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An exploration of teachers' views and experiences towards the use of Gauteng primary literacy & mathematics strategy (GPLMS) lesson plans with and without coaches: a case study of six teachers in two Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) schools

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AN EXPLORATION OF TEACHERS' VIEWS AND EXPERIENCES TOWARDS THE USE OF GAUTENG PRIMARY LITERACY & MATHEMATICS STRATEGY (GPLMS) LESSON PLANS WITH AND WITHOUT COACHES

A case study of six teachers in two Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) schools

BY

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A research report submitted to the Wits School of Education, Faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education by combination of coursework and research

SUPERVISOR: F. DE CLERCQ

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Most importantly to my son Kobamelo, thinking of you and how proud you would be of your mom one day when you are old enough to understand gave me the courage and strength to carry on even when it got challenging. This is dedicated to you my boy.

DECLARATION

I declare that this research report is my own unaided work completed under the supervision and guidance of my supervisor, Francine De Clercq. It is being submitted for the degree of Master of Education, at the University of the Witwatersrand. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other university.

……..... March 2015

Gontse Molotsi

List of abbreviations

ANA- Annual National Assessment

CPTD- Continuous Professional Teacher Development

DAS- Development Appraisal System

DBE/DHET- Department of Basic Education/Department of Higher Education Training

DoE- Department of Education

EFA- Education for All

ELRC- Education Labour Relations Council

ETDP-SETA-Education, Training and Development Practices Sector Education and Training Authority

FFL- Foundations for Learning

GPLMS- Gauteng Primary Literacy and Mathematics Strategy

HL- Home language

IPET-Initial Professional Education of Teachers

IQMS- Integrated Quality Management System

ISPFTED- Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development in South Africa

LIEP- Language in Education Policy

LitNum- Literacy Numeracy

LOLT- Language of Learning and Teaching

LP's – Lesson Plans

NEEDU- National Education Evaluation and Development Unit

NPFTED- National Policy Framework for Teacher Education and Development

NGO's- Non-Governmental Organizations

PD- Professional Development

PED- Provincial Education Department

SIP- School Improvement Plan

SACE- South African Council of Educators

SADTU- South African Democratic Teachers Union

SGB- School Governing Body

SMT- School Management Team

HESA-EDF- Higher Education of South Africa – Education Deans' Forum

SI- Scripted Instruction

TD- Teacher Development

TPD- Teacher Professional Development

TED- Teacher Education Development

WCE- Western Cape Education Department

WSE- Whole School Evaluation

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this qualitative research report was to explore teacher's views as perceptions regarding one of South Africa's Literacy and Numeracy intervention strategy. The specific area in this regard, was to explore the two major tools that are gaining popularity within teacher development studies. These tools namely the usage of scripted lesson plans and coaches were also used in this intervention strategy to develop teachers in the selected underperforming schools throughout Gauteng Province. This research aimed to find out from six participants in two different schools how they perceived using these scripted lesson plans and having coaches in their classrooms who helped them interpret and use the lesson plans they were provided with. The research evaluates the knowledge the participants gained from this experience and once the coaches no longer visited their classrooms and schools, the teacher's experience of using the scripted lesson plans without the coaches' supervision.

The participants in this report expressed how they appreciated the coach-mediated lesson plans provided for them in the Gauteng Primary Literacy and Mathematics Strategy program. However the participants stated problems with the pacing of the lesson plans where some teachers felt that the lesson plan pacing was too fast for their learners and how some of the activities did not fit the context of their schools. The participants stated that they had a problem with the structure of the content in the lesson plans and the fact they taught too many different concepts in one week. This they stated was confusing for the learners and themselves. With regards to the coaches mediating the lesson plans, the participants showed a sense of appreciation at having someone who would help them unpack the lesson plans, but expressed the need for the coaches to model the teaching pedagogues, which was ultimately never done, rather than just talking them through them. The attitude or interpersonal skills displayed by the coach became one of the big issues that either influenced the reception or rejection of the coaches' presence in classrooms. The one thing all participants' concurred on was the supply of other resources such as posters and flashcards, which they stated they found very useful as a stimulus for the learners.

Key words

Gauteng Primary and Literacy Intervention Strategy

Scripted Lesson Plans

Coaching

Teacher development

Summary of chapters

Chapter 1 Gives the introduction to the study, the rationale the researcher used in choosing this area of study as well as the contextual background. This chapter also states the aims and questions the research will be embarking on answering.

Chapter 2 Will review the literature on teacher development and locate the study within national and international literature. It deals with issues of the perceptions of teacher development, current popular development techniques and the case for South Africa's GPLMS implementation.

Chapter 3 Gives an in-depth outline of the rationale for the qualitative case study approach used in this research, outlines the tools used to collect data and how the data was collected and analysed.

Chapter 4 Gives an account of the findings in the research, how the participant's responses were analysed in an attempt to find common themes in the responses as well to identify and different views with regards to the research topic.

Chapter 5 Is the analysis and discussions of the research. The analysis and discussions are done with regards to the literature reviewed; this chapter states the similarities and differences amongst the teachers and schools and attempts to give possible reasons for these. It further includes the conclusion and recommendations for further study.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Teacher Development (TD) has become a major area of concern and research over the past few years. This is not surprising as pressure is mounting globally on the teaching profession, with the emphasis now being placed on schools to offer quality education to all, especially for the children in disadvantaged or marginalized groups of society. The 2000 Education for All (EFA) resolution pressurized developing countries governments and partners to ensure access to education for all learners of school-going age (EFA, p. 9). From 2005, this not only included the focus on access to education but also the ensuring of the provision of quality education in all schools. This is because the subsequent EFA reports had noted that the sudden quantitative expansion of education seemed to have compromised the quality of teaching and learning in classrooms. In response to this, the development of teachers has ever since become a key focus in the drive to providing quality schooling. Countries globally have turned their efforts and finances to various teacher development programs as one of the main means through which to address the problems of poor quality education.

The aims and focus of TD, as well as the understanding of what forms of TD are most effective or appropriate to address the varying competencies of teachers have become areas of great interest and debate in various countries around the world.

TD, which encompasses both pre-service and in-service training of teachers, is commonly perceived to be aimed at the improvement of teacher's competences and knowledge, which, according to Shulman (1987) revolves around the following key areas 1) Subject matter knowledge. 2) Pedagogical knowledge 3) content knowledge and 4) Societal knowledge.

Welch (2012) adds that the aim of TD should not be an end in itself but a process aimed at improving teaching and learning, which should ultimately lead to better learner performance. Villegas-Reimers (2003, p. 13) agrees with Welch (2012) that TD should rather be seen as "a long term process that includes regular opportunities and experiences planned systematically to promote growth and development within the profession."

On the issue of who should drive TD initiatives, Welch (2012, p. 2) identifies a tension between:

- Those who favour system-wide improvement; requiring centrally led professional development initiatives for school improvement, and
- Those who want to leave to teachers, the responsibility of determining the focus of the development they need.

The first category includes those who tend to treat teachers as objects of change whilