than any other theory by providing a "…site ontological account of what practices are composed of, and how practices are shaped by, and shape the cultural-discursive, material-economic and social-political arrangements (practice architectures) in which they are enmeshed in sites of practice" (Grootenboer et al., 2017, p.109). Kemmis and Grootenboer (2008) provide a well-developed set of concepts and criteria for analysing and understanding practice. Although their work is not popular within the African context, it has been particularly influential in the developed world and is currently gaining momentum. Rönnerman, Grootenboer and Edwards-Groves (2017), for example, used the Theory of

Practice Architectures to examine the site-based local conditions that influenced the interactions between teachers, middle leaders and principals in a Swedish educational district.

A similar study was conducted by Grootenboer and Edwards-Groves (2013) who employed the notion of practice arrangements and the sociality of practices to understand how teachers and learners encountered one another in everyday classroom mathematic practices in Australia. These scholars and many others (Aspfors, 2012; Kemmis et al., 2014; Heikkinen et al., 2012; Pennanen, Bristol, Wilkinson & Heikkinen, 2016; Tynjala & Heikkinen, 2011) indicated that the Theory of Practice Architectures was increasingly becoming influential because of its explanatory power hence the choice to use it in this study.

For this study, the Theory of Practice Architectures was most relevant because of its explanatory power and richness. It enabled an interrogation of the practice architectures of the existing practices and interactions between schools and the ECTs. This theory was particularly useful in asking how current practice architectures in these institutions were simultaneously enabling and constraining effective induction; how the involved participants were led by them and how they were, at the same time, shaping and influencing them. In doing this, I was not only able to gain understanding on how early career teacher induction was not happening in some schools and how it was being conceptualised and enacted where it was happening, but I also managed to get insight into different ways of effecting change for enhanced induction practices.

As a theoretical approach, the Theory of Practice Architectures is social. This implies that it is contextualistic, interactionalistic and constructivistic; three important characteristics of social theory. Kemmis and Grootenboer (2008) emphasise that practices occur in a context, i.e. the particular physical environment in which a practice is enacted. They argue that this physical site is imbued with social, cultural, political, material and institutional factors that significantly impact individual and collective human behaviour. This is consistent with Kelchtermans and Vandenberghe (1993) who note that human behaviour always results from a meaningful interaction with the contextual environment.

The Theory of Practice Architectures thus conceives practice as a social phenomenon that is best understood as situated in context. The contextualistic quality of this theory was particularly useful in this study as it aided the analysis of the nature of interactions between schools and ECTs in the selected research sites. Particular practices at the five schools and at D district were not considered in isolation, rather they were looked at from a contextual perspective where the history of the landscape of teacher professional development and the myriad socio-economic, political and institutional factors at play in the South African public schooling context were acknowledged as important prefiguring conditions.

As a social practice theory, the Theory of Practice Architectures is also interactionalistic as it recognises that practice is situated in a context where multiple actors interact amongst themselves and with their environment in a mutually constitutive way. The interactionalistic quality implies that "practice is not solely dependent on the experience, intentions and actions of individuals but rather they are shaped and conditioned by arrangements, conditions beyond each person as an individual agent or actor" (Kemmis & Grootenboer, 2008, p. 37). In other words, the manner in which any practice unfolds in any given context largely depends on the contextual circumstances and the kinds of practice architectures that have historically dominated that particular context. Individuals are thus not at will to act in any manner they please; rather their actions are prefigured by what Kemmis and Grootenboer (2008) call 'extra-individual' factors from their surroundings. This means that the ways in which people say things, do things and relate as social beings are governed by already established ways of interacting.

Practices are therefore embedded in ongoing interactions between people themselves and between people and their environments. This theoretical stance was useful in understanding the nature of professional interactions amongst ECTs and their peers, their School Management Teams (SMTs) and with district D officials. Exploring the affordances and constrains of those interactions was also made possible because I managed to develop an understanding of how and why ECTs perceived their job situations the way they did; how and why more experienced school personnel held certain perceptions about ECTs; and why the D district induction initiative, for example, was designed the way it was.

The Theory of Practice Architectures was also appropriate for use in this study because of its constructivistic assumptions that aligned with this study's view of the world. Constructivism, rather than focusing on facts, foregrounds the meanings participants ascribe to an experience. In other words, meanings are construed while interacting with one another and with the environment. According to Kemmis and Grootenboer (2008), individuals develop dispositions in a context. Dispositions form individuals' worldviews and these develop through exposure to types of collective group knowledges which are transmitted socially through the culture and language used in the group, the shared material resources as well as through the social relationships formed.

The idea of practice architectures thus drew my attention to the differing arrangements that configured the intersubjective spaces within which participants in this study encountered one another (Pennanen et al., 2016). Kemmis and Grootenboer (2008) indicated that participants in a practice encounter one another in three intersubjective spaces, namely; the semantic space realised through the use of language, the physical-space time realised through activity and work, and the social space characterised by power and solidarity.

The intersubjective semantic space dimension was a particularly useful lens in examining how different participants understood the notion of induction. Participants' use of language pertaining to ECTs, how they communicated in their induction activities as well as their descriptions of what they were doing were key indicators of their conceptualisation of the idea of induction. In the physical-time space, I was able to analyse the activities that constituted the induction initiatives. These activities were intricately examined in terms of the actions involved and how they were undertaken, how physical space was configured, and how resources were shared among different role players. The social space was another intersubjective space where individuals interacted with one another and construed reality from. Having the social space perspective enabled the analysis of how ECTs became members of groups, how they shared ideas with others and how they became integrated into sayings, doings and relatings of the group.

In addition to its social nature, the Theory of Practice Architectures was a useful framework in analysing the multi-layered dimensions to beginning teacher learning in context. During

the formative years of their careers, ECTs are expected to develop various knowledges and skills for their work in the classroom as well as other tasks related to teaching and learning. According to the Theory of Practice Architectures, teacher learning is enabled or constrained by the practices' architectural arrangements in the context of practice. These arrangements in sites constitute the core of the Theory of Practice Architectures and in this study they afforded an analysis into the three intersubjective spaces where participants came into contact with one another in the various ECT support practices identified in this study.

The Theory of Practice Architectures was not only an insightful analytical lens in this study; it was also a transformational tool. In many of the studies where it has been used, this theory was successfully employed to reveal the ways in which practices are enabled or constrained by the conditions under which they occur (Kemmis & Heikkinen, 2012; Kemmis et al., 2014; Kemmis & Mahon, 2017). This effect was equally realised in this study as the theory facilitated a better understanding of the prevailing conditions at the selected schools and at D district, and in the South African public schooling context at large, that enable and constrain meaningful induction of ECTs.

In addition to offering analytical insights, the theory's transformational agenda was instrumental in finding ways to change and enhance professional practice (Mahon, Kemmis, Francisco & Lloyd, 2017). One of the guiding sub-questions of this study was to explore ways in which ECT induction practices can be improved and sustained and this objective augured well with the transformational agenda of this theory. Using the identified practice architectures in the research sites, I was able to assume an evaluative stance and point to unreasonable, unproductive and unsustainable practices and conditions that stifled effective ECT induction in the existing school-based and district-based induction initiatives.

When ECTs join a new school environment, they find established ways of doing things that form the fabric of the schools' culture. While they come possessing certain knowledges from ITE, they often find it difficult to put them into practice. Rather, they inherit traditions, policies and practices found deeply engraved in those new work environments. Although as individuals they may have agency, the relationship between them and their social environment remains one that is mutually constituted. According to Kemmis and

Grootenboer (2008), local arrangements and circumstances shape and condition the intentions, actions and experiences of individuals within a particular social setting. Put differently, ECTs exert some influence on their new work environment, but to a large extent, they are the ones configured by their new context. This means that upon joining the new school environment, new teachers begin to share a language in the ongoing discourse practices (sayings); they share practices and activities (doings); and they become members of a group, whether they have been accepted or excluded (relatings). It is within this trichotomy of space and system arrangements that professional practices for the common good are either enabled or constrained. Using such a transformational resource/framework would be highly recommended in the South African teacher development context to scrutinise current practices and expose their moral, social and political consequences. This, therefore, means that the Theory of Practice Architectures offers a way of shedding light on what is often hidden in plain view by teasing out individual components of human practice i.e. sayings, doings and relatings that constitute practices of induction in South African public schools that are working to either constrain or enable praxis in its best sense with positive outcomes.

### 3.3 What the Theory of Practice Architectures could not achieve

Although the Theory of Practice Architectures provided a site ontological account of the existing practices of ECT induction, it did not completely provide an account of ECTs' practices as well as their ultimate view of the profession. While there is overwhelming evidence in the literature that early career experiences are a huge factor in determining the professional growth of some teachers as well as influencing their decisions to either stay or leave the profession, the reasons why different teachers adopt different stances are varied.

According to Lindqvist and Nordanger (2016), teachers' decisions to stay or leave are influenced by a wide range of factors. Amongst the many reasons, Lindqvist and Nordanger (2016) argue that macro and micro institutional arrangements and individuals' personal characteristics or traits are among the most influential factors. What the Theory of Practice Architectures afforded in this study was a contextual explanation of macro factors beyond

the school or district such as the South African socio-economic and political climate within which teachers work; as well as account for micro institutional factors such as school related politics that impact on the professional socialisation and learning of ECTs. The theory was, however, limited in its capacity to unearth many other deep seated individual factors such as personal character, attitudes, emotional dispositions and levels of resilience of the different teachers; all of which crucially influence teachers' actions, thoughts and ultimate decision making processes. This theoretical shortfall can be cited as one of the study's limitations as the evidence provided in this study was essentially looked at from the Theory of Practice Architectures' point of view and may thus be inconclusive in as far as ECTs' motivations to stay or leave the profession are concerned.

## 3.4 Chapter conclusion

This chapter discussed the central theoretical work that was used in this study. Key concepts underpinning the Theory of Practice Architectures were explained in relation to how they were used in this study. In a nutshell, the Theory of Practice Architectures offers a trichotomy of space and site arrangements i.e. sayings in the cultural-discursive arrangements, doings in the material-economic arrangements and relatings in the social-political arrangements that hold a practice in place. It was within these arrangements that practices of ECT induction were looked at in this study. The following chapter details how this study was empirically designed and conducted.

# Chapter 4: Research design and methodology

## 4. Introduction

As stated in the introductory chapter, this study is an exploration of the nature of induction support and professional development opportunities available for ECTs in South African public schools in a selected district. In order to develop an understanding of current induction practices, I conducted an empirical investigation where I gathered data directly from the different actors involved.

This chapter is organised into three sections and its main purpose is to explicate how this study was designed and conducted. Firstly, it details the philosophical and theoretical positions that informed the methodological choices used in this study. Secondly, it outlines the data generation procedures and reports on the actual courses journeyed in the field. The chapter ends with a procedural account of the data analysis; detailing how I arrived at the main conclusions.

## 4.1 Nature of research inquiry: interpretivism

This study's main aim was to develop an understanding of the nature of interactions between ECTs and their new school environment as well as the available possibilities of ECT learning through an exploration of current induction and professional development practices. The best way to arrive at this understanding was to use an interpretive research approach. Interpretivism, also referred to as social constructivism, is a research approach that explores how people interpret and make sense of their experiences and how the contexts of events and situations have impacted on peoples constructed meanings (Creswell, 2013; Grbich, 2013). The social world, from an interpretivist standpoint, is best understood from the subjective viewpoint of the individuals who are part of the ongoing social activity being investigated. This study sought to understand current induction practices in South African public schools in the selected district thus the specific experiences of participants involved in this practice were inquired into as they constituted the social reality for this study.

The substance of interpretive research largely makes use of the qualitative research tradition in which findings are not arrived at by statistical or quantitative procedures (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Rather, as a qualitative researcher, my key interest was demonstrating that people's experiences and the meanings attributed to those experiences matter. This meant that, as the key research instrument, I obtained information directly from the actors involved in the explored phenomena through spending a considerable amount of time interacting with them in their settings (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). This was useful in obtaining detailed narratives which provided a basis for an in-depth understanding of the processes involved in ECT induction.

According to Cohen et al. (2011), there are many variants of qualitative inquiries and this study employed the phenomenological approach. Phenomenological studies investigate participant's perspectives of events, particularly what was experienced, how it was experienced, and finally the meanings that participants assigned to their experience (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010; Creswell, 2013). There are further variants to the phenomenological approach depending on the nature of the problem to be studied. The specific phenomenological approach used in this study was hermeneutical phenomenology which, according to van Manen (1990), focuses on lived experiences (phenomenology), reflects and interprets on essential themes that constitute the 'texts' of participants' lived experiences (hermeneutics). This approach was most appropriate for this study as it facilitated a better understanding of what happened in specific early career experiences as well as allow a careful interpretation of what those experiences meant to the different actors involved within the selected South African public schools.

## 4.2 Sampling and selection of participants

This study drew conclusions about three groups of individuals whose roles were central in as far as early career teacher induction in the selected public schools was concerned: ECTs, school-based mentors and concerned district officials. Non-probability sampling was used where I purposefully selected participants satisfying my research purpose. According to Creswell (2013), the sampling process in non-probability sampling is not based on a

calculated selection. Rather, a specific purpose predetermines the selection and in this study I selected ECTs to provide insight on their experiences of induction and school-based and district-based mentors that would shed light on their approaches to teacher induction.

Purposive sampling, as noted by Cohen et al. (2011), is used to access in-depth information from those people who have knowledge about a specific issue. Because I was interested in understanding ECTs' experiences of support in their working environment, I sought to engage with ECTs themselves in terms of how they had experienced and were experiencing their early years in the teaching profession. I also sought school-based mentors and district officials directly involved in supporting ECTs with various aspects of their professional practice within the selected schools and district to get insight into the nature of activities that were being enacted as a way to induct ECTs. Engaging ECTs, school-based mentors and district officials from the district was particularly important in this study to gain an understanding of the nature of interactions established across the board where ECT induction was concerned.

The selection of participants was done in phases and locating participating ECTs was the first and most crucial stage of the sampling. The question of which schools were to participate in this study and who in those schools was to be selected was utterly dependent on this first phase that involved the identification of relevant ECTs. Because I needed to conduct focus group discussions, I requested from the selected district office a list of all schools with at least eight ECTs within their first five years of teaching. The initial list had nine schools, four former Model C and five township schools. I welcomed this balance as it enabled me to elicit current induction practices from the two major types of public schools in South Africa, at least in Gauteng.

Understanding current beginning teacher support practices in these diverse school contexts became an immediate imperative because one major objective of this research was to illuminate contextual issues around beginning teacher induction in South African public schools. This became even more important given current policy debates around the formulation of a context-sensitive induction framework for South African public schools' beginning teachers (BRIDGE, 2016).

Going into the field, I had an assumption that all participating early career teachers were qualified, holding either a B.Ed. or a PGCE from a recognised South African Higher Education Institution (HEI). I imagined that all of them would have been through Initial Teacher Education (ITE), which exposes teacher graduates to subject or disciplinary content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge (i.e. how this content knowledge is taught, popularly known as PCK) and some teaching experience in a real school context during the teaching practicum (TP) component of ITE. This expectation was, however, thwarted by the reality in the schools that some of the newly hired teachers were unqualified. According to the CDE's (2015) executive summary, a qualified teacher in South Africa is one who has acquired a formal accredited teaching qualification comprising at least three years of training (M+3)[2]. I, however, proceeded to include the unqualified teachers in my sample with a more profound interest to explore the nature of support available for them, particularly where there is an absence of ITE. The fact that some of the participating teachers were unqualified indicated a more pressing need for induction support. A full description of participants' qualifications is provided in Chapter five.

After making contact with the above mentioned ECTs, I then used snowball sampling to select the second group of participants: school-based mentors in the respective schools. Snowball sampling is a chain referral method where the identified participants are used as informants to identify other participants who qualify to be included in the sample frame (Cohen et al., 2011). My intention was to use snowball sampling during the preliminary visits to the schools and from the focus groups interviews to acquire leads and get connected to other relevant participants. I, however, only managed to identify one school out of the nine, again using purposeful sampling that directed me to information-rich participants. The contacts obtained were of school-based mentors, either formally or informally assigned, to act in various capacities to support beginning teachers. The identified school-based mentors included HoDs, Deputy Principals and other senior teachers.

The selection of the third group of participants was done through what can be aptly described as an 'emergent design' (Cohen et al., 2011; Patton, 2015). This design is typical of

[2] M+3 refers to one having a National Senior Certificate, popularly known as Matric, plus three years of tertiary education in a teacher training institution.

qualitative inquiries that have a naturalistic characteristic where the research process does not rigidly follow procedures specified in the prospective design of the research process. According to Patton (2015), the emergent design emerges or unfolds during the course of the study and this makes it possible for the researcher to make and change decisions about data generation while on the field. In other words, qualitative naturalistic enquiries are discovery-oriented, hence, they require some degree of flexibility, adaptability, responsiveness and openness on the part of the researcher because data is whatever emerges as important to understanding the phenomena under investigation (Patton, 2015).

As I was seeking the list of schools with newly hired teachers at the selected district office (henceforth D district), I came across a poster in the lift that read: *New Educator Workshop, 11 August 2016, 14:00 Hours, D district Hall* (see Appendix C1). The workshop had been done two days ago; this was inopportune yet presenting the district office as a potential source of rich data. I immediately followed this up and it turned out that D district had been running induction workshops for newly hired teachers in the district since the beginning of 2015. By the time I left the building, I had a whole list of new participants who included Subject Advisors, workshop organisers and facilitators from the Teacher Development Unit. With this exciting discovery, I immediately developed new sets of research instruments to access the kinds of activities that were done at district level to support the targeted newly hired teachers.

### 4.3 Data generation procedures

Multiple data generation methods were used in this study. Creswell (2013) argues that extensive data collection is the major sustaining factor of qualitative inquiries. For an in-depth exploration of teacher's early career experiences and induction practices in the selected public schools, data were empirically generated through interviews, observations and document searches. These instruments were ideal for this study as they enabled me to learn the kinds of practice architectures (i.e. sayings, doings and relatings) from the participants as they interacted in their environment. These instruments, thus, enabled me access into how participants conceptualised he idea of ECT induction.

It is important to indicate that the data generation process was not straightforward; rather it was iterative where I moved concurrently between the processes of data generation, organisation and analysis. The following sections of this chapter outline the research instruments that were chosen and how they were utilised in this study as well as a comprehensive description of how I generated data, organised and eventually analysed it.

### 4.3.1 Interviews

Interviews were the main source of data for this study so I spent a considerable amount of time engaged in conversations with participants about their experiences of induction and roles assumed in these practices. The core purpose of interviews in qualitative research is to seek in-depth understandings of individuals' experiences of an activity, programme or event (Scott & Morrison, 2006). This purpose of the interview corroborated well with the purpose of this study which sought to understand current induction support offered within the selected public schools and from the district. According to Kemmis and Grooteboer (2008), cultural-discursive arrangements tell what is being transmitted through generations and how this facilitates the maintenance of particular structures. In other words, I managed to draw from participants' expressions what was habitually shared when they talked about their professional experiences on the job, thus, gaining insight on how ECT induction was understood.

Because I had different categories of participants to interview, I developed different interview schedules specific for each group of participants (see Appendices A8- A12). According to Scott and Morrison (2006), interviews sit on a continuum depending on the purpose for which they are designed for thus determining different approaches to the collection.

Firstly, I used the focused group interviews and this type of interview is used to generate data from homogeneous people in a group situation through a focused discussion (Krueger & Casey, 2015; McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). From the initial list of nine schools, I managed to successfully negotiate entry into five schools, three former Model C and two township schools. These five schools were ideal because each had a minimum of four ECTs within their first five years of teaching.

I extensively used, both in framing and conducting the focus group interviews, Kelchtermans' (1993, 1994) Narrative Biographical perspective, a dual perspective that offered theoretical as well as methodological guidelines in understanding teacher's career experiences through eliciting their career stories. In his study of teachers' career stories, Kelchtermans (1993, 1994) gave a central place to teachers' career experiences and, in particular, to the meanings teachers ascribed to their experiences. Kelchtermans (1993, 1994) studied primary school teachers' experiences of professional development and concluded that teachers develop a 'personal interpretive framework' within which they make sense of their experience. This 'personal interpretive framework' is "a set of cognitions that operate as a lens through which teachers perceive their job situation, give meaning to it and act in it" (Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002, p. 107). This means that teachers develop certain conceptions of their work based on their experience and it is through these conceptions that they construct how they ought to operate and behave within that work environment. Likewise, I stimulated the teachers to tell narratives and stories of their early career experiences and these were subjected to an interpretive analysis where ascribed meanings of experience were abstracted.

Determining whether five focus group discussions were adequate or not was difficult hence I looked out for occurrences of data saturation where information emerging from the discussions was becoming redundant (Creswell, 2013; Merriam, 2016). By the time I conducted the fifth focus group discussion, I was confident that the data from this type of interview were adequate as it painted a clear picture of the schools' organisational contexts and practices as well as pointing out early career teachers' challenges and concerns in their new work environment, two key aspects of the research focus. Not only were the focus group interviews useful in that regard, but as mentioned earlier, data from therein were key in determining the direction of later research procedures.

After intently reflecting on the focus group interviews, I worked out which school, amongst the five participating schools, had formal and functioning induction structures in place. This led me to decide on the school(s) to inquire further into, identify new information-rich participants to interview, sharpen the interview questions and focus on specific aspects that were highlighted in the focus group discussions, and finally generate information based on the clues given about the kinds of documents to search for in the schools.

Using focus group interviews in data generation is quite prevalent in phenomenological studies but there are challenges that researchers encounter on the field and this method is no exception (Cohen et al., 2011). According to Krueger and Casey (2015), focus groups are popular for being difficult to manage as other participants tend to dominate and others contribute very little. As I went into the field, I was aware of the multiple adverse incidences inherent of focus group interviews that could potentially distort the quality and substance of my data. It was very difficult as all five groups were different in size and had individual group dynamics that I had to device specific strategies to manage the discussions as each group presented its own scenarios. Despite these differences, I generally managed the discussions by setting some rules before the discussion began and ensured all participants contributed to the discussion by channeling the direction of the discussion.

The focus group discussions, as indicated earlier, clearly singled out one Former Model C school (henceforth Peculiar High School) as having formal induction structures in place out of the five participating schools. Five ECTs from this school had participated in the focus group interview. In order to unearth comprehensive details about how these teachers were experiencing this formally structured induction in their school, I conducted two separate episodes of individual interview sessions with each of these five teachers. This coheres with Creswell (2013) who points out that data collection in phenomenological studies often consists of in-depth and multiple interviews with participants who have experienced the phenomenon under study. According to the Narrative Biographical perspective (Kelchtermans, 1993; 1994), these interviews are done cumulatively where several episodes of semi-structured interviews are done in such a way that responding teachers are made to reflect on their career and reconstruct professional biographies or stories in which the essence of their career experiences are retrospectively organised (Kelchtermans, 1993; 1994). I, therefore, managed to access in-depth accounts of these five teachers' experiences and perceptions of their interaction with their professional environment and its organisational context, and more specifically with induction.

Individual interviews with ECTs at Peculiar High School led me to identify other interview participants within this school relevant for this study. Five members of the schools' SMT were directly involved in the schools' new educator induction programme and these

included two Deputy Principals who were overseeing the programme and three senior teachers running different aspects of the programme.

I managed to interview the two Deputy Principals and one mentor teacher. The other two mentors, on numerous occasions, were unavailable to be interviewed. Interviewing these key role players at Peculiar High School enabled me to obtain an in-depth understanding the induction practices at this school, particularly how their programme was organised and conducted thus opportune for providing a comprehensive account of the schools' approach to induction.

All participating schools were under the administrative jurisdiction of D district and their district office, as mandated by the Provincial Department of Education (PDE), had the responsibility of facilitating young graduate teacher's induction in their zone schools. As I sought to understand how ECT induction was being conducted in the selected schools, it was equally important to understand the districts' approach to it. Experience of the districts' induction was a significant part of beginning teachers' early career experiences and this experience of the district's intervention played a role in influencing their overall impressions of the profession. Interest into the districts' approach to induction led me to carry out individual interviews with D district officials responsible for inducting beginning teachers. As stated earlier, this group of participants was almost haphazard as the opportunity to generate data from them presented itself in an unexpected manner. I, however, interviewed key representatives from each unit who were directly involved in the districts' induction programme. The interviewees included two facilitators from the Teacher Development Unit (TDU), a labour relations officer from Dispute Management (DM) and a representative from Transversal Human Resources Services (THRS). These four interviews were enlightening as I managed to elicit the essence of D districts' approach to induction, particularly details of how they organised and facilitated their induction programmes.

According to Miles, Huberman and Saldana (2013), the critical question in qualitative studies is whether the meanings arrived at are trustworthy and credible. Merriam (2016) advises that all data generation needs to be rigorously conducted so that insights and conclusions presented therefrom ring true to readers and other researchers. I therefore employed a good

degree of rigour in the data generation processes, especially the interviews as they were the most value-laden activity. I ensured that I minimise bias and conducted the interviews in my best ability to ensure quality, trustworthy and credible meanings. I acknowledged that an interview was not a simple dialogue but a complex interchange having "interpersonal, interactional, communicative and emotional aspects" (Cohen et al., 2011, p.422) needing careful consideration. Cohen et al. (2011) further warn that an interview is not only a data collection exercise; rather it is a social and interpersonal encounter where different socio-cultural contexts exert different influences on the interview. An awareness of these factors prepared me well to exercise caution in every interview encounter and I tried to ensure that the interview sessions were done well within the indicated time, I used language well understood by participants, I did not ask leading questions that could potentially influence participants to give particular responses and, finally I probed with follow-up questions for participants to clarify their intended meanings. By using these cautionary measures, I managed to gather different experiences and practices of induction leading to more thoughtful and nuanced conclusions drawn from the data (H.J. Rubin & I.S. Rubin, 2012).

In order to avoid wandering from the focus of my study, I used predetermined interview guides to conduct the individual interviews. Although I had these guides in the form of semi-structured interviews, I encouraged participants to respond in their own terms as opposed to structured interviews (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). These questions allowed what H.J. Rubin and I.S. Rubin (2012) called 'responsive interviewing' as they allowed flexibility and adaptability on my part as the interviewer in that I had possibilities of modifying my line of inquiry, follow-up interesting responses and investigating underlying motives (Robson, 1993). All interview sessions were audio-recorded and I intently listened and followed the direction of the conversations after each interview sessions to check if all key aspects of the inquiry were covered and identify lines upon which to do the follow-up interviews.

### 4.3.2 Observations

To complement the interview data and in order to get a better sense of the participants' experiences, I observed participants in their interactional settings. According to Cohen et al.

(2011), this form of data collection is highly flexible and enables the researcher to gain access to interactions in a natural social setting. This study was interested in the induction of ECTs which is a social practice. It was, therefore, important to observe participants in their context with the view of accessing patterns of sayings, doings and relatings (Kemmis & Grootenboer, 2008) during induction related workshops and meetings. I managed to observe three new educator workshops organised and facilitated by the district and three new educator meetings at Peculiar High School and observing the practice architectures in these sessions was instrumental in developing a fuller appreciation of how induction was understood and enacted by participants.

It was important, from the onset, to specify my role when generating observational data because it is during observations that the presence of the researcher can mostly 'contaminate' the natural research setting (Creswell, 2013; McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Avoiding this was especially difficult given that the nature of phenomenological inquiries require the researcher to be close to participants and at times be directly involved in participants' activities (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Before formally undertaking the observations, I had spent a considerable amount of time in contact with the majority of participants at the district office and at Peculiar High School during the focus group and individual interviews. Because of my familiarity with the participants, it was fairly easy to assume the role of observer-as-participant where I participated peripherally by asking questions during the different activities. This worked well in reducing what Cohen et al. (2011) call 'reactivity effects' where my presence in the workshops and meetings could influence the behaviour of the participants. I was, however, cautious of my involvement and attachment with the participants because there was a danger of 'going native' where objectivity would be compromised by gradually assuming a more insider role adopting the values, norms and behaviours of the group as my own (Cohen et al., 2011; Creswell, 2013).

I began informally observing the research sites by taking descriptive notes about the general interactions at the school and district office under study. These descriptive notes were compiled during the many times I went to these sites to set up appointments for interviews or to conduct interviews. I then scheduled to conduct formal observations of new educator meetings at Peculiar High School and district induction workshops. The district induction

workshops were done on Saturdays and took the whole day from 8 am until 3pm, so I narrowed and focused the observations to those interactional and programme settings most relevant to the research purpose and questions. This meant observing systematically using a carefully designed observation schedule (see Appendix A13) that defined and explicated the phenomena to be observed (Scott & Morrison, 2006). That is to say, I focused on the content covered and how this was organised and facilitated. This is reiterated by McMillan and Schumacher (2010) who suggest that observers, well before immersion in the field, need to ascertain and define in precise terms the units of observation.

Of the five sampled schools, I decided to observe one school (Peculiar High School) because it was the only one where beginning and new teachers to the school were mentored and supported in a formally structured induction programme. Three new educator meetings were thus observed at this school and here I focused on how these were conducted as well as the kinds of content that was covered in these sessions. The district office, on the other hand, offered induction workshops for all beginning teachers under their circuit schools at a centralised venue during weekends. I managed to observe three of such workshops and again, the focus was on the content covered and their overall facilitation. These observations were rich sources of complementary data as the data generated thereof enriched my understanding of previously gathered interview data.

For all the observed sessions, I first recorded them at the description level where I used a set of questions to guide the observation of specific phenomena as outlined in the research purpose. This instrument guided the compilation of field notes and this was organised into four categories as set out by Morrison (1993), as cited by Cohen et al. (2011, p.457), the physical setting (physical environment and its organisation), the human setting (characteristics of the individuals being observed i.e. gender composition and age ), the interactional setting (roles, conversations, formal and informal, verbal and non-verbal and any subtle or critical incidents) and the programme setting (activities, resources and their organisation).

The next level was reflecting on the descriptive field notes immediately after each observation session. In this reflection exercise, I made additional explanatory notes to the

field notes. I also used this time to reflect on the reactions of participants to being observed as well as my personal biases and dispositions as these have grave implications on the trustworthiness and credibility of the data product.

### 4.3.3 Document searches and analysis

In addition to the interviews and observations, this study relied on documents. Documentary evidence provided an important gaze into the practice architectures that underpinned induction practices in the research sites. Documents were particularly telling of the material-economic arrangements (doings) (Kemmis & Grootenbooer, 2008) as they were records of past induction activities that were conducted in the schools and districts. Documents pertinent to this study were, thus, searched for and analysed.

Many scholars debate in the literature on the nature of artefacts that count as documents (Cohen et al., 2011; Scott & Morrison, 2006) and for this reason, I categorically identified the materials that were to be subjected to document analysis and these included public and official records, meeting minutes, handouts, electronically stored texts such as PowerPoint presentations presented at workshops, school policy documents and any record of an event or process pertaining to the induction and professional support offered to ECTs at the selected schools and at D district.

Locating relevant documents was difficult. As soon as I found someone assisting me with information in the various research sites, I would ask for documents that accompanied what they provided for induction. For example, there were no documents available in four of the participating schools (with the exception of Peculiar High School) because much of what was done was ad-hoc, hence documents attesting to the existence of formal induction did not exist. Relevant documents were, however, located at Peculiar High School in the form of a 'New Educator File' given to all new teachers, meeting minutes and other policy documents that new teachers were taken through upon joining the school (see Appendices D).

D district office was another source of rich documentary data as I managed to obtain much of the paper trail and electronically stored text generated by and for the induction

workshops organised and facilitated at the time of data generation. Although I did not manage to get all documents that district officials alluded to during the interviews, the few that I managed to secure were significant sources of secondary data as I could, after careful analysis and interpretation, read from them what happened, when and who were the key role players in the events recorded. More importantly, the analysis of documents was particularly useful in comparing and contrasting the school-based and out-of-school induction approaches as represented by Peculiar High School and D district, respectively. The available records were effectively telling of the specific form and content of the two example induction models which enriched my understanding of how induction was understood and practiced.

According to Cohen et al. (2011), ascertaining the authenticity of the documents to be analysed for a study is preliminary and basic, yet a fundamental procedure that speaks to the degree of credibility of the overall research findings. I thus closely examined any artefact included in the inventory of documents for this study in terms of relevance and significance. This process was relatively made easy because the general advantage of generating data from documents is that they elicit a high degree of accuracy because they were not kept with the knowledge that they would, one day, be scrutinised for research purposes (Cohen et al., 2011). For some of the documents I did follow-up interviews to understand the information relayed in the document as well as obtain a sense of the underlying values and assumptions leading to the development of any document in question.

## 4.4 Approach to data organisation and analysis

Data were generated from different sources using multiple instruments and it culminated to voluminous written-up field notes, interview transcripts and multiple documentary materials. Working through the data was cumbersome so in order to organise and elicit meaning from them, I followed the interactive model to data analysis as proposed by Miles and Huberman (1994). The interactive model, as is shown in Figure 3 below, is composed of three concurrent streams of activities that are interacting throughout the data analysis

process: data reduction (later renamed data condensation (Miles et al., 2013)); data display and; drawing and verifying conclusions.

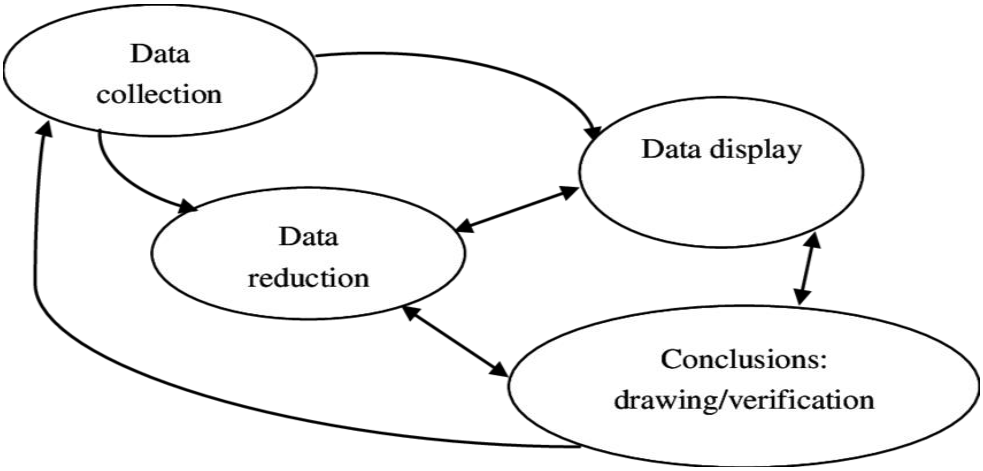



**Figure 3: The interactive model of qualitative data analysis** (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 12).

I began with data reduction, later renamed data condensation by Miles et al. (2013); a process of "selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting and/or transforming" the raw empirical data (Miles et al., 2013, p. 12). In other words, I was sorting and organising the data by reading through them and selecting which chunks to pull out, which ones to discard as well as describing and summarising certain chunks so as to begin shaping an evolving story. According to Miles and Huberman (1994), this is anticipatory data processing that almost naturally occurs when the researcher begins to think about a handful of data in relation to the study's guiding questions, informing critical literature as well as the theoretical framework.

The data organisation process began as soon as I entered the research sites and continued after significant data were generated. Both individual and focus group interviews were transcribed and I systematically followed qualitative data analysis procedures and guidelines to "assemble the textural and structural descriptions" (Creswell, 2013, p. 52). This process was done inductively by employing two levels of coding. Firstly, the initial coding was a low-inference process where I developed descriptive codes by identifying and labeling what was in the data. I highlighted particular significant statements from the raw data that indicated ECT experiences and the different support activities available for them, either

through an induction programme or professional development. I then moved the analysis to the conceptual and theoretical level by developing pattern codes where the descriptive codes were interpreted and organised into patterns until a more comprehensive set of themes were established (Creswell, 2013; Miles et al., 2013). This process was iterative as I moved vertically on an individual data set and horizontally across data units in order to obtain a comprehensive, meaningful and coherent picture of participants' meanings. The data were, therefore, subjected to a constant comparative process (Grbich, 2013) which allowed for the identification of clusters of meaning that underpinned the underlying structure of the shared induction experiences (Creswell, 2013).

In addition to the interview transcripts, I gathered numerous documents from sites as evidence of current induction practices. These documents included public and official records, minutes, electronically stored texts such as PowerPoint presentations presented at workshops and school policy documents. Working through these documents was tedious especially the lengthy legal framework documents that govern the conduct and professional practice of teachers in South Africa such as Circular 65 of 2007, Personnel Administrative Measures (PAM) document, SACE code of professional ethics, Public Service Act No. 103 of 1994 and the Employment of Educators Act No. 76 of 1998.

To better manage and organise these voluminous documents, I employed a data condensation (reduction) strategy by focusing on the sections that were relevant to participants in this study (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Miles et al., 2013). The Personnel Administrative Measures, for example, was a document that was often referred to by participants. In a nutshell, the PAM document spells out the terms and conditions of employment for teachers in South Africa. Contained in this document are details about the establishment of vacant teaching posts in schools, how interviews are conducted and the appointment of teachers. These details were irrelevant to this study. The document was, therefore, only referred to in terms of sections that participants indicated. For example, Chapter G of the PAM document outlines the procedures of dealing with teacher grievances which is an aspect relevant to the work of some district officials who participated in this study. All legal evidentiary documents were looked at in terms of the sections that participants were using.

With all the data organised, I then used data display. A data display, as explained by Miles et al. (2013, p.12), "is an organised, compressed assembly of information that allows conclusion drawing and action". I played with the data by fitting it into tables, matrices and summary forms as a way of figuring out the best way of representing it in such a way that it read well. Some of the representations were discarded and those that worked well were maintained. These various forms of displays enabled a better reading of the data and stimulated further analysis that led to the drawing and verification of conclusions. As is shown in Figure 3, the processes of data reduction (condensation), display and drawing and verifying conclusions happen simultaneously rather than sequentially, I, therefore, worked iteratively across these three processes and developed preliminary propositions that were later sharpened following some of Miles et al. (2013) thirteen tactics for generating meaning. The tactics used were:

- **Noting patterns**, **themes**, **seeing plausibility**, and **clustering** i.e. seeing "what goes with what." **Making metaphors**, like the preceding three tactics, achieved more integration among diverse pieces of data.
- **Making contrasts/comparisons,** a pervasive tactic that sharpens understanding.
- Tactics for seeing things and their relationships more abstractly. These include **subsuming particulars into the general, factoring**, an analog of a familiar quantitative technique; **noting the relations between variables** and **finding intervening variables**.
- Finally, to systematically assemble a coherent understanding of data I used the tactics of **building a logical chain of evidence** and **making conceptual/theoretical coherence** (Miles et al., 2013, p. 277).

### 4.5 Trustworthiness of the research process and findings

Qualitative research is largely criticised for not being scientific enough because of its subjective nature. Accounting for issues of validity and reliability are two of the most fundamental research principles that render any research findings useful (Grbich, 2013;

McMillan & Schumacher, 2010; Scott & Morrison, 2006). Research validity refers to the degree of truthfulness of the research findings, i.e. congruency between what the researcher captures and reality.

Research reliability, on the other hand, is achieved when the design used provides the same findings if the study is replicated elsewhere, provided that the phenomenon under study remains constant (Scott & Morrison, 2006; McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). There is, however, extensive contestation around the appropriateness of the use of these terms in qualitative research as they are argued to have positivistic foundations (Cohen et al., 2011; Miles et al., 2013; Patton. 2015). Having considered this debate, it was still imperative to demonstrate validity and reliability of this naturalistic inquiry; thus, I used trustworthiness, an interpretivist term proposed by Lincoln and Guba (1985), as a more appropriate alternative for assessing and evaluating the worth of this qualitative inquiry.

Claims to trustworthy findings completely rest on a "sound research design" (Grbich, 2013, p.5) that I developed and enacted through employing rigorous and precise data generation methods. Firstly, I ensured that all questions guiding the inquiry were appropriate, pertinent and relevant to my research focus and this was an iterative process as I kept reflecting on the effectiveness of the instruments after every contact made with participants or with situations. While careful consideration of the data generation procedures was fundamental, it was equally important to employ robust and detailed data analysis strategies. Miles et al. (2013) argue that well carried out research does not necessarily add out to compelling conclusions. In view of this, I made considerable effort to adhere to Lincoln and Guba's (1985) techniques for conducting qualitative research that achieves the outlined criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability.

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), credibility speaks to the truth value of the research and Miles et al. (2013) ask the question of whether or not the findings of the study make sense or if they paint an authentic portrait of what was looked for.

Dependability shows consistency of the research findings and that the results can be replicated elsewhere, provided that the phenomenon under study remains constant (Scott & Morrison, 2006; McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). To ensure that findings of this study ring

true, I triangulated through multiple data sources which were instrumental in cross-validating emerging data (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). I sought data from focus group interviews with ECTs; individual interviews with selected ECTs, school-based mentors and district officials participating in teacher induction; field notes generated during induction workshops and an array of documents developed on and for the induction workshops under consideration. This triangulation process was particularly useful as it enabled me to ensure consistency across the data sets and it was also a useful process of ensuring some degree of conformity between what I captured and reality.

Transferability, another criterion for establishing research trustworthiness, is concerned with the applicability of the findings in other contexts (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Having spent a considerable amount of time with participants, I managed to get a holistic view of the participants' personalities, their roles and how they interacted amongst themselves and their school context. Such immersion, according to Cohen et al. (2011), enables the generation of thick descriptions strong on reality and this was realized in this study as I managed to compile data that accurately captured the social processes and interactions that were of interest to me.

While generating thick descriptions strong on reality was an imperative for establishing transferability, I was also aware of the need to ensure confirmability of the research findings by being careful not to influence what participants said and did by imposing my biases, interests and motivations. In order to ascertain that my influence was not overbearing on the participants' responses, I used the process of participant validation, a process of "systematically soliciting feedback about your data and conclusions from the people you are studying" (Maxwell, 2013, p.126). All transcribed interview transcripts and observation field notes were sent back to the participants along with tentative interpretations of the data so that they confirm the credibility of both the data and my interpretation of it. All participants were in agreement with what I had captured during both the interviews and observations. It was interesting to note that participants would always provide further explanations on some of the information that would have caught their attention whilst reading through the transcripts and observation field notes. For example, all district officials in response to the field notes took time explaining how they struggle to attain teachers' interests in the

induction workshops they conduct. They indicated that ECTs attend workshops with already preconceived negative attitudes towards anything that comes from the district. Such explanations were useful in corroborating the meanings of participants and the meanings I was developing from what I had captured. Member checking, therefore, turned out to be the single most important way of necessitating "mutual meanings" (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010, p. 330) between me and the participants, at the same time ruling out the possibility of misinterpreting the meaning of what participants said and did.

This study was also highly subjective, particularly because I was the key research instrument in both data generation and its analysis. I was in direct contact with participants, their situations and programmes and this could potentially distort the quality of the data because of the effect of my presence on the natural setting and the effects of the setting on my cognitive and emotional rationalism (Miles et al., 2013; Patton. 2015). My difficulty, and for any other qualitative researcher, was establishing credibility of the empirical procedures followed in order for the research results to be useful. I employed what Patton (2015) called 'empathic neutrality' where I established rapport with participants at the same time maintaining a neutral and non-judgmental stance that allowed some objectivity. In addition to this, I fully documented and described in detail the methods and procedures of inquiry including all 'backstage information' (Miles et al., 2013) as well as reflect on the implications of these on resultant findings.

## 4.6 Ethical considerations

Qualitative research, by its nature, involves interacting with participants mostly in their settings over a considerable amount of time (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Conducting this study required me to spend a significant amount of time in schools and at the district office with participants thus the need for me to be meticulously conscious of the required research ethical considerations. According to Cohen et al. (2011), social research should not only aim to do good (i.e. beneficence), but it should also avoid causing harm (i.e. non-malfeasance). Therefore, I carried out this study with professional integrity by making every possible effort to adhere to qualitative research ethical guidelines and took stringent

measures to ensure the protection of participants. I was guided by the four core principles of social research, namely, reducing the risk of harm to participants by informing them of any possible risks in participating in my study; obtaining informed consent (see Appendices A1- A7), ensuring anonymity and confidentiality[3] by using pseudonyms and not sharing the information they gave me with anyone; and providing participants the right to withdraw from the study at any time during the study (Cohen et al., 2011; McMillan & Schumacher, 2010)

Before going to the different research sites, permission was sought, firstly from the University of the Witwatersrand Ethics Committee which is responsible for authorising empirical data gathering procedures. Secondly, I sought permission from the Gauteng Department of Education (See Appendices B) as I was conducting my empirical study in the Gauteng province. After being cleared by my university ethics committee and the provincial office, I proceeded to the District office where I notified the district that I was going to carry out my study in the district. While I already had clearance to gather data from the district schools, I felt it was important for me to establish good rapport with all stakeholders concerned. The district office was very welcoming and I was assisted there in identifying the schools that had a minimum of six or seven ECTs with not more than five years teaching experience. From the district office I approached the schools where I would explain the purpose of my study to either the principal or deputies who would then assist me to gain access to the ECTs and school-based mentors. As mentioned above, I was guided by the ethical value of informed consent because I ensured that I explained my intentions to all stakeholders. Providing adequate and clear information was helpful as I was generally well received by all people that I engaged.

## 4.7 Chapter conclusion

This chapter outlined the methodological journey that was followed through in undertaking this study. Philosophically, this study viewed the world from a social constructivistic

[3] Confidentiality cannot be ensured in a focus group discussion hence the focus group interviews covered questions that could comfortably be discussed in a group. All other questions that were somewhat encroaching the participants' privacy were discussed in individual interviews (see appendices A8 and A9).

perspective thus the choice to use a phenomenological qualitative methodological approach that essentially foregrounded participants' perspectives of events as well as the meanings they ascribed to those events. The following chapter is an elaboration of the study's sampling criterion and provides a vivid description of participants in their context of practice.

# Chapter 5: Participants and their context

## 5. Introduction

While the previous chapter outlined the philosophical underpinnings and methodological pathways taken in this study, it provided little information on and about the participants of this study. This chapter provides a broad description of both the institutions and participants from these institutions that took part in this study. The chapter also provides a descriptive account of the general contextual conditions within which participants worked in. This account particularly focuses on the districts' administrative structures and the schools' physical and socio-economic conditions as these contextual arrangements were significant factors in either enabling or constraining effective ECT induction practices in the aforementioned institutions.

### 5.1 Broad description of the selected schools and their general context

A total of five public secondary/high schools, all under the jurisdiction of D district, participated in this study. Table 1 below contains summary details[4] of these schools:

[4] The summary details of the participating schools are as of the time at which data for this study was generated.

| Name[5] of school | Common High[6] school | Peculiar High School | Hoerskool Regular | Typical Secondary School | Usual High School |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Type and category of school** | Township, Quintile[7] 3, no fee | Former Model C, Quintile 5, fee paying | Former Model C, Quintile 5, fee paying | Township, Quintile 1, no fee | Former Model C, Quintile 5, fee paying |
| **Total number of learners enrolled[8]** | 1500 | 1600 | 1300 | 1400 | 1200 |
| **Total number of teachers** | 45 | 65 | 60 | 41 | 54 |
| **Total number of ECTs (0-5 years' experience)** | 14 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 8 |
| **Number of ECTs who participated (0-5 years' experience)** | 5 | 4 | 5 | 5 | 5 |

**Table 1: Summary of participating schools**

All schools that participated in this study were public high/secondary schools offering grade 8 up to Grade 12. As is shown in Table 1 above, two of the participating schools were low

[5] The participating schools' real names have been withheld for ethical reasons. Pseudonyms have been used instead and these names are telling of, either the existence of formal beginning teacher induction or its absence. To illustrate, the names Common, Usual, Regular High and Typical Secondary School are denoting the non-existence of formal induction structures within these schools. One school was unique as, out of the five participating schools, it was the only one with a formal induction programme. To demonstrate its uniqueness, I named the school Peculiar High.

[6] All participating schools offered Grade 8 up to 12. However, amongst those that used English as the language of teaching and learning, some were referred to as high schools and others as secondary schools and I simply adopted the referral name. The Afrikaans speaking school was referred to as a Hoerskool hence the name Hoerskool Regular.

[7]South African public schools are ranked and organised into quintiles based on the poverty profile of the community served by the school. Schools serving the poorest communities are categorised as quintile 1 schools and are afforded no-fee status thus receiving more subsidies from government. On the other end of the continuum are Quintile 5 schools, these are advantaged schools as they serve more affluent communities thereby receiving less funds from government (South African National Norms and Standards for School Funding, DoE, 1998).

[8] The numbers for total learners and teachers indicated have been rounded off to protect the identity of the schools.

quintile schools and were geographically located in the townships. According to the South African Education Funding Policy, as is stated in the South African National Norms and Standards for School Funding, (DoE, 1998), quintile 1 schools serve the poorest communities and often these schools largely serve black learners and the schools are often poorly resourced.

Common High and Typical Secondary were township schools whose demographics resembled characteristic South African township schools. Both schools had the majority of their learners coming from poor socio-economic backgrounds as was evidenced by the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) houses and informal settlements surrounding the schools. There are taverns within proximity of the schools and a heavy presence of unemployed youths roaming the streets during school and working hours.

According to Christie (1998), a large number of black schools in South Africa are marred with challenges because of the poverty and societal disruption prevalent in the communities they serve. Some of the societal problems included conflict, violence, vandalism, criminality, gangsterism, rape and substance abuse and these inherent community problems inevitably found their way into the schools as I gathered from the casual conversations I had with several members of the SMTs of Common High and Typical Secondary School.

Table 1 also indicates total learner enrolment as well as the number of teachers working in each school and it shows that all participating schools were generally of the same size. An important distinction to note, however, was that much of the infrastructure in the two township schools was generally dilapidated and in a state of disrepair. Although these township schools had access to clean water, electricity, adequate classrooms, libraries and laboratories, they had severe inadequacies of necessary resources such as desks and chairs, books and laboratory equipment in comparison to the other three participating former Model C schools.

Many township ex-Black schools that were serving only black learners during the apartheid regime, in addition to being poorly resourced, were dysfunctional with a collapsed culture of teaching and learning. After the attainment of freedom in 1994, many of these schools remained largely dysfunctional due to high teacher and learner absenteeism, high learner ill-

discipline which resulted in severe underperformance, high grade repetition, and high dropout rates (Christie, 2008; Fleisch, 2008; Taylor et al., 2003). The two participating township schools, however, despite being in a context prone to these challenges, were positioned amongst the top achieving township schools in Gauteng with each school having more than 50% of its learners passing National Senior Certificate (NSC) with bachelor pass (University Exemption).

The other three participating schools, i.e. Peculiar, Regular and Usual High School, were former Model C schools. These schools were located in affluent areas and in such suburbs, schools are characterised by adequate infrastructure and material resources (Christie, 2008; Fleisch, 2008; Taylor et al., 2003). Many former Model C schools are categorised in quintiles 4 and 5 as they service advantaged communities where the majority of parents can afford to pay school fees except for a few exemptions. All the former Model C schools that participated in this study were in quintile 5. In addition to basic school infrastructure like classrooms, libraries and laboratories, the three former Model C schools had overhead projectors and computers. Unlike the township schools that were serving black learners only, these were more racially diverse in learner population.

Important to note, however, was that one of the former Model C schools, Usual High School, was greatly uncharacteristic of a former Model C school. Although the school was endowed with infrastructure and material resources typically found in former Model C schools, it was on the verge of collapsing in terms of the culture of teaching and learning (Christie, 1998). Usual High School was frequently appearing in the local newspaper for various scandals such as improper relations between teachers and learners, drugs and substance abuse amongst learners, inefficient and corrupt school management and different learner indiscipline issues. The school was located near an informal settlement and mainly served Black learners and a significant number of Coloured learners.

At the time of data generation, I gathered that there was a lot of disgruntlement amongst the parents of Usual High School. In fact, there was significant learner migration from this school as parents, those who were financially capable, were moving their children to perceived

better schools. While this was a former Model C school located in a suburban area, many of its challenges were not dissimilar and resembled those typically found in township schools located in more impoverished communities. The anomalies of this school were further accentuated when compared to the other two former Model C schools which were, in many respects, equivalents of top-end quintile 5 schools in South Africa.

## 5.2 Description of participating ECTs

Table 1 also points to the group of participants who were of central interest to this study, that is, ECTs with less than five years' teaching experience. There were a total of 46 ECTs across the five schools and 24 of them participated in this study while the remaining were unavailable for various reasons. Although this was disappointing and a potential huge set-back to the data generation process, this did not disrupt the study because the numbers were still safe and focus group interviews were successfully conducted with the available ECTs. Table 2 below provides a summary of the details of ECTs who took part in this study:

| School | Name[9] | Gender and age | Professional and academic qualifications | Years on the job |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Common High School** | Nono | Female/26 | Psychology degree, PGCE | 1 |
| | Mandla | Male/24 | B.Ed, FET English major | 2 |
| | Amos | Male/26 | B.Ed, Intermediate and Intersen | 3 |
| | Noleen | Female/28 | B.Ed, FET Maths major | 4 |
| **Peculiar High School** | Tessa | Female/30 | Hospitality Management degree, PGCE | 2 |
| | Beth | Female/23 | Studying B.Com Accounting, was still to register for PGCE (unqualified) | 1 |

[9] The participating teachers' real names have been withheld for confidentiality purposes. The names being used are pseudonyms that the ECTs chose for themselves.

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Khanyi | Female/33 | Recreation management degree, PGCE | 1 |
| | Liza | Female/37 | BA Publishing degree, studying PGCE | 1 |
| | Jaco | Male/25 | B.Ed SP and FET Language Education, Afrikaans | 3 |
| **Hoerskool Regular** | Andre | Male/28 | Honours in Industrial Psychology, PGCE | 3 |
| | Aileen | Female/27 | BA Drama, PGCE | 3 |
| | Ruan | Male/25 | B.Ed FET, | 2 ½ |
| | Bijon | Male/26 | B.Ed FET, | 2 |
| **Typical secondary school** | Buhle | Female/26 | B.Ed, Computer applications, Technology and Tourism | 3 |
| | Lebo | Female/26 | B.Ed, Life Sciences and English major. | 4 |
| | Lindo | Male/25 | B.Ed, Accounts major | 2 |
| | Brenda | Female/24 | B.Sc. Maths, PGCE | 1 |
| | Jabu | Male/27 | B.Ed, Maths major | 3 |
| **Usual High School** | Ruby | Female/26 | Public management and Psychology (non-degree); PGCE Computer Applications | 2 |
| | Maggot | Female/31 | Tourism Diploma, PGCE Intermediate and Senior Phase | 2 |
| | Thabo | Male/28 | B.Ed, Maths and Commercial subjects; doing post-graduate degree in Management | 3 |
| | Sanmari | Male/25 | B.Ed, majoring in Afrikaans, English and Life Sciences | 3 |
| | Gwen | Female/25 | B.Ed, FET Tourism and Psychology | 2 |

**Table 2: Summary of participating ECTs**

Table 2 above shows that most of the participating ECTs were qualified to teach with the majority holding B.Ed. degrees and a few others with general degrees complemented by the PGCE. Three teachers, at the time of engagement in interviews, were underqualified. Of the three, Liza and Ruby were studying for the PGCE in recognised South African teacher training tertiary institutions while Beth was still busy with a general degree and indicated intention to register for PGCE once completed with her first degree.

These sampled teachers were in different subjects and specialisations but this was not problematic as the study was more interested in generic experiences of induction upon joining the teaching profession. What was key for this study were the teachers' number of years in the profession and, as is shown in Table 2 above, most of the participating teachers were in the mid-range of between two and three years' in the profession with a few having one year or four years' experience.

## 5.3 Broad description of school-based mentors (Peculiar High School)

As was mentioned in the previous chapter, the emerging data indicated that a structured induction programme was being enacted at Peculiar High School. Follow-up individual interviews with Peculiar High Schools' ECTs led me to interview school-based mentors at this school who were key role players in facilitating its induction programme. Below is a table summarising details about these participants.

| **Name**[10] | **Designation** | **Qualifications and experience** | **Role in induction programme** |
|---|---|---|---|

[10] Real names for these participants have been withheld for confidentiality purposes. I refer to them using their roles in the induction programme.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Deputy Principal 1** | Deputy Principal, Mathematics teacher, HoD Mathematics | B Ed, 28 years teaching experience of which 13 years as DP. | Pioneered induction programme, coordinated and facilitated programme activities. |
| **Deputy Principal 2** | Deputy Principal, taught Life Sciences | B.Sc degree, Higher Diploma in Education, 29 years' experience, 7 years as DP. | Worked with DP1 in coordinating the induction programme. |
| **Lead Mentor** | History, LO and Creative Arts teacher; LO HoD; Safety and Security Officer | B. Ed. Degree. Joined Peculiar High in 2003. | Lead Mentor[11] supported both mentors and mentees. |
| **Assistant Mentor[12]** | English teacher | No details of her qualifications. | Assistant Mentor[13], supported both mentors and ECTs. |

**Table 3: Peculiar High Schools' induction mentors (key role players)**

Table 3 above illustrates the organisational structure of Peculiar High School's induction programme and provides details of key role players that sustained the programme. The school's induction programme was basically run by the two Deputy Principals, Mrs Dunn (Henceforth, DP1) and Mr Quiley (henceforth DP2). As the main drivers of the induction programme, these two deputies were responsible for structuring the programme activities

[11] The Lead Mentor role was one that rotated amongst the HoDs and long-serving teachers. This role was only occupied by such because having extensive experience and a long history with the school were key characteristics that well positioned one to guide new teachers in the induction programme.

[12] Ms Greene was never available for interviewing but I have included her in the table to show how Peculiar High School's induction programme was structured in terms of its management.

[13] The Assistant Mentor role also rotated amongst the youthful teachers with less than 10 years being at this school. This youthful teacher was believed to be in a position to be more sensitive to the needs of ECTs and probably relate easier and better with the young teachers.

as well as overseeing their implementation. While they headed this induction programme, they had assistance from Mr Sibanda, the Lead Mentor (henceforth LM); Ms Greene, the Assistant Mentor (henceforth AM) and other staff members who would be called in to facilitate particular induction sessions on issues outside the specialty of the four main mentors.

As is shown in Table 3 above, the role of the LM was occupied by a long serving teacher who understood the schools' culture and systems having been in the school for more than 10 years. The LM was the Geography HoD and was in a position to assist new teachers with subject related matters as well as with other school system issues. The Lead Mentor role rotated among senior teachers and HoDs and, at the time of the interviews, LM was just finishing his one year term. The key responsibilities in this role were to work together with the two DPs in organising and running the new teachers' induction. LM's role as Lead Mentor included overseeing the schools' security and, as part of the induction programme, he facilitated the sessions on Security and Evacuation where he familiarised new teachers with the school's map and alerted them on evacuation procedures in the event of different emergencies.

Another key role in the Peculiar High Schools' induction model was that of the Assistant Mentor (AM). The AM's role was to provide just-in-time assistance to new teachers. While each new teacher was paired with a mentor, the AM was there to offer support to mentees as well as the mentors themselves because they were still fairly new being just over a year in the school. Because the majority of ECTs were young, the role of AM was assigned to a young teacher as well with less than ten years in the school so that s/he would relate easier and better with the youthful new teachers. The AM at the time of conducting the interviews, unfortunately, never availed herself to be interviewed but her inclusion in Table 3 serves to show the organisational structure of Peculiar High Schools' induction programme.

## 5.4 Broad description of participating local education district

South African local education districts are the intermediary institutions that provide a vital link between Provincial Departments of Education (PDEs) and schools as well as the public they serve. Local education district offices are described in the Policy on the Organisation Roles and Responsibilities of Education Districts (DoE, 2012) as 'local hubs' of the PDE, as their operations are subject to the statutes and obligations of the PDEs.

There are nine local education districts in the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) and each is composed of seven departments, each headed by a director with some departments having sub-units. According to Chinsamy (2002), PDEs, through their local district offices, supported by circuit offices, have, among others, the responsibility of assisting teachers to improve the quality of teaching and learning in their institutions mainly through their Teacher Development Unit (TDU). The TDU is in direct contact with schools and provides ongoing teacher professional development and capacity building by conducting training workshops and seminars on various curriculum issues, on-site classroom visits and lesson observation. At the same time, however, the PDE exerts pressure on local districts to ensure that schools deliver quality teaching and learning. Local districts, in turn, discharge accountability pressure on school management and teachers to ensure they achieve the standards and expectations set by the PDE.

Figure 4 below depicts the South African local education district organogram (i.e. its management and organisational structure and the various departments and units).

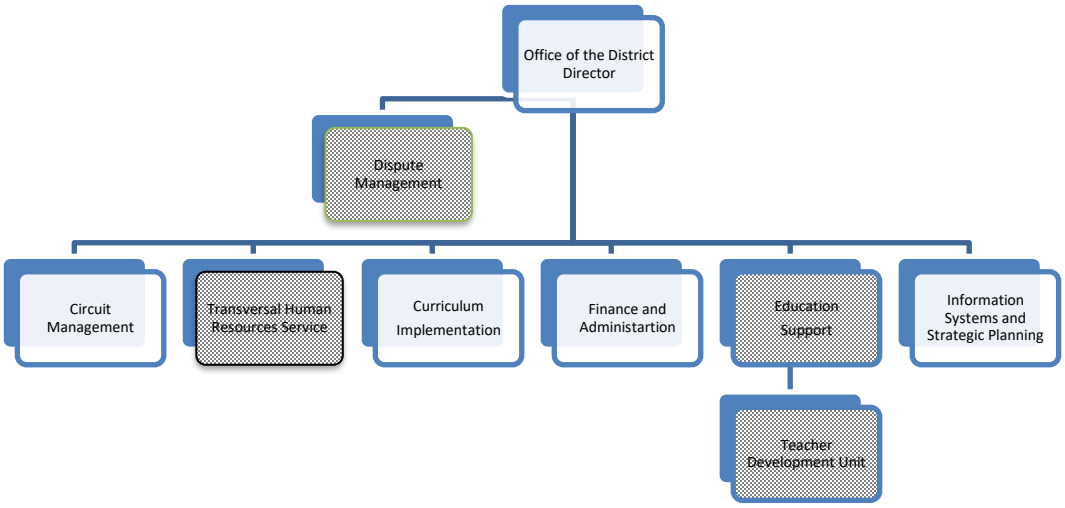



**Figure 4: GDE district organogram,** Adapted from Padayachee, Naidu & Waspe (2014, p. 67).

Figure 4 above shows all the departments and units that constitute the South African local education district. While these various departments have different operations, they share the district's primary obligation of supporting teaching and learning through working jointly with principals and teachers in schools. The highlighted (see darker shading in Figure 4 above), are the districts' departments that participated in this study, namely, Dispute Management (DM), Transversal Human Resources Services (THRS) and Curriculum Implementation through its Teacher Development Unit (TDU).

The Curriculum Implementation department had the responsibility and accountability of the induction deliverables and executed these functions through its TDU, formerly known as Human Resource Development (HRD). As is depicted by its former name and its current name, the TDU's primary role was to coordinate the professional development of education's human resources, the teachers in district schools. As part of the capacity building, D district came up with an initiative to induct beginning teachers with a particular focus on Funza Lushaka[14] bursary recipients. TDU organised elements to be covered in the induction plan,

[14] Funza Lushaka is a bursary allocation launched in 2007 for SA students who desire a career in teaching. The bursary covers full cost to complete a full teaching qualification in an area of national priority e.g. Maths, Sciences,

drove the alignment of all other departments to the key focus areas in the induction and determined its implementation. While TDU focused on aspects to do with the role of the teacher in the teaching and learning imperative, they called on the input of Dispute Management department to cover aspects that govern the work of early career teachers as Public Service (PS)[15] employees.

As highlighted in Figure 4, Dispute Management, formerly known as the Labour Relations office, was a key department in district D's induction and this department dealt with all employer-employee relations issues. Its role was to bring to ECTs' attention the legislative frameworks that apply to them as PS staff, particularly issues of discipline, grievances and disputes in the workplace as is outlined in the Management of Employee Discipline for Supervisors, Principals and Managers Circular 1 of 2016 and the Personnel Administrative Measures (PAM) document. In addition to this, THRS was called in to ensure ECTs were made aware of the conditions of service in terms of salary scales and levels, performance bonuses, pay incentives and pension benefits as PS staff and have an opportunity to get clarity on many other human resource related issues that affected them.

## 5.5 Description of participating district officials

All schools that participated in this study were under the jurisdiction of one local education district, D district. Like all district offices, district D was headed by a District Director who oversaw the implementation of the district's mandates within the seven departments and their respective sub-units. Of interest to this study was the induction support provided by district D to early career teachers in its district schools. Four officials from the three participating departments highlighted in Figure 4 were championing the induction initiative

Technology e.t.c. subjects. Recipients of these bursaries are required to teach at a public school for the same number of years that they have received the bursary. Qualified recipients of the bursary can request placement in a province of their choice but it is the PDE concerned that will determine whether a suitable post is available (DBE, http://www.funzalushaka.doe.gov.za/).

[15] Public Service employees are persons who are employed (a) in posts on the establishment of departments; and (b) additional to the establishment of departments (Section 8 of the Public Service Act 103 of 1994 as amended).

and Table 4 below summarises details of these district officials who were key administrators and facilitators of the induction initiative.

| Name[16] | Academic and professional qualifications | Department and Unit; Designation at D district | Role in induction programmes |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Mr Luxomo** | BA General majoring in Geography; PGCE (Geography, Technology Social Sciences); Post-graduate Diploma (Managing and Leading Education through Digital Technology). | Curriculum Implementation department, Deputy Chief Education Specialist in Teacher Development Unit (TDU) | Organised induction activities for TDU; coordinated with other participating departments to put the induction framework together. Facilitated sessions on roles of a teacher as outlined in SACE Code of Professional Ethics for Educators; Norms and Standards for Educators and other classroom management aspects. |
| **Mr Nkondla** | BSc degree, BSc Honours, PGCE | Curriculum Implementation department, Mathematics and Physical Science Subject Advisor working in the Teacher Development Unit (TDU) | Facilitated workshop sessions on classroom management strategies; and Teaching methodologies. |
| **Mrs Mhlara** | B.Ed. degree, Human Resources Management Diploma | Deputy Chief Education Specialist in Dispute Management (former Labour Relations) department | Facilitated workshop sessions on discipline, grievances and disputes in the workplace as outlined in legal frameworks: Employment of Educators Act 76 of 1998 as amended; Public Service Act 103 of 1994 as amended; |

[16] Pseudonyms were also used here to protect the participating district officials.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | PAM document, Management of Employee Discipline for Supervisors, Principals and Managers Circular 1 of 2016. |
| **Mr Jazwe** | Senior Education Diploma, Human Resource Management. | Assistant Director: HR Provisioning in the Transversal Human Resources Services (THRS) department. | Facilitated workshop sessions on conditions of service- covered HR related aspects on salary scales and levels, performance bonuses, pay incentives and pension benefits for PS staff. |

**Table 4: Summary of D district officials' roles and responsibilities**

As stated earlier, the Curriculum Implementation department, through its TDU, was the main driver of D district's induction initiative. As is shown in Table 4 above, Mr Luxomo was a Deputy Chief Education Specialist (DCES) in the TDU and was heading the initiative by overseeing its organisation and implementation. Together with other officials at the TDU, Mr Luxomo coordinated with other relevant departments such as Dispute Management and THRS and came up with what he referred to as a *"holistic induction framework that covered all aspects impacting on the job of a teacher"*. Mr Nkondla, also shown in Table 4 above, was a Facilitator working in the TDU. He specialised in Maths, Science and Technology (MST) subjects and he was one of the key presenters at the induction workshops held by the district. So while he held a normal district Facilitator role that mainly involved him visiting and supporting MST teachers in different schools, he was requested by the Chief Education Specialist (CES) of TDU to assist with the induction initiative.

Table 4 also indicates that Mrs Mhlala, the DCES of Dispute Management department, was another key contributor in the district's induction. As per the TDU invitation, Mrs Mhlara's role was to disseminate the role of the Dispute Management office to beginning teachers so that they were aware of the roles of this office pertaining to their jobs as Public Service (PS)

staff. As a representative of the Dispute Management department, Mrs Mhlara facilitated sessions on the legal frameworks that spelt out procedures relating to discipline of PS staff.

Also highlighted in Table 4 is Mr Jazwe, the Assistant Director: HR Provisioning in the THRS department. His main role, as an HR officer, was to ensure the implementation of PS post provisioning for Public Ordinary and Learners with Special Educational Needs (LSEN) schools. Put differently, Mr Jazwe was responsible for the recruitment and placement of teachers, including appointing Funza Lushaka graduate teachers in D district schools. He had comprehensive knowledge of the HR issues affecting beginning teachers hence his involvement in the district's induction initiative. Mr Jazwe was, therefore, the key HR specialist person in the district's induction workshops where he facilitated the sessions on conditions of service that basically addressed teacher salaries and benefits.

## 5.6 Chapter conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter basically provided a detailed overview of this study's participants in their respective job designations and working environments. Of utmost importance in this chapter was the identification of the two school categories that participated in this study i.e. township and former Model C schools as well as the myriad of factors that characterised the broader schools' contextual arrangements.

This chapter also highlighted the administrative structure of the South African local education district. Of significance within the district structures were the particular departments and units that played pivotal roles in this study's phenomenon of interest: ECT induction. While this chapter was useful in elaborating details about participants and their context of practice, the following chapter presents the data that emerged from my various engagements the these aforementioned participants.

# Chapter 6: Research findings

## 6. Introduction

The main aim of this study was to explore and develop understanding of practices of induction and professional development activities being enacted in selected public schools, focusing on how they provide ECTs with learning opportunities that strengthen their repertoire of professional skills. This chapter begins by briefly explaining the stages and processes of the analytical strategies that were used to arrive at the study's findings. The chapter then presents the research findings by extensively exhibiting excerpts from the data that relate to the study's central questions. I conclude the chapter with a general reflection on the significance of the findings presented.

The data analysis process I adopted was a highly inductive process of "subsuming the particular into the general" (Miles et al., 2013, p. 277). This process, as defined by Merriam and Tisdell (2016), was a meaning deducing process where particular and systematic steps were followed to abstract meaning from the data. I used thematic analysis as an analytical strategy which is basically an inductive process that begins with the identification of words and phrases of text in the data that spoke to the research questions. These chunks of text were then organised and compared to form categories that were further organised by looking at relationships and comparisons into themes. Below is Table 5 showing how I refined sub-categories into categories, and categories into more abstract themes. It is in this order that these themes are presented in this chapter:

| **Theme** | **Category** | **Sub-category** |
|---|---|---|
| ECTs' experiences of their professional roles | Classroom organisation and management | -organising learners and teaching activities<br>–instilling classroom discipline |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | Overwhelming workload | -overwhelming administration duties, both school and district requirements<br>-overloaded timetables<br>-teaching many subjects and across the grades<br>-assigned difficult classes<br>-extra and co-curricular duties |
| | ECTs' experience of their work environment | Unsupportive and hostile work environments<br>-labelling<br>-isolation |
| Nature of existing practices of ECT professional development | Basic orientation | -vague incidences of mentoring, peer mentoring and shadowing<br>Formalised ECT orientation- The Peculiar High School example |
| | Induction | The Peculiar High School New Educators Induction Programme;<br>District D Young Graduates Induction Programme |
| Perceptions about influence of ECTs' experiences on their view of the profession | Dissatisfaction amongst ECTs | ECTs looking to exit the profession.<br>ECTs continuing with profession half-heartedly. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | | ECTs willing to stay and grow in the profession. |
| Perceptions about improving practices of ECT professional development | Schools' capacity to professionally develop ECTs | Capacity of schools to support questionable<br>-mentor-mentee matching problematic<br>-issue of time problematic |
| | Districts' capacity to professionally develop ECTs | Capacity of district to support questionable (district monitoring more than supporting)<br>-support not matching and meeting needs |
| | Proper training of inducting personnel<br><br>Change form and content of induction | -training of HoDs and SMTs<br>-training of district officials<br><br>-school based support rather than once-off sessions offsite<br>-focus on day to day duties of ECTs |

**Table 5: Refinement of sub-categories into categories, and categories into more abstract themes**

### 6.1 ECTs' experiences of professional roles

One of the main findings of this study that sets the scene to understanding the experiences of ECTs was that they encountered a myriad of challenges in their new professional roles as teachers. Many indicated that these professional challenges started right at the beginning of their careers; and for many, those challenges still persist. There were, however, a number of challenges that were significant and highlighted across the five schools. These included, but

not limited to, (i) challenges with classroom organisation and management; (ii) overwhelming workload; and (iii) unsupportive and hostile work environments. Each of these challenges in the ECTs' professional roles are explained and illustrated in detail below:

### 6.1.1 Classroom organisation and management

The most common challenge that seemed to permeate every reflection in the ECT focus group interviews was that of organising and managing the classroom. The data, unanimously, indicated that ECTs came with a somewhat adequate content knowledge base. In fact, they felt they were well conversant with subject matter knowledge and believed that they were in the process of developing much more effective pedagogical content knowledge from their own classroom experiences.

While many expressed confidence with their grasp of content knowledge, they, however, indicated that they were faced with other challenges that negatively impacted on their pedagogical practices. One such challenge mentioned was that somehow they were struggling to establish a flow in their teaching. One teacher commented: *I do know my Mathematics very well but then I have never had a day where I felt like things were moving smoothly in my lesson* ***(Jabu, Typical secondary)***. Another teacher sharing the same sentiments said: *…it's like there is always chaos in my classroom. I have never really taught nicely. I am always screaming to keep them quiet or telling somebody to sit down or to…I feel like all I do is give instructions and not really teaching* ***(Maggot, Usual High)***.

Many ECTs believed that their challenges with classroom organisation and management were as a result of learners' behavioural problems. They especially found instilling classroom discipline and maintaining a favourable atmosphere for effective teaching and learning the most difficult aspect of classroom organisation and management. They were particularly disappointed to discover that the classroom management skills and techniques they had learnt from their ITE training were impractical and difficult to implement in a real classroom situation.

Although discipline and classroom management skills and strategies were learnt during pre-service teacher training, transferring that knowledge when confronted with real discipline issues in the classroom remained a challenge for ECTs. I could detect the teachers' desperation, frustration and hopelessness as they narrated their challenges with this component of their teaching portfolio. One teacher commented: *we do learn about classroom management and discipline at college but it's actually different when you are in a school* ***(Andre, Hoerskool Regular).*** Another lamented: *I can't maintain the discipline and all the nice things I'd planned to do with the class is just a waste of time. I really cannot get to it especially with the younger grades 8 and 9's* ***(Liza, Peculiar high).*** The situation for these ECTs was made worse because the schools seemed not to have proper procedures for dealing with learner behavioural problems. The majority indicated that their respective schools had school codes of conduct that spelt out unacceptable learner behaviour and consequences for each instance of indiscipline but those documents were not fully put to use as learners could get away with anything. Several spoke about this challenge and said:

> *…we are really struggling with discipline…especially Grade 9B…I reported to the Phase Tutor who took it up to the Grade Head and they had to escalate to the vice principals, then to the principal…nobody listens…and that was 2 months ago, nothing has been done to assist me in any way. Even if you ask, there's no help so it doesn't really help to ask you're just left to die basically* ***(Sanmari, Usual High).***
>
> *The other challenge is that there is no protocol of dealing with learners with behavioural problems. As new teachers we need guidance on dealing with learner problems because there are some learners with real issues here. Do I refer the matter to someone? Who is that someone? Currently there's no structure or any disciplinary committee, nothing…we do have a code of conduct but then it's just there on paper* ***(Buhle, Typical Secondary)****.*

The despondency and hopelessness due to the problem of learner indiscipline was worsened for ECTs when they realised that even the SMTs seemed incapacitated to deal with the problem. One teacher narrated how she noticed that other more experienced colleagues were also baffled by this challenge: *When you ask for assistance they* [HoDs and other more experienced colleagues] *say you need to work on your classroom*

*management and I'm like 'what do you mean classroom management? I'm trying my best to keep them quiet'. Give me something to work with, tell me try this that is effective for you and I will try and implement it. I could see they were also clueless* ***(Gwen, Usual High).***

In view of this, ECT's confidence seemed to have been adversely affected in significant ways as negative emotions to the teaching job were invoked. They generally expressed feeling helpless, disempowered and demotivated and one teacher expressed his dejectedness saying: *…I came to teach and realised that I actually have very little rights. That was actually a very big shock! A child can say absolutely anything or abuse a teacher and get away with it. I didn't realise how hard it actually is. I'm almost not allowed to be human…I can't raise my voice…we really don't have any rights to be quite honest and now it becomes a struggle to do your job* ***(Andre, Hoerskool Regular).*** Clearly, this negatively impacted teaching and learning because ECTs reported that once they lost a grip on maintaining orderly classrooms; they failed to effectively implement their planned lessons.

Although the challenge of instilling learner discipline was cutting across all five participating schools, ECTs at Peculiar High School were better positioned to deal with this challenge because they had the schools' structural and cultural resources to draw from to deal with this challenge. The school has clearly outlined classroom ordering procedures that are made known to all teachers and ECTs were assimilated into these routines. One teacher had this to say:

> *They [*mentors, deputy principals and HoDs*] teach us how to discipline our class like for instance in the first meeting they told us that when the kids come you need to make sure that they are lined up you know as they enter and then after two weeks they get used to the system... In the morning you see all learners lined up at classroom doors and you sort of just get into the system of doing that. Even in class, learners know that the deputies are very serious with bad behaviour so it sort of makes life a bit easier for newbies like me* ***(Khanyi, Peculiar High)****.*

The two deputies at Peculiar High School also spoke about how ECTs find classroom organisation and management challenging especially the issue of learner discipline.

They were however emphatic about the routines they have established in their school and how they encouraged all new teachers to adhere to them to ensure teaching and learning happens in the school. The two deputies commented:

> *The biggest challenge they are facing is classroom discipline. So classroom discipline is the main issue. But we advise them on what to do. Classroom discipline starts outside of the classroom not inside the classroom when you line up. When you walk up and down checking uniform then you allow the girls in first and then the boys follow. You walk to the front and you stand, I greet you and tell them to sit down. I can tell them now to take off their blazers because it's hot during the lesson, they must be completely engaged during the lesson. You can't be teaching for 40 minutes. You teach for 20 minutes then the remainder of the time you've gotta give them work. That's the only way you are going to keep them quiet. And when the bell rings they pack up and stand; what I do is I walk up and down the aisles and check for papers, push your chair in and straighten the desks; blazers on then you go out of the classroom in order. They just don't go out; they go out row by row starting at the back because my door is at the back, row by row. This is what I do, this is how we do it at this school and this is what I encourage all teachers and new teachers to do* ***(DP1, Peculiar High)****.*

> *So discipline is the main thing and every year it has been like that, they say discipline! Discipline! Discipline! In our efforts to develop educators… that's where the main focus is on. Helping them with discipline in the classroom because they are so young and these kids think aah, this teacher is my age group. …here even the sitting arrangement is very important, we go by a formula and our learners know it and our new teachers also go by it.* ***(DP2, Peculiar High)****.*

What was clear from the above testimonies is that dealing with learner indiscipline and maintaining orderly classrooms is difficult to achieve but ECTs at Peculiar High School seemed to have a better and more eased experience because the school had established and regularised procedures for maintaining learner discipline. ECTs at this school were guided into using practical strategies to implement in their classrooms such as establishing and maintaining line-up routines before the lesson and maintaining classroom sitting arrangements. They were also assisted with creative ways of balancing teaching and classwork time and these strategies seemed to have been already embedded in the schools' culture as almost every teacher in the school was seen to be implementing the abovementioned strategies. Although there was generally an agreement amongst ECTs at Peculiar High School that classroom organisation and

management remained one of their main challenges, it was apparent that there was a sense of ease amongst these teachers as compared to the ECTs from the other schools. The main reason for this was that Peculiar High School, right from the SMT, regarded learner discipline as a matter of priority. There was a collective effort to deal with this issue especially because of the detrimental effects indiscipline could have on the schools' core obligation of ensuring effective teaching and learning.

### 6.1.2 Overwhelming workload

Teaching is not only about lesson planning and its delivery. This key responsibility is accompanied by a lot more other work that makes up the teaching portfolio. The findings in this study indicate that ECTs were not fully prepared for the nature of work that they went on to encounter in their respective schools. One teacher reflected that *it's such a pity that the practicals we did in the four years of training did not give us a full sense of what the job really involves* ***(Brenda, Typical Secondary).*** ECTs indicated that they were especially shocked with the amount of administration work that goes into teaching, overloaded timetables, teaching many subjects across the grades and the amount of energy and time needed to be devoted towards extra and co-curricular duties.

Administration overload was cited as the most daunting duties that clouded ECTs' work. The administrative workload involved, but not limited to, managing the attendance register, assessment and recording marks and compilation of various classroom data. The findings in this study show that ECTs find the administration cumbersome as they have to meet both school and district administrative requirements. At the school level, among the many other responsibilities, ECTs are required to plan lessons, balance registers, assess learners, mark and record marks and develop an organised filing system for each subject and grade they are teaching. One teacher was perturbed by the complications of the administrative tasks and bemoaned that *they don't teach us how to balance your register, filing with sick notes and things like that and how you balance filing in your subject related work and how your file should look* ***(Sanmari, Usual High).*** Another

teacher aired similar sentiments saying in the first week *at the end of week you have to fill in the register. You've never seen a register and now all of a sudden you have this very formal document that you're not allowed to make any errors on. Like how do I do this?* ***(Aileen, Hoerskool Regular).***

In addition to being bewildered by the formality and meticulousness required when working on the class register, ECTs were equally perplexed by more administrative demands placed on them from the district office. The district, through facilitators' school visits, require a compilation of data in the form of learner statistics such as reports on struggling learners and the various interventions put in place to support those learners. One teacher complained that she was never guided on *how to make sure that you get all the stats correctly and how when all the kids come you need to find out how many come from a certain background, how many live 5km away from school. There is a lot of paperwork and no one informed me on this paperwork. I feel like a receptionist yet I'm here to teach (****Gwen, Usual High)****.*

Another teacher was especially challenged because he was only two years into the profession and not yet confident of how to properly do the paperwork from the department. He said that *the department stuff is hard, most of the time I am doing stuff that I'm not even sure of* ***(Bijon, Hoerskool Regular)****.* The administrative requirements from the department and the district were considered obstructive yet almost sacred because they had no choice but to meet them as schools naturally report to the district and the department. There was an obvious contestation because while ECTs felt that it was disturbing their main teaching and learning obligations, they could not relegate district demands and one teacher actually commented that the *administrative work from the district is worse! It's either statistics that have to go to the department or it's a new form that we have to fill about that at risk learner and it's taking up so much time that we actually neglect teaching* ***(Sanmari, Usual High).***

ECTs also mentioned that while the statistics and various data required by the district were cumbersome, the district also brought along the *hefty, yet meaningless,* Integrated

Quality Management System (IQMS). What made the IQMS a meaningless laborious task for the ECTs was that they felt they had never benefitted from the exercise ever since they joined the teaching profession. As a result, ECTs indicated that they filled in the forms simply to fulfil the district checklist of having done the IQMS. One teacher recalled on the exercise of filling the previous years' IQMS forms saying *the IQMS is actually another job hey* [laughs]*… I said I'm struggling with time management because I'm really struggling, but then I got no help…makes no sense really* ***(Bijon, Hoerskool Regular).*** Another teacher also mentioned how the IQMS was a lot of work yet did not add value to him as a developing professional. He believed that the problem was that he had not been adequately guided into the process and he said: *The IQMS at the end of the year is also a lot of paperwork and there's not a lot of support so I just wrote down what the other teachers wrote and I don't think it's right because nobody ever taught me how I should do it.* ***(Ruan, Hoerskool Regular).*** What can also be understood from these teachers' explanations is that their view of the IQMS was only another tedious administrative task they had to do without attaching any professional gains to it.

ECTs reported that they were overwhelmed by the number of subjects and classes they had to teach. Only two of all the ECTs that participated in this study said that they were teaching only one subject, the rest had more than two. Having to teach many subjects, and at times in different grades, meant that ECTs needed a lot of time to do lesson preparation as different subjects, as well as different topics within those subjects, were prepared for differently. Consequently, most ECTs rarely had free teaching periods on their timetables and this meant that they spent most of their working hours moving from one lesson to the next. One of them complained that *most of the time we are all over the place, teaching but not really understanding what it is we are actually doing* ***(Lebo, Typical Secondary)****.* In relation to this challenge, another teacher said:

> *Most of us here, if you're lucky, only have two free periods a week. Some here we have five subjects and it's impossible to know all our learners and to plan for all the different subjects is a nightmare.* ***(Andre, Hoerskool Regular).***

Another teacher was almost in tears when she spoke about her teaching schedule: *I don't even know where to begin…I teach LO Grade 8, English Grades 8 and 9, and Creative Arts Grades 9 and 10. So my timetable is crazy and to prepare for all that is just hectic and it's just crazy to think that I report to three HoDs!* ***(Nono, Common High).*** Teaching many subjects in different grades meant that ECTs were to develop multiple lesson plans and put together various lesson preparations. In addition, they needed to attend several subject departmental meetings as and when they were required by respective HoDs. As result of such overloaded daily schedules, time management was clearly one of the major challenges ECTs complained about. One teacher expressed feeling exhausted saying: *There's not a night that I can go to bed earlier than 11pm and the next day I am tired. I am always chasing time because the stuff is just too much* ***(Sanmari, Usual High).***

While the workload was overwhelming, ECTs were mostly exasperated by what they described as *unfair task allocations* happening in the schools. They reported that, unlike their more experienced colleagues, it was only them being new to the schools that seemed to be teaching many subjects in different grades. A general finding across the schools was that the bulk of ECTs' teaching loads were the lowest Grades 8s and 9s. They also indicated that, more often than not, they were allocated the weakest classes with the most unruly learners. Commenting on these seemingly unjust practices, some teachers said:

> *…the number of classes we have is a problem but it's actually about the type of classes we are given. All new teachers here are given the worst classes while all other teachers are teaching the well behaved learners. It's like all problem children are meant to be taught by new teachers only and that is something that's really challenging. We are not yet good with enforcing discipline yet we are given the worst classes. Giving me a class of 58 learners who are loud and who just don't listen when I'm a first time teacher doesn't work!* ***(Lindo, Typical Secondary)****.*
>
> *I don't know here any senior teacher who has a fully packed timetable like ours. The thing is they don't do that to senior personnel; it's done only to new teachers because we are vulnerable and can't really say no* ***(Andre, Hoerskool Regular).***

The occurrence of such irregularities in the assignment of duties across the schools was clearly unwelcomed by ECTs and it seemed to have largely contributed to ECT disgruntlement in their respective schools.

As was mentioned earlier, teachers' work, ECTs included, is not limited to the classroom only, there is an expectation that they partake of the extra and co-curricular duties assigned to them by their superiors. The general finding in this study was that while ECTs were obligated to undertake extra and co-curricular duties, schools, however, seemed to take advantage of them because of their newness to the school and their youthfulness. Because they were young, ECTs were believed to be highly energetic enough to be capable of handling multiple tasks at one go. One teacher grumbled that *everything the school can't handle in terms of activities or whatever, they give to the new teachers because the* school believes that young teachers are *full of energy, they can do anything!* ***(Bijon, Hoerskool Regular)***. Similarly, another teacher complained that a*ll the experienced teachers know how to get around managing their time more effectively yet they add trouble to young and new teachers by giving them extra loads of work* ***(Maggot, Usual High)***. What the schools, however, failed to realise was that these young teachers, because of inexperience, were already struggling with the other loads of work that they had to do such as administration and organising teaching and learning activities.

### 6.1.3 ECTs' difficulties in working environment

Besides being challenged by various practical tasks that constituted the teaching job, ECTs were also seriously challenged by the schools' working environments that they generally described as unsupportive and hostile. The majority of ECTs reported that they found it very difficult to adapt to their respective school environments because there was little or no support made available for them and they generally felt that the schools were hostile as other teachers were not accepting and integrating them into the teaching staff community. These social problems heightened ECTs' on-the-job challenges as it became increasingly difficult for them to find assistance with the already bewildering realities of the classroom.

Upon arrival into their respective schools, all ECTs were expecting to be supported in various ways by either members of the SMT or their more senior peers who had served in the schools for a long time. Much to their surprise, many found that there was either very little or no support at all available for them. The majority of schools seemed not to have put in place formal structures to support ECTs. Reflecting on the experience of being deployed in a school where they struggled because of lack of support some expressed a deep nostalgia of the time during ITE where they could work collaboratively with others. Most felt isolated as they experienced the general balkanized and unsupportive cultures of their respective schools and some of the ECTs had this to say:

> *I think I could have done with a lot more support, not only with the admin…people expect you to know things but truth is, you don't know. I had no idea what the rules of the school were and how things work in the school so for me that was the most lacking support* ***(Noleen, Common High)****.*

> *…when you are in the classroom you're alone and no one shows you how to do anything. I was so used to working in groups at varsity, then you come here and you're on your own* ***(Mandla, Common High).***

> *You know that sense of teamwork we experienced at college especially when working on projects, it's not present here. Even though you have another teacher working with you, you don't necessarily work with each other. It's not that kind of support where you're stuck I'll help you, it's not that kind of support system* ***(Bijon, Hoerskool Regular).***

As the ECTs reflected, some indicated that they needed to be supported even with particular instructional practices but they were discouraged upon realising that there was no one to help. Although Buhle was three years into her teaching, she pointed out that she still needed assistance to improve her classroom management and teaching skills. She said:

> *…actually I need a lot of support you know, I need help say on how I can improve my handling of the class. At times it's about content. There are some topics that I know I'm*

*not very good at and teaching them is not so comfortable so I would want to know how to approach them. Even with SBAs (school-based assessments), what tasks do I give to the learner?* ***(Buhle, Typical Secondary).***

Some ECTs mentioned that support could be available but it was not easily accessible. One teacher explained how she had to *ask for it and demand it as it's not something that you can just expect to come to you* ***(Aileen, Hoerskool Regular)***. Another teacher also spoke about how she would *go to the relevant people and keep pushing in order to get some kind of help* ***(Ruby, Usual High)***. In some of the schools, getting support seemed to be dependent on one's personality. A few with bold and persistent personalities were able to negotiate their way and make headway, unfortunately, the timid personalities were left to device their own coping and survival strategies.

In fact, some ECTs were too intimidated to ask for help and mentioned that they failed to do so because they feared being thought of as incompetent. One teacher said she *felt too intimidated to go ask because the thinking is 'but you should know because you're a teacher'. I needed someone that I could go talk to without feeling that I was inferior* ***(Noleen, Common High).*** Another teacher also related to feeling vulnerable when asking for help and said that *it's natural to feel intimidated to ask because it's your job, you were trained to do it. But still there are aspects you don't know and sometimes you shoot yourself in the foot by not asking* ***(Bijon, Hoerskool Regular).*** Because they were apprehensive, some early career teachers opted to come up with their own solutions to particular challenges they were facing and evaded any possibility of exposing their vulnerability to their more experienced peers. It seemed there was the absence of collegiality between the new entrants and their more experienced colleagues and the ECTs clearly indicated that there was, clearly, an *us and them* divide.

It is apparent from the findings of this study that the relationships between most ECTs and their more experienced peers were strained. In fact, most reported that they found that their more senior colleagues were unprecedentedly hostile towards them. This was a disturbing finding for most ECTs as they were expecting these very colleagues to assist them in various capacities and substantially ease their transition from pre-service to in-service practice through their accumulated wisdom from years of experience. The

findings also suggest that ECTs' difficulties on the job were intensified by the unfriendliness of senior teachers and the overall working environment that was created because of this hostility. They said:

> *I remember not even knowing the difference between a Phase Tutor and a Grade Head because there was not a single person I could approach and ask. The unfriendliness is even transferred to us because now we've had so many new teachers starting here in the last 2 weeks, I don't even know their names and I have no idea what they teach. I don't know if they are temporary or permanent, there is no introduction to them at all. I'm sure they are also finding us weird* ***(Gwen, Usual High)****.*

Another teacher was particularly dismayed by the lack of friendliness amongst colleagues within his school. He was of the opinion that the general atmosphere within the school did not create opportunities, even for the ECTs themselves, to freely engage with one another. He lamented: *We don't really have a space where we meet as new teachers like this* [referring to the focus group interview meeting][17] *to discuss issues like we are doing now.* ***(Andre, Hoerskool Regular).*** The working environments were thus generally hostile and made it difficult for ECTs to initiate and introduce new collaborative working cultures.

The data excerpts above largely illustrated that ECTs felt unsupported and isolated due to the absence of norms of collegial interchange. Opportunities to share experiences and ideas and collaboratively work as teams were not available which meant that opportunities for ECT learning were hindered. It was also apparent that some ECTs needed assistance with specific subject matter issues but the balkanized cultures were so entrenched that they were unfamiliar with other teachers and their roles in the school as well as certain school systems and procedures. The prevailing school cultures were counterproductive and failed to effectively integrate ECTs teachers in the workplace. Consequently, such cultures seemed, to a large extent, influence negative attitudes

[17] After the focus group interview with the ECTs at Hoerskool Regular the teachers were so happy and thanked me for giving them an opportunity of sitting together as new teachers and speaking about their challenges and needs. Although this meeting was a mere data gathering exercise and did not offer any solutions to the teachers' dilemmas, they were, nevertheless, pleased with it. They even mentioned that sharing experiences as ECTs was therapeutic. Similar sentiments were also shared by ECTs at Usual High, Typical Secondary and Common High schools.

towards the profession and increase job related problems such as stress, low morale and dissatisfaction.

Another important and interesting finding of this study was that the working environment seemed to be more difficult for ECTs in township schools. The degree of hostility between ECTs and more experienced teachers seemed to be much more pronounced as compared to what was found in the former Model C schools. The animosity was more apparent and, according to some ECTs, it went beyond senior teachers' mere unfriendliness and a reluctance to offer support. ECTs believed that the real issue was about senior teachers' concerns about their job security. One teacher explained:

> *It's actually very difficult for us here. You see…we got Funza Lushaka bursaries to study an Education degree and when you go through the department system when you get a job they are supposed to make you a permanent teacher. So we need to pay the government through service so the department is supposed to make us permanent teachers so I think that is where the problem is, older teachers think we are taking their jobs so nobody actually likes us here* ***(Amos, Common High).***

In agreement, another teacher indicated that *there is a lot of fear among the older teachers that we the new teachers are going to replace them. If there is a chance of retrenchments then the old teachers would be the first to lose their jobs because the Funzas are well qualified* ***(Buhle, Typical Secondary)****.* Because of feeling threatened, ECTs believed that senior teachers resorted to contemptuously labelling them as 'Funza Lushakas'. This labelling was not welcomed by ECTs as it denoted a number of negative impressions about them even in the surrounding community. Infuriated about this, another teacher commented: *…it's actually not cool at all to be a Funza because even in the community out there people are saying bad stuff about us* ***(Mandla, Common High)****.* Another teacher explained the difficulty in being a Funza Lushakas bursary recipient and being deployed to a township school saying *there is a bad connotation here, even the principals think that Funza Lushakas are lazy, disrespectful and they think they know it all* ***(Jabu, Typical Secondary).*** There seemed to be a general perception amongst senior staff and the people in the community that ECTs were lazy, boastful and arrogant. In addition to the lack of

adequate support, the labelling and exclusion by their more senior colleagues made ECTs' experience of their working environment unpleasant, particularly those in township schools. Overtones of feeling disrespected and under-valued could be sensed as they narrated how they experienced their respective working environments.

### 6.2 Existing practices of ECT professional development

As was mentioned in the first chapter, this study was primarily concerned with exploring existing practices of ECT professional development in the selected schools and district. The key purpose for this focus was to develop an understanding of the available professional development practices, see their affordances and constraints as well as determine different ways of enhancing them.

Data were generated from five high schools and from D district and all these institutions showed acute differences in terms of whether or not they prioritised ECT professional development and for those that prioritised it there were certainly differences in the manner in which they enacted those practices. Table 6 below briefly provides an inventory of the existing practices in the respective schools and district that were researched:

| | **ECT PD practices** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Name of school/district** | **Basic orientation** | **Induction** | **Mentoring** | **HoD and SMT support** |
| Common High | X[18] | X | X | X |
| Peculiar High | √[19] | √ | √ | √ |
| Hoerskool Regular | √ | X | X | X |

[18] X indicates that practice was not available
[19] √ indicate that practice was available

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Typical Secondary | X | X | X | X |
| Usual High | √ | X | X | X |
| D District | X | √ | X | *[20] |

**Table 6: Summary of ECT PD practices across the six researched sites.**

As can be observed from Table 6 above, only Peculiar High School and D district seemed to have prioritised ECT PD, as is evidenced by their formalised programmes targeted at ECTs professional learning. The remaining four schools, although at varying degrees, showed the least concern with ECT PD as was indicated by the total absence and some vague incidences of ECT supporting practices.

### 6.2.1 Basic orientation

In order to get insight of the nature of ECT PD practices and any available support, in whatever form, all ECTs had an opportunity to reflect on their first days and weeks early on in their respective schools. The findings from those focus group reflections showed that four of the five sampled schools (i.e. Usual High, Typical Secondary, Common High and Hoerskool Regular) were reluctant and the least concerned about installing supporting activities specifically geared to support ECTs in their new professional roles. Most of the ECTs relayed that practicing as full time teachers was their most difficult life experiences especially because there was barely any support available. Two of the four schools (i.e. the township schools) did not even provide basic orientation and the other two schools (i.e. the former Model C schools) seemed to acknowledge its importance but it was poorly enacted. Many of the ECTs in these four schools could relate to the metaphor of *being thrown into the deep end* where they were left to device their own strategies to get accustomed to their new environment. One teacher mentioned that his first day was *horrible! There was no training, no person giving direction, nothing!* ***(Amos, Common High)***. The other teachers narrated their early days' experiences as follows:

[20] * indicates invalid/irrelevant field

*I didn't know where the bathrooms were…I wasn't even introduced to the learners so it was really bad* ***(Mandla, Common High)***.

*On the first day, I sat in the staffroom the whole day. They said I mustn't do anything I must just sit in the staffroom and get to know the other teachers then my HoD came and told me that I was going to be teaching Grade 8 and 10 LO. The next day I looked for 10H and started to teach* ***(Lebo, Typical Secondary).***

*When I started here I remember I was given a timetable and I followed that timetable the whole week and then the following week it was chaos. The timetable had changed and I was not aware. The learners came to tell me "It's your period sir". It was so embarrassing…there was no guidance whatsoever* ***(Jabu, Typical Secondary).***

The above excerpts are indicative of the fact that ECTs were barely introduced to the school systems and how they worked. There seemed to be an assumption that they would somehow find their feet on their own. The practice of *throwing ECTs into the deep end* seemed to be the norm in township schools as was observed at Common high and Typical secondary schools. Although ECTs from the remaining former Model C schools i.e. Usual High and Hoerskool Regular, felt like they were *thrown into the deep end*, their experiences were slightly different because their schools seemingly made attempts to provide some guidance to its new teachers. Below are reflections on the nature of orientation experienced by some ECTs from the abovementioned former Model C schools:

*After a month of teaching that's when I had my orientation but it was on paper. I was told the photocopier is in the staffroom, if I want to make copies I do this and that without being taken to the place or the machine to be shown how to operate it. It was just on paper* ***(Ruby, Usual High)***.

*I remember my first day…I was felt like I was just thrown at the deep end. I went for an interview on Tuesday and then they called me to start the following day. I didn't even know what I was going to teach when I came here. I then met my HoD who took me through a few things he had on paper. I remember being told I was going to teach Grade 8 and 9's LO. I was given the timetable, told the names of the other teachers in my new department, told when we would have the school assembly, when and where our departmental meetings were held and where I would find him if I needed help and that was it (****Gwen, Usual High).***

*There's this one event, before the school opens we had a meeting, all new teachers because we were…I think 5 or 6 newbies. But then it's also a hello-goodbye quick meeting, nothing about the details of the job or the new school. I mean they tell you…this school has a green file that tells us basics like where do you park, how you're supposed to dress, where do you find what, just the basics and that's it! This is only for those who like come and start in January, if you come somewhere later in the year, sorry!* ***(Ruan, Hoerskool Regular).***

A substantive orientation is meant to equip beginning teachers with information about the school and this may involve touring around the school; briefing about school rules and policies; allocation of classes and explanation of job description and any other important information about the learners, the community and the school that may come valuable to the new teachers. With reference to the above excerpts, some aspects of the orientation process were evident and visible in both the former Model C schools. Both schools seemed to acknowledge the need to provide orientation support for their ECTs. However, what was disconcerting for the ECTs concerned was that the support was impractical and inadequate. The Usual High School orientation was largely inconsistent as the focus areas in the orientation seemed to differ and depend on the preference of one HoD to another. They seemed to organise orientation for the ECTs as they came but the challenge was that some of the sessions were done very late at inopportune times as was experienced by Ruby. Hoerskool Regular, on the other hand, conducted its orientation a day before schools open. However, the school seemed to focus the orientation on peripheral issues such as appropriate teacher dressing and the allocation of parking space which, to the ECTs, were of little importance. This seemed to suggest, therefore, that ECTs in both these schools were more or less launched into practice without adequate information and preparation for the various duties they were to do.

The findings also showed that former Model C schools, in comparison to the township schools, made arrangements, where possible, for shadowing. Shadowing was an opportunity made available for some of the ECTs to spend a few days or weeks working together with the teacher they were meant to replace. One teacher who had this opportunity said that *the first few days I was just observing because the previous teacher*

*was still there and I watched her do all her things which made it easy for me when she left* ***(Aileen, Hoerskool Regular)***. Another teacher also had an opportunity of shadowing the teacher whom she was replacing said *the lady who was teaching before was still here so she took me through everything with regards to filing and teaching. I had to sit in at least 5 weeks with her so I got to see how she was doing most of the things (****Sanmari, Usual High)***. Shadowing seemed to be great way of familiarising ECTs to their work as well as the school environment in general. While it seemed to be a very practical way of orienting ECTs into their roles, it was unfortunately incidental and only available to a few lucky ones.

Further reflections of other ECTs from the two former Model C schools seemed to illustrate that while considerable efforts were made to provide orientation support for ECTs, much of it was vague, superficial and haphazard. Eventually, ECTs within the same school experienced their early career days and weeks differently. One teacher actually made the observation that his school did the orientation haphazardly. He commented:

> *I had the school ways of operating explained to me by this one teacher and I remember being given a paper. It had a list of things that the HoD spoke to me about like school starting and ending time, stuff about registers and filling…yaa a number of things. I still have that paper in my file but I don't think it's made available to all new teachers who come. I think it's because of the HoD who was responsible at that time when I came. When other teachers came after me I never heard them talk about that, we all seem to have different experiences* ***(Thabo, Usual High)****.*

Some ECTs were lucky and managed to get assistance from supportive senior teachers and HoDs. Such teachers were coincidentally met with peers and HoDs who had a sense of vocation and care and such teachers seemed to have settled fairly easily into their new roles and school environment.

> *I was supported very well by my HoD. If I had a problem I would always go to him and he would advise how to treat a problem. Everyone was very supportive, even the other teachers they were always asking if I was doing fine so I found it easy to settle in because help was around me* ***(Andre, Hoerskool Regular).***

A similar and interesting finding was noted in one of the township schools, Typical Secondary school. Having realised that their school had no formal structures to support

new teachers joining the school, some of the ECTs who had more than a years' experience working in the school took it upon themselves to provide orientation and some mentoring support to their peers. One teacher said that he *was lucky to have Jabu*[21]*help. He showed me around even with simple things like where the toilets were* ***(Lindo, Typical Secondary).*** Another beneficiary of this informal peer mentoring said: *My first week was very successful. I had a lot of people who gave me advice and they were very helpful. I can say I also had informal mentors, yaah...Lebo and Jabu especially were, even now they still are, very helpful. They showed me around the ins and outs quickly* ***(Brenda, Typical Secondary).*** What is evident in these cases is that where formal structures of ECT support were not in place, some individuals within the aforementioned schools had an appreciation of the need for supporting ECTs. What was also apparent from this finding was that the onus to provide support was dependent on the individuals' personality and not limited to an office such as that of an HoD.

#### 6.2.1.1 Formalised ECT orientation: The Peculiar High School example

Noticeable differences, however, emerged from Peculiar High School ECTs' reflections. While they identified with the general inherent challenges that came with starting out in the teaching profession, they reported to have started more easily and smoothly in comparison to all the other ECTs from the other schools. Peculiar High School was the only school, out of the five sampled schools, that had an internal formalised induction programme for its new teachers. Within that formal induction programme was an orientation programme that was held at the school a day before schools open every January whenever the school had a cohort of ECTs. Some of Peculiar High Schools' ECTs described their experience of their orientation as follows:

> *I found my first week quite easy because I attended the new teachers' orientation. So we came to the school a day before the school opened and we were taken around the school and shown our classes, the staff room and were we were to sit. It was really nice and the*

[2121] Jabu is one the new teachers who had joined Typical Secondary School a year earlier than Lindo. Although he was not oriented in any way, he voluntarily offered to guide Lindo through the basic information about the school and its systems.

*deputy principals explained to us the school vision, mission and a lot of government policy things that we should know. And then I was given a mentor as my go to person, like anytime I need help I can just go to her* ***(Beth, Peculiar High).***

*I think I survived very well especially because of the briefing and orientation. I was invited to the school just before opening day and I found some other new teachers there. We were taken to the board room and were addressed by the two deputies who took us through the school code of conduct; and that code...that one…the eeh…SACE code. They gave us other documents to read at home like the Educator's Act and some other ones. I liked going around the school and this was great because when I started teaching I was already familiar with the school. We went back to the boardroom and we were introduced to our mentors and HoDs. So I didn't really struggle* ***(Jaco, Peculiar High).***

A major finding from the above excerpts was that the Peculiar High School ECT orientation programme was very formal and detailed. The orientation was facilitated by the schools' two deputies and the presence of HoDs and mentors for the respective ECTs seems to indicate that this was a session formally scheduled on the school's calendar. As was also indicated by the two teachers above, the orientation covered a multiplicity of issues ranging from school specific issues to general professional details about being a government employee which seems to indicate that the programme was reasonably comprehensive. The school specific details included being introduced to the school in terms of its physical infrastructure, the schools' policies that guide teachers, their respective mentors and HoDs and detailing of the responsibilities that they were to be undertaking. Various government policy documents were referred to familiarise ECTs with their roles and responsibilities as civil servants. The two deputies, DP1 and DP2, were the main drivers of the orientation programme and they elaborated on the actual activities that constituted the schools' orientation day:

*…We start with getting them to know the school building, the office, what are the codes for certain gates. This is the map of the school, this is the map of the administration building, these are the exam rooms, this is how the exams are run. We take out the school code of conduct, teacher's dress code for males and females…ah what else? We give them the organogram of the entire school, how it is run- from the Principal, the two Deputies until the HoDs. Where can they do their Photostat, aah parking, staffroom sitting, staffroom responsibilities, extra-mural activities and responsibilities…we go through an array of that* ***(DP1, Peculiar High).***

*Well, I ask them to introduce themselves. Tell us more about themselves and then find out their interests and what activities they would like to participate in in the school and that's when they become relaxed. One may say I play soccer or netball and then I introduce them to the people who are in charge of those activities and then they start opening up. After the extra murals, according to the programme of the day we just don't jump into the legal aspects because that will obviously scare them. Code of conduct, that's where I start covering what's expected of them as a teacher and this is what they have been training for. How to conduct themselves, we've got SACE where it does everything and the school has its own rules eh, starting time, ending time you just don't do as you please. There is a timetable which you need to follow and there is all that. There's also these legal aspects I like talking about but I don't like to start with it because it scares them but with time now throughout our meetings we get to those aspects of the legal implications. It's important and we emphasise that if they don't go according to it there are consequences* ***(DP2, Peculiar High).***

The data has clearly shown that ECTs at Peculiar High School had a unique experience through the schools' formalised induction programme run by the two deputy principals. Orientation seemed to be an important component of this schools' induction programme where new teachers to the schools were introduced to the school, their expected duties as well as a variety of policy documents from within the schools and legal frameworks from the department that guide teachers' work (see Appendices D and E). In a nutshell, the new teacher orientation at Peculiar High School basically focused on two aspects: (i) familiarising new teachers to the schools' procedures and values; and (ii) providing information and awareness of the various legal aspects that apply to them as government employees. From the reflections of the ECTs, it was evident that the comprehensive orientation they received made it easier for them to navigate their new environment as they had clear structures and personnel assigned to assist them.

### 6.2.2 Induction

As was indicated earlier in Table 6 above, a major finding of this study was the identification of two examples of formalised ECT induction programmes; the Peculiar High School New Educator Induction programme and D District's Young Graduates

Induction programme. I describe these two induction initiatives in detail by expounding on how they were organised in terms of their content and how they were enacted.

#### 6.2.2.1 The Peculiar High School New Educators Induction Programme

Of the five schools that participated in this study, only Peculiar High School had a formalised and functioning induction programme. This schools' induction programme was started in 2012 and was designed for all teachers new to the school, irrespective of previous teaching experience from elsewhere. The programme was pioneered by the schools' two deputy principals who ran and oversaw its activities with the assistance of lead mentors, two long-serving teachers who understood the schools' systems. The programme was composed of four main workshop meetings that were held throughout the year and an ongoing mentoring component where individual teachers' needs were met during one-on-one mentoring sessions with an assigned mentor. Table 7 below that summarises the Peculiar High School's New Teacher Induction Programme in terms of its organisational form, focus areas and key resources used:

| **Activities**[22] | **Organisational Form** | **Focus** | **Resources** |
|---|---|---|---|
| **First orientation meeting- January, a day before teaching and learning commences** | Once-off 2 hour workshop meeting<br><br>Context-embedded as it happened on-site in the school boardroom<br>Physical touring of school | Information about the school is relayed to new teachers (mission and vision, code of conduct for educators)<br><br>Introduction to the schools' physical structure and resources (school tour) | Orientation File given to new teachers.<br>File contains: school generated documents with details of Mentor/Mentee roles; Evacuation and Ground floor |

[22] All induction activities were organised within 1 year except for the mentoring component that was meant to be an ongoing process that was meant to continuously aid the professional development of mentees. Although mentor-mentee pairing was formally organised at the beginning of the year there was little follow-up on the progression or meaningfulness of these relationships and most were discontinued as the year progressed, unless if the paired teachers find common ground that propels the mentorship forward.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | Introduction to critical personnel in their respective capacity to support new teachers (the two deputy principals, assistant mentors, individually assigned mentors, Examination officer, Security and Safety Head and respective HoDs). | plan; school generated documents on Conduct of Educators; National policy documents: Circular 65; PAM document; SACE code of professional ethics; school generated documents on tests and examination procedures and; school code for quality education. |
| **Second meeting- First term February, a date determined by SMT[23]** | Once-off 1hour workshop in school boardroom | Safety and security Guidelines and procedures in case of emergency are explained | Emergency evacuation plan, school map and ground floor plan |
| **Third meeting- Third term, a date determined by SMT** | Once-off meeting in school boardroom | Feedback meeting: on relationship with mentor; listening to new teachers and address any challenges being faced- information used to improve programme. | None, unless mentees bring something to the meeting they needed help with |
| **Fourth meeting, Forth term on a date determined by SMT** | Once-off workshop meeting in boardroom | Cycle tests and examination procedures explained as per GDE standards and as per school standards | National examination and school tests templates shared |
| **Mentoring component** | Peer mentoring where mentor-mentee are in on-going relationship, | Mentor assists with school system aspects like operating the Photostat machine, | It could be the Photostat machine, class register, any |

[23] The induction workshop meeting dates were set by the SMT because these meetings appeared on the school's larger timetable. Putting these meetings on the school programme synchronised them with other programmes and it also ensured that all mentors and HoDs were available to attend if there was need for them to be there.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | One-on-one mentoring, sessions that are ad-hoc and decided upon by pair | balancing the register, compilation of learner statistics; filing documents; extra-mural duties; consulting with parents; sometimes subject-specific mentoring if pair is in same department and any other needs as determined by pair or upon request from mentee. | formal document-anything that the mentee requires assistance on |

**Table 7: Summary of Peculiar High School's New Teacher Induction programme**

Table 7 above shows Peculiar High Schools' approach to induction. The programme was specifically for teachers who were in their first year at the school. It ran throughout the year and was composed of different activities at different intervals to match the new teachers' milestones and timeous needs. The varying activities were strongly focused on addressing generic aspects about the profession as well as school specific issues meant to facilitate the easy integration of new teachers into the schools' culture and norms (see New Educator File, Appendices D). As can be seen in Table 7 above, the induction programme was made up of once-off workshop meetings and a mentoring component. Both components drew substantially from national legal frameworks that govern the work of teachers in South Africa and school generated policies.

#### 6.2.2.1.1 Once-off workshop meetings

The Peculiar High School induction programme was organised into four main workshop meetings that were held at different times throughout the year to mark different milestones in the new teachers' acclimatisation with the context. As can been seen in Table 7, the first workshop meeting was an orientation meeting that happened in the first term on a day before schools formally opened. This was an information sharing day where new teachers were provided with information about the school as well as details about their roles. Some of the information provided included the schools' mission and vision; the schools' code of

conduct for educators as well as what the school and the DBE as their employer expected of them. Each new teacher was given a file containing all this information and the meeting took them through some of the key information in the school policies as well as the DBE policy frameworks that govern the work of teachers; these included: the SACE code of professional ethics, the PAM document, Circular 65 and the Employment of Educators Act 76 of 1998.

During this orientation meeting, new teachers were also introduced to key people available to support them in various capacities. Among those were their respective assigned mentors whose roles were clarified in the New Educator file handed out to each new teacher (see Appendices D). In addition to the assigned mentor, there was a mentoring team that included the two deputy principals (DP1 and DP2) the two supporting mentors (LM and AM), the Examination officer and the respective HoDs.

The orientation also included introducing new teachers to the schools' infrastructure and resources during the guided school tour. Another meeting associated with this was held later in the first term (in February on a date determined by the SMT) where the current Assistant/Lead mentor took new teachers through what they called the 'Evacuation Drill'. This was a Safety and Security workshop meeting where the emergency evacuation plan was shared particularly the guidelines and procedures for any case of an emergency within the school. The school map and the floor plan were distributed and new teachers were shown where to assemble the learners and how to keep themselves safe during an emergency such as a fire or a robbery. The LM explained that they *practice this evacuation drill, particularly to try to train the new teachers who are coming to the school so that if maybe there is an emergency they need to know which steps to take and how fast they need to do that* ***(LM, Peculiar High)***.

The third meeting was held during the third term and this was a feedback meeting and in this meeting, the mentoring team and the SMT were keen on gathering progress information from the new teachers in terms of how they were faring with adapting to the school environment as well as their relationships with other colleagues. New teachers then reflected and reported back about how they were progressing with their mentors and how

they generally found the induction support since the beginning of the year. One of the deputy principals explained this feedback meeting saying:

> *We have a feedback session, some kind of a post-mortem, an evaluation on our approach you know. We sit and discuss with the mentees and ask them what has worked and what has not worked for them. After that we have our own meeting as the induction team and we do an evaluation. If something is not working we chuck it out. We come across a new idea, we build it into the programme. At first we only had mentors and we encouraged mentees to go to them for this and that. Then we realized we didn't know anything about the legal framework of teaching, the do's and don'ts, about SACE…so we built all those things in. So from the feedback meetings we have built in a lot of things to clarify the job description more. Part and parcel of the teaching job description means that they need to partake in extra-mural activities, engage with stakeholders (i.e. the parents, the child, the department, the community)…all those people who have a stake in the school…the SGB, so we get the mentees to know exactly what their job description is. We let them know the percentage of teaching time, this is the number of hours that you need to teach. Those are the improvements we've made to our programme. When DP2 and I started 7 years ago we didn't have all that in…any young person who is coming in for the first time needs to know their benefits of medical aid, what's the benefit of the pension, housing etc. All these were from mentees questions and we had to build those things in* ***(DP1, Peculiar High)****.*

It appears that this feedback session had a mutual benefit for the new teachers and for the induction programme coordinators. On the one hand, new teachers had this opportunity to get their views and complaints across to the induction programme coordinators and the SMT. On the other hand, the deputies and the whole induction team used the feedback information to improve the programme. In that way, the school induction programme regenerated and continued, as best as possible, to be meaningful to new teachers as it was continuously tailor-made to be more sensitive to their needs.

The last workshop meeting for the year focused on procedures for conducting school and national tests and examinations. This session was held in the fourth and last term of the year and the Examinations Officer facilitated it. The main focus of this workshop was to guide new teachers on examination standards and procedures stipulated by the school and by the department. A number of ECTs indicated that they *found this session*

*enlightening* ***(Tessa, Peculiar High)*** and *eased the exam pressure because I was really scared to mess things up but the guidance made it so easy for me* ***(Khanyi, Peculiar High)***.

The schools' induction workshop meetings centrally drew the attention of new teachers to learning and understanding the schools' contextual arrangements and their new job situation by emphasising what the schools was like and how new teachers could best fit into the schools' ways of operating.

While the induction meetings prioritised familiarising new teachers to aspects about the school, it however, substantially drew its content from national imperatives expressed in legal frameworks that govern teaching and learning in South Africa. To illustrate, the schools' Code of conduct for educators (see Appendix D4) significantly draws from the SACE code for professional ethics, the PAM document, Circular 65 and the Employment of Educators Act 76 of 1998. The Peculiar High Schools' induction framework was relatively comprehensive in that not only did it integrate new teachers into the schools culture and norms; it initiated them to the norms and standards of the South African teaching profession.

#### 6.2.2.1.2 The mentoring component: peer mentoring

In addition to the workshop meetings, the Peculiar High School New Educator Induction Programme had a mentoring component where the new teachers were formally assigned a team of mentors to assist them throughout their first year. The team included two deputy principals as the lead mentors, two assistant mentors and each new teacher was assigned an individual mentor. Some of the new teachers were pleased with the availability of mentorship support as well as with the fact that the school was concerned about them and assembled such a structure for them. One teacher was appreciative of the support and said:

> *I was pretty anxious the first day and the first week as well because I was just imagining how overwhelming it would be. I didn't know what to expect, the planning like how the lesson should go and getting the discipline under control. I was glad there is a mentoring team for new teachers where I was able to get help. The deputy principals explained to*

*us the schools' expectations and what we need to be doing and come open day I wasn't so scared…and I was also given a mentor and one of the HoDs supported me a lot (**Tessa, Peculiar High)**.*

The new teachers also welcomed the individualised support they received from their assigned mentors. They mostly appreciated that the mentor was available to assist at any time, as and when they needed help. One teacher explained that her mentor was *next door so every-time I needed something I just run to her. She holds my hand…she showed me around the school and the systems, where the classes were, how to make copies, like admin stuff* ***(Khanyi, Peculiar High).*** Another teacher was especially grateful to having a mentor as it was a different experience from that of another school where she had taught. Although she indicated that there were certain struggles that could not be taken away from the early career days' experiences, she was happy that she had a mentor to provide the much needed direction. She said:

*I have a mentor, in fact Tessa[24] is my mentor…this is different from my previous school in Limpopo where I was just given classes to teach without any direction given. The administration here is quite extensive though but at least my mentor shows me the ropes. I mean I still struggle with it but I guess it's better than if I had to make sense of it on my own* ***(Liza, Peculiar High)****.*

An interesting finding with Peculiar High Schools' approach to the mentoring was that they radically departed from the traditional norm of appointing senior teachers with many years of experience to mentor their incoming new teachers. Rather, the new teachers in mentee positions are recruited as mentors in the following year to mentor their incoming peers. One of the deputies explained:

*With the mentorship we use last years' mentee to mentor the new teachers who came in this year. We believe they make the best mentors because everything is still new to them and they remember everything and it's still fresh so they can mentor others. It's also*

[24] Tessa was actually in her second year of teaching and was assigned to mentor Liza who was in her first year. Peculiar High School had a mentoring system where a new teacher was mentored for a full year then the following year, that same teacher was assigned to mentor another new teacher.

*good for the mentors' growth, you know how you become better at something when you teach it to the next person* [laughs] ***(DP2, Peculiar High)***.

A new teacher was therefore mentored during their first year of joining the school and they, in turn, mentored a new entrant teacher in the following year. According to DP2, this approach was an ideal arrangement that facilitated growth for the whole ECT cohort as they were given the responsibility to mentor their new peers. The induction team also believed that former mentees, because they were still new to the school environment themselves, were familiar with common beginning teacher challenges and probably more sensitive to new teachers' support needs hence were well positioned to assist their new peers. DP1 explained that the mentors, *because of their recent experiences, were very good as source of immediate assistance and guidance especially with school specific issues like filing administration documents, conducting internal tests and national examinations, participation in extra-mural duties and consulting with parents* ***(DP1, Peculiar High)***. The schools' approach to new teacher mentoring, best described as peer mentoring, was, clearly, unlike traditional mentoring models that conceived knowledge and skills as being transferrable from a more knowledgeable and experienced colleague to a novice colleague.

To clarify the mentorship component, the induction team also made attempts to specify the roles and responsibilities of both parties in the mentor-mentee relationship. These roles were explained on the orientation day during the introductions and they also had accompanying documentation that explicated these roles for future reference (see Appendices D). An example of the specific roles and responsibilities as was outlined in their New Educator Orientation file (see Appendix D3), the mentor was to *assist in transforming the mentee into an effective and functioning professional* as well as *set for the mentee a standard that relates to projecting the qualities of professionalism and respectable teaching behaviour*. On the other hand, the mentee, as outlined in the same file, was expected to be *willing to put learning first* and *be prepared to engage in productive dialogue with their mentor regarding professional development*. These grand intentions, however, seemed far removed from what was happening in many of the

mentor-mentee relationships. Some of the mentees mentioned that they had as little as two discussion meetings with their assigned mentors throughout the year. One of the new teachers said *I saw my mentor once and that was just after the orientation and it was just a hello kind of thing* ***(Liza, Peculiar High)****.* Another mentee mentioned that *I only speak to my mentor in the corridors or when we meet in the staffroom and it's just her asking how I am doing and I say I am ok, that's it!* ***(Beth, Peculiar High)***. What this probably indicated was that the majority of the mentees were in less than ideal pairings thus the mentor-mentee relationships could not develop to achieve the intended levels of productivity and meaningfulness to the professional development of the mentees.

Another issue of concern was that the nature of interactions and conversations between the mentors and mentees were limited and could not go beyond general technical and procedural aspects especially where the pair were teaching different subjects. One new teacher said *I met my mentor once because we are not in the same subject or same department so it makes no sense. If I have a discipline issue I talk to my HoD; subject matter I talk to my HoD. Everything is subject related* ***(Jaco, Peculiar High)****.* The content of a conversation between another mentor and mentee *was about how to operate the photocopying machine, he showed me in like two minutes and that was it* ***(Khanyi, Peculiar High)***. It seemed, therefore, that although mentor-mentee relationships were formally installed they were not functional and were largely failing to yield the expected results. In recognition of these challenges, one of the two deputies indicated that *this pairing is a difficult thing to do. It's a difficult thing to get right. We just cross our fingers and hope for the best. But if the two parties don't hit it off and click we step in and say ok let's go back to the drawing board* ***(DP1, Peculiar High)***. In other words, the pairing of the mentor and mentee was done on a trial basis but flexible enough to be changed in the event that the paired teachers were not productively working well together. Although there was an option to change the pairings for more productive relationships, the process was however not thoroughly followed up as no mentee mentioned ever being assigned a new mentor after a failed relationship.

#### 6.2.2.1.3 Role of the HoDs

In addition to the formal induction support, new teachers at Peculiar High School heavily relied on their HoDs whom they worked closely with in the departments. While the HoDs were not directly working as part of the induction programme, their roles were emphasised as key to the success for new teachers in the school.

As was indicated in Table 7, the induction programme mainly focused on capacitating new teachers with administrative and technical aspects of the job. This induction support was generic in nature and it applied to every new teacher irrespective of the Grade or subject they taught. In addition to this generic support, the Peculiar High School induction programme incorporated HoDs to complement the generic induction activities. HoDs had the crucial role of supporting new teachers with matters relating to subject matter knowledge and all departmental specific issues. One of the deputies commented:

> *We have subject experts, our HoDs…they meet the new teachers on a one-on-one, aah HoDs have about four to five sessions with them during the course of the year. Aaahh, class visitation, classroom management, aah knowing the annual teaching plan aah knowing which ideas to build on, aah how to set up a question paper, how to pose a question according to the Bloom's Taxonomy you know things like that. That is more the function of the HoD as the subject specialist* ***(DP1, Peculiar High).***

DP1 above spoke of how HoDs had a huge role to play in supporting new teachers, although in a different way. HoDs focused on matters relating to the subject but they were assisting in a specialised way taking cognisance of the fact that they were supporting new teachers who had a lot to learn about how to organise teaching and learning activities in particular subjects as well as in this specific school.

As was indicated earlier, HoDs were required to attend the orientation of new teachers suggesting that they were an important element to the new teachers support structures. ECTs emphasised the importance of the roles that their respective HoDs were playing by acknowledging that *everything is subject related* ***(Jaco, Peculiar High)*** and how *again the administration is generally quite subject specific. It's not generic* ***(Tessa, Peculiar High)***. Another teacher also noted how *each subject has different sections and topics. It's filed*

*differently and they need different tasks; there is a whole specification for each area. I'm now doing English and Business Studies, they're worlds apart and I couldn't have survived without both my HoDs* ***(Liza, Peculiar High)****.* In other words, HoDs complement the induction team as well as the assigned mentors by providing subject-specific support which would, most probably as was indicated by the ECTs, be unfamiliar to any of the inducting team or assigned mentor.

In a nutshell, the Peculiar High School New Educators Induction programme sought to be comprehensive by exposing the new teachers to how the school system worked as well as familiarise them to what was expected of them by the department. In as far as school related matters were concerned, the induction programme made an attempt to achieve both the socialisation of its new teachers and enhancing their effectiveness in their new professional teacher roles. The induction programme activities, clearly, sought to achieve these through integrating the new teachers into the schools' cultures and norms mainly using the lead inducting team as well as the assigned mentors. This was done to ensure that certain school specific practices and ethos were transferred for adoption by the new teachers.

In as far as departmental expectations were concerned, the schools' induction programme compiled a document trail of most legal frameworks that affected its teachers as government employees and these legal frameworks were strong reference points even for the school generated policies. Because of this formalised induction programme, the new teachers at Peculiar High School seemed to ease better into the school community as well as into their professional teacher roles in comparison to other ECTs from the other schools who were, to a large extent, thrown into the deep end.

#### 6.2.2.2 District D Young Graduates Induction Programme

The district ECT induction programme, popularly known as the Young Graduates Induction, served all newly qualified graduate teachers within their first year of teaching in the district schools. Some district officials explained that *we identify the new teachers*

*via the HR and then we invite those teachers for induction* ***(Mr Luxomo)****.* The district induction programmes seemed to have been specifically developed for graduate teachers who had qualified under the Funza Lushaka bursary scheme. One district official indicated that *normally we target the Funza Lushakas at the beginning of the year so that we can be able to give them training* ***(Mrs Mhlara)****.* The district seemed oblivious of the fact that there were unqualified and underqualified teachers working in their district schools who were normally employed by the schools under their School Governing Body (SGB) posts. In other words, the ECT professional development offered by the district was selective of only those who could be picked by their HR system indicating that some ECTs were excluded from the district organised induction programmes.

Table 8 below presents a summary of the three Young Graduates Induction programmes run by district D that I managed to collect documents for and gather impressions about during the course of this study:

| **Date** | **11 August 2016** | **24 January 2017** | **11 March 2017** |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Workshop venue** | District Hall, near the township schools | District Hall, near the township schools | Teacher centre near Typical secondary school |
| **Target group and organisers** | Mathematics and Physical Science (Funza Lushaka) Teachers, organised by TDU and run by Subject Facilitators | FET Grade 10-12 new educators of PAT subjects i.e. CAT/IT, Tourism, EGD[25] and Hospitality studies, organised by TDU and run by Subject Facilitators | Generic- all new 2017 graduate teachers (Funza Lushaka bursary recipients), organised by TDU and run by TDU, DM and THRS. |
| **Theme/ Workshop title** | Themed 'Making the classroom the centre of excellence'. | Novice/new educator information | Young graduate's induction |

[25] PAT refers to Practical Assessment Tasks and the subjects in this category include Computer Applications and Technology (CAT), Information Technology (IT), Tourism, and Engineering, Graphics and Design (EGD).

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | workshop (Generic) | |
| **Organisation of workshop and focus areas** | Generic aspects like classroom management, how to be a professional teacher and general encouragement of new educators to be more aware of their responsibilities within the new schooling environment. | Beginner Educator vs Senior Educator Specialist (SES)<br><br>Classroom management<br><br>Primary Roles of Educators<br><br>Attitude towards Learners<br><br>Teaching Methodologies | Three units presented as per their unit specialisations:<br>• TDU: Teacher Development<br>i. SACE Code of conduct<br>ii. Classroom management<br>iii. Seven roles of the educator<br>• DM: Dispute Management-<br>• THRS: Transversal Human Resources Services |

**Table 8: Summary of D district's Young Graduates Induction workshops held between August 2016 and March 2017[26].**

As is shown in Table 8 above, D district ran induction workshops for new teachers in its district schools and these were held either at the District Hall or at the district's Teacher Development Centre. What was, however, interesting to note was that both venues were located in the township areas and were within the vicinity of all the township schools that participated in this study. The distances between the workshop venues and the former Model C schools were longer and were generally ranging between 12 and 20 kilometres. There was an obvious bias in the location of the induction venues and one district official explained that *those venues have always been located in the township parts of the district* and they used those venues especially because of *the concentration of Funza Lushaka teachers in township schools as compared to the number in former white schools* ***(Mr Jazwe,***

[26] These were not the only workshops that were conducted between the periods August 2016 to March 2017; rather these are the ones I managed to acquire information on. I was fortunate to attend and observe the March 2017 one, others were scheduled for the year but the dates were changed and due to communication problems I could not attend them. It was also difficult to secure the documents and presentations for the missed workshops because they were in the hands of district officials I had not interacted with previously, I tried but could not succeed. This information is therefore not a complete representation of district Ds induction initiatives in terms of what was covered and how. The information does, however, provide insight into the focus areas that were of concern to the inducting teams as well as provide a general sense of how ECT induction was conceptualised at this district.

***THRS)***. The centrality of the district's intervention in township locations seemed to suggest that D district was focusing on developing township schools and somewhat underplaying the needs of former Model C schools.

Table 8 also indicates that all the induction workshops were especially targeting young teacher graduates who were beneficiaries of the Funza Lushaka bursary scheme. Again, D district seemed to be biased in terms of the selection of new teachers who participated in their induction programme. I confirmed this bias during my informal conversations with many of the ECTs who attended these district workshops. From these conversations, I gathered that many of the ECTs were there because they felt they were obliged to. There was, generally, a sense that being a Funza Lushaka beneficiary meant that they 'owed' the state and attending district organised workshop was one way of 'paying back'. Some ECTs appeared to be disinterested and were obviously disconnected to the activities that were facilitated at these workshops. Generally, these district induction workshops were taken as one of those 'get-it-over-and-done-with' activities that people do.

The table also indicates that the TDU was the key organising unit but the actual running of some of the workshop activities was left to Subject Advisors as can be noted in the workshops of August 2016 and March 2017. One of the officials responsible for the organisation of these workshops explained:

> *We as the TDU only do the logistics and the follow ups are run by the Subject Advisors where they take them through the content. What is expected of a teacher in terms of Maths, Science, History and so on. So they are subject specific and we only go as far as organising for this to happen by sending out the invites and providing the equipment to be used on the day but the Subject Advisors do the actual work* ***(Mr Luxomo, TDU)****.*

The August 2016 workshop themed 'Making the classroom the centre of excellence' was organised for Maths and Physical Sciences new teachers and was run by Mathematics and Physical Science Subject Advisors. Similarly, the January 2017 workshop specifically targeted FET Grade 10-12 new teachers of PAT subjects i.e. CAT/IT, Tourism, EGD and Hospitality studies and was run by Subject Advisors from the same subject areas. Although these workshops addressed generic aspects about teaching, they were also concerned

about other aspects such as teaching methodologies specific to those subject areas. These two workshops were thus different from the January 2017 one entitled 'Young Graduates Induction'. This one was absolutely generic and targeted all new teaches in the district who were teaching for the first time in the year 2017. Below are detailed tables showing what each of these workshops was about in terms of their focus areas:

| **Mathematics and Physical Science Teachers' Induction workshop 'Making the classroom the centre of excellence'** | |
|---|---|
| **Presentation topic** | **Details of presentation** |
| **The professional teacher** | Dressing: teachers encouraged to dress in a dignified manner so that they get learners', parents' and colleagues' respect;<br><br>Behaviour in relation to learners: teachers were encouraged to treat and discipline learners with dignity and respect. Reference was made to the SACE Code of professional ethics.<br><br>Targets: teachers were encouraged to establish a system to run the classroom, take cognisance of the different levels of learner capability and pacing. |
| **Motivational talk**- encouragement for enthusiasm, 'More than transmitting knowledge, teaching is about inspiring others to discover their purpose and potential'. | Planning and goal setting: Specific, Measureable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely goals.<br><br>Passion for the profession and empathy for learners and other stakeholders involved.<br><br>Classroom management: get parents on board, be firm, be consistent and fair, stay calm and listen, develop interactive and engaging lessons.<br><br>Future: Five years from now what will your learners say about you? |
| **Role of a teacher as a manager of the classroom** | Slides show example pictures of poorly managed against well-managed classrooms.<br><br>Classroom rules- an example of clear and concise classroom rules is juxtaposed to a long list of unclear rules and facilitator engages new educators in a discussion |
| **Giving learners feedback** | New educators encouraged to give regular informal assessments as well as regular feedback |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Seeing todays learners as future citizens** | Types of learners that new teachers need to be aware of:<br>Poverty stricken/destitute learners.<br>Family/community factors such as divorce, gangsterism, violence (issues learners bring to school).<br>Technology- negative and positive effects in the classroom.<br>Learners' attitude and behaviour- apathy and disrespect of teachers, major challenge.<br>Parental/guardian involvement- this has evolved<br><br>Encouragement for new educators to learn through collaboration<br><br>Tips shared on how to encourage learners |

**Table 9: Summary of Mathematics and Physical Science Teachers' Induction workshop**

Table 9 above shows the details of the induction workshop that was held for Mathematics and Physical Science teachers. The main focus for this workshop was captured in its theme, 'Making the classroom the centre of excellence'. This theme was explored through five PowerPoint presentations facilitated by several Subject Advisors.

The underlying lessons were about what it meant to be a professional teacher and this was discussed from the way young teachers were supposed to present themselves to the learners and the school in general; how they were to manage their relationship with different stakeholders that included learners, parents, other teachers and the community; and some aspects related to classroom pedagogy such as classroom management, pacing and assessing and giving feedback to leaners. One Subject Advisor who was part of this workshop mentioned that they

> *…focus on the pedagogy…the knowledge transfer. We teach them how to transfer particular aspects to the child especially the underperforming children because the skill to transfer knowledge to the learners is a major challenge with new teachers and that is our main focus…we also teach them on policies and curriculum coverage based on CAPS and tell them that this curriculum starts here and ends here. We give them what we call work schedule or annual teaching plans (ATPs), and tell them what to cover per*

*week, per month, per term and per day so that we prepare them for our school visits because when we come we want to see everything on par* ***(Mr Nkondla, Subject Advisor)****.*

Although this induction was for Mathematics and Physical Science teachers and sought to cover discipline related aspects, it seemed to be composed of more generic aspects. Many participating ECTs were disappointed because they felt that it was a mere repeat of another induction workshop they had attended early on in the year. The facilitating district officials tried to make the programme vibrant but the ECTs indicated that there was nothing new and the general atmosphere was somber. One ECT had attended this workshop and his impressions of it were that *it was a bit useful but not so much. I liked that we discussed relevant stuff like how we should relate with learners and other people you know but I expected to get real things to actually use in my classroom when I teach my Maths you know* ***(Jabu, Typical Secondary)****.*

Another ECT, who was also in attendance, complained that *the workshop was very dull. They copied the SACE ethics, put in on a slide and read for us…they were also shouting at us about how they expect us to have our files in order when they come for school visits* ***(Noleen, Common High)****.* While the induction workshop for Mathematics and Physical Science teachers made an attempt to address issues that were of important concern to ECTs, the ECTs themselves seemed to have been disappointed by both the content of the workshop as well as how this content was communicated to them. The main disappointment was how the Subject Advisors emphasised the importance of ECTs preparing for their school visits and this was interpreted as *not in line with developing us but more of managing and pointing out our errors* ***(Jabu, Typical Secondary)*** as one ECT put it.

Table 10 below shows details about another discipline specific induction workshop that was held for new educators teaching subjects with a Practical Assessment Tasks (PAT):

| Novice/new educator information workshop<br>FET Grade 10-12 new educators of Practical Assessment Task (PAT) subjects i.e. Computer Applications Technology (CAT)/ Information Technology (IT), Tourism, Engineering Graphics and Design (EGD) and Hospitality studies | |
|---|---|
| **Presentation topic** | **Details of presentation** |
| **Beginner Educator vs SES** | Discussion explored some of the challenges that new educators were likely to face: Feeling overwhelmed, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Development & Growth, Teacher isolation, Curriculum overload, Time management, Dealing with learner's parents, Insufficient resources, Maintaining classroom order and discipline, Dealing with under-motivated learners.<br>New educators encouraged to learn from more experienced Senior Educator Specialist (SES). |
| **Classroom management** | Tips on classroom management are shared: How to create conducive learning environment, developing clear rules and instructions, the importance of lesson preparation, time management, consistency in dealing with misbehaviour, varying the manner of lesson delivery, engaging and involving learners in the lesson, incentivising and rewarding learners etc. |

**Table 10: Novice/new educator information workshop for FET Grade 10-12 Practical Assessment Task (PAT) teachers**

Table 10 above shows another discipline-specific Young Graduates Induction workshop that was also facilitated by Subject Advisors. As can be seen from the table, it targeted Grade 10 to 12 FET new teachers of Practical Assessment Task (PAT) subjects such as Computer Applications Technology (CAT)/ Information Technology (IT), Tourism, Engineering Graphics and Design (EGD) and Hospitality Studies. None of the ECTs who participated in this study had attended this workshop but it was important to include it in this study to showcase the various approaches used by D district at inducting ECTs. According to one district official, this specific induction workshop was *a general information sharing workshop meant to indicate to PAT teachers that the district was aware of them and that there were specialised experts available for their assistance because we ran this as PAT Subject Advisors*

***(Mr Luxomo, TDU)***. A general perusal of Table 10 above shows that this workshop mostly focused on generic aspects that ECT teachers were likely to encounter in the new school and classroom situation. For example, topics such as teacher isolation, curriculum overload, time management, dealing with learner's parents, insufficient resources, maintaining classroom order and discipline, dealing with under-motivated learners and creating conducive learning environments were some of the issues discussed. It goes without saying that these aspects were very general and could have been discussed with any other ECT. As was indicated by Mr Luxomo above, the assembling of an induction workshop for PAT teachers only was also meant to communicate to ECTs that the district was concerned about new teachers and available to support them.

Although the induction workshop for PAT teachers was largely covering generic content, it is important to acknowledge that it did have a component that discussed how ECTs could grapple with integrating ICTs in their teaching as their subjects were highly technical. This could as well have been covered in a generic workshop but it is important to highlight the fact that D district was cognisant of the need for subject-specific induction. There was some excitement amongst the ECTs especially for the fact that the days' induction was specifically designed for PAT teachers. Speaking to some ECTs before the workshop, I gathered that they were looking forward to the workshop and many indicated that they were hoping to learn a number of strategies to take to their classrooms were their individual subjects were concerned.

I managed to engage a number of ECTs after the PAT induction workshop and many were again disappointed as they felt that the focus did not address their subject-specific concerns. I also observed during some sessions that teachers were asking pedagogy related questions and the facilitating official dismissed such questions arguing that those questions were a diversion from the objectives of that particular workshop. A few teachers seemed content after the workshop and indicated that the way the workshop was conducted was impressive. They particularly referred to the classroom management session where role-playing was incorporated as a way to illustrate how they ought to deal with certain issues. It seemed, therefore, from this positive feedback that ECTs preferred practical modeling of practice rather than the traditional lecture style that dominated most district facilitated workshops.

While it was important to develop insight into the district's approach when conducting discipline-specific induction workshops, it was also important to capture their approach to conducting the generic workshops designed for all ECTs in the district schools. Below is Table 11 showing details of a generic induction workshop:

| **Young Graduate's Induction<br>All new 2017 Funza Lushaka bursary recipient graduate teachers** | |
|---|---|
| **Topic** | **Details of session** |
| **Transversal Human Resource Services (THRS) presented by Mr Jazwe (**Assistant Director: HR Provisioning THRS | As new employees in the public sector, presenter explained the different offices and functions of major role players in the THRS i.e. its sub-directorate<br><br>Presenter started off with motivational talk- encouraging new educators to take careful responsibilities over their finances<br><br>Presenter too new educators through the different services available for new educators under the THRS directorate and they included: employee assistance with regards to conditions of service, salaries, housing allowance, taking leave, recognition of further qualifications and termination of service. |
| **TD- SACE code of conduct** presented by an official from TDU | Presenter took new educators through SACE document by focusing on key relationships that have to be carefully managed:<br>• Educator-learner,<br>• Educator-parents<br>• Educator-community<br>• Educator-colleagues<br>• Educator-profession, imperative that they participate in CTPD and accumulate points. There is an expectation that they should be able to induct other new educators after their induction.<br>• Educator-employer, i.e. GDE/Private school<br>Educator-SACE, cooperation with council emphasised. |
| **Classroom management** presented by an official from TDU | Dress code, no prescribed manner of dressing but new educators encouraged to dress in a dignified manner.<br><br>Tips on classroom management are shared: How to create a conducive learning environment, developing clear rules and instructions, the importance of lesson preparation, time management, and consistency in dealing with learner misbehaviour. Varying the manner of lesson delivery- one menu becomes boring, engaging and involving learners in the lesson as |

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|---|---|
| | well as in developing classroom rules, incentivising and rewarding learners etc. |
| **Dispute Management (Former Labour Relations)** presented by Mrs Mhlara (DCES Dispute Management) | Role of DM is explained-to ensure labour peace/harmony between the educator and employer.<br><br>Presentation focused on how new educators are to relate with the legislative frameworks that govern their roles.<br><br>Presenter spoke to the following aspects whilst making reference to relevant legal frameworks:<br>Explanation of how new educators are to relate with legislature and with the public given that they are public servants, reference made to the Employment of Educators Act 76 of 1998, the Code of conduct for the Public Service and the SACE Code of Professional Ethics.<br><br>Grievance procedures- presenter explained the steps to be taken in case there is conflict in the workplace or where new educators have been violated, Acts of misconduct were explained as well as the disciplinary code and procedures, reference was made to the Employment of Educators Act 76 of 1998 section 17 and 18; Circular 01/2016 (Management of Employee Discipline for Supervisors, Principals and Managers). |
| | |
| **Seven roles of the Educator presented by Mr Luxomo** (DC ES, TDU) | GDE vision and mission is shared and discussed.<br><br>Seven roles and responsibilities of the educator were explained with reference to the PAM Document as well as the Norms and Standards for Educators<br><br>Seven roles of the educator:<br>Learning area/subject/discipline/phase specialist, Interpreter and designer of learning programmes and materials, Learning mediator, Assessor of learning and of learners, Leader, Administrator and Manager, Scholar, Researcher and Life-long learner, Community, citizenship and Pastoral role.<br><br>Regulations were explained: working hours (7 hours/day which translates to 1800 hours/annum) as per PAM document.<br><br>Expectations during a formal school day: scheduled teaching time, relief teaching, extra and co-curricular duties, pastoral duties (detention, scholar patrol), administration, supervisory and management functions. |

| | |
|---|---|
| | Expectations outside the formal school day: 80 hours of PD/annum, lesson planning and preparation, evaluation.<br><br>As new employees in the public sector, presenter explained the different district offices and their functions<br><br>Second presenter from TDU explained the IQMS process i.e. what goes into one's personal IQMS file- Collective agreement, Lesson observation, Self-evaluation, Pre-evaluation, Post-evaluation and a Personal Growth Plan indicating areas they need development on |

**Table 11: D District's March 2017 Young Graduate's Induction for Funza Lushaka bursary recipient graduate teachers**

Table 11 above shows the different district units that facilitated sessions at the generic induction workshop as well as details of the content that was covered in the various sessions. The Young Graduates Induction workshop of March 2017 was open to all newly hired Funza Lushaka graduate teachers in the district and this was the first large induction workshop conducted by D district. One district official explained that the TDU *identified all new teachers who started teaching in 2015, 2016 and 2017 via the HR and then invited those teachers for induction* ***(Mr Luxomo, TDU)****.* Mr Luxomo went on and provided a general overview of how they organised and conducted this generic Young Graduates Induction workshop:

> *We start with a 2 hour session where we take them through the conditions of service in the office. Here we have an HR person coming in and then present what is due to them in terms of HR and finance and if they have any queries we direct them to the right people. And then as the Teacher Development Unit (TDU), we take them through the work ethics as stipulated in the SACE document. So we present that and then we allow discussion and where they are not clear they ask questions on that part. That's in the 2-hour session. Then we also take them through what we call the Predictability Framework. This is a curriculum management framework where we look at what is the role of the teacher in curriculum delivery? What is the role of the HoD because they are reporting to the HoD* ***(Mr Luxomo, TDU)****.*

As an official working in the TDU, Mr Luxomo was one of the key organisers for the generic induction workshop and it is clear from his explanation that this workshop covered a range of issues. Firstly, there was a session that covered HR related issues such as the conditions of service, salaries, housing allowance, taking leave, recognition of further qualifications and termination of service. The facilitator explained that the main reason they have this session was to make ECTs aware of the *different offices in the THRS sub-directorate and their functions as well as the different services available for them under the THRS directorate* ***(Mr Jazwe, THRS)***. Another district official also explained that they *take them through the HR because new educators don't know that they have to apply for the housing allowance. They think that they are just going to get that automatically and so that's when the HR comes in* ***(Mr Luxomo, TDU)***. In other words, the HR unit was built into the induction workshop after a realisation that most ECTs were ignorant of their employment conditions. This initiative was welcomed by some ECTs and one who was appreciative of this particular HR session commented:

> *There was a workshop…I can't remember the date though but they talked to us about how pension works and about housing…how do you claim pension and all those insights. Yeah, it was really good to have someone explain those things because I didn't really have a full understanding of my pay-slip… and that stuff about how you become permanently placed in a school was really helpful* ***(Lindo, Typical Secondary)***.

An important observation in relation to this generic induction workshop was that most of its activities were designed in response to the complaints that were coming from the schools and many other stakeholders. As is indicated in Table 11, Mr Jazwe started his presentation with a somewhat motivational talk about effectively managing finances and encouraging new educators to invest in financial literacy training. This talk was in response to the information that the district gathered from a local bank about the irresponsible ways in which most ECTs were handling their finances. The THRS official, in response to the information provided by the bank mentioned that:

> *The new educators are messing up and most of them are in debt hence we ended up partnering with X[27] Bank to help with personal financial skills. X Bank came to us when they noticed in their database a trend where month end debits go through but are*

[27] Due to ethical considerations, the real name of the bank concerned is not disclosed and is referred as X Bank throughout the study.

*reversed later on. They then checked and saw that it's mainly government officials, and majority being teachers; and mostly these new teachers. This means these people cannot afford, they wait for debits to go through, take that money back and then go pay other debts. They are clearly spending more than they are earning. The bank emailed the details to us so that we see for ourselves…that's why we want to zoom into the new ones before they get into trouble* ***(Mr Jazwe, THRS)****.*

In addition to the THRS responding to the calls from X bank, TDU had several sessions on the induction programme which were included to address further complaints about ECTs that were made by the school principals. These sessions included taking teachers through the SACE code of professional ethics, how to effectively manage their classrooms, discussing the seven roles of the educator and a brief explanation of the IQMS process. According to one official, their *activities are informed by what the principals say* ***(Mr Luxomo, TDU)****.*

The session on the SACE code of professional ethics focused on key relationships that ECTs entered into while in the teaching profession and how they were expected to manage those relationships. The importance of this component of professional ethics was especially emphasised by district officials because there were a number of complaints from school principals concerning the conduct of ECTs especially in managing their relationship with learners. Mrs Mhlara, from Dispute Management, explained that they *get cases from the principals, issues that are reported to us by the principals and the main challenges are issues of sexual assault, number one in the database and then corporal punishment. New teachers find themselves in a fix where they cannot engage with the learners.* It appears then that a number of male teachers were found wanting where their handling of the teacher-learner relationship was concerned because the district reported that:

*…there are a lot of teachers appearing on our database; male teachers especially are the ones who are experiencing problems in terms of having relationships with the learners. Having them on our database, we decided as labour relations that we need to train them and capacitate them* ***(Mrs Mhlara, DM)****.*

District officials were equally concerned about ECTs' classroom management skills when handling their classrooms. As was stated by Mrs Mhlara, ECTs were facing serious difficulties with respect to this as many ended up administering corporal punishment which was not

permissible in any South African school. This observation resulted in the incorporation of DM in the induction programme so that they clarify the consequences of such actions to ECTs. According to the DM unit, many ECTs were infringing on learners' rights by administering corporal punishment and she explained that:

> *…it's not even a question of corporal punishment, it is assault simply because of the rage that is happening in the classroom they end up slapping the learner. So theirs is more of assault than corporal punishment so that is why we saw it fit that we need to take them through so that they understand this is considered an act of misconduct and they will be charged accordingly* ***(Mrs Mhlara, DM)****.*

While DM was incorporated into the induction to address problems with ECTs' acts of misconduct such as sexual assault and corporal punishment, the unit's bigger purpose was to ensure that there was labour peace between teachers and their employer which in the case is the DBE. One of the DM officials explained their specific role pertaining to ECTS:

> *With our new educators we are responsible for giving them support in terms of capacitating them with the do's and don'ts in the teaching profession because we've realised that due to the fact that they are only having theory and no experience in the workplace they find themselves in difficult situations. And most often than not if we don't give them support they end up being the most vulnerable in terms of them being charged, so we are there to take them through the legislative framework, that is the act that they are appointed under and then we give them their rights in the workplace and then also we give them the disciplinary code and procedures so that they can know what types of misconduct they are not supposed to commit* ***(Mrs Mhlara, DM)****.*

In ensuring that ECTs were aware of the labour relations legislative frameworks that they were employed under, DM was given a mandate in the induction programme to cover aspects such as Grievance procedures, acts of misconduct and disciplinary code and procedures. The Grievance Procedures component explains the steps that ECTs can take in cases where there is conflict in the workplace especially where they have been violated. This was deemed necessary *because most new educators do not know that there are structures in place to protect them* ***(Mrs Mhlara, DM)***. Chapter G of the PAM document was a point of reference that guided the discussions on the grievance procedures. Acts of misconduct were discussed and the DM official basically went through what was considered as acts of misconduct according to section 17 and 18 of the Employment of Educators Act 76 of 1998 Acts of serious

misconduct such as corruption in examinations, sexual relationships with learners, possession of illegal intoxicating substances and serious assault resulted in immediate dismissal and acts of less serious misconduct such as negligently mismanaging finances or accepting compensation in cash or otherwise from learners or the public resulted in the issuing of written warnings. These acts of misconduct were included in the induction as *it was important to alert new educators of the possible pitfalls in the profession as well as the procedures that we take as DM in charging them* ***(Mrs Mhlara, DM)***.

The Management of employee discipline by supervisors, principals and managers (Circular 01/2016) was used as the main reference legislative framework to explain the disciplinary code and procedures. Mrs Mhlara also explained that as DM they employed a number of legislative frameworks to execute their role. She said: *when we charge educators we don't solely use the Employment of Educators Act, the SACE code of conduct comes into play, so does the PAM documents, Circular 65…all of those. So it was necessary for us to bring various legislative frameworks to their attention so that they can be on the know so that whatever they are doing they do it knowing what the consequences are… you will be dismissed and scrapped out of the profession.* The role that the DM played in the induction programme was to ensure ECTs were aware of the frameworks that protected their interests in the workplace as well as how those very frameworks were instruments for charging them in the event that they were caught on the wrong side of the law.

The issues to do with ECTs conduct in the public schools were complemented by the TDU sessions on classroom management and the seven roles of the educator. As was stated above, most principals were complaining about how ECTs managed their classrooms. One TDU official gave the perception of most principals saying:

> *…a principal came to my office and said 'My new teachers, the Funza Lushakas, don't know how to manage the classrooms; they want to get more with less work. In short they are just lazy, I don't want a Funza Lushaka, I'm not even absorbing them'. That is the view of many principals so we need to assist these new ones with classroom management and discipline especially how they relate to the learners. So the part of the work ethics, the roles of the educator and classroom management were a cry from the principals* ***(Mr Luxomo, TDU)***.

As is indicated in Table 11, TDU facilitated the classroom management session where they shared tips on classroom management. ECTs were guided on how to create a conducive learning environment, develop clear rules and instructions, the importance of lesson preparation, time management, and consistency in dealing with learner misbehaviour. Some ECTs found value in this specific session and they commented: *They* [district] *were also talking about that whole thing about how we are not allowed to touch the children, you cannot hug them and that we must be very careful because you can get into trouble* ***(Brenda, Typical Secondary).***

> *There was a session at the district about discipline which was very insightful.. We discussed exactly what you should do, how you should approach a kid and what you should do in a situation. Like don't touch them and make sure there is a desk between you and the kid that type of thing. I remember going to that one, I think it was some 2 months after I started teaching. Even that it was still hard to implement it because in class it's a different story but it taught me a lot. It was very enlightening, they had several speakers and it ran from 8 till 1300pm* ***(Tessa Peculiar High)****.*

The ECTs seem to have appreciated the session on classroom management as they could identify aspects from it that they could incorporate in their handling of their classrooms. What appears to persist, however, is a sense that there is always a gap between what one learns in a workshop to what actually happens in a real classroom situation.

In addition to classroom management, TDU also spoke about the seven roles and responsibilities of the educator and these were explained with reference to the PAM document as well as the Norms and Standards for Educators. *Explaining the Seven roles of the educator is important because it's a session that basically covers almost everything that we expect of these new teaches* ***(Mr Luxomo, TDU)****.* As is shown in Table 11, the seven roles that were elaborated on include being a Learning area/subject/discipline/phase specialist, Interpreter and designer of learning programmes and materials, Learning mediator, Assessor of learning and of learners, Leader, Administrator and Manager, Scholar, Researcher and Life-long learner, Community, citizenship and Pastoral role. In elaborating ECTs roles, this session also touched on working hours regulations as per the PAM document.

*We also go into details about the working hours, that is 7 hours/day which translates to 1800 hours per annum so that they don't fight with their HoDs or supervisors in schools when they are told to leave the school at 3:00 pm. We also have expectations outside the formal school day: 80 hours of PD per annum so we also make that clear* ***(Mr Luxomo, TDU)****.* In the same session, TDU explained the IQMS process in terms of how ECTs have to compile their personal IQMS file as well as the various documents that are contained within the file. Mr Luxomo explained that *we include the IQMS because it's often misunderstood by new educators and our facilitators explain all the documents. What is the Collective agreement, Lesson observation, Self-evaluation, Pre-evaluation, Post-evaluation and a Personal Growth Plan and we make sure they ask questions.* While the IQMS was included in the induction programme and D district made efforts to clarify it, most ECTs were still confused about it. The majority of ECTs indicated that they viewed it as an additional item on their administrative checklist and found no value in it.

There was an indication from the district officials that principals were complaining about ECTs failing with respect to content and curriculum delivery. Mrs Mhlara shared that *one principal came through to the office to specifically complain that Funza Lushakas don't even understand their content, the schedule and the marking of the register.* Here issues related to the delivery of content knowledge, pacing of the curriculum and administrative aspects such as managing the class register were being raised by the principal, and probably others as well. These aspects were not covered in the generic induction workshop or in the subject specific ones which raises the question of why these important aspects that ECTs grappled with on a daily basis were not included in any of the induction programmes. An ECT also made a similar observation and complained that *I am always absolutely disappointed with the district induction workshops because it's just a waste of time. The thing is the they do have some great stuff on policies but that stuff don't add any value to the work that we do at school daily* ***(Amos, Typical Secondary).***

## 6.3 ECTs' views of the teaching profession

ECTs in the different public schools were exposed to different school contexts and these experiences seemed to imprint certain influences on their overall impressions of the teaching profession. According to the various comments received from the different participants in this study, the South African public schooling context generally seemed to be a depressing environment for teachers to work in, especially given the poor support structures available for ECTs who are still in the formative stage of their careers. As a result of this, the majority of ECTs were still teaching but seemed to be seriously dissatisfied with their working conditions. This study found that ECTs could basically be organised into three categories as per the different levels of dissatisfaction. Firstly, there were those so dissatisfied that they were looking to exit the profession; secondly there were those who were dissatisfied and hopeless but seemed to continue in the profession though doing the job half-heartedly and finally, those who have been dissatisfied with the challenging working context but hopeful and willing to stay and grow in the profession. These identified categories of ECTs will be elaborated in detail below:

### 6.3.1 ECTs looking to exit the profession

As was highlighted in the findings discussed in Section 6.1, most ECTs' experiences of their professional roles and of the general working environment were mostly marred by difficulties. Technically, they were struggling to cope with the demands of the job such as classroom organisation and management, managing the overwhelming administrative tasks and managing their time with respect to other extra and co-curricular duties. One ECT spelled out most ECTs' sentiments saying: *I can tell you with the amount of work and with these kind of learners we have here some of us won't even last 10 years in teaching* ***(Thabo, Usual High)***. Their difficulties and frustration were worsened by the social environments in the schools that were hostile and unsupportive. As a result, many ECTs were dissatisfied and were thus reflecting and doubtful about their future in the teaching profession. Many ECTs, especially from the township schools, indicated that the challenging professional context was so disheartening that they were busy scouting for opportunities in other fields in order to exit the profession. One of the ECTs mentioned that he was *busy with an exit strategy* and was *currently doing a post-graduate degree in Management with the University of Cape Town*

*(UCT), something completely unrelated to Education and I am certain in three years' time I will be gone* ***(Thabo, Usual High)***. Another ECT also indicated that she was doing other studies and was hoping that would create opportunities for her outside of the classroom. She said:

> *…there is no progress in this field. I look at my colleagues who did other degrees and they have made so much progress, I need to catch up and this teaching space doesn't offer me much, only stress! Right now I am doing an IT degree on part-time and I will have a better chance outside* [of the teaching field] *given my background in Computer Applications, Technology and Tourism* ***(Buhle, Typical Secondary)****.*

While others were more proactive in terms of their future prospects, others were not yet sure how they were going to exit but insisted that they were not staying in the profession for long. Some seemed to be trapped in the profession as they owed the Funza Lushaka bursary scheme some years of service but were resolute that once their dues were settled they were leaving. One ECT said that *some of us are here to pay Funza back then we're out* ***(Mandla, Common High)****.* Similar sentiments were held by Sanmari from Usual High School who lamented even joining the profession. She expressed her disappointment saying*: I regret my decision to do a B.Ed! Now I am stuck here because of this Funza money that I used for my studies!* Although these ECTs did not specify a clear plan in terms of when or how they were going to leave, it was clear from their expressions that they were dissatisfied with the profession. These ECTs would have left if it were not for the Funza Lushaka bursary that required them to serve and fulfill their contractual obligations in which they were required to teach in a public school the same number of years for which they received a bursary.

In addition to ascribing their disappointment and dissatisfaction to their early years' experiences, some ECTs became more censuring of the general teaching field. Infusing some criticality in their reflections, many saw no hope of growth in the profession and believed that the profession was unappreciative of individual efforts. Some ECTs said:

> *For me it's the fact that there is no growth in Education. You need to know people in high place to even become an HoD. For me that is demotivating. If the government could say if you study, let's say Honours, then there is some acknowledgement. There is no incentive for growth. You try to develop yourself but there is no difference, you still get the same salary, the same school and nothing changes. That is killing us and I tell you I don't see myself in the classroom for long* ***(Lebo, Typical Secondary)****.*

> *My biggest problem is the Education department; I don't understand why we have to teach if we have to pass the learners anyway. I'm trying to find a reason for going to class and that's killing my passion for the profession. You are just told that a learner cannot spend x amount of years in a phase so you just have to push them up yet there is no progress with that learner. I just can't do it; it's really depressing and takes all the fire out of me* ***(Lindo, Typical Secondary)****.*

The above comments are indicative of ECTs' overall views of the profession. It seemed that it was while they were encountering many challenges related to their work and the general atmosphere in their working contexts that they began to contemplate on the whole field and really reflect upon what the profession offered them. They seemed to be dissatisfied with poor growth prospects and the highly politicised promotional criteria. The overall quality of learners and the demands placed on schools by the PDEs to pass learners also seemed to be a great source of their dissatisfaction as was against their beliefs about teaching and learning. In other words, the general teaching environment was in violation of most ECTs values and beliefs as well as future prospects as individuals hence their indications to leave the profession as soon as better opportunities are available for them.

### 6.3.2 ECTs continuing with profession half-heartedly

Another category of ECTs that was identified in this study composed of those who were dissatisfied with the prevailing working conditions but seemed to indicate that they would continue with the profession, though doing the job half-heartedly. Many in this category believed that they were *once called to teach but now because of the nasty experiences in the schools; all the passion to improve learners lives was killed and we are now simply worried about our salaries month-end* ***(Noleen, Common High)****.* Similar sentiments were echoed by another ECT who said:

> *…we have so much pressure you know, bills to pay and after four years of studying there a lot of things that needs fixing so I told myself not to worry about what happens here* [i.e. at school]*. I have no power to change things so let me worry about me* ***(Jabu, Typical Secondary)***.

What was emerging from these ECTs was that they had lost hope for better experiences in their schools. Due to the contextual circumstances they had experienced, these teachers seemed to have lost their agency and were leaving everything to fate and assumed somewhat reckless attitudes and believed that as individuals they could not change the situation in their schools. Another ECT was of the view that *she will simply emulate how other senior teachers are doing it. This school and the kids here are hopeless so I will roll with the flow so I survive* ***(Maggot, Usual High)***. Evidently, these teachers felt discouraged and were basically prostrated by their situations that they went into survival mode without a care of positively influencing change or improvements in their respective schools. According to one district official, *some new teachers have adopted an I-don't-care-attitude and these teachers become the most dangerous teachers in the system because they resist all efforts from us to help them* ***(Mr Nkondla, Subject Advisor)***. Such ECTs seemed to become unproductive and unresponsive to teacher professional development activities which indicated the perpetuation of poor teacher quality in the system.

### 6.3.3 ECTs willing to stay and grow in the profession

The final category of ECTs demonstrated resilience. Although faced with innumerable challenges, they were willing to stay and grow in the profession. These teachers acknowledged that the early years in the teaching profession were fraught with extreme challenges and they were equally dissatisfied with the status quo. What was, however, unique about these ECTs was that, despite being dissatisfied, they were keen to *forge forward and make a difference in teaching and learning* ***(Bijon, Hoerskool Regular)***. These ECTs were confronted with depressing situations and even discouragement from their senior peers. One ECT commented:

> *…it's very discouraging when you get to a school and all the older teachers ask you what you are doing coming to such a school and why did you choose teaching. It's so discouraging! They are even bragging, 'Thank goodness I just have three more years to go!' I'm only starting now and it would be nice to have a positive mentor who can actually motivate you but then there is no motivation here but I know why I chose teaching and that keeps me going* ***(Gwen, Usual High)***.

Gwen was in an unsupportive schooling context where other senior teachers were demotivating her but it seemed that she was internally driven and was not moved by all the discouragement that came her way. Another ECT who was also in a hostile environment demonstrated his resilience and commitment to the profession despite the challenges encountered saying: *I think if you survive your first year you will be a teacher forever, I understand why some people don't want to stay, it's really difficult but I have learnt to see past these difficulties…I will get better with time* ***(Amos, Common High)***. What can be seen from these teachers is that they were resilient as individuals and were not easily defeated by what was happening in their contexts. It seems their courage was coming more from their individual personalities which was unfortunately lacking in the other teachers described in the two categories described above.

While some ECTs were willing to stay in the profession because of their strong personalities that enabled them to withstand the various professional pressures, some were more influenced to stay in the profession by the positive experiences they had had and the substantial support they had received. Many ECTs from Peculiar High School felt encouraged and motivated to stay in the profession as they could see opportunities for further growth as competent professionals. They said:

> *I am convinced teaching is what I want to do and I think it's because here I am made to feel like a professional. I have friends in other schools who are surprised when I say this but I really see myself even assisting other teachers in future* ***(Beth, Peculiar High)***.
>
> *Starting to teach is obviously very difficult but it gets better with time. I used to feel like quitting when I started but now I don't feel so bad and I can see that I keep getting better at it especially with the help I get around here I can only improve* ***(Khanyi, Peculiar High)***.

What emerged from these ECTs' reflections about their future career prospects was that they were keen to stay, learn and grow in the profession as they were provided the opportunity to do so in their school. Although there could be other factors, it is clear that the quantity and quality of support they received in their school played a huge role in convincing them to consider teaching as a worthwhile profession. One ECT indicated that *if it were not for the support from the deputies I would have left and gone back to tutoring*

*at university where it's less hectic* ***(Jaco, Peculiar High)***. It can be concluded from the experiences of these ECTs that while the teaching profession is generally difficult especially because of the many challenges encountered in the early career years, induction support goes a long way. The levels of support made available for ECTs seemed to greatly influence their overall view of the profession as well as their decisions to either stay or leave. The findings have, therefore, demonstrated that ECTs contemplate leaving the profession where they are barely supported and are less likely to do so in highly supportive school contexts.

## 6.4 Perceptions about improving ECTs induction and PD practices

The findings discussed above have clearly indicated that ECTs in different school contexts have had different on-the-job experiences that ranged from very difficult circumstances where there was barely any support to others where the beginners were spoiled for choice. What was apparent, however, from all ECTs' reflections, whether they were in supportive environments or not, was that they could all relate to the nature of challenges inherent of the profession when starting. There was, therefore, generally, agreement amongst participants that ECT induction was necessary but there were different opinions in terms of who should facilitate it, where it should be done, what it should focus on and how the whole induction process should be done.

### 6.4.1 Schools' capacity to induct and professionally develop ECTs

Many of the participants believed that both schools and the district had the capacity to meaningfully support ECTs and they suggested various ways that could be adopted, both in schools and at the district level, to ease the transition from ITE to the classroom and school environment as well as facilitate meaningful professional development for ECTs. There were, however, mixed feelings amongst participants in as far as the question of who was best positioned to conduct this induction for ECTs was concerned. Some indicated that schools were best suited to professionally develop ECTs arguing that although *the district can come up with whatever programmes but I strongly feel that as school we have a responsibility to play our part. We rely on the department a lot and we*

*accept the changes that they want us to bring in but at the end of the day still the responsibility lies with us* ***(DP2, Peculiar High)****.* The main reason given was that ECTs were more likely to benefit from *having someone who would literally be here who understands our daily struggles as opposed to someone sitting in an office somewhere who comes here once in a blue moon* ***(Sanmari, Usual High)***. These participants were actually indicating that the induction would be more meaningful to be done at school and be facilitated by someone who is based at the school as unlike district officials who visit the schools infrequently.

Many of the ECTs, especially those who had barely been supported, indicated that schools were more than capable of supporting and professionally developing ECTs. They were of the view that the lack of support in schools was, rather than a capacity issue, more a matter of willingness on the part of SMTs and the more experienced teachers. One deputy principal argued that *schools have got the capacity; everything we are doing here can be well done in other schools. It's just that there are a lot of disgruntled teachers out there because they* [the department] *don't value us and people are now doing their jobs half-heartedly* ***(DP1, Peculiar High)****.* DP1 here was referring to their New Educators Induction Programme and was of the view that their programme could be emulated in other public schools with similar conditions. The challenge, as he noted, was that the working relationship between schools and the department was not conducive and that caused a general lack of commitment on the part of senior teaching personnel. Another ECT concurred with this view and said that *the experienced teachers we have are more than adequate to be able to help us. I just think there is a lack of interest from their side. They are simply not interested in helping us become better teachers and for teaching to become a respectable profession* ***(Sanmari, Usual High)****.* It seemed that most senior teachers did not feel obligated to support ECTs and there was this sense of general reluctance and obliviousness where ECTs were concerned.

Some ECTs suggested strategies that could be employed at the school as part of inducting new teachers to adapt better into the schools' way of doing things. One ECT pointed out that she would have benefitted much if she had an opportunity to *observe different*

*teachers in their classes and see how they implement discipline, what works? What doesn't work? How do they implement their lessons etc. We don't have that and I just think if you are exposed to see 10 or 20 different teachers teaching throughout the year that would be very enlightening* ***(Tessa, Peculiar High)****.* Other teachers suggested opportunities *for shadowing a teacher on a formal basis is definitely one great idea* ***(Liza, Peculiar High)*** where an incoming new teacher has an opportunity to be shown different aspects of what their new job entails. These clearly have potential to facilitate easy integration of ECTs into particular schools' way of working but senior teachers seemed not to have that culture and were almost *secretive and very protective of their classroom spaces* ***(Lindo, Typical Secondary)***.

School-based induction programmes seemed more appealing to ECTs because they had potential to offer practical and on-the-ground solutions for most of their challenges. Rather than attending workshops at some central location away from their work environments, ECTs suggested having the workshops being hosted and facilitated at their respective schools by personnel resident at their schools. One teacher was of the view that:

> *…the school can assign one teacher to mentor all the new teachers. That specific teacher will have more free periods so that they can use that time to go around and visit, observe new teachers teaching if need be and really use that time to engage with us. They can say don't do this that way, do it this way, with admin make your file like this with all your class lists do it this you know stuff like that. I'm sure if just one teacher was committed to new teacher support we wouldn't be feeling this lost* ***(Amos, Common High)****.*

Others, in agreement, also thought that one senior teacher could be alleviated of most of their teaching duties to focus on supporting new teachers. This teacher would then *come up with steps that new teachers could follow, like 'Becoming a New Teacher' or 'Settling well into the job' (****Buhle, Typical Secondary)****.* This same assigned senior teacher could *create a platform that will make it better for new teachers to find information or create a group where as new educators so we have a space to talk about the challenges we are facing in the school. Such a platform would be best suited to also come up with solutions on how to deal with those challenges. In a group we are able to share our experiences and I am sure*

*we can learn from each other as well as support each other* ***(Jabu, Typical Secondary)***. The ECTs indicated that creating such a persona within their respective schools would be beneficial to them even for *emotional support as well because we do get involved, what do I do? So providing someone who is more experienced to talk to would help; just an ear to listen to what I'm going through* ***(Brenda, Typical Secondary)***. ECTs were convinced that the best place to find support would be in their respective schools and they believed that if schools could develop an office for a specific inducting professional their experiences would be eased. They were also of the suggestion that the kind of help they would be able to access would not only be limited to issues about technical teaching, rather they would also get emotional support implying that the kind of induction they required would have to be comprehensive enough to include emotional aspects of the job.

Others were, however, strongly of the view that senior teachers were incapable of conducting the ECT induction because they were not trained to induct and support others. One teacher said:

> *I feel that teachers are meant to be teachers and we are now trying to put so many skills on a teacher that they are not capable of. In terms orientation and bridging that gap the old teachers were not trained to do that and they don't know how to do that. They were not trained to do that and if you are going to place that responsibility on them you do face the risk of them doing a half-hearted job, they'll do what is not required or fail in meeting those standards you know* ***(Thabo, Usual High)***.

A slightly similar view was expressed by a district official who was of the opinion that schools cannot, and should not, be given the responsibility of inducting ECTs as *most of these senior teachers are struggling themselves especially because of the amount of work they have to go through* ***(Mr Nkondla)***. While the issue of capacity seemed to be an issue of concern, the issue of time seemed to be the major challenge in schools. Mr Nkondla went on to explain that *sometimes you find that one is an HoD of 5 learning areas, grade 8 to 12 and he must check the books of those learners and they forget the new teachers. Some HoDs are teaching grade 11 and 12 so they are busy trying to make sure that their kids pass but the new teachers suffer*. Because HoDs were swamped themselves, they relegated

their role of supporting ECTs and prioritise learners. Another ECT acknowledged that *most senior teachers have Matric classes and they have their own pressure. They have to enter marks, again admin, at a certain time so for them to put time aside to support a new teacher is difficult. The school is busy and time is a huge factor in what we want to do and what we can do (**Nono, Common High)**.* Another teacher suggested that while induction was best done within schools, it could only be a success if senior teachers and HoDs were given lighter responsibilities so that they could find time to interact more with ECTs in activities that foster their professional development. She said:

> *The other problem is that the senior teachers and HoDs have a lot to focus on because they have heavy work-loads. I think some of them can support us and some of them really want to but they are too busy. The only way to make this work is to lighten the work that they have to do so that they have time for us. Maybe if they have fewer classes to teach **(Buhle, Typical Secondary)**.*

While lightening the workload of senior teachers and HoDs seemed like an easy solution to the problem of time, the challenge was in actual fact bigger that the schools and one that they could not solve by themselves. A district official explained in detail saying:

> *Time is a serious problem because staff establishment is done by the number of learners in a school without looking at the subjects that are offered at the school and the staff establishment is on a ratio of 1:50, for every teacher there are 50 learners. I'll give you an example of one of our schools, school Z. That school has about 250 learners which means it qualifies for 5 teachers only but offers many subjects now teachers end up teaching 4 or 5 subjects. Imagine the amount of time they need to prepare? It's then about the size of the school. Big schools, we have some with more than 1500 learners. Those teachers have space in between and there you find that a teacher is only teaching Geography right across or there are actually four teachers teaching Geography in one grade and they actually sit and share their preparation; that helps them. So if you can compare big schools and small schools, small schools have a serious challenge **(Mr Luxomo).***

As per Mr Luxomo's explanation, HoDs and ECTs in smaller schools would be more challenged in finding time to engage in professional development activities as they would be teaching many subjects and most probably many grades as well. This was, nevertheless, not the case for the schools that participated in this study because all of

them had a learner enrolment of above a thousand. It was indicated earlier that some ECTs were teaching many subjects and many grades but that was more as a result of the schools', seemingly unfair, internal allocation of subjects and classes rather than the districts' post establishment.

### 6.4.2 District's capacity to induct and professionally develop ECTs

While others were of the view that schools were best positioned to professionally develop ECTs, some participants believed that the district would do a better job than the schools. One district official was of the opinion that:

> *…most new teachers had to figure out for themselves this is 10A this is 11C; where are the toilets. They were just put in the staff room and there was no support with basic stuff like that surely there's nothing there for them to help them become good teachers. Induction in our schools is very weak! That's where we come in as the district, as former teachers we know what these new teachers need and don't assume that these students from university know everything. We know that in the working world it's different, totally different* **(Mr Nkondla, Subject Advisor)**.

Another district official also mentioned that the district officials, *unlike teachers, we were trained to capacitate teachers, that's our job* ***(Mrs Mhlara, DM)***. District officials were thus arguing that they would be the best institution to run induction programmes for ECTs. To add to what the others said, another district official also explained that the district had multiple offices that could be used as instruments for ECT induction. He said that *we have the THRS with our human resources related support*, *Curriculum division specializes with content and curriculum coverage issues, our facilitators/subject advisers assist with the specific subject related issues and then we have TDU coming in with classroom management and all that stuff…we are a complete team and all this expertise is not found in schools. We have it here at the district* ***(Mr Jazwe, THRS)***. The district believed that their previous teaching experience gave them a somewhat natural disposition to understanding the experiences and needs of ECTs. In addition to this, they believed that their extensive training and their multiple offices of different specialisations made them the ideal ECT induction practitioners.

Although the district officials expressed confidence in their capacity to provide effective professional development for ECTs, most participants within the schools questioned the officials' capacity and propensity to do so. One deputy principal though that *the department is more out on a witch-hunt instead of supporting teachers. If there is something wrong, it will be highlighted by the department. So they need to…, when you want to do effective induction…you can only choose another teacher who stands in the classroom to do the induction and not a political figure* ***(DP1, Peculiar High)***. An ECT made a similar comment: *I think the department needs to be actively involved in the running of schools. They only come here looking for our problems and errors. They should be here to support and guide us* ***(Buhle, Typical Secondary)***. Another ECT infuriated speaking about the district said:

> *We currently have Institutional Development and Support Officials (IDSO's) who are supposed to help with school related issues and we are not receiving support from them either. They come here and they see what's going on, we have here Mrs X who's been coming here every day for the past three weeks but still nothing has been done. If the responsibility to do induction is given to the useless district people, it's a train smash! We are doomed* ***(Sanmari, Usual High)***.

These participants' comments insinuated that their previous encounters with the district officials showed no evidence of being supported. Rather, the district was thought of as incapable to conduct ECT induction because they were known to focus more on making teachers and schools accountable rather than providing meaningful support. By implication, the needs and problems faced by ECTs would remain unsolved if schools remained reluctant and waited upon the district to conduct ECT induction.

Other participants within the schools were more concerned about the quality of programmes that were being offered by the district induction team. One deputy principal pointed out that the main challenge was that the district offered a programme that had activities that were too generic and she explained that these had the problem of failing to address specific school related issues and new teachers' day to day challenges on the job. She said:

> *…but then at the District it's the whole group from different schools and it's so generic but the difference with what we do here is that we are looking at an individual who is working here and this is how we are going to try and help you, ours is more hands-on. Unlike at the District, I mean they can make it practical but I don't think it is as effective as the way we do it here where the actual work is done. Even though we may cover similar things I think the District one falls short because schools are different and the problems also differ. Ours is customised for the school* ***(DP2, Peculiar High)****.*

Implied in the above comment was that district programmes, because they were done offsite and catered for many ECTs at one session, they failed to address individual teacher challenges. There is an acknowledgement that district programmes were useful in covering generic issues but there is a limitation in that their programme activities were presented as one-size-fits all which was not the case as the ECTs were coming from different schools with different contextual and cultural backgrounds. Another deputy principal added that *the new educators don't really find those workshops beneficial that's why we now do our own thing here where we try to cover that which the department is trying to do. We take our teachers there because that's policy. You see I need to follow the policy. I don't design the policy I just implement it, that's all* ***(DP1, Peculiar High)****.* In other words, Peculiar High School had identified the weaknesses of the district offered induction programme activities and they redesigned them to address their ECTs' concerns. The deputy principal indicated that their school continued to send their teachers to district organised induction programmes but, both the school SMT and the ECTs, were in agreement that district induction programmes added no intrinsic value to their growth and professional development.

### *6.4.3* Proper training of inducting personnel

Most participants were in agreement that ECT induction was necessary and that there was a real gap between university ITE and the working world that needed to be filled. Participants believed the current status quo could not permit effective induction of ECTs unless there was proper training of the inducting personnel, whether at the school or at the district. ECTs thought that *people are capable but they must go for some form of*

*training on what they might have to offer to these new teachers because it takes some special kind of skill to train someone to be a professional* ***(Buhle, Typical Secondary)****.* The ECTs were arguing for comprehensive training on mentors and inductees rather than for schools to *make the assumption that a teacher would be naturally capable of supporting a new one* ***(Thabo, Usual High)****.* ECTs even believed that *district people were not really trained because most of the time they just read slides and for them that's training of new teachers [laughs]. They need real training* ***(Brenda, Typical Secondary)***. The process of induction was therefore thought of as requiring some specialised knowledge on the part of the inducting personnel. An additional comment in relation to this was made by a deputy principal:

> *I also think the person who is doing the mentoring or induction has to go for workshops from time to time just to update their knowledge. Times are changing and I cannot come up with some ideas from 20 years ago and implement them now. Just look at technology, it has taken over and whoever will be mentoring these new teachers has to keep abreast* ***(DP2, Peculiar High)****.*

It seemed that in order for effective ECT induction to be effected there is need for properly training the trainers. Although the personnel were there, there was concern about their skills and aptitudes to successfully enact professional development for these young teachers into effective professionals.

## 6.5 Chapter conclusion

This chapter conclusion reflects on the above research findings in relation to the study's research questions that were put forward in Section 1.4 of Chapter 1. The overarching research question of this study enquired about the nature of the existing practices of induction and professional development available in selected South African public schools to provide ECTs with learning opportunities to strengthen their repertoire of professional skills.

This main question was answered through an exploration of several sub-research questions. The first of these asked: What are the main on-the-job/professional challenges experienced by early career teachers? In response to this, it emerged from the findings

that ECTs found their early career years in the profession very challenging especially in their professional roles and how they experienced their new working environment.

A number of challenges relating to their professional roles as teachers were significant and highlighted across the schools and these included, but not limited to, struggling to manage their classrooms especially instilling learner discipline, being overwhelmed and unsure of the administrative duties and generally feeling pressured by many other extra and co-curricular demands of the job. In respect to the working environment, they reported that they found the general atmosphere hostile and unsupportive and many related to the metaphor of being thrown into the deep end as they were barely supported by more experienced colleagues in their respective workplaces.

In view of the highlighted challenges, this study sought to understand how ECTs were being professionally developed to strengthen their professional practices and the findings indicate that most of the support available was superficial and incidental in the form of vague incidences of mentoring and shadowing. The findings, however, identified two formal induction initiatives that were in place to support ECTs: one was a school-based induction programme at one of the participating schools, Peculiar High School and the other was district-based at D district. The Peculiar High School New Educators Induction Programme included basic orientation, a peer-mentoring component as well as support from the SMT and the HoDs. The schools' induction programme focused on professionally acculturating its new teachers to become members of the school community through nurturing values, norms and practices of the school.

The D district Young Graduates Induction Programme was designed mainly for newly hired Funza Lushaka teacher graduates in the district's schools. The district induction programmes were organised into two forms; generic and subject specific induction workshops. What was, however, established was that these two focused on more or less the same aspects; mainly providing ECTs with information on what was expected of them as government employees. The district induction programme was largely criticised for playing a more monitoring and accountability role with little support being directed

towards the development of technical and pedagogical issues that affected ECTs on a daily basis.

It was also established in the research findings, as a response to the third sub-question, that ECTs experiences, to a large extent, influenced their overall view of the profession thereby affecting their practices and commitment to the profession. As a result of their experiences, three categories of ECTs were identified: (i) those who were dissatisfied that they were looking to exit the profession; (ii) those who were dissatisfied and hopeless but seemed to continue in the profession though doing the job half-heartedly and, (iii) those who have been dissatisfied with the challenging working context but hopeful and willing to stay and grow in the profession.

Finally, it emerged in the research findings that practices of ECT induction and professional development can be improved and enhanced. Both the school and the district were identified as, potentially, the two most powerful instruments for conducting ECT professional development through induction. It was, however, established that harnessing these two for meaningful and sustained induction would require careful thought. Among the many factors to be carefully thought out is proper training of the inducting personnel, refocusing the content and form of the induction programmes as well as evaluating the capacity of the district and the school as key role players in ECT professional development through induction.

# Chapter 7: Discussion of findings

## 7. Introduction

The previous chapter presented the findings of this study which were generated from the analysis of the data. This chapter reflects on these findings in relation to the overarching research question which was put forward in Chapter 1. In responding to this main research question, this chapter reflects back on the reviewed related literature and relevant concepts from the Theory of Practice Architectures which were discussed earlier in Chapters 2 and 3, respectively.

The overarching research question for this study was: What are the existing practices of induction and professional development available in selected South African public schools to provide early career teachers with learning opportunities to strengthen their repertoire of professional skills? In this chapter, I draw on the work of Kemmis and Grootenboer (2008) to strengthen my argument that it is imperative to carefully consider current practices of ECT induction and professional development in South African public schools as these practices, to a large extent, determine whether ECTs learn a repertoire of professional skills and develop into competent professionals or not.

I also argue that early career experiences greatly influence ECTs' overall impressions of the profession which in turn influences their daily practices in the classroom as well as their commitment to the profession. Kemmis and Grootenboer's (2008) emphasis on the importance of understanding site arrangements within the different school settings was especially useful to my analysis as it allowed me to think through how the prefigured local arrangements within each school were working to either create opportunities for meaningful professional learning or amassing challenges for the ECTs.

The main aim of this study was to primarily explore the ways in which ECTs are supported in their new school contexts by examining the existing practices of professional development and induction and how these provide learning opportunities to strengthen ECTs' repertoire of professional skills.

In an attempt to answer the main research question, four sub-questions were generated to tease out the various elements of the main research question. The sub-questions were:

i) What are the main on-the-job/professional challenges experienced by ECTs?
ii) How are ECTs inducted and professionally developed in their respective schools and district?
iii) How do existing practices of induction and professional development influence ECTs' practices and commitment to the profession?
iv) How, if at all, can ECT induction and professional development practices be improved and sustained?

The responses to these sub-questions are presented below through a discussion of the main themes that emerged from the findings of the study.

## 7.1 Challenges experienced by ECTs in new professional roles

The main aim of this study was explored, through a number of sub-questions, and the first one sought to develop an understanding into the nature of challenges that ECTs experienced in their new professional roles. The general finding in this study was that ECTs encounter a range of challenges. Many often start with romanticised ideas about the new teaching experience and they come in having high expectations in terms of positively impacting learners. They are, however, exasperated when reality unfolds with the many challenges that are inherent in the teaching portfolio. Their challenges are exacerbated by the lack of support in their new school environments, a sentiment most referred to as 'being thrown into the deep end'. The nightmare is even more pronounced for those ECTs in the township schools who face hostility from within the schools as well from the surrounding community as they carry the disgraceful name 'Funza Lushakas'.

These findings were consistent with much of the literature that was reviewed in Chapter 2 that acknowledged that ECTs face a multitude of challenges that range from difficulties with socialisation into the new environment, enacting effective pedagogies, managing their classrooms as well as meeting other school demands (Arends & Rigazio-DiGilio,

2000; Feiman-Nemser et al., 1999; Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002; Maringe & Prew, 2015; Wong, 2004).

### 7.1.1 Expectations enchanting, reality exasperating

Upon joining their respective new work environments, the majority of ECTs had been exposed to school environments during their ITE teaching practicum where they assumed teaching under the guidance of a university tutor and a supervising mentor teacher in the host school. The teaching practicum is meant to contribute to the development of professional skills amongst student teachers. Ideally, they are meant to acquire and/or improve abilities in producing teaching materials for use in their subject matter, develop social-relational skills as they interact in close interpersonal relationship with learners, other teachers and many other people in the professional setting. Student teachers, through the teaching practicum, are generally expected to acquire technical-professional skills through familiarisation with the basic procedures of their future professional work, such as school rules, use of resources and facilities, quality control, assessment and evaluation (Zabalza Beraza, 1996, p. 270).

Practically, however, student teachers are somehow cushioned from the real experience of being a teacher and deprived of rich teaching experiences. While the teaching practicum is meant to create an opportunity for student teachers to learn the practice of teaching in the real world setting, the teaching practicum is, according to Wilson and I'Anson (2006), a simplified version of the real world as it usually falls short of real world work. Consequently, ECTs experience what Kelchtermans and Ballet (2002, p. 105) call "praxis shock" where the sudden confrontation with school realities and responsibilities challenges their ideals about teaching. Consistent with these claims in the literature, the findings of this study showed that ECTs experienced what Veenman (1984) called 'a reality shock' where they were thrown into bewilderment as they never anticipated many of the experiences they encountered in their respective schools even though many had had several weeks of doing the teaching practicum during ITE. ECTs particularly faced challenges with classroom organisation and management, the quantity and

complexity of their workload as well as establishing collegial relationships with more senior teachers.

The findings indicated that the major challenge that made the reality of being in a school exasperating for ECTs was organising and managing their classrooms. They came with the expectation to positively impact the lives of learners through delivering sound content knowledge only to realise that there were a multitude of things they needed to juggle simultaneously in order for effective teaching and learning to occur.

Previous research evidence indicates that ECTs reported learner behavior management and curriculum planning to be their most serious problems (Chisholm et al., 2005). Learner indiscipline was a serious constraint for the ECTs and they were bewildered to realise that it was very difficult to execute their planned lessons. These findings confirm what has been previously reported in the literature that there seems to be a theory-practice gap between ITE and real classroom situations (Bartel, 2005; Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002; Steyn, 2004; Veenman, 1984; Zeichner & Tabachnick 1981).

Although discipline and classroom management skills and strategies were learnt during pre-service teacher training, transferring that knowledge when confronted with real discipline issues in the classroom remained a challenge for ECTs. The situation was worsened by the general sense of hopelessness in the schools because even the SMTs seemed incapacitated to deal with problems of indiscipline. It is argued that this problem escalated when corporal punishment was banned in South African schools and this left teachers feeling helpless, disempowered and demotivated (Maphosa & Shumba, 2010; Moyo, Khewu & Bayaga, 2014). Alternatives to corporal punishment that encourage positive learning environments through using incentive-based systems in which teachers reward good behavior were encouraged. These were deemed ineffective and teachers, more so ECTs, struggled to establish orderly classrooms for effective teaching and learning.

While implementing effective learner discipline strategies was a challenge for most ECTs, their experiences were more complicated because it also emerged in the data that the majority of them were assigned to teach the most difficult and lower Grade classes. The literature acknowledged that schools are notorious for this practice as senior teachers reserve more behaved classes for themselves (Mazibuko, 1999; Mohr & Townsend, 2001; Whitaker 2001). This challenge persisted to the extent that ECTs were losing out on instructional time as they spent most of the lesson time trying to control the unruly learners. An interesting finding in the literature was that this was not only a South African schools' problem but an international one (Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Mohr & Townsend, 2001; Whitaker 2001). This was a serious challenges and Feiman-Nemser (2001) objects to this popular yet unfair practice in schools arguing that even the best induction programmes cannot compensate for this anomaly.

The difficulty with learner indiscipline related more to the contextual arrangements within the schools that ECTs happened to become part of. When ECTs joined their respective new school environments, they found established *modi operandi* that formed the fabric of the schools' culture. While they came possessing certain knowledges about cultivating disciplined classrooms from ITE, they found it difficult to put them into practice. There was, therefore, a serious disjuncture between the theoretical knowledge acquired from college with the actual practice. Consequently, they resorted to, although begrudgingly, inheriting existing traditions and practices found deeply engraved in those new work environments.

ECTs in the township schools, for example, reported that these schools were basically in a state of disrepair in as far as learner discipline was concerned. Some ECTs in the former Model C schools concurred and had concluded that the culture of teaching and learning was completely eroded as even the SMTs were incapacitated to deal with the indiscipline issues. According to Kemmis and Grootenboer (2008), local arrangements and circumstances shape and condition the intentions, actions and experiences of individuals within a particular social setting. Although as individuals, ECTs may have agency, the relationship between them and their social environment remains one that is disparately

constituted and they are forced to adapt to local configurations. In Kemmis and Grootenboer's (2008) terms, ECTs begin to share a language in the ongoing discourse practices (sayings) and they share practices and activities (doings) that are in existence in relation to learner discipline.

Classroom management and organisation also involves management of the curriculum where ECTs have to organise learners and learning activities. The findings in this study have demonstrated that most ECTs were confident with their grasp of core subject concepts. Steyn (2004, p.84), however, points out that professional development planners need to exercise caution regarding such "unrealistic optimism" as ECTs, because of inexperience, will obviously be less conversant with diverse pedagogical paradigms for effective teaching and learning. Although they claimed to be confident with subject matter knowledge, it emerged that ECTs were still skeptical with regards to working with the curriculum frames especially the interpretation of the curriculum and the selection of the most appropriate teaching approaches. According to Shulman (1987), this specific teacher knowledge is PCK and it stems from the teacher's understanding of content/subject matter knowledge, curriculum knowledge together with an understanding of learner's cognitive characteristics. Equipped with this PCK, the teacher is then able to represent knowledge that is accessible to learners. Feiman-Nemser (2001) calls this responsive instruction where a teacher makes appropriate pedagogical moves after a careful elicitation and interpretation of the curriculum, the topic to be taught as well as the learners' ideas. Such knowledge and skill is still lacking in ECTs and, according to Steyn (2002), teachers in the early phase of their career are hesitant to try out new teaching approaches and are thus, more often than not, open and welcoming to guidance from their more experienced colleagues. What emerged, however, in this study was that the more experienced colleagues were either too busy with their own work or unwilling to assist. ECTs were thus left alone to devise their own survival strategies which, unfortunately, were not comparable to best practice.

Even though most ECTs indicated that they had HoDs who were meant to support them with curriculum interpretation and other subject-specific issues, working with the

curriculum remained a challenge because some HoDs were not very helpful because they lacked the knowhow themselves. In addition to poor support to curriculum implementation by HoDs, the findings of the study also showed that ECTs were not properly prepared to deal with the new CAPS curriculum. Avalos (2016) points out that new teachers are the most vulnerable when it comes to problems in the general curricular policy context.

South Africa has had several curriculum policy reforms and each has had a share of its problems. Currently, teachers are implementing CAPS and there has been many challenges reported in the literature in relation to this new CAPS curriculum. Chief amongst the challenges reported is that there was poor and inadequate training of teachers, the curriculum itself brought along too much paperwork, and this has created a lot of confusion for teachers (Prew, 2013; Msibi & Mchunu, 2013). As was discovered in this study, these problems are especially profound amongst ECTs. However, a better understanding of the curriculum and a sound grasp of subject content knowledge (SCK) and PCK develops over time in practice and this is consistent with Feiman-Nemser (2001) who argues that teachers, regardless of how complete and comprehensive their academic training was, can only acquire and learn the skills of how to teach while they teach.

Another major challenge identified in this study was that the reality of handling full teacher responsibilities was exasperating for ECTs. As was indicated earlier, the ITE teaching practicum shielded ECTs from the actual quantity and complexity inherent in the world of real teaching practice. As a result, the evidence in this study showed that the reality of the workload was overwhelmingly shocking for ECTs. Chapter A of the PAM document specifies that the formal school day for teachers is seven hours which translates to 35 hours per week. Chapter A.4.1.2.1 of this same document states that during this scheduled contact time, teachers are expected to engage in the following activities: (a) Teaching, (b) Relief teaching, (c) Extra and co-curricular duties, (d) Pastoral duties (ground, detention, scholar patrol, etc.), (e) Administration, (f) Supervisory and management functions, (g) Professional duties (meetings, workshops, seminars,

conferences) and (h) Planning, preparation and evaluation (PAM, p. 16-17, DBE, February 2016). Amongst these duties, ECTs were particularly challenged with the volume and complexity of the administration that came with the teaching responsibility.

ECTs were dismayed to realise that teaching was not only about lesson planning and its delivery; rather, it involved a range of other administrative work that had to be done before, during as well as after the stipulated working hours. The data also revealed that the two main sources of the administrative work for ECTs were the school and the district. The school administrative workload involves, but not limited to, managing the attendance register, assessment and recording marks and compilation of various classroom data (Steyn, 2004). The district, on the other hand, through facilitators' school visits, requires a compilation of learner statistics/data such as reports on struggling learners and the various interventions put in place to support those learners. In addition, the district conducts performance management on the work of teachers through the IQMS which demands a lot of time and paperwork.

The main problematic dimension in the implementation of the IQMS is that it does not take into consideration the other demands placed on teachers' time (Chisholm et al., 2005). Although South African teachers, through the teacher's unions, have raised many complaints in relation to the hefty IQMS and the other overwhelming administrative work, these challenges have persisted even with the curriculum reviews and are considered some of the main weaknesses of the current CAPS curriculum (Du Plessis & Marais, 2015). A significant body of literature has confirmed that post-apartheid educational reforms in South Africa have, over the years, increased teachers' workload exponentially (Jansen, 1998; Booyse & Swanepoel, 2004; Chisholm et al., 2005) and because of lack of experience and limited knowledge and skills in navigating their way around this heavy workload, ECTs found the reality of the workplace environment afflicting.

According to Chisholm et al. (2005), there is a strong correlation between work overload and time constraints and the evidence in this study draws attention to further challenges

with time management due to ECTs' failure to cope with their workload. As was indicated above, ECTs had to deal with internally and externally imposed administrative work which took up a lot of their time. Over and above the tedious administration, ECTs were expected to equally participate and perform well in non-administrative activities such as extra and co-curricular activities, professional development, pastoral care and breaks. As a result, most ECTs were always behind their work schedules and there was a general agreement that instructional time was seriously being affected by all that busyness.

Chisholm et al. (2005) conducted a survey of 900 public schools to understand the workload of South African teachers and the results showed that there is a catastrophic erosion of actual teaching time. Similar to what was established in this study, the survey results concluded that most teachers in South African public schools spend more time on administration-related activities such as assessment, evaluation, drafting reports and record keeping as opposed to the time they spend on the core activities which include teaching, lesson preparation and planning (Chisholm et al., 2005).

### 7.1.2 Thrown into the deep end: its either you sink or you swim

Unlike other professions that introduce complex work gradually, the teaching profession has been described by Tynjala and Heikkinen (2011) as an 'early plateau profession' that immediately acquaints ECTs to the full teaching and administrative responsibilities. The other paradox with the teaching profession is that, while it is an early plateau profession, unlike other professions that commit considerable time orienting the newly hired, it offers the least support and often launches its young into the deep end to either sink or swim (Arends & Rigazio-DiGilio, 2000; Feiman-Nemser et al., 1999; Fantili & McDougall, 2009; Ingersoll & Smith, 2004; Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002).

The findings from this study established that most public schools lacked basic orientation where ECTs were hardly welcomed to the school or had the context of the school outlined to them. Many of them related to the metaphor of 'being thrown into the deep end' where they were left to devise their own survival strategies. According to Steyn (2004), orientation is highly lacking in South African schools yet it is an important process of

integrating beginning teachers into the profession. Many ECTs reported that they were apprehensive and uncertain about their schools' educational contexts in terms of the character and culture of their respective school communities and unsure of how to carry themselves in those new environments as no or very little guidance into the context was provided.

It emerged in the findings that ECTs in the township schools struggled the most as orientation in those schools was totally non-existent. Normally, orientation is part of the bigger induction scheme of teacher professional development where ECTs are welcomed and provided with the necessary information. ECT orientation involves the conveyance of important information that include details about the new duties and responsibilities, school policies, rules and procedures, introduction to the school community; introduction to mentors and other teacher colleagues; a tour of the school premises and in some schools the handing out of a staff handbook, some school policy documents, school prospectus and any information essential for the new school members (Brock & Grady, 1997; Steyn, 2002).

What was evident, however, in the township schools especially was that most long-serving teachers had developed "ingrained negativity and skepticism" (De Clercq, 2013, p. 48) about teacher professional development so they did not have the desire nor the skills base to provide any support to the novice teachers joining their school. In other words, the culture of isolation and individualism was so deeply ingrained in these schools that the thought of supporting ECTs was unwonted.

While former Model C schools were cognisant of the need to provide ECTs with some form of orientation, the findings, however, indicated that what was provided as orientation was highly nonessential, impractical and inadequate. In one of the schools, ECTs reported that the orientation focused on peripheral issues such as dressing and the allocation of parking space. The findings of this study also showed that the ECT orientation that happened in another former Model C school was patchy and inconsistent as each teacher reported to have had a different experience.

The data also evidently showed occurrences of haphazard and superficial support in the form of shadowing, brief orientation, peer-mentoring and some guidance from willing HoDs. What these cases, and the more difficult township experiences highlighted above, however, illustrate is the fact that South African public schools generally have no structures in place to provide meaningful orientation for ECTs. One explanation for this, according to Maringe and Prew (2015), is that there seems to a conflation between induction and orientation where schools provide orientation and they consider it as having provided induction for their ECTs. This conflation comes from a poor conception of what induction is and how it is delivered. Another explanation is that schools are generally incapacitated to provide induction support and this challenge, according to Flores (2007), is due to a leadership crisis that fails to provide direction for the school and these poor practices become embedded in the schools' cultures.

According to Steyn (2002), orientation involves the welcoming of new teachers and is a phase during which issues that are critical early in the year are relayed to the new staff. Brock and Grady (1997) propose a developmental induction programme composing of a series of five steps. In this induction programme, the importance of orientation is emphasised and it is the third step after new teachers have been welcomed and offered initial assistance such as being introduced to the mentors. In the event that ECTs are offered superficial orientation or are not oriented at all, as in the case of most schools in this study, they immediately find it difficult to settle in the school and they begin to develop negative impressions about their new work context. When schools adopt this 'sink or swim' or orientation by default practice, the implications are costly as in the case of the US where a third of new teachers leave the profession within the first three years or they remain in the profession but with little optimism (Darling-Hammond, 2000, 2003; Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004).

### 7.1.3 The schools' relational and micro-political conundrum

While ECTs were vaguely supported and had difficulties with the technical-professional aspects of their work, the findings of this study illustrated that they also struggled with social-relational skills as they had considerable difficulties negotiating their respective

schools' organisational politics beyond the classroom. The findings from this study indicate that, with the exception of one school (Peculiar High), all other schools were composed of problematic relational micro-politics that were counterproductive to the professional learning of ECTs as well as to the growth of the teaching staff in general.

One prevalent finding was the existence of intense antagonism between ECTs and their more senior teacher colleagues. The hostility from senior colleagues experienced by ECTs was also indicative of the nature of existing school cultures and how those cultures influenced ECTs. School culture manifests itself in the beliefs, attitudes and practices of people who work in that particular school environment. Because ECTs co-exist with others in a particular culture, they are, inevitably, shaped by the culture of the school in which they work and are socialised to begin to take on existing beliefs and practices of their colleagues even if it is at odds with their personal philosophies or with what they learnt in ITE (Bartel, 2005).

According to Flores (2007), school culture is embedded in the shared meanings, values and attitudes as well as how these are conveyed and understood within the school community. The shared ways of doing things in the township schools and in the learning impoverished former Model C schools were basically indicating to ECTs that teacher networks are not encouraged, people work as individuals and not collaboratively in teams, collegial exchanges are not encouraged and there is no space for the exchange of information and ideas. In turn, ECTs gathered that it was unacceptable and shameful to ask for advice from senior colleagues hence they resorted to assisting one another amongst themselves. This, unfortunately, meant that there was very little opportunity for deep learning because it was almost a case of the blind leading the blind. This "informal buddy system" Feiman-Nemser (2001, p. 1030) works for the few that are fortunate but it still robs them of professional growth through a systematic and sustained approach to professional development.

It has long been established in the literature that teachers are less likely to grow and become professionally literate in school environments where there is an absence of a

sense of cohesion and belonging (Britton et al., 2003; Darling-Hammond, 2003; Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002; Menon, 2012; Tynjala & Heikkinen, 2011; Wong et al., 2005). The existing relational micro-politics thus had negative implications and were immensely detrimental to the process of professional acculturation of the concerned ECTs. As a result, ECTs were failing to snugly fit in and become accepted members of the school community. Rather, they were in the community but existed as professional and social outcasts.

The study also found that instead of professional exchanges between ECTs and their more senior colleagues, what was prevalent in the support impoverished schools were exchanges about how the context was difficult to work in. Most of the conversations amongst teachers in the school corridors and in the staffrooms were about how the learners were impossible to control and sometimes ECTs would find themselves being quizzed about their choice to become teachers in the first place.

Senior teachers held the view that their schools were hopeless and the teaching profession in South Africa was not an ideal context for both personal and professional growth. As they emphasised on the negatives, similar attitudes and values were transferred to ECTs and the adoption of these negative dispositions were manifest in ECTs' description of their working contexts as well as their impressions about their future career prospects. This finding is well accounted for by the social constructivist perspective which argues that humans construe meanings whilst they are in interaction with others in an environment. Kemmis and Grootenboer (2008) elaborate further that individuals develop dispositions in a context. Dispositions form individuals' worldviews and these develop through exposure to types of collective group knowledges which are transmitted socially through the culture and language used in the group (Kemmis & Grootenboer, 2008; Kemmis, & Heikkinen, 2012). ECTs in this case, were being socialised into believing that they were in hopeless school contexts where there was little possibility of professional growth and job satisfaction (Struyven & Vanthournout, 2014).

It also emerged from the data that ECTs' voices were silenced even in the face of maltreatment. For example, many ECTs found the workplace environment both technically and socially challenging as they were made to teach subjects they did not specialise in during ITE. While they well aware that this was unfair to them and their learners, ECTs were not in a position to raise complaints. This speaks to the degree of ECT vulnerability and the constraining relational environment in which they worked in. In some instances, their silence was attributed to the fact that they wanted to give their senior colleagues a good impression about themselves and in some instances, the silence was due to fear of being judged by colleagues and administrators (Feiman-Nemser, 2001). According to De Vos and Kirsten (2015), this constitutes some type of workplace bullying and they further assert that the problem lies in the power difference between the victim and the perpetrator, who in this case are the ECTs and the SMTs, respectively. Likewise, Kemmis and Grootenboer (2008) argue that participants in a practice encounter one another in the intersubjective social space that is characterised by power and solidarity and the nature of relating often signal whether new members have been accepted or rejected. Unfortunately, the use of power by SMTs in these schools had the effect of intimidating ECTs and stripping them of their dignity and rights in the workplace (De Vos & Kirsten, 2015) and this also had far reaching implications of potentially damaging ECTs' professional development (Struyven & Vanthournout, 2014).

#### 7.1.3.1 Stereotyped and labelled: 'Funza Lushakas' in township schools

While the findings of the study show that most ECTs experienced their new working environments as very hostile, a peculiar problem of stereotyping and labelling was a challenge that was mainly faced by ECTs in the township schools. The hostility of this fashion was coming from senior teachers, members of the SMTs, the general populace of the community and even the district officials who referred to ECTs by the derogatory title 'Funza Lushakas' because they believed they were arrogant and lazy.

According to De Vos and Kirsten (2015), this workplace bullying especially affects victimised teachers' professional and social relationships. The ECTs who were victims of

this labeling reported that they felt disrespected, excluded and loathed thus somewhat withdrew from both social and professional relationships with the perpetrators. The ECTs in the township schools were thus deprived of an opportunity to use the school community's currency in terms of sharing values, norms and practices. This is consistent with Wong (2003; 2004) who posits that when ECTs join a new school environment, they are not merely looking for a job, rather they are craving connections, and they want to belong, be recognised and valued for their contributions. Flores (2007) adds that, being new to an environment; ECTs yearn and strive for both personal and professional acceptance from learners, other teacher colleagues, the administration staff and the school leadership.

The relational social environment that was seen to prevail in the township schools of this study can be argued to be abject rejection of the ECTs both at the personal and professional level. Unfortunately, such rejection has far-reaching implications: it is counterproductive to the professional learning and growth of the affected ECTs. According to Kemmis and Grootenboer (2008), social-political arrangements are basically the enabling or constraining factors in a social space that influence how people within a practice relate to one another. The existing social relationships in the township schools reinforced the culture of isolation and balkanisation cultures where teaching is recognised as an individualised responsibility rather than a shared one, a position seriously detrimental to the profession itself (Bartel, 2005; Flores, 2007; Struyven & Vanthournout, 2014).

Overall, the experiences of ECTs concur with previous research that highlights difficulties with the technical aspects of the profession as well as with the social-relational skills. Consequently, ECTs were harbouring feelings of frustration, anger and bewilderment. They were immensely challenged with assuming full teacher responsibilities and their experiences were worsened by the lack of adequate and meaningful support from other staff members. They also interpreted the school working environment as composing of very hostile relational micro-politics. They found most people in the school community unfriendly and unsupportive and this was largely manifested in problematic professional and social interactions between ECTs, other staff members, the district and the

community at large. What can be deduced from this discussion is that the school community, which was supposed to be the context in which opportunities for ECT learning and growth are created, unfortunately became the very context that thwarted ECTs' opportunities for growth and professional acculturation.

## 7.2 Archetypes of ECT induction from existing practices

The analysis of the research evidence revealed two main archetypes of ECT induction: induction as support and induction as monitoring with increased performance standards for teachers. These two induction archetypes were looked at in terms of what their affordances were with the hope of deriving lessons to inform the development of an induction framework for South African public schools. The induction initiatives were also interrogated against existing literature to evaluate their usefulness for more informed practice. It is important to note that these two archetypes are based on the empirical evidence attained in this study (the school-based and the district-based induction initiatives) and are certainly not fully representative of what is generally being practiced in South Africa. However, they do provide insight into how ECT induction is being conceptualised on the ground as well as inform an appropriate approach towards the development of an ECT induction framework for South Africa.

In what follows, I discuss each ECT induction archetype as well as the nature of practice architectures in the distinct sites and how those local arrangements resulted in differing ECT induction practices.

### 7.2.1 ECT induction as support

The findings of this study showed that ECT induction in the school-based induction initiative was conceived as an ongoing enrichment process for beginning teachers. According to Pennanen et al. (2016), such support programmes have an 'asset view of teachers' in which the emphasis is on enriching new teachers' professional skills. The school-based induction programme was organised in workshops and a combination of mentoring styles. There were four induction workshop meetings that ran throughout the

year (one workshop per term). In these workshops, members of the Mentoring team that included two deputy principals and two assistant senior teachers facilitated various discussions and ECTs had an opportunity to ask questions for clarity. This schools' induction programme was run by the SMT and this speaks to the nature of the schools' organisational structure and culture as pro-learning.

Tynjala and Heikkinen (2011) argue that organisational culture plays a significant role in influencing the general learning orientation of the organisation. The schools' senior managerial team spearheaded the ECT induction programme and according to Flores (2007), the school is a workplace community imbued with social and psychological attributes that are instrumental in the development of new teachers' sense of practice. The collaborative work culture within the school had the main advantage of opening up a space for ECTs to learn and grow professionally while considering teaching as a collaborative endeavor rather than an individual pursuit.

Worth considering is the content of the school-based induction workshops that emphasised the professional development of the ECTs. The first workshop meeting was the Orientation Programme that basically welcomed ECTs to the school and provided an outline of the context of the school as well as sharing of the schools' instructional philosophy. The workshop was on Safety and Security guidelines and procedures for emergency evacuation which ensured ECTs were aware of the safety measures within the school. The third workshop was a Feedback Session where ECTs were given space to raise any matter affecting them in the new school environment. The last workshop in the fourth term covered procedures for tests and examinations. What is significant from the content of these workshops is that there was intent focus on the professional learning of the ECTs.

Reporting on the successful induction programmes in China, France, Japan, New Zealand and Switzerland, Britton et al. (2003) highlighted that these countries focused on the professional learning of their ECTs by ensuring that their programmes are comprehensive in covering aspects that relate to the professionalism of their teachers.

Feiman-Nemser (2001) argues that induction should be conceived as the beginning phase of ongoing teacher professional development where the focus is on improving the professional skills of the new teacher at every juncture in their careers (Wong, 2004). Cleary, the school-based induction initiative was beginning to foster ongoing professional support for its ECTs, as evidenced by the content as well as the consistency of the workshop meetings throughout the year.

The integration of a mentoring component into the induction process is considered one of the essential elements of effective induction programmes (Wong, 2004). Of paramount importance, however, is how the mentoring is done and what was interesting to note in the school-based induction mentoring component was that there were two mentoring styles that were being used. Firstly, the induction model heavily relied on peer-mentoring. Peer-mentoring, according to Tynjala and Heikkinen (2011), is based on social constructivist assumptions about learning where knowledge is shared through reciprocal relationships between mentor and mentee. In the schools' mentoring model, ECTs in their first year of teaching were mentored by ECTs who were in their second year of teaching in the school.

According to Kemmis et al. (2014), where mentoring is considered to support and guide the new teachers' professional practice, mentors and mentees are usually not in a supervisory relationship. Clearly, the mentoring teachers had not acquired much experience themselves but this pairing was done to create a more 'safe space' for mentees where they would be able to openly communicate with their peers without feeling incompetent or the fear of being judged or criticised. Here, interactions assumed more dialogical channels in which both mentor and ECT shared their knowledge and both views were accepted and valued. This approach has been proved to have immense benefits for both the mentor and mentee as the reciprocal partnership has potential to change the mindset and skillset of both teachers involved (BRIDGE, 2016). This is consistent with Pennanen et al. (2016) who argue that mentoring between peers can facilitate the exchange and generation of ideas that may potentially lead to transformative innovations in certain teaching practices.

The second mentoring style used in the school-based induction programme was the traditional mentoring model. Traditional dyadic mentoring (Pennanen et al., 2016) adopted an asymmetrical distribution of knowledge and competence (Tynjala & Heikkinen, 2011) where senior and more experienced teachers transferred knowledge to the younger newly hired teachers (Kemmis & Heikkinen, 2012). The more experienced SMT and HoDs provided this kind of mentorship by sharing their knowledge from their vast experience. The schools' mentorship team composed of more experienced teachers who facilitated the induction workshop meetings by leading the discussions and clarifying questions and responding to queries and questions that ECTs may have had.

The traditional mentoring model, however, has limitations in that it tends to impose a unidirectional socialisation of ECTs by mentors into existing cultures of teaching and as a result overshadows and subdues practices of thoughtful reflection essential in a mentoring relationship. This mentoring model is also highly problematic as it "connotes a conservative view of learning, linear transmission of knowledge and asymmetrical power relations between participants" (Pennanen et al., 2016, p. 30). In other words, mentors in this traditional mentoring model often assume positions of power and authority and view mentees from a deficit point of view effecting a 'banking approach' where ECTs are considered empty heads that need to be filled.

Although highly critiqued in the literature for relegating and suppressing mentees' knowledge and views because of the default binary superior-inferior set-up (Kemmis et al., 2014; Pannenen et al., 2016; Wong, 2004), this mentoring style proved valuable to the learning and growth of ECTs in this school. The evidence showed that experienced teachers, form their vast experience in the school and in the profession, shared with ECTs potential pitfalls on the job and the different strategies that could be used to avoid them. An example worth noting was the classroom discipline routines established across the school that ECTs were mentored into adopting and using successfully.

The emphasis of induction as support in the school-based induction initiative was also demonstrated by the simultaneous use of the two mentoring styles which comes highly recommendable in the literature. According to Wong (2004), newly hired teachers' needs are so diverse that adequate assistance is unlikely to come from one assigned mentor. Rather, an effective mentoring component needs to draw from a combination of mentors who also bring with them a combination of experiences and expertise. The assembling of a collaborative mentoring team is therefore more effective as the support that is provided is holistic as different individuals within the team could offer different types of support (BRIDGE, 2016). This was evidently the case in the schools' mentoring component where the peer-mentoring was generic and about technical aspects about the school and the job; and the HoDs provided subject-related expertise and the SMT brought in the overarching leadership and guidance to the ECTs.

While the schools' induction workshop meetings were highly successful in terms of achieving the intended objectives, it is important to note that many of the peer-mentoring relationships were not sustained. One of the problematic dimensions was with the criterion that was used in the mentor-mentee pairing. The assignment to be a mentor was simply based on the fact that one had been mentored in the previous year as a first year teacher. The mentoring team believed that new teachers in their second year would be still familiar with both the challenges associated with the role of being a new teacher and the challenges inherent in trying to adopt into a new school environment. Peer-mentoring was believed to afford opportunities for closer and more intimate interactions between the young teachers, something less likely to be achieved using the traditional mentoring approach of an older and more experienced teacher providing guidance and counsel to a younger colleague. Because of this, second year teachers were believed to be the ideal mentors as they were in a position to be more sensitive to the plight of their peers. This arrangement is consistent with Tynjala and Heikkinen (2011) who argue that peer-mentoring enables collaborative learning and reflective dialogue.

ECTs involved in the peer-mentoring preferred to be paired with mentors in their subject field. The literature has sufficient evidence on the efficacy of subject or discipline

considerate mentor-mentee pairing (Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). In a study of the effects of mentoring, Smith and Ingersoll (2004) established that attrition during the first year of teaching was reduced by 18% where the mentor and the mentee were teaching different subjects. Where the mentor-mentee pairing was based on similar field, attrition was reduced by 30%. While ECT retention is the least worry for the South African education system, ECTs in this study still preferred to be assigned mentors in their respective disciplines as that had potential to create and sustain constructive dialogue on issues pertinent to their teaching.

Evidence from this study suggested that the mentor-mentee relationships were not sustained due to the problematic issues around mentor-mentee pairing such as failure to establish common ground due to the differences in subject disciplines. The study's findings, however, indicated that ECTs at Peculiar High School felt supported and were comfortable to ask for help even from other teachers who were not assigned as mentors. This was possible because the school had initiated its ECTs into a culture where asking for assistance was normal and welcomed. Put differently, ECTs had been conscientised to the idea of teaching in a cultural environment that encouraged collaboration where teaching and learning were viewed as a collective responsibility.

Even though many of the peer-mentoring relationships had not thrived, the mere introduction to the idea of mentorship within the school was a clear indication to the ECTs that collaboration was encouraged within the school. Such a school culture is described as an 'integrated professional culture' in which frequent and reciprocal interaction among novices themselves, and between novices and senior, more experienced colleagues is promoted (Kardos, 2001; Kardos & Johnson, 2007).

The analysis of the collective programmes that made up the schools' induction programme largely shows that it conceived induction as support. These programmes offered ECTs with support and guidance on various aspects on the teaching role successfully demonstrated that formal structures of induction support have a huge influence on ECTs practices in the classroom, job perception and ultimately on their

levels of commitment to the profession. ECTs in this school described their experiences of the schools' professional culture as encouraging and supportive.

### 7.2.2 ECT induction as monitoring with increased performance standards

The second archetype of ECT induction that was detected in this study was induction as monitoring with increased performance standards for teachers. This type was manifest in the approach to induction that was used in the district-based induction programme that was looked at in this study. Again, this archetype was looked at in terms of what its affordances were with the hope of deriving lessons from it to inform the development of an induction framework for South African public schools.

One of the main findings of this study in relation to the district-based induction programme was that the programme was specifically designed for new graduate teachers in the township schools, the majority of whom were Funza Lushaka bursary recipients. District officials reported that they had had complaints about township ECTs from a number of stakeholders (these included school principals, other teacher colleagues, parents and local banks) about how these young teachers were arrogant and failing to meet their job obligations. As a response to these complaints, the district put together an induction programme that can best be described as a politically charged monitoring and regulating tool that emphasised compliance to legal frameworks and standards set for teachers in the South African public service.

The content and characteristics of the induction programmes were thus biased towards ensuring that ECTs align with the mandates stated in various policy documents that govern the work of South African teachers such as the SACE code of professional ethics, Circular 65, the PAM document and the Norms and Standards for Educators. It follows that the district-based induction workshops covered aspects like conditions of service, roles and responsibilities of a teacher, classroom management and protocols for addressing disputes in the workplace, to mention but a few.

According to Pennanen et al. (2016), where teachers are viewed from a deficit point of view, induction is taken to be a solution to new teachers' problems such as high attrition, pedagogical incompetence and failure to comply with prescribed standards. Similarly, Tynjala and Heikkinnen (2011) point out that the use of high systematic control and inspection is an indication that teachers are recognised as incompetent in professional ethics and the use of effective pedagogies. Clearly, the district had the perception that ECTs had weaknesses that needed fixing. The challenge with this approach, however, is that increased pressure with minimal support often leads to teachers being frustrated and resentful of any initiatives from the district as was largely reported by many ECTs in this study.

As was indicated above, the district officials reported that their efforts to install induction were mainly for new teacher graduates who were Funza Lushaka bursary recipients and these teachers were mainly deployed in township schools. The data also pointed to the fact that all induction workshops facilitated by the district were done in venues closer to the township schools revealing that township schools were being prioritised over former Model C schools.

The research findings, however, indicated that some former Model C schools were on the verge of breaking in terms of appalling cultures of teaching and learning, especially due to the problem of learner indiscipline. In other words, ECTs in former Model C schools were in need of district support as much as township schools as the contexts of these schools had drastically changed (Lethoko et al., 2001). Anderson (2003) observed that most district support initiatives in Canada were failing to yield much because of incohesive practices that failed to meet district schools at their points of need. This concurs with Bantwini and Diko (2011) who argue that one of the major problems with district support in South Africa is that their support is often fragmented, poorly coordinated and usually does not work. The districts' focus on township schools was a reactive response to the problems that had been highlighted about ECTs in township schools. Rather, all its district schools were bound to benefit if the district had formulated its induction in a proactive developmental way that was clear on purpose and intention.

Smith and Ingersoll (2004) contend that the content and characteristics of induction programmes vary extensively depending on the purpose for which they were designed. The monitoring and regulatory stance assumed by the district was clearly inconsiderate of the former Model C schools as the district seemed to have formulated their approach using township schools' data only. A comprehensive district-based induction programme would have been structured around the professional learning of ECTs, emphasising collaboration between the township and former Model C schools. Wong et al. (2005) report that teachers in the U.S. lagged behind in professional learning due to isolation and a lack of collegial interchange.

A study of the role of district officials in Canada reported a major paradigm shift in learner achievement as soon as districts that were previously emphasising governance and leadership redirected their focus to improving instruction and leaner achievement by mobilising themselves and their resources to support instructionally-focused professional learning for teachers (Anderson, 2003). In other words, districts serve a mediating role between the state and the schools and rather than using that role to regulate the work of teachers, schools benefit more if more efforts were directed towards activities that support and improve teachers' instructional practices.

While it may be easier for district officials to be allocated time to conduct induction for ECTs as compared to HoDs, senior teachers and the SMTs, the question remains whether they are the best agents for effective ECT induction implementation for SA public schools. There are a number of factors that have to be looked at in order to understand the manner in which local education districts in South Africa carry out their functions. Firstly, local education districts in South Africa operate within confines of the mandates stipulated in their roles and responsibilities as stated in the Policy on the organisation, roles and responsibilities of education districts (National Education Policy Act number 27 of 1996, DBE, 2013). According to section 20.2 of this policy, the district, among many other duties, has the responsibility of supporting schools through "providing an enabling environment and organising provision and support for the professional development of

managers, educators and administrative staff members". The following section 20.3 articulates the districts' oversight and accountability roles which includes "accounting to the PDE for the performance of education institutions in the district". In other words, while the district has to support schools by building their capacity through various professional development activities, it exerts accountability pressure on schools to ensure they perform to the satisfaction of the PDE. The findings of this study, thus, confirm an enduring tension that has been cited in literature to conflate the effectiveness of the district between being an instrument for both support and accountability (Anderson, 2003; Bantwini & Diko, 2011; Narsee, 2006).

Although there were activities that focused on developing ECTs' teaching related practices, the evidence from the findings overwhelmingly show that the district-based induction programmes were emphasising compliance to legal frameworks, hence much resistance from the ECTs. The district officials themselves showed to be lacking a sense of self-efficacy knowing too well that most of their efforts were resisted in their district schools. Studies in South Africa have also established that one serious challenge with the district is that it operates at the intersection of a dual yet seemingly contrasting dichotomy of developmental support and accountability pressure (Bantwini & Diko, 2011; Narsee, 2006). In other words, the role of the local education districts in South Africa is contested as they are torn between providing developmental support and monitoring teachers and ensuring that they adhere to structures and standards set for them.

It is well recorded in the literature that both pressure and support by the district are necessary for continuous school improvement (Chinsamy, 2002; Fullan, 2002). There is, however, a need for establishing and maintaining a balance between the amounts of support provided and pressure applied in order to ensure rapid progress and high performance (Barber & Phillips, 2000). Education districts in South Africa have, unfortunately, been found wanting in respect of well proportioning these two as they tend to filter any task assigned to them through its roles and responsibilities filter, especially the oversight and accountability one.

A careful analysis of the perceptions of the interactions between the district and ECTs showed that, largely, the district offered little support but were over-emphasising their supervisory mandate. Because of this monitoring and supervisory aptitude, most district related interventions have not been previously well received in schools (Bantwini & Diko, 2011; Narsee, 2006). The same was gathered in this study. The district interpreted induction through its roles and responsibilities lens and approached it from a more supervisory angle and the resultant effect was that ECTs were repulsive to their efforts. Their induction sessions were largely reduced to mere information sharing sessions rather than developmental sessions that meaningfully contribute to ECTs' skill set of what they can actually use within their respective classrooms. This finding confirmed De Clercq's (2002; 2008) observation that South African education departments do not have the necessary knowledge, competences or experience and financial resource capacity to effectively support schools and teachers in their work challenges. In a nutshell, where induction takes a monitoring, supervisory and accountability stance, ECTs are less likely to grow their professional skills.

## 7.3 Staying or leaving?: Influence of varying experiences on ECTs practices and commitment to profession

The findings from this study illustrated that two main issues in the new school environment weigh heavily on ECTs and ultimately define their new job experiences: the technical aspects of the job and the affective social side of the job. Technical aspects of the teaching job involved aspects to do with the enactment of general pedagogical knowledge such as organising and managing the classroom, disciplining learners and other core teaching responsibilities. The affective and social side to teaching involved the web of relationships that ECTs were entangled into with different people within the school community. From the research that has presented in the previous chapter, there are clear indications that ECTs' experience with general pedagogical issues; the way in which relationships with people within their new workplaces play out and the varying experiences of induction support were emotionally significant. These experiences

evoked feelings of "affection or rejection, enthusiasm or depression, commitment or detachment" to the profession (Avalos, 2016, p. 503). In sum, teachers' early career experiences are powerful in the shaping of how they carry out their duties professionally as well influencing their overall levels of commitment to the profession.

The first few years of teaching are "an intense and formative time in learning to teach, influencing not only whether people remain in teaching but what kind of teacher they become" (Feiman-Nemser, 2001, p.1026). The experience of beginning teachers in their early career years are quite profound in that they have potential to determine whether they develop into competent and committed professionals or not.

In addition to the technical and the social challenges experienced on the job, the findings from this study have also demonstrated that ECTs' experiences of induction support or the absence of it, in their respective schools have far reaching implications. The availability or non-availability of induction support mainly affects ECTs practices in their various professional roles as well as the level of their overall commitment to the profession. According to Maphosa and Shumba (2010), South African public schools are lacking in respect of teacher professionalism as teachers are generally demotivated and are not entirely committed to teaching. One reason, amongst the many that have been put forward to explain this, is that teachers have been crippled by the schools' context which basically lacks a culture of teaching and learning (Christie, 1998; Lethoko et al., 2001). Similar effects were noticed amongst the many ECTs in this study as they reported to be largely dissatisfied with their job situations. They also confessed that their conditions of work were so frustrating that it was affecting their daily practices as well as influencing their levels of commitment to the profession. Paying attention to ECTs' experiences in this study was particularly imperative as the evidence generated therefrom provided important indications to the ECTS' future plans and career prospects. Given the ECTs' experiences that have been outlined in the sections above, this study identified three categories of ECTs in terms of the newly attained perceptions of their job situations and how they acted in them.

The first category was that of 'turnover intents'. These are ECTs who were so dissatisfied with their job situations that they were resolute on leaving the profession. ECTs, because of inadequate knowledge and skills, often exhibit low professional confidence which may, in some cases, ultimately lead to stress and conviction that they must leave the profession (Tynjala & Heikkinen, 2011). Similarly, Ryan et al. (2017) observed that high teacher stress levels result in high turnover intent. This was evident in the reflections of many of the ECTs who displayed stress symptoms due to their current job situation and believed that their lives could turn out better in other fields perceived to be more rewarding. Lindqvist and Nordanger (2016) concluded that individuals with broader aspirations who fail to acclamatise to the workplace context or the collective identity of the profession are more likely to leave the profession. Others indicated that they would have left if it were not for the Funza Lushaka bursary loan that they were paying back with some years of service. While these factors can be attributed to teachers wanting to leave or actually leaving the profession, there is overwhelming evidence that unsupportive organisational cultures contribute to teachers leaving (Lindqvist & Nordanger, 2016). The findings from this study have clearly illustrated that the major push factors were in respect of the unsupportive organisational and institutional cultures that thwarted ECT professional growth.

Literature has indicated that teacher attrition is less of a concern in South Africa as the rates are very low in comparison to western countries where as much as 50% of NQTs leave the profession after the first year (Darling-Hammond, 2000, 2003; Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). Bertram et al. (2006) pointed out that although rates for teacher attrition are low, South Africa has a challenge of teacher shortage hence the indication to leave the profession by ECTs in this study is worrying. While it could be argued that this study is simply reporting on evidence of ECTs expressions of intent, it can also be argued that this turnover intent could soon have an impact on the teacher shortage dilemma that already exists in South Africa (Bertram et al., 2006). According to Lindqvist and Nordanger (2016), teacher attrition is a process that begins way before teachers take the actual steps of leaving the profession. In other words, ECTs who

indicated that they want leave have already began the process of preparing their exit thought the impact is not immediately visible but will only be felt some years later.

The second category of ECTs identified in the findings of this study were dissatisfied ECTs who had decided to stay in the profession though half-heartedly. These ECTs had adopted the 'bad apple' characteristics as they were positioned to sustain the vicious cycle of poor teaching and learning in South Africa. Such ECTs were dissatisfied with their job situations that they were now intrinsically motivated to act only in their personal interests without a care for the learners or the profession. Mukeredzi and Mandrona (2013) argue that if individuals in a context are unhappy or disinterested that context can only breed disgruntled people harbouring feelings of helplessness, frustration and discontentment which ultimately results in negative outcomes. ECT who decided to stay half-heartedly despite the challenges in the context were more concerned about developing survival skills in the harsh environment rather than their growth as professional teachers. It was established in this study that many teachers were complacent about general professional development hence their unwillingness to provide induction support to ECTs. Such teachers were working in schools that generally have cultures that are not learning-oriented and ultimately, "the professional culture within which educators in a school do their work is embedded in the larger school culture" (Kardos, 2003, p. 9).

In other words, some ECTs adapted to and adopted beliefs, attitudes and practices of people whom they worked with as well as began to share similar low expectations of their learners and the school. Feiman-Nemser (2001) notes that sometimes it is regrettable to see new teachers being shaped by the culture of the school in which they work and often begin to take on beliefs and practices of their colleagues even if it is at odds with what they learnt in ITE. This, according to Kemmis and Grootenboer's (2008), is an indication that local arrangements and circumstances shape and condition the intentions, actions and experiences of individuals within a particular social setting.

The third and final category of ECTs can best be described as 'agentic individuals'. This group of ECTs, despite the harsh realities of the public schools' context, had decided to

stay and were willing to find ways to grow in the profession. Johnson et al. (2010) describe such ECTs as resilient. The decision to pursue the profession with growing engagement despite its complexities can be attributed to many factors that range from positive experiences of support, or as is stated by Avalos (2016), the teachers' personality.

Some teachers' motivation to become teachers and to stay in the profession comes from a deeper commitment to the ethical and moral purpose of contributing to society through teaching (Avalos, 2016; Johnson et al., 2010). Such teachers are able to remain committed even though the social environment as well as the broader policy landscape may be overwhelmingly constraining. The findings from this study showed that a few ECTs, especially from the township schools, possess this resilience quality and they demonstrated this when they used their agency to create opportunities for innovative collaborative engagement amongst themselves. Avalos (2016), however, argues that some teachers are prompted towards their professional development when they device strategies to deal with the challenges they are facing.

The findings from this study also showed that some ECTs were largely convinced to stay in the profession by positive experiences in their school community cultures and the quality of induction they received. Over and above the quality of induction support received, Johnson et al. (2010, p. 10) points out five conditions that support ECTs' resilience, namely, (i) relationships (social networks, human connections and belongingness); (ii) school culture (collaborative school cultures); (iii) teacher identity (if ECTs successfully integrate a range of personal, professional and structural discourses into ones identity); (iv) teacher's work (acknowledgement of how teacher's work is configured by the context with broader cultural, economic and political conditions) and (v) policies and practices (if official mandates and guidelines show a strong commitment to ECTs' wellbeing). Likewise, Avalos (2016) observes that the quality of induction support does not always forecast ECTs self-efficacy perceptions and commitment to the profession unless they are broadly located in an organisational environment that is conducive for meaningful induction to happen. Evidence of these conditions was gathered from Peculiar High School and it attests that the nature of the organisational

atmosphere matters. Most ECTs in this school indicated that the overall ambiance at the school was one of the main factors that persuaded them to project future prospects in the profession and a passion to continue pursuing those prospects with much enthusiasm. It is important, however, to bear in mind that while organisational or school-based factors are key in determining the retention of teachers in the profession, many other variables need to be taken into consideration. The broader policy terrain of intense accountability and teacher evaluation in the US for example has led to high levels of turnover intent and teacher attrition (Ryan et al., 2017).

## 7.4 What now?: Improving and sustaining practices of ECT induction

Tynjala and Heikkinen (2011) argue that the early years of a teachers' career are characterised by lowered professional self-confidence and stress symptoms thus necessitating induction support systems to be in place. The findings from this study demonstrated that ECTs, because of the challenges they experience with the quantity and complexity of the teaching responsibilities and the difficulties inherent in their schools' social contexts, suffer from low professional confidence and display a number of stress-related symptoms.

Most ECTs reported that they were feeling overwhelmed with their duties and this failure to cope with their workload and other complex job requirements was worsened by the absence of meaningful support structures within their schools. As a way to meet their various needs, ECTs suggested that their jobs would be eased if schools installed induction programmes to assist them during the early years of their career. This section discusses the different participants' suggestions of strategies that could be employed in South African public schools to develop, improve and sustain practices of meaningful ECT induction.

In as far as the suggestions for improved and sustained ECT induction were concerned, the findings from this study highlighted two important questions for consideration: (i)

What should the induction focus on? and (ii) How should the induction be organised (i.e. who is best positioned to facilitate the induction and where should it be done)?

Participants were in agreement that the South African teaching force, at the moment, is in need of professional development that enhances their classroom instructional practices for effective teaching and learning. In view of this national concern, participants suggested that ECT induction has to specifically focus on developing ECTs' professional skills most essential for teaching.

Guskey (2002) observes that professional development programmes vary in content and in format but most share the common purpose of improving professional practices, beliefs and understanding of teachers towards better students' learning. Wong (2004) in agreement posits that induction programmes take on different formats depending on the purpose and scope they intend to serve. However, there are certain components that underlie successful induction programmes and one key component amongst those is the incorporation of a strong sense of instructional support (Wong, 2004). ECTs especially raised a concern that while orientation, administrative support and mentorship are important aspects that should be part of an induction programme, more efforts should be carved towards instructionally-focused practical professional skills that relate to their day to day functions inside the classrooms.

Participants were indecisive about how ECT induction should be conducted in terms of who is best capacitated to provide the induction support and where the induction activities should be carried out. Two key instruments for implementing ECT induction were identified: the district and the school. The school-based induction model would offer on-site, context-embedded support to ECTs whilst the district-based model is traditionally known to provide off-site, context-removed induction support. It is important to note that literature has largely established the efficacy of on-site teacher professional development programmes over off-site ones (Maistry, 2008; Christie et al., 2005). One major weakness with off-site programmes has been the fact that that they provide teachers with new facts and skills rather than fostering teachers' continuous learning. District workshops in South Africa, for example, have the tendency of imparting

information concerning the implementation of a reform; or necessitating policy changes and this has often overshadowed the key underlying purpose of the activity to improve teaching practices (Maistry, 2008). Being far-removed from the context of practice, the district-based induction clearly failed to situate teachers' understanding of teaching in practical contexts. Maistry (2008) calls this the problem of 'transfer', as there is no immediate manifestation of the 'products' of a workshop or seminar knowledge into practical classroom practices. Akyeampong (2002, p.6) argues that new ideas and practices should be tried out on the spot, i.e. in the classroom context, which allows them to be "critiqued in the light of local culture, norms and conditions". Guskey (2002) concurs that teachers need to experience their learning in real classroom or school contexts not in 'sit and get' programmes that provide little opportunity for application. The district thus offered de-contextualised learning which presents challenges for ECTs to transfer the knowledge and skills learnt to their classroom settings.

Most off-site teacher development programmes also have a short duration as they are run for a few days or a few weeks. Li and Chan (2007, p. 343) describe these short duration programs as "one-shot, short-burst, quick-fix one-day event" suggesting that they try to equip teachers with skills within the very shortest of time. Sustained development can never be compressed in an event, meeting or activity; it has to be ongoing as learning the art and craft of teaching happens over time (Kardos, 2003). Brief workshop sessions are often characterised by of a lack of follow up at the school level. Brief off-site ECT teacher induction workshops, thus, do not foster sustained development of either teacher subject knowledge, or pedagogical knowledge. Li and Chan (2007) argue that such programmes are excellent and quite appropriate at the information dissemination level though they fall short of sustained development which requires in-depth and continuous engagement with teachers undergoing professional development. Unlike off-site ECT induction workshops, on-site programmes are much more likely to be sustainable as they extend over long periods of time. The extended duration allows for continuous dialogue and reflection through follow-ups and constructive feedback. This, according to Wong (2004), characterises high quality

induction programmes suggesting that ECTs in South African public schools are bound to benefit more from school-based induction programmes.

While participants were indecisive, it seems that on-site school-based induction has the strength of being context embedded and probably offers most relevance to ECTs' day to day activities. Insights from Wenger's (1998) social theory inform that learning is fundamentally a social phenomenon thus induction activities should adopt a perspective that places ECT's learning in the context of their lived experience; what Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999) call 'knowledge-in-practice'. Here ECTs are afforded an opportunity to gain the most essential knowledge for teaching which is practical knowledge embedded in practice. In other words, the contextualised nature of on-site induction allows ECTs access to information on new knowledge and skills, an opportunity to reflect on practice along with the opportunity for authentic practice and this has greater chances of ensuring sustained improvements in classroom practice.

Schools, therefore, ought to be the center of ECT induction implementation. This does not suggest that district-based induction activities are irrelevant. Li and Chan (2007) point out that off-site programmes are effective at the information disseminating level and they can do so to many teachers in a short space of time.

In order for substantial progress with the school-based induction to be made, change advocates such as Fullan (2002) and Feiman-Nemser (2001) argue that the culture of schools have to undergo total transformation. As was illustrated by the data, ECTs were always expected to adapt to their new school environments and it seemed as if they had nothing to offer to the schools. While a total transformation of the culture of South African public schools will take a long time to attain as it is difficult to unlearn embedded ways of doing things, what can be done in the meantime is to develop context customised induction programmes that focus on the development of what Keong et al. (2010) call 'resilient skills'. Such skills enable ECTs to cope with challenging workplace circumstances. An example of resilience in a difficult work environment in this study was demonstrated by ECTs in the township schools.

Having realised the difficulties that come with being launched into practice without any form of support, they took it upon themselves to initiate orientation and informal mentoring and induction for their peers. Instead of adopting a victim mentality, there is a place for ECTs' agency. The famous Mahatma Gandhi said, "You must be the change you want to see in the world." In other words, school life challenges are inevitable but ECTs can rise to the challenge and initiate change in their schools. They can develop peer-group communities of practices where they can discuss the challenges that they are facing as well as solve problems together. The mentoring model that can be adopted can be similar to the peer-group mentoring that has been highly successful in Finnish schools. In the Finnish example, 4 to 10 teachers meet both formally and informally with a mentor and discuss different aspects of their practice (Heikkinen et al., 2010; Tynjala & Hekkinen, 2011). These peer-group mentoring sessions have been reported to be highly successful as ECTs describe them as conducive to their professional development.

## 7.5 Chapter conclusion

This chapter basically discussed what framed ECT experiences in South African public schooling contexts. ECTs' experiences were mainly composed of challenges that ranged from difficulties with the quantity and complexity of the teaching responsibilities to appalling working conditions due to the highly political and hostile environment created by poor social relationships with other teacher colleagues. These challenges were fueled by a general lack of systematic induction support, as most ECTs had to develop coping and survival mechanisms in order to deal with the harsh realities.

In the midst of all this distress, two ECT induction archetypes were identified i.e. induction as support which was exemplified in the school-based induction programme and induction as monitoring with the increase of performance standards for teachers as was demonstrated by the example district-based induction initiative.

Drawing on the work of Kemmis and Grootenboer (2008), this chapter illustrated that the existing induction archetypes are as a result of particular site arrangements within the respective institutions. How ECT induction was understood, enacted and the social

relationships that underpinned it, to a large extent, had implications on whether or not ECTs were predisposed to professional learning and developing into competent professionals. This discussion illustrated that opportunities for this kind of learning were limited as most ECTs were barely exposed to induction support at all or had experienced the district-based induction programme which conceived induction as monitoring. Such a conception of induction, unfortunately, demotivated teachers and added little value to their day-to-day classroom realities. As a result, three categories of ECTs were identified: the 'turnover intents' who were resolute to leave the profession; the 'bad apples' who were intrinsically inclined to merely survive in the profession without the drive to influence positive change in their learners or in the profession, and lastly, the 'agentic individuals' who were self-directed to stay in the profession and use their agency in a developmental way.

The chapter further argued that in order to change ECTs' rhetoric about poor job situations, create opportunities for professional learning and enhance classroom practices, ECT induction needs to be developed and sustained. Careful consideration, however, has to be taken with regards to the induction form (i.e. who, where and how questions in the organisation of the induction) and its foci (i.e. content focus areas). The efficacy of on-site induction over off-site induction were discussed implying that school-based approaches were bound to be more productive as compared to district-based induction which is usually offsite and has the limitation of being removed from the context of practice. The following chapter concludes the study by summarising the whole study, drawing up lessons from the discussion, spelling out the main contributions of the study and the implications of the study for policy, practice and scholarship in general.

# Chapter 8: Summary, lessons learnt, recommendations, reflections and conclusions

## 8. Introduction

The previous chapter discussed the research findings in light of the reviewed literature and the theoretical perspective that provided a lens into the data. The previous chapters have been a build-up of a story of how pre-figured contextual arrangements in South African public schools either enable or constrain ECTs' professional learning and growth. This chapter concludes the study by way of summarising the main findings of the study, displaying the important lessons drawn from the research findings as well as spell out the main contributions of the study. This chapter also considers what this study has opened up as areas for further exploration and ends with my reflection on the PhD journey.

## 8.1 Summary of the study

This study sought to understand how ECTs are supported and provided with learning opportunities in their new school contexts to develop a range of professional skills. The study explored this by examining ECTs' experiences in their new working environments as well as looking into the existing practices of ECT induction and how these were vehicles of ECT learning and growth. In order to arrive at this understanding, this study had the following research objectives:

- to understand the main on-the-job/professional challenges experienced by ECTs;
- to explore and understand how ECTs were being inducted and professionally developed in their respective schools and district;
- to explore how existing practices of induction and professional development influence ECTs' practices and commitment to the profession; and finally
- to explore the means through which ECT induction and professional development practices can be improved and sustained.

To address the above research objectives, this study was organised into eight chapters and each impelled the story forward in the following ways:

**Chapter 1** basically set the scene for the whole study by introducing the problematic issues which were of concern to the study as well as the context in which the study was situated. This chapter spelt out that there was a lingering challenge of teacher quality in South Africa which has translated to poor ECT professional learning and growth in public schools due to the absence of both a policy and the practice of ECT induction.

The chapter explicated the rationale for the study by arguing that issues of teacher quality will continue to be recurring if opportunities for ECT professional development and induction were not explored. Chapter 1 further provided a background to the issue of teacher professional development and ECT induction in South Africa by unpacking the social, political and cultural issues imbued in the research context. It was clearly stated in Chapter 1 that the research problem would be especially looked at against a background where teacher professional development had not flourished due to the "ingrained negativity and scepticism" (De Clercq, 2013, p. 48) amongst the many long-serving teachers.

**Chapter 2** reviewed what was considered valuable evidence in the literature. In a nutshell, this chapter discussed how the central theme of the investigation related to other research and existing theories in the literature. The chapter considered the details of international, regional and South African research evidence of formal or programmatic induction support for ECTs in their first five years of teaching. This evidence was further looked at in terms of the various contextual factors affecting ECTs and how teacher induction and mentorship programmes were designed to respond to those various contextual factors. This chapter also illustrated how the main argument of this research has been integrated into the wider framework of the reviewed related literature.

**Chapter 3** discussed how this study was theoretically conceptualised by covering two aspects; firstly, it outlined the basic assumptions, beliefs, tenets and axioms of the theoretical perspective that was used as a lens to look into the data of this study. Practice theory was the overarching theoretical lens that was chosen and it is based on the belief that people and society exist in a mutually constitutive relationship where people's actions as social beings

shape and transform society; and in turn, society shapes and transforms people's actions. The particular theoretical work, couched within Practice Theory, used in this study was the work of two social theorists, Stephen Kemmis and Peter Grootenboer called the Theory of Practice Architectures (2008). This theory basically argues that practices do not happen in a vacuum; rather they occur in a context that has certain arrangements or set-ups that either enable or constrain a practice.

Secondly, the chapter justified the selection and use of the chosen theoretical perspective. One of the main reasons the Theory of Practice Architectures was most suitable for this study was that it enabled in-depth insight into the nature of professional interactions amongst ECTs and their peers, their SMTs and with the district officials as well as the affordances and constraints of those interactions.

**Chapter 4** explicated the study's methodological approach in terms of how it was designed and conducted. Firstly, the chapter provided details on the philosophical and theoretical orientation of the study that informed the methodological choices that were used. This study conceived the social world from an interpretivist standpoint where the subjective viewpoints of the participants were taken to constitute social reality. To arrive at participants' viewpoints data were generated through the use of qualitative research instruments that included focus group interviews, individual interviews, observations and documents analysis. Lastly, the chapter briefly outlined the interactive model to data analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Miles et al., 2013) and its various processes that were instrumental in the organisation and analysis of the data.

**Chapter 5** provided a detailed descriptive account of the participants as well as the contextual conditions within which they worked. This chapter particularly highlighted the schools' physical and socio-economic conditions as they were important contextual arrangements that play a significant role in shaping ECTs' experiences.

**Chapter 6** presented the research findings by extensively exhibiting verbatim excerpts from the data. The research findings were organised in relation to the study's research questions and the main themes that emerged were:

- **ECTs' experiences of their professional roles**

  The findings revealed that ECTs were finding several aspects of their professional roles challenging. These included struggling with classroom organisation and management especially instilling classroom discipline, organising learners and teaching activities, overwhelming workload in the form of administration duties (both school and district requirements), overloaded timetables, teaching many subjects and teaching multiple grades, and poor time management due additional work such as extra and co-curricular duties.

- **ECTs' experience of their work environment**

  In addition to the challenging work, ECTs found the working environment equally challenging as it was rife with hostility and generally unconducive to their learning and professional growth.

- **Nature of existing practices of ECT professional development**

  Generally, schools were unsupportive to ECTs as evidenced by the lack of basic orientation and the occurrence of support in the form of vague incidences of mentoring, peer mentoring and shadowing. Some evidence of ECT induction surfaced and these were identified through two induction archetypes: one that conceived induction as support (school-based programme) and the other that looked at induction as monitoring and increasing standards for teachers (district-based induction programme).

- **The influence of ECTs' experiences on their view of the profession**

  Generally, ECTs are dissatisfied because of the myriad of challenges in the profession. The study thus identified three categories of ECT dissatisfaction: those so dissatisfied that they are looking to exit the profession, dissatisfied ECTs continuing with the profession and do the job half-heartedly and those who, nevertheless, are willing to stay and grow in the profession.

- **Perceptions about improving practices of ECT professional development**
  The study also found that the district and the school are the key stakeholders that have the responsibility of inducting ECTs. However, certain conditions have to be met in order for effective ECT induction to be achieved. For example, proper and comprehensive training of both school-based and district-based inducting personnel needs to be seriously considered in order to enhance the capacity of these two stakeholders to provide effective ECT induction.

**Chapter 7** reflected on the research findings in relation to the reviewed literature and relevant concepts from the Theory of Practice Architectures. Certainly, in order to make sense of the evidence presented there was need to have an understanding of the context. This was brought in through the use of the Theory of Practice Architectures. This chapter brought to light what people said about ECTs, the kinds of activities that ECTs were involved in as well as the web of relationships they were involved in and how these pre-figured local arrangements within those school environments influenced ECTs' experiences as well as how the idea of induction was conceptualised.

**Chapter 8**, presents a succinct summary of the whole study by highlighting the important lessons from the study as well as spell out the key contributions of the study.

## 8.2 What was learnt?

Merely understanding the experiences of ECTs in South African public school and highlighting some of the efforts that have been put in place to provide ECTs with induction support is highly inadequate. Important lessons were drawn from the experiences of ECTs and the example induction initiatives and what follows is a presentation of the important lessons as well as their implications for policy and practice:

### 8.2.1 Lessons from the experiences of ECTs

The engagement with ECTs across the five schools that participated in this study yielded extensive details regarding ECT's experiences in the South African public schooling context.

The highlights from the numerous conversations with ECTs were that they were finding the responsibilities associated with the teaching job very difficult and they were mainly dissatisfied with the working environment that presented very little opportunities for learning and further professional growth. While those challenging experiences have been discussed extensively earlier in the previous chapter, I have extracted two main lessons from that discussion that are important to reflect on when considering the assembling of ECT support structures. The two lessons are:

- **ECTs need to be supported with the technical aspects of the teaching job**. This means providing assistance with pedagogical aspects such as organising learning activities, lesson preparation and delivery. ECTs also need to be guided on a whole range of administrative responsibilities which include managing the class register, filing, record keeping and

- **Schools need to consciously create conducive environments ideal for ECT learning and professional growth**. ECTs fail to perform to the best of their abilities in hostile school environments thus principals and SMTs need to cultivate collegial working relations in their schools to ensure ECTs are socialised into school cultures that promote learning and growth.

### 8.2.2 Lessons from the available evidence of ECT induction

Overall, the study established that many South African public schools do not invest in ECT induction. New teachers are launched into professional practice without meaningful orientation or induction. Rather, they are left to devise their own survival strategies which, as was demonstrated by the ECTs' experiences in this study, leave them frustrated and dissatisfied with the profession.

The study, however, came across two ECT induction initiatives: a school-based induction programme and a district-based one. This study adopted a critical mind-set and provided a detailed analysis of these two induction initiatives by sifting out what seemed to work well and what was not working and derived important lessons therefrom to inform a proposal induction framework for ECTs in South African public schools.

While I used the available evidence to offer suggestions, I do acknowledge that evidence is never conclusive as it comes with a large degree of uncertainty. The evidence from the existing induction initiatives does, however, offer stakeholders probabilities, indications and tentative conclusions about how ECT induction is likely to play out in some South African schools and districts and the potential pitfalls to be acutely attentive to when considering ECT induction in South African public schools.

#### 8.2.2.1 Lessons from the school-based induction initiative

A key concern of this study was to explore and gain understanding, where ECT induction practice was available, the intricacies of the processes that were used to induct and professionally develop ECTs. As was indicated earlier, one former Model C school out of the five that participated in this study had a functioning school-based induction programme. In order to draw lessons from this school-based induction programme, I have attempted to highlight the positive and negative attributes of this school-based induction programme and compiled aspects that seemed to work and those that were not working. In particular, I looked at the form and foci of the orientation programme, the induction workshop meetings, the mentoring component and the role of SMTs and HoDs in the overall induction programme. Below are the important lessons derived from an intent analysis of each component of the school-based induction programme:

- **The orientation programme** was one of the most successful components of the schools' induction programme and had a number of strong points that are worth emulating. Firstly, the orientation was scheduled on the school calendar and took place in January, a day before schools open. The fact that this session appeared on the school calendar meant that it was prioritised and immediately sent a message to ECTs that the school was organised and took their appointment seriously. The orientation session was also held at an ideal time before the school was formally running and this meant that adequate time was allocated to provide ECTs with information about the school and other information appropriate early on in the year. Because the whole day

was devoted to the orientation session, ECTs were afforded the opportunity to ask questions on aspects not understood well.

Secondly, the schools' orientation programme assembled key supporting personnel to assist the ECTs in various ways. The overall induction programme was run by the SMT and an induction team which comprised of two deputies, a lead mentor and an assistant mentor. The ECTs were hired to teach different subjects and each subject represented required the respective HoDs to be present. It was also established that each ECT was assigned a mentor to work closely with throughout their first year. All these people were required to attend the orientation programme so that they were introduced to the ECTs and the session was highly interactive and they were given an opportunity to speak to the respective mentors and HoDs about different aspects related to their work. This was especially important as it helped ECTs familiarise themselves with other colleagues as well as get assurance that help and support was available in that new school environment.

The third important lesson that can be derived from the school-based orientation was that the focus of the orientation programme was both relevant and meaningful as it introduced ECTs to their new working environment as well as what was required of them. ECTs were introduced to their colleagues; taken on a school tour; provided with information about the background of the school and the school community, the school policies, rules and procedures, introduced briefly to filing and record keeping, given information about the expectations of the DBE and information about extra and co-curricular activities.

Another important quality of the orientation was its comprehensiveness. From the description of the aspects that were covered, it is clear that the core issues around ECTs' new job responsibilities were spelt out in greater detail. This is an important lesson as providing such guidance eases ECTs' early days on the job as they will be aware of what is expected of them, where to sit in the staffroom, where their classes

are, and what they will be teaching along with the resources needed for all they have to do.

The fourth and last strong point of the school-based orientation programme was that it provided ECTs with relevant and critical information early in the year. While the whole orientation day composed of discussions around ECTs' responsibilities, they were, in addition to the information discussed, provided with a file with a paper trail of most of the issues that had been discussed for future reference. Amongst the information shared in the New Educator file were information bearing documents such as the SACE code of professional ethics, PAM document, Circular 65 i.e. government policy documents detailing the roles and responsibilities of teachers in South Africa as well as school generated documents explicating the schools' policies, rules and procedures; information about the roles of mentees and mentors and other general information about the school. This take-away file was important for ECTs' future reference and the information therein was relevant so that they quickly become aware of the expectations the school had of them as well as of their employer i.e. the GDE.

- **The induction workshop meetings** were the central components of the school-based induction programme and several lessons can be drawn from them. The first important aspect is related to the organisation of the workshop meetings. The school had four workshop meetings throughout the year; one meeting per term. Scheduling these meetings across the year is an important lesson because periodic meetings gave ECTs a sense that support and professional development within the school was ongoing. It is also crucial to note that schools often cite time constraints as one of the main hindrances to providing induction support to ECTs. Placing one meeting per term eased the burden on the inducting team as well as the ECTs given that they were already overwhelmed with the other work that they needed to do.

Another important lesson from the induction workshop meetings has to do with the careful selection of content that was covered during those workshops. The first

workshop meeting was the Orientation Programme that basically introduced ECTs to the school environment. This workshop meeting, as was explained above, was held in the first term and generally covered most essential information required for beginners. The second one was the Safety and Security workshop held in the second term where guidelines and procedures for an emergency evacuation were shared. The third meeting was a Feedback Session where ECTs reflected on their experiences in the school and on the various support structures available; and the last workshop covered Examination procedures. What is significant to learn from these workshops is that they were designed to meet the needs of ECTs at different intervals during the first year on the job. The orientation, for example, came right at the beginning and equipped ECTs with just-in-time information as they started out in the new school. During the middle two terms the meetings factored in the Safety and Security workshop and the Feedback session, both appropriate at the time to settle the ECTs into the school routines as well as get a sense of how they were settling into the school community. The Feedback was also very important as it helped shape the induction programme to be more sensitive to ECTs' needs. The Examination procedures workshop was scheduled in the last term because that is the time when ECTs, for the first time, participate in Cycle tests and national examinations.

- **The mentoring component** was one of the main pillars of the school-based induction programme. The mentoring team was given leadership and direction by two deputies with the assistance of two senior teachers, one aided in the capacity of Lead Mentor and the other as Assistant Mentor. What can be emulated in other schools is the level of involvement of the two deputy heads. It was learned that they spear-headed the initiative to provide induction support to new teachers in their school and they continued as the focal personnel running the workshops and facilitating many of the discussions. In order for ECT induction to be successful it is of paramount importance that members of the SMT occupy significant roles to provide the much needed leadership and direction to the induction programme.

Also important to note is that the two deputy principals brought in two other senior teachers to participate and assist in the lead mentoring team. This arrangement had mutual benefits; ECTs were afforded an opportunity to learn from the wisdom of senior teachers' wealth of experience; and senior teachers were developing crucial mentorship skills. The principal and assistant mentoring positions were also rotated amongst the senior teachers in the school ensuring that all teachers were afforded an opportunity to learn and grow as they provided support to ECTs. In addition to the lead mentors, each new teacher was assigned an individual mentor whom they worked closely with. As was indicated earlier, the assigned mentors were in their second year in school having being mentored themselves in the previous year.

A significant lesson for immediate uptake here is that the school used a combination of mentoring approaches; traditional mentoring where senior and more experienced teachers transfers knowledge to the new teachers and peer mentoring where the relationship between the mentor and mentee was more reciprocal as both had something to learn from each other. The adoption of these two mentoring styles exuded richness in that it promoted collegiality by acknowledging that all teachers in the school could make a contribution to the professional learning and growth of ECTs.

It is also imperative to highlight that the peer mentoring relationships were not very successful and the most important lesson from that is that mentor-mentee pairing needs to be carefully considered in order for the relationship to be productive. Relationships in the peer mentoring arrangements were more fruitful where mentor and mentee were teaching the same subject(s). Although the mentorship can be about generic aspects of the job, it seems this relationship is more sustained and productive where the mentorship is subject-specific. In other words, adopting subject-specific peer mentoring promises consistent mentor-mentee engagement as opposed to random pairing of mentors and mentees.

- **HoDs** had a significant role in the school-based induction programme and having these highly experienced individuals as part of an induction programme is highly

recommendable because they can be extremely influential in the effective integration of ECTs in the departments as well as in the school community. HoDs are an important source of support for ECTs as they are subject specialists and they can provide the much needed assistance with subject-specific issues right in the departments where ECTs are placed.

Below is a diagrammatic representation of the important elements from the school-based induction programme that could be replicated and inform the coordination of ECT induction at the school level:

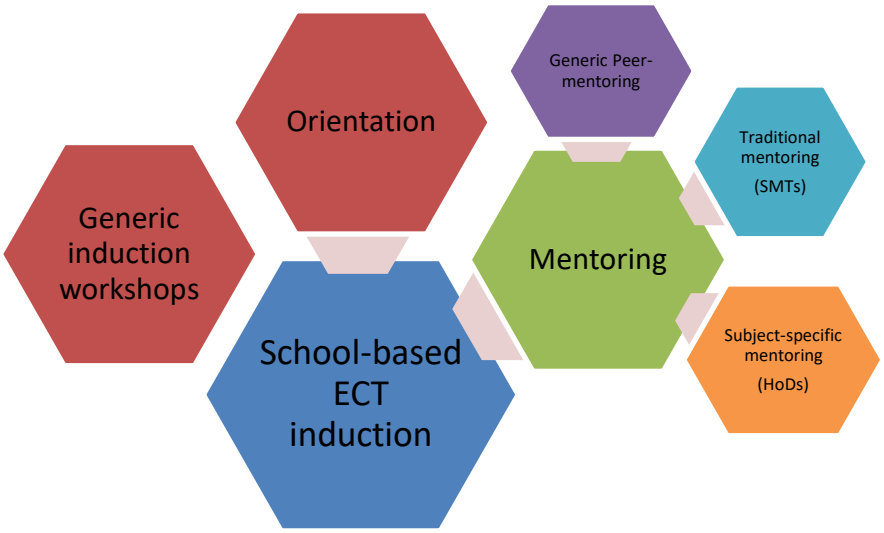



**Figure 5: School-based ECT induction model**

### 8.2.2.2 Lessons from the district-based induction initiative

This study also investigated how the concerned district was involved in the induction and professional development of ECTs in its district schools and the study revealed that the district had an induction programme mainly developed to target new teacher graduates who

were beneficiaries of the Funza Lushaka bursary scheme. Similar to the approach undertaken in looking at the school-based induction initiative, I have highlighted the positive and negative attributes of the district-based induction programme's form and foci. I paid particular attention to the generic induction workshops, subject-specific induction workshops, the different roles played by the four district units that were involved in the induction programme i.e. TDU, DM and the THRS. Below is a detailed exposition of the important lessons derived from these various elements that make up the district-based induction programme:

- Generic and subject-specific induction workshops were the main activities that characterised the district-based induction programme. The generic workshops covered aspects relevant to all newly hired teachers such as conditions of service, roles and responsibilities of a teacher, classroom management and protocols for addressing disputes in the workplace. The subject-specific workshops were meant to cover aspects peculiar to particular subjects such as specific pedagogical issues. However, a closer analysis of the subject-specific workshops showed that they failed to address in-depth subject-specific matters. Rather, they were identical to the generic workshops. While it was a noble idea to consider discipline specific induction, it did not work well thus more productive for district to focus on generic workshops.

  The district induction workshops were carried out at teacher centres and district halls that all seemed to be closer to township schools hence the attendees were mainly ECTs from the township schools. Reflection on the practice of the district revealed unprecedented bias towards teachers in township schools and neglect of those in former Model C schools. There was emphasis of building capacity within Funza Lushaka graduate teachers. By doing so, the district projected itself in a way that seemed as if it was a district that served township schools only. An important lesson thus is that any efforts by the district to provide induction support for ECTs should also be considerate of former Model C schools as well. This study demonstrated that ECTs in the former Model C schools were also facing challenges in

their contexts and would stand to benefit from the information provided in the district-based induction workshops as well.

It is also worthwhile to sift a lesson from the districts' approach to ECT induction. The district developed content based on the complaints about Funza Lushaka graduate teachers they received from different stakeholders. As a result, the district assumed a reactive stance that sought to address ECTs' deficits and this even affected their approach to the whole process as they emphasised compliance to legal frameworks rather than ECTs' professional learning. Instead of assuming a reactive stance to the process, it is important for districts to take a more proactive approach where they carefully consider the purpose for which they are designing ECT induction. Currently, the South African teacher development space ought to be more concerned about enhancing teacher quality for improved teaching and learning in the public schooling context.

- Role of different district units i.e. TDU, DM and THRS: Normally, the TDU is wholly responsible for overseeing and facilitating teacher development activities for its district schools. What can be taken as an important lesson from this district's approach to induction is that TDU collaborated with other units to provide specialists' knowledge to the districts' newly hired teachers. Because each unit had specialised knowledge, the compilation of the content that was covered from the different units represented was rich and most importantly ECTs were afforded an opportunity to know the various units within the district and how they could make use of their services.

  THRS was invited to cover the conditions of service, salaries, housing allowance, taking leave, recognition of further qualifications and termination of service. It is quite commendable that THRS came on board as such information is both relevant and important for ECTs and is information that is not easily accessible. In addition, DM was invited to cover grievance procedures in the workplace, what constitutes acts of misconduct in the public service and the disciplinary code and procedures. These

aspects were discussed with reference to the relevant legal frameworks and this worked well as, again, this information is pertinent to ECTs so that they are aware of their rights in the workplace as well as the limits within which they work in.

TDU facilitated discussions on work ethics following guidelines outlined in the SACE code of professional ethics; the Predictability Framework which is essentially about curriculum management where details of the role of a teacher are clarified. They also discussed the seven roles and responsibilities of a teacher as per the PAM document and the Norms and Standards for Educators; the expected number of working hours per day, term and year and outlined the IQMS process as well as how ECTs should go about developing their personal IQMS files. Evidently, these focus areas are pertinent and need to be adopted in any ECT induction framework in South Africa.

Below is a diagrammatic representation of the important elements from the district-based induction programme that could be replicated and inform the coordination of ECT induction at the district level:

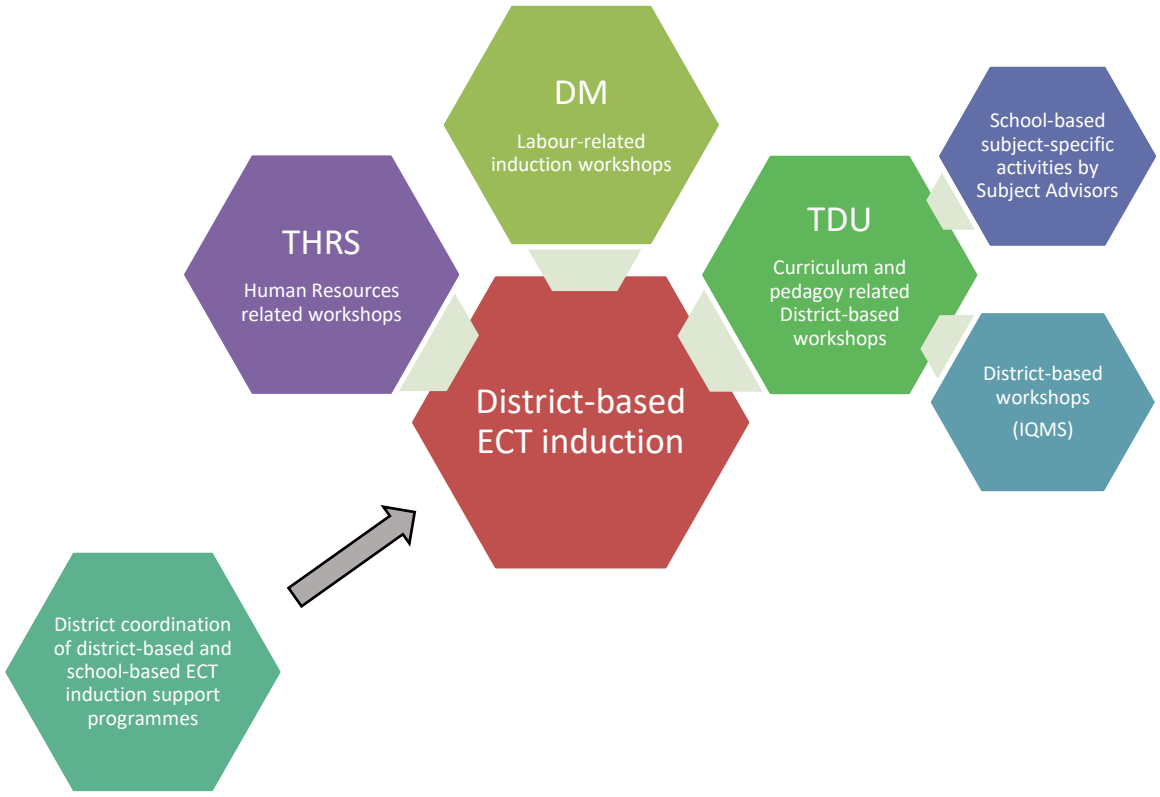



**Figure 6: District-based ECT induction model**

### 8.2.3 Implications for policy and practice

At the moment, the South African DBE has no policy for ECT induction and based on the findings of this study and the lessons drawn, I propose a few points for consideration in the drafting of an ECT induction policy framework:

- Careful consideration of the purpose, scope and intended outcomes of the induction framework is imperative.
- Induction framework needs to be accompanied by a carefully considered implementation plan that spells out the roles of different stakeholders such as schools and districts as well as specific roles of the inducting personnel.

While the South African education system has been known to possess excellent policy frameworks that look good on paper, it has also been known to be very poor in the

implementation of those policies. The existence of a policy document does not translate to practice. In light of this, I propose a number of practical steps that can be taken as a way forward towards practicing what the above policy recommendations suggest:

- There is need to acknowledge existing realities. Generally, there is a serious deficiency of capacity in South African districts to provide effective instructionally-focused ECT induction support and general professional development to teachers. District officials need to be trained in order for them to be capacitated to provide instructional support to teachers.
- The findings of this study as well as the literature have demonstrated the need for SMT to take the leading role in as far as ECT orientation and induction are concerned. This role for the SMT needs to be emphasised in schools as well as in the various training sessions organised and conducted by the district. The proposed ECT induction framework for South African public schools above has to be managed well in order for it to be sustained. Figure 7 below illustrates how ECT induction is to be developed and managed in South Africa:

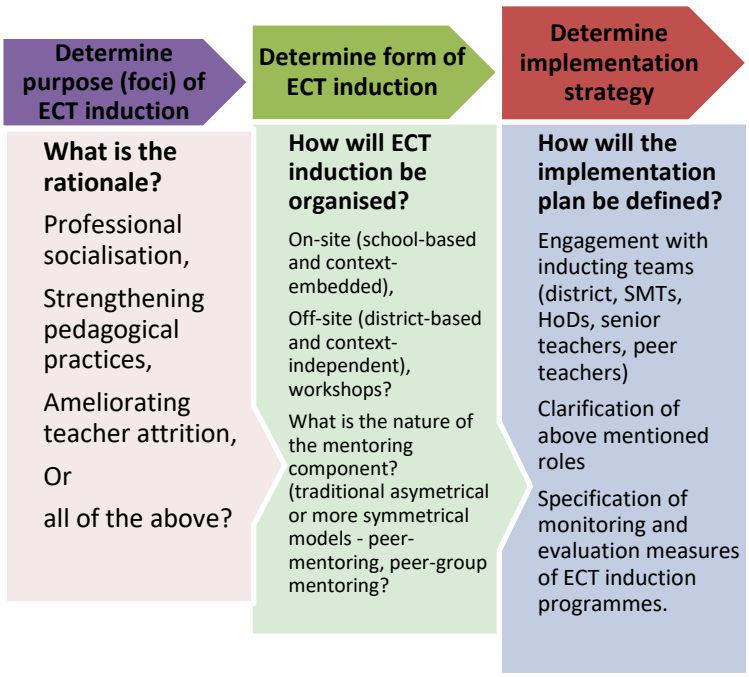



**Figure 7: Developing and managing ECT induction in South Africa**

### 8.2.4 Putting it all together: the contribution

Considering all the observations that have been made in this study, this thesis puts forward a number of contributions to the body of knowledge. After synthesising key aspects from the preceding discussions, I present below that:

- Using the conventional phenomenological research design, this research produced findings that add to what is known about the difficulties that ECTs encounter upon assuming full teacher responsibilities as well as the inherent contextual challenges in their new working environments. While highlighting ECTs' challenges may not be new to the literatures, this study raises questions about the previously held view that experiences and working conditions of teachers in former Model C schools are eased due to the legacy of privilege from the apartheid era. This study demonstrated that ECTs in some of those contexts are equally struggling as the culture of teaching and learning in those schools continue on a downwind. The study suggests that the usual formulation of former Black schools as the ones that need intervening restorative strategies is problematic because it perpetuates the separatist view of South African schools leading to the neglect of some former Model C schools that are in dire need.
- This research has also demonstrated innovation in conducting empirical research by modifying an existing instrument. This study brings narrative biographical enquiry methods in the focus group interviews with ECTs where cumulative interviews followed up the focus group interviews to get to the depth of ECTs' experiences as they told their career stories. Narrative biographical methods are normally used exclusively in narrative researches where participants' stories are reported in detail and analysed using narrative research tools. This study did not adopt narrative research analysis strategies to this data but merely used the narrative research gathering techniques only. The use of narrative biographical enquiry methods in a phenomenological study enabled an in-depth inquiry into ECTs' experiences which allowed the exposition of new insights about the challenges ECTs have in South African public schooling context as was elaborated on above.
- This research also combines empirical, conceptual and theoretical resources in a novel way. The study brings together key elements emerging from the findings,

concepts from the reviewed literature and concepts of the Theory of Practice Architectures in order to shed new light on factors that influence ECTs' practices and commitment to the profession. This eclectic approach enabled the understanding that ECTs in different schools are exposed to different experiences of induction support. This shows, as is argued by the Theory of Practice Architectures, that different sites have distinctive arrangements that shape what is said, done and the nature of social relationships in those sites which ultimately influences the way induction is understood and enacted. Using this eclectic approach challenges the current body of knowledge about ECT induction as it shifts our attention from generalist understanding of the key purposes of ECT induction such as the socialization of new teachers, strengthening of pedagogical practices and or ameliorating teacher attrition. Rather, this study has argued that distinctive site arrangements determine the outcome of an induction initiative hence it is important to understand the purpose of induction in relation to a particular context.

- The last, and probably the most notable contribution of this study, is that this research adds to the understanding of ECT induction in South Africa by reporting on existing practice. This is important for a number of reasons and the most prominent of these is to tell what does and what does not work, especially at a time in South Africa when the DBE and various research institutions are busy contemplating on various issues around the installation of policies to guide the induction of ECTs. This study reveals, for the first time in South Africa, how ECT induction is conceptualised and implemented from a school and a district point of view, and highlights both the strong as well as the problematic aspects around these two approaches to ECT induction. Using these insights, the study further reflects on contextual arrangements that require serious consideration to increase the potential of the school and the district to be effective agents for ECT induction. These insights are invaluable as both the school and the district are pivotal institutions that are conceived as key instruments for teacher professional development policy implementation in South Africa. In view of this, this study proposes the adoption of an ECT induction framework in South African public schools that has the following features:

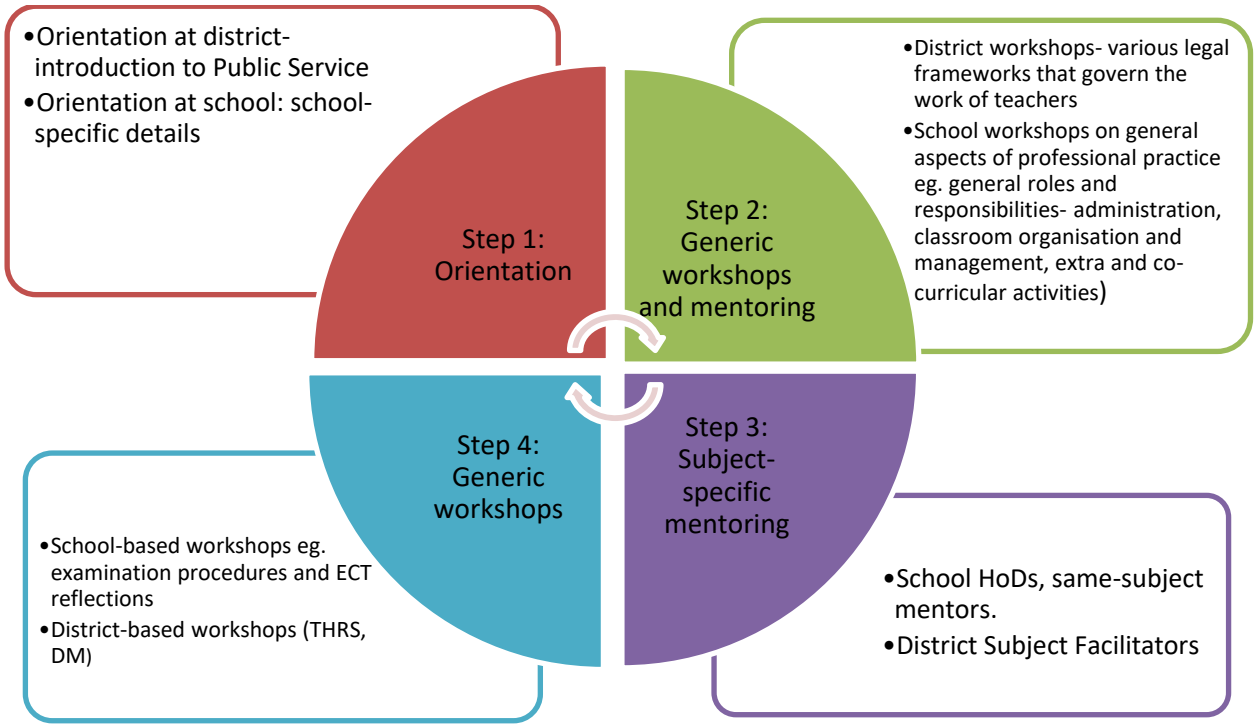



**Figure 8: School-District-based ECT induction model**

Figure 8 above shows the proposed model for ECT induction for South African public schools. The proposed ECT induction model firstly acknowledges that both the school and the district are key centers for ECT induction thus suggesting that district and schools work together so that there is no overlap and repetition of responsibilities. The School-District-based model also suggests approaching ECT induction in a series of steps from the time ECTs are hired:

**Step 1**: Orientation, firstly at the district level as a way of welcoming and introducing ECTs to the Public Service. Secondly, ECTs are to be orientated at the school of deployment by a lead mentoring team. This school-based orientation could include a tour of the school, introduction to HoDs and mentors and specific outlines of what the school expects of the ECTs as well as introduce them to various personnel who will be available to assist them within the school. Both these orientation sessions, ideally, should occur before schools open so that they are afforded adequate time.

**Step 2**: Generic workshops on various legal frameworks that govern the work of teachers can be conducted at the district. In these sessions, the district can take ECTs through the policy guiding frameworks such as the Employment of Educators Act, PAM document and

the SACE code of professional ethics as a way of guiding them on acceptable conduct with regards to the learners, the community and the profession itself. Schools, in addition to what the district covers, can conduct generic workshops on general aspects of professional practice as well as assign ECTs peer mentors who can assist on general aspects about the school practices and routines.

**Step 3**: Subject-specific mentoring to be school-based but will involve school HoDs, same-subject mentors and district Subject Facilitators and these will be working collaboratively to support ECTs with subject-matter and pedagogy related issues.

**Step 4**: Generic workshops can be conducted at both the school and the district. The school-based workshops can facilitate discussions on examination procedures and provide an opportunity for ECTs to reflect on their experiences throughout the year. The district-based workshops on the other hand can cover aspects related to ECT employment conditions under the guidance of the THRS and DM units. It is important to note that these four stages should all be covered during the first year of teaching and ECTs can repeat steps 2, 3 and 4 up to the third year of employment so that they gain clarity and confidence in the different aspects covered in the model.

While it is of paramount importance to spell out a series of steps to follow from orientation to full-fledged induction for newly hired ECTs, it is equally important to highlight baseline enabling conditions required within both schools and districts to activate the new proposed model as well as how to develop such enabling conditions. The key baseline conditions are:

- Induction can create opportunities for ECTs' professional growth and this demands that the induction is well-conceived. This means that school principals and deputies need to put in place a lead induction and mentoring team that will be responsible for organising and facilitating the ECT induction activities. Similarly, districts need purposeful leadership within the TDUs that drive the induction programme and activities for ECTs in its district schools.
- The proposed School-District-based ECT induction model requires that communication lines between the district and schools remain open so that both parties are aware of what induction activity is being covered and when is it done. A

collaborative working relationship between schools and the district, therefore, needs to be developed and maintained.

## 8.3 Unanswered questions: recommendations for further research

This study investigated how early career teachers are inducted in some SA public schools and the meanings they made of their experiences during the formative years of their career. I have highlighted the positive and negative experiences attributable to factors related to the school context, school culture, school-based mentoring, district-based support, peer support collaborative reflection sessions. The study established that early career teachers are feeling overwhelmed with the professional demands of teaching and this is worsened by the lack of guidance and support. I have also provided lessons from the best available induction support from a district perspective and from a schools' perspective. It remains unclear, however, how other potential induction providing institutions would conceptualise and approach ECT induction thus this study recommends future research to take the following directions:

- Literature argues for the development of partnerships between schools and ITE universities to cooperatively tackle ECT induction but little information is available in as far as clearly articulating how those partnerships should look like. In other words, there is need for research that provides indications as to who within the university and the schools will be responsible for what and how those individuals will be working collaboratively.
- While this study has provided best available evidence of a district and a schools' approach to ECT induction, it would be fruitful for the South African teacher professional development literature to expand on this study and provide an in-depth evaluation of these two in terms of which institution is best positioned to provided induction for ECTs in South African public schools.
- One limitation of this study that is noteworthy is that it came up with conclusions about the experiences of ECTs in high schools and did not generate any data about the South African public primary school context. While it can be assumed that there are certain challenges identified in this study that are generic and can also apply to

primary school ECTs, the findings of this study cannot be taken to represent the status quo in South African public primary schools. This study has, however, opened up a new discussion about how each context has prefigured conditions that influence ECT support practices. I therefore acknowledge that the primary schooling context is different and will most likely present its own configurations thus am arguing that research in this context needs to be pursued.

- The Theory of Practice Architectures provided an account of the macro contextual conditions of schools in South Africa as well as an explanation of the micro institutional factors such as school related politics that, in different ways, impact on the professional socialisation and learning of ECTs. The theory was, however, limited in its capacity to uncover many other individual factors that influence teachers' actions, thoughts and ultimate decision making processes. In order to fully understand ECTs' decisions to stay or leave the profession, it is suggested, therefore, that further studies be conducted to probe into personal characteristic issues like attitudes, emotional dispositions and levels of resilience of the different ECTs.
- While further research has been proposed in the primary schooling context, I also recommend further probing about how the proposed model of induction might need to be adapted to other schooling contexts in South Africa. It would be worthwhile to invest in research that explores how the proposed induction model could best be used in rural schools which constitute a greater population of schools in a (South African) developing world contexts.
- This study has opened up questions about the consequential challenge of teacher deprofessionalisation given the growing concerns over learner ill-discipline. Exploring the process of teacher deprofessionalisation and how to address the consequences of learners' ill-discipline is a genuine South African, in fact worldwide challenge that deserves considerate attention.

## 8.4 Conclusion

Overall, sufficient evidence was found to support the general belief that ECT induction will ease teachers' experiences in their new school contexts. In addition to this, the study found that well-conceived ECT induction would highly increase ECT's professional practices and urge them to stay and be more committed to the profession. Significantly, the study managed to propose an induction framework for South African public schools that has potential to enhance the practice of ECT induction. This proposed framework takes into consideration the invaluable role that can be played by the district and the school as the two main drivers for effective ECT induction and professional development.

## Epilogue: Reflections on the PhD journey

Putting this thesis together was a process fraught with highs and lows. This reflection presents some of my crucial PhD moments, some were encouraging and some were retrogressive and had the potential to completely undermine the completion of this thesis. The reflection is organised into three sections: Thinking about doing a PhD; Doing the PhD and; Life happening during the PhD.

Once in a while I would record some of my experiences in a journal and a reflection on my PhD journey would be inadequate and inauthentic if I do not share some of the excerpts journaled.

### Thinking about doing a PhD

I had indicated to my supervisors that I wanted to pursue a PhD. One of them encouraged me to look into teacher induction in South Africa as the DBE was beginning to commission research in that area. Of course, my area of research interest was teacher professional development but I had not explored anything on teacher induction. I was fascinated by the idea of teacher induction, and then the reading began. Like most of the ECTs in this study, I almost felt like I was thrown into the deep end because I was basically venturing into an area that was unknown to me. I had a lot of doubts and was skeptical and was thinking to myself:

*Do I even know anything about teacher induction? I do know much about teacher professional development. Let me start there.*

*11/04/2015*

### Doing the PhD

As I sunk deeper into the readings, I realised I could relate my own experiences as a new teacher some years back. I was never inducted, the literature spoke to my very experience. This new insight led me to eventually find my voice: I wanted to develop an argument for teacher professional development that is career-stage sensitive. I realised that early career

teachers were being lumped together with seasoned and veteran teachers when it came to teacher professional development. Again, I was taken back to the enduring challenge of one-size-fits-all approaches to teacher development in South Africa. I was ready to start as I had found my niche.

I formally registered and started on the PhD journey towards the end of April 2015. I was excited about my area of research as I found out from the literature that induction fell under the broad field of teacher professional development. Truth be told, working in a somewhat familiar turf was more comforting than exciting.

While I was getting a grip on the conceptual idea of the phenomenon of induction, I was also grappling with the technical aspects of what it meant to do a PhD. Reading through my university's expectations from a doctoral thesis, I learnt that I was expected to develop a complex and critical argument and, eventually, arrive at conclusions that speak to the ongoing scholarly conversations. In other words, the expectation was to 'generate new knowledge'. This was the most baffling expectation of all. I recorded the quote below in my journal and it kept me hooked throughout the PhD process. It was a constant reminder that doing a PhD actually meant to 'generate new knowledge' although I kept pondering:

> *But what does it actually mean to write something new that is original? How big is the contribution? How small? Is it a cure for cancer? Something no one has ever thought of before? Or something more manageable? (Thompson & Kamler, 2016)*
>
> *26/11/2016*

While there were a lot of adjustments that needed to be done, one major one was adjusting from being learning through coursework and attending lectures to being a self-regulated student. This was the most challenging part of the journey as I learnt to set my own targets and timelines and develop the discipline of following through those plans. These are invaluable lessons, learnt through practice. I consider this as important training that will launch my career as a budding scholar. I believe the self-regulation skills are very important life lesson that I will use in other dimensions of life.

**Life happening during the PhD**

*Only retrospectively will you finally know what your design was. Prospective designs articulate possibilities. Retrospective descriptions of what actually occurred constitute the actual design.*

*From Halcom's Methodology as journey, in Patton (2015).*

*15/06/2018*

Prospectively, I had clearly mapped my way through the data generation process. It was only until I went into the field that the actual research design unfolded. Events took their own turn, much to my surprise. For example, I never anticipated incorporating the district as a research site, yet, in the end it was one of the major sources of data for this study.

Likewise, I had charted my PhD journey on paper but the actual journey took several twists and turns. Being a wife, mother and a student at the same time came with its own challenges, at times threatening the life of the developing thesis. I, however, triumphed.

The biggest take away from this all these experiences is that there are multitudes of lessons from experience, good or bad. Relating to the status of early career teacher induction in the South African public schooling context, it was clear from the findings of my study that teachers are largely being launched into professional practice without adequate support. By highlighting what is working and what is not working, profound lessons can be drawn therefrom and some good can be harnessed.

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# Appendices

**Appendices A: Research instruments**

**Appendix A1: SMTs/ HoDs/Principals/Deputy Principals' Information Sheet**

Dear SMTs/ HoDs/Pricipals/Deputy Principals

My name is Emure Kadenge and I am a student at the University of the Witwatersrand studying towards my PhD degree. For the completion of this degree I am required to conduct research and my topic is entitled **Exploring induction and professional development opportunities for early career teachers in selected South African public schools.** More specifically, I am investigating the nature of school-based induction and support available for early career teachers by researching the views and experiences of SMTs/ HoDs/Principals/ Deputy Principals, like yourself, who oversee the implementation of these activities. The following issues will be discussed:

1. Induction and professional development activities in the school
2. Your views on the strengths and weaknesses of the approaches used in induction and professional development
3. The lessons learnt from this experience and suggestions for better practice.

I would like to conduct a semi-structured interview with you on these issues and, if possible, observe meetings, training sessions or any formal interaction you may have with teacher mentors as well as the early career teachers in your school. Participation is voluntary and refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled to. The interview will take approximately 50 minutes. Your responses in the interview will be kept confidential, and no information that could identify you will be included in the interview transcripts or final thesis. The interview materials (i.e. audio recordings and transcripts) will not be seen or heard by any person other than myself and my research supervisors. Please note also that this interview material will also be destroyed 3 years after the research has been completed. During the interview you may refuse to answer any question you are not comfortable with and you may choose to withdraw from the study at any point.

Please complete the enclosed consent form if you are willing to participate in this research. Your participation will be highly appreciated

Yours sincerely

Emure Kadenge. Cell: **078 238 8393;** **e-mail:** **emuremasoke@gmail.com**

**Appendix A2: Early career teachers' Information Sheet**

Dear Early career teachers

My name is Emure Kadenge and I am a student at the University of the Witwatersrand, School of Education reading for my PhD degree. For the completion of this degree I am required to conduct research and my topic is entitled I**nduction and professional development opportunities for early career teachers in selected South African public schools.** More specifically, I am investigating the nature of school-based induction and support available for early career teachers by researching the views and experiences of early career teachers on the following issues:

1. Induction and professional development experiences in the school
2. The strengths and weaknesses of the approaches used in induction and professional development
3. The lessons learnt from this experience and suggestions for better practice

I am inviting you to; firstly, participate in a focus group discussion and, on another date, in an individual interview where we discuss these issues. I would also like to observe meetings, training sessions or any formal interaction you may have with your assigned mentor.

Participation is voluntary and refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled to. The interview will take approximately 50 minutes. Your responses in the interview will be kept confidential, and no information that could identify you will be included in the interview transcripts or final thesis. The interview materials (i.e. audio recordings and transcripts) will not be seen or heard by any person other than myself and my research supervisors. Please note also that this interview material will also be destroyed 3 years after the research has been completed. During the interview, you may refuse to answer any question you are not comfortable with and you may choose to withdraw from the study at any point you feel uncomfortable.

Please complete the enclosed consent form if you are willing to participate in this research.

Your participation will be highly appreciated

Yours sincerely

Emure Kadenge.

**Cell:** **078 238 8393** **e-mail:** **emuremasoke@gmail.com**

**Appendix A3: District Officials' Information Sheet**

Dear District official

My name is Emure Kadenge and I am a student at the University of the Witwatersrand reading for my PhD degree.

For the completion of this degree I am required to conduct research and my topic is entitled **Exploring induction and professional development opportunities for early career teachers in selected South African public schools.** More specifically, I am investigating the nature of orientation or induction support available for new educators within the school and from the department through the schools' respective district. I am researching the views and experiences of district personnel like yourself, who, in different capacities, are involved in supporting new educators. Your views and experiences in relation to the following issues will be discussed:

1. Induction and professional development activities that you participate in to support new educators;
2. Your views on the strengths and weaknesses of the approaches used in new educator induction and professional development; and
3. The lessons learnt from this experience and suggestions for better practice.

I would like to conduct a semi-structured interview with you on these issues and, if possible, observe meetings, training sessions or any formal interaction you may have with new educators in your various attempts to support them.

Participation is voluntary and refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled to. The interview will take approximately 50 minutes. Your responses in the interview will be kept confidential, and no information that could identify you will be included in the interview transcripts or final thesis. The interview materials (i.e. audio recordings and transcripts) will not be seen or heard by any person other than myself and my research supervisors. Please note also that this interview material will also be destroyed 3 years after the research has been completed. During the interview you may refuse to answer any question you are not comfortable answering and you may choose to withdraw from the study at any point.

Please complete the enclosed consent form if you are willing to participate in this research.

Your participation will be highly appreciated

Yours sincerely

Emure Kadenge. **Cell: 078 238 8393** **e-mail: emuremasoke@gmail.com**

**Appendix A4: Focus group Interview Consent Form**

I do understand the conditions of participating in a focus group interview facilitated by Emure Kadenge for her PhD degree research entitled ***Exploring induction and professional development opportunities for early career teachers in selected South African schools.***

I understand that:

- Participation in this focus group discussion is voluntary
- I may not answer questions that I would prefer not to
- I may withdraw from the discussion at any time
- No information that will identify me will be included in the interview transcripts and research thesis.

By signing below I am agreeing to participate the focus group interview:

Signed……Date……..

Signed……Date……..

Signed……Date……..

Signed……Date……..

Signed……Date……..

Signed……Date……..

Signed……Date……..

Signed……Date……..

**Appendix A5: Individual Interview Consent Form**

I……do agree/do not agree* to participate in an interview facilitated by Emure Kadenge for her PhD degree research entitled ***Exploring induction and professional development opportunities for early career teachers in selected South African schools.***

I understand that:

- Participation in this interview is voluntary
- I may not answer questions that I would prefer not to
- I may withdraw from the discussion at any time
- No information that will identify me will be included in the interview transcripts and research thesis.

Signed……Date……..

*Please delete as appropriate

**Appendix A6: Interview Audio recording Consent Form**

I……do agree/not agree* to be audio recorded during an interview by Emure Kadenge for her PhD degree research entitled ***Exploring induction and professional development opportunities for early career teachers in selected South African public schools.***

I understand that:

- Participation is voluntary
- I may withdraw from the study at any time and will not be advantaged or disadvantaged in any way
- I can stop the audio recording at any time during the interview with no repercussions
- The audio recordings will be destroyed between 3-5 years after completion of the project
- No information that will identify me will be included in the research report

Signed……Date……..

*Please delete as appropriate

**Appendix 7: Observation Consent Form**

I……do agree/not agree* to be observed interacting with my coach by Emure Kadenge for her PhD degree research entitled ***Exploring induction and professional development opportunities for early career teachers in selected South African public schools.***

I understand that:

- Participation is voluntary
- I may withdraw from the study at any time and will not be advantaged or disadvantaged in any way
- No information that will identify me will be included in interview transcripts and the research thesis
- The observation will only be used for this study

Signed……Date……..

*Please delete as appropriate

## Appendix A8: First round- Focus group interview with early career teachers

### *Early school-based support experiences*

1. What happened the first week of your teaching in terms of being introduced by the school to the school and your teaching?
2. What kind of support did you get and from whom? Please explain how you were supported. If no, explain what happened and what you would have liked to happen.
3. In the first year of your teaching, what would you say were your priority development needs? Explain why you considered these priorities?
4. What kind of teacher development and support activities have you participated in that met your priority development needs? Explain.
5. What have you learnt from participating in these activities/ programmes?
6. What did you manage (or not manage) to use successfully in your teaching

### *Perceptions about schools' and districts' capacity to support early career teachers*

7. Having undergone these experiences of induction and teacher development, what is your perception(s) about teaching?
8. Describe what you like/do not like about the school-based support for early career teachers in this school?
9. The department is planning to introduce formal induction for NQTs in 2017. Do you think there is enough capacity within schools to make the induction successful? Explain.
10. Do you see that working out in this school? Do you think the school has the capacity to provide meaningful opportunities for early career teachers to learn and grow professionally?
11. How, in your view, can schools best support early career teachers?
12. Do you have any comments you would like to make about the issues we discussed in this interview?

## Appendix A9: Second round- individual interview with early career teachers

### *Participants' profile questions*

1. Can you give me details of your academic and professional qualifications?
2. How did you get your job at the school and was it among your first choices? Explain.
3. What do you teach and do you think you are qualified to teach this? What is the most difficult aspect or challenge to teach this?

### *Mentoring experiences*

4. Did you get some kind of mentorship in your school? How did you get on, what did you do together?
5. Explain your first session with your mentor and how has your interaction with your mentor evolved/changed since your first session? Explain.
6. Did you observe a practical teaching demonstration by your mentor? Did the mentor observe your teaching? Did your mentor made you reflect on your strengths and weaknesses? Explain more
7. Did you find it beneficial to have a mentor? Why? What have/haven't you learned?
8. Can you cite one key incident/episode that your mentor handled in an impressive/not so impressive way? Why was that incident memorable?
9. What do you think could be improved in your relationship with your mentor to make it more beneficial for your practice?
10. What is your overall view about having a mentor in the early years of teaching and explain the kind of relationship that works?

### *Self-image/self-description questions*

11. How do you describe yourself as a teacher?
12. How are you perceived by other teachers, learners, parents, SMT?

### *Self-esteem/ evaluation of oneself question*

13. How good are you as a teacher? Explain.

### *Task perception questions*

14. How do you define your job as a teacher? What do you consider to be your task?
15. What should you do to be a proper teacher?

### *Job motivation and future prospective questions*

16. What motivates you to be a teacher?
17. Is there motivation to remain a teacher? Where do you see yourself 5/10 years from now?
18. Do you have any comments about the issues we discussed in this interview?

## Appendix A10: Individual interview questions for mentors

### *HoDs and Deputy Principals*

### *Participants' profile questions*

1. Can you give me details of your academic and professional qualifications and experience?
2. How long and what have you been teaching/working in this school?
3. How long have you been mentoring early career teachers?

### *Induction practice questions*

4. What kind of training did you receive that enables you to support early career teachers?
5. Do you have formal or informal systems and structures in place to induct early career teachers? Please give details of that formal/informal arrangement.
6. From your experience of supporting early career teachers, what would you say are the main instructional challenges that they face?
7. Please take me through the procedures and activities you engage new teachers on their first day and week on the job. Please explain why.
8. What, whether explicitly stated or implicit, is the main idea that the school wants to inculcate into your early career teachers? Why is that so important and how do you get that across?
9. Please explain your strategies to develop and enhance the competences of early career teachers.
10. What specific aspects of their teaching do you focus on? Why?
11. How would you describe your approach to supporting and enhancing their practices in early career teachers? To what extent do your strategies serve to reinforce or change the strategies that early career teachers bring with from teacher training?
12. How have you generally been received by the early career teachers? Please explain in relation to a particular teacher(s) in mind.

### *Mentoring experiences*

13. Explain the nature of the mentorship that you are involved in with early career teachers and how long it lasts?
14. What, in your view, can the teacher-mentor interaction and relationship achieve and not achieve? Please explain.
15. What have you learned about yourself as a person and as a professional from your experience as a mentor?
16. What are some of the challenges you have encountered working with early career teachers?
17. What can you say have been the impact of your mentorship on the early career teachers' general perception of the teaching profession?
18. What do you think is the ideal teacher-mentor relationship?
19. Describe what you like/do not like about the school-based support for early career teachers in this school?

### *Perceptions about schools' and districts' capacity to support early career teachers*

20. The department is planning to introduce formal induction for NQTs in 2017. Do you think there is enough capacity within schools to make the induction successful? Explain.
21. Do you see that working out in this school? Do you think the school has the capacity to provide meaningful opportunities for early career teachers to learn and grow professionally?
22. How, in your view, can schools best support early career teachers?

Do you have any comments you would like to make about any of the issues we discussed in this interview?

## Appendix A11: Individual interview questions for district Teacher Development Unit personnel

*Participants' profile questions*

1. Please give me details of your academic and professional qualifications.
2. How long have you been working as a teacher developer/trainer?

*Questions relating to their involvement in new educator support/induction*

3. How are you involved in new educator support and development? Can you take me through your work with new educators, those who've just joined the profession?
4. How are the support activities organised? How often do you engage with the new educators (frequency)?
5. Is there any other on-going support for new educators that you co-ordinate as the TDU?
6. What in your view can the district-school relationship achieve in terms of supporting new educators?
7. From your experience of working with new educators in various capacities, what have you noticed as some of the main challenges new educators have?

*Perceptions about schools' and districts' capacity to support early career teachers*

8. Do you think there is adequate capacity within schools to support new educators?
9. Teachers and schools often complain about time constraints. How have you worked around this so as to ensure maximum participation of teachers in the various support activities you conduct?
10. What is your assessment of the support you provide to new educators as district? Are you seeing positive results?
11. How else do you think the district/TD unit you can support new educators?
12. Do you have any other comments you would like to make?

## Appendix A12: Individual interview questions for District personnel

### *Dispute management and Transversal Human Resources Services*

### *Participants' profile questions*

1. Can you give me details of your academic and professional qualifications and experience?
2. What is your role in the district/division?

### *Questions relating to their involvement in new educator support/induction*

3. What kind of support do you give to new educators? Frequency?
4. What specific aspects do you focus on when supporting new educators? Why focus on those aspects? Where was the call coming from? Why?
5. How long have you been involved in supporting new educators in this manner?
6. How else are you planning to support new educators?
7. From your experience of working with new educators in this division/unit, what would you say are the main challenges experienced by new educators? Why are those challenges prevalent?
8. In the capacity that your position affords you to engage with new educators, how would you say you have been generally received by new educators?
9. Do you have any comment you would like to make regarding anything we have discussed in this interview?

## Appendix A13: Observation schedule

### *The physical setting*

| |
|---|
| What is the physical environment like? |
| What is the context? |
| What kinds of behaviour is the setting designed for? |
| How is space allocated? |
| What objects, resources, technologies are in the setting? |

### *The participants*

| |
|---|
| Describe who is in the scene, how many people and their roles. |
| What brings these people together? |
| Who is allowed here? Who is not here that I expected? |
| What are the relevant characteristics of the participants? |
| How are people in the setting organising themselves? (patterns and frequency of interactions, the direction of communication patterns). |

| |
|---|

### *Activities and interactions*

| |
|---|
| What is going on? |
| Is there a definable sequence of activities? |
| How do people interact with the activity and with one another? |
| How are people and activities connected? |
| What norms and rules structure the activities and interactions? |
| When did the activity begin and how long does it last? |
| Is it atypical activity or usual? |

### *Conversation*

| |
|---|
| What is the content of conversations in this setting? |
| Who speaks to whom? Who listens? (Quote directly, paraphrase or summarise conversations). |

| |
|---|
| Silences and non-verbal behaviour that add meaning to the exchange. |

### *Subtle factors*

| |
|---|
| Any informal and unplanned activities. |
| Symbolic and connotative meanings of words. |
| What does not happen, especially if it ought to or is expected to happen? |

## Appendices B: Ethics clearance letters

## Appendix B1: University of the Witwatersrand, School of Education Ethics clearance letter

**Wits School of Education**

27 St Andrews Road, Parktown, Johannesburg, 2193 Private Bag 3, Wits 2050, South Africa. Tel: +27 11 717-3064 Fax: +27 11 717-3100 E-mail: enquiries@educ.wits.ac.za Website: www.wits.ac.za

**Date: 30 March 2016**

**Student Number: 685431**

**Protocol Number: 2016ECE003**

Dear Emure Kadenge

**Application for Ethics Clearance: Doctor of Philosophy**

Thank you very much for your ethics application. The Ethics Committee in Education of the Faculty of Humanities, acting on behalf of the Senate has considered your application for ethics clearance for your proposal entitled:

**Exploring induction and professional development opportunities for early career teachers in selected South African schools.**

The committee recently met and I am pleased to inform you that clearance was granted. However, there were a few small issues which the committee would appreciate you attending to before embarking on your research.

**The following comments were made:**

- Re-work section 3.3 so that it corresponds with section 3.2.
- In section 6.1 the word "pseudonames" is spelt incorrectly.
- You need to be aware that a journal article will be a prerequisite to graduation. Adjust your infomation sheets to reflect this end-use of your data.

Please use the above protocol number in all correspondence to the relevant research parties (schools, parents, learners etc.) and include it in your research report or project on the title page.

**The Protocol Number above should be submitted to the Graduate Studies in Education Committee upon submission of your final research report.**

All the best with your research project.

Yours sincerely,

M Mabuza

Wits School of Education

011 717-3416

Cc Supervisor: Prof Felix Maringe and Dr Francine De Clercq

## Appendix B2: Gauteng Department of Education research approval letter

**For administrative use only:**
**Reference no: D2017 / 255**
**enquiries: 011 843 6503**

GAUTENG PROVINCE
EDUCATION
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

# GDE RESEARCH APPROVAL LETTER

| | |
|---|---|
| **Date:** | **25 August 2016** |
| **Validity of Research Approval:** | **25 August 2016 to 30 September 2016** |
| **Name of Researcher:** | **Kadenge E.** |
| **Address of Researcher:** | **77 Mimosa Street; Helderkruin; Roodepoort; 1724** |
| **Telephone / Fax Number/s:** | **078 238 8393** |
| **Email address:** | **emuremasoke@gmail.com** |
| **Research Topic:** | **Induction and professional development opportunities for early career teachers in selected South African schools.** |
| **Number and type of schools:** | **NINE Secondary Schools** |
| **District/s/HO** | **Johannesburg North and Johannesburg West** |

***Re: Approval in Respect of Request to Conduct Research***

This letter serves to indicate that approval is hereby granted to the above-mentioned researcher to proceed with research in respect of the study indicated above. The onus rests with the researcher to negotiate appropriate and relevant time schedules with the school/s and/or offices involved. A separate copy of this letter must be presented to the Principal, SGB and the relevant District/Head Office Senior Manager confirming that permission has been granted for the research to be conducted. However participation is VOLUNTARY.

The following conditions apply to GDE research. The researcher has agreed to and may proceed with the above study subject to the conditions listed below being met. Approval may be withdrawn should any of the conditions listed below be flouted:

## *CONDITIONS FOR CONDUCTING RESEARCH IN GDE*

1. *The District/Head Office Senior Manager/s concerned, the Principal/s and the chairperson/s of the School Governing Body (SGB.) must be presented with a copy of this letter.*
2. *The Researcher will make every effort to obtain the goodwill and co-operation of the GDE District officials, principals, SGBs, teachers, parents and learners involved. Participation is voluntary and additional remuneration will not be paid;*

2016/08/25

1

*Making education a societal priority*

**Office of the Director: Education Research and Knowledge Management ER&KM)**
9th Floor, 111 Commissioner Street, Johannesburg, 2001
P.O. Box 7710, Johannesburg, 2000 Tel: (011) 355 0506
Email: David.Makhado@gauteng.gov.za
Website: www.education.gpg.gov.za

3. *Research may only be conducted after school hours so that the normal school programme is not interrupted. The Principal and/or Director must be consulted about an appropriate time when the researcher/s may carry out their research at the sites that they manage.*
4. *Research may only commence from the second week of February and must be concluded by the end of the THIRD quarter of the academic year. If incomplete, an amended Research Approval letter may be requested to conduct research in the following year.*
5. *Items 6 and 7 will not apply to any research effort being undertaken on behalf of the GDE. Such research will have been commissioned and be paid for by the Gauteng Department of Education.*
6. *It is the researcher's responsibility to obtain written consent from the SGB/s; principal/s, educator/s, parents and learners, as applicable, before commencing with research.*
7. *The researcher is responsible for supplying and utilizing his/her own research resources, such as stationery, photocopies, transport, faxes and telephones and should not depend on the goodwill of the institution/s, staff and/or the office/s visited for supplying such resources.*
8. *The names of the GDE officials, schools, principals, parents, teachers and learners that participate in the study may not appear in the research title, report or summary.*
9. *On completion of the study the researcher must supply the Director: Education Research and Knowledge Management, with electronic copies of the Research Report, Thesis, Dissertation as well as a Research Summary (on the GDE Summary template). Failure to submit your Research Report, Thesis, Dissertation and Research Summary on completion of your studies / project – a month after graduation or project completion - may result in permission being withheld from you and your Supervisor in future.*
10. *The researcher may be expected to provide short presentations on the purpose, findings and recommendations of his/her research to both GDE officials and the schools concerned;*
11. *Should the researcher have been involved with research at a school and/or a district/head office level, the Director/s and school/s concerned must also be supplied with a brief summary of the purpose, findings and recommendations of the research study.*

The Gauteng Department of Education wishes you well in this important undertaking and looks forward to examining the findings of your research study.

Kind regards

.....

**Dr David Makhado**

**Director: Education Research and Knowledge Management**

**DATE:** 2016/08/25

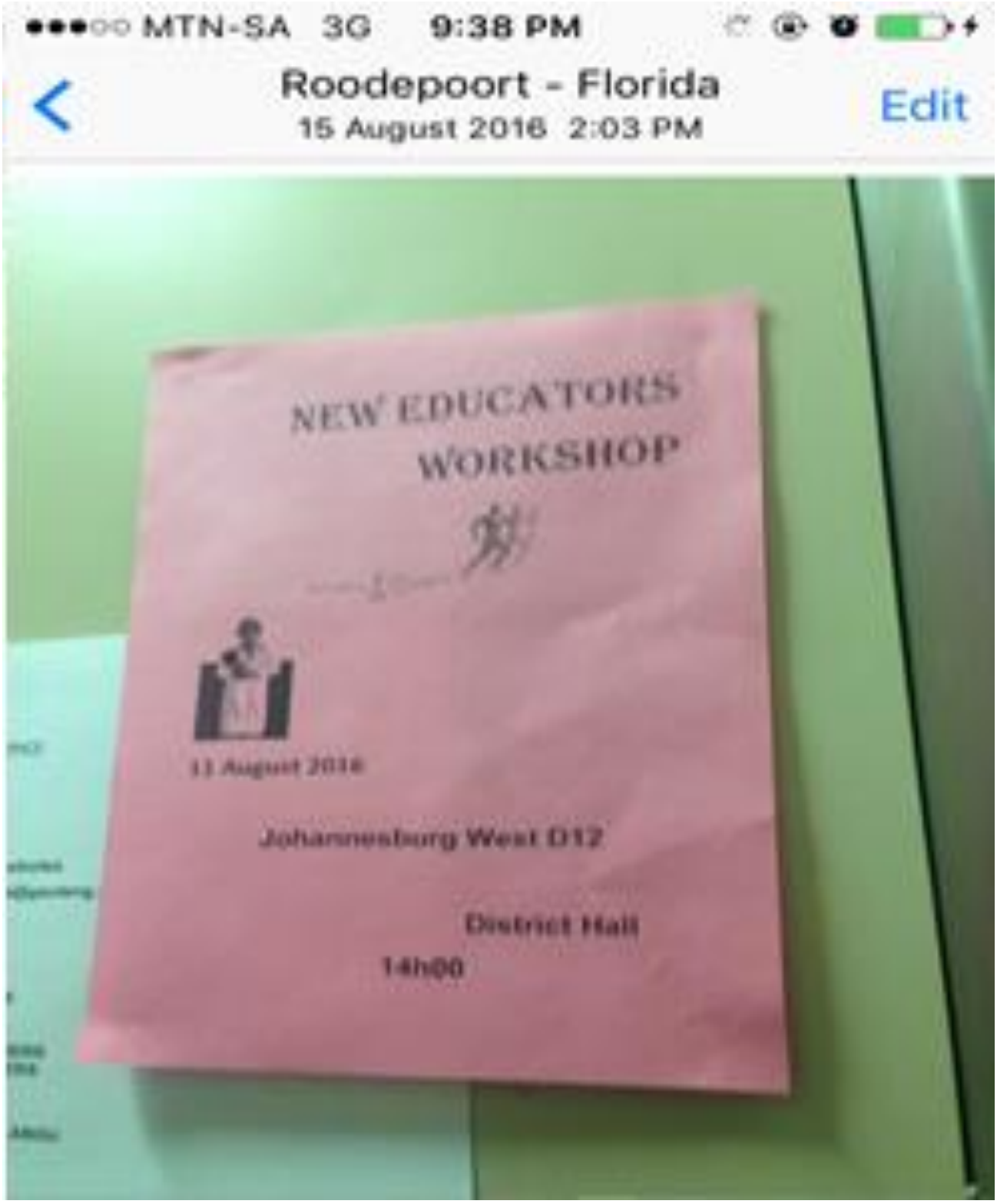


*Making education a societal priority*

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**Appendices C: District D generated induction documents**

**Appendix C1: District D New Educator Workshop invitation**



**Appendices D: Peculiar High School teacher induction documents**

**Appendix D1: Educator Orientation file 2017**

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**Appendix D2: Welcome letter to new teachers**

Dear ……..

We are very pleased that you have joined the staff of Peculiar High School and we trust that your association with the school will be a happy one.

Like all schools, Peculiar High School has its own rules, traditions and functional patterns, and these will no doubt be new and strange to you. To assist you to feel at home and to fit in with the school system, the following people have been specifically assigned to help you and they may be consulted by you whenever necessary:

1. ……..is the Head of your Department and will assist you with any academic problems, as well as giving you guidance in the teaching of your subject(s).
2. ……..has been assigned to make you feel at home during the initial period of your association with the school and to help you to get to know the staff and the school, so please feel free at all times to approach him/her for advice and assistance.

Lastly, a few words of advice about pupil-teacher relationships that may help you in your handling of pupils:

- Take care not to become too familiar with pupils or to allow them to become too familiar with you. At all times they must realise that, although you may be friendly towards them, you are the teacher and they are the pupils.
- It is better to be strict form the start. Pupils will generally take advantage of a teacher who allows them too many liberties, but they will respect and appreciate a strict, but fair teacher.

Thank you again for accepting an appointment at Peculiar High School, and please do not hesitate to call on me for advice and assistance.

Deputy Head,

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**Appendix D3: Mentee and mentor roles and responsibilities**

The **mentee**:

- Must be willing to put learning first;
- Adaptable to change as education is continuously changing;
- Must be prepared to engage in productive dialogue with their mentor regarding professional development;
- Must be prepared to listen;
- Must be committed to their own professional development;
- Must be committed to bring about positive changes to the teaching and learning environment they are in;
- Must be prepared to become active change agent in the learning environment they find themselves in;
- Must engage in an exchange of personal values, skills and knowledge that realates to the teaching profession and perhaps other relevant fields of study;
- Must stay focused and keep their eye on the prize…personal and professional development and advancement.

The **mentor**:

- Is regarded as the expert having experience in the field;
- Acts as a guide in the teaching career of the newcomer;
- Willing professional that are eager to share their many skills and vast knowledge;
- Become a role model for the new teachers;
- Must be open minded with regard to ideas that are different from their own;
- Mentors must be change agents;
- Are generally highly efficient, mature that take cognizance of their own shortcomings, nobody is perfect;
- Teach the 'exactly how to' to beginner teachers…teaching them the tricks of the trade!
- Set a standard that relates to projecting the qualities of professionalism and respectable teaching behavior;
- Teach the mentee reflective practices that allow them to learn from their own as well as the mentors actions and practices;
- Assist in transforming the mentee into an effective and functional professional. Transformational leadership and the recognition of its principles is crucial.

**Appendix D4: School code for quality educators***

As a **TEACHER**, in line with the SACE Code of Professional Ethics, **I promise** to:

- Teach to advance the education and the development of learners as individuals;
- Respect the dignity and rights of all persons without prejudice
- Develop loyalty and respect for the profession;
- Be punctual, enthusiastic, well prepared for lessons, and sober of mind and body;
- Improve my own knowledge and skills base to be more effective;
- Maintain good communication between teachers and students, among teachers themselves, and between teachers and parents;
- Eliminate unprofessional behavior such as teacher-pupil relationships, drunkenness and drug use, assault, sexual harassment and to curb habitual absenteeism;
- Make myself available to provide extra mural activities.

*This code was adopted from the SACE Code of Professional Ethics where the school pulled out aspects from the code that they felt were imperative.

All the above documents are entries of the new educator file given to each new educator on the day of their first induction meeting. Attached also in the new educator file are other legislative documents that they need to go through in their own time. The attached documents are as follows:

- PAM document
- Circular 65
- SACE code of professional ethics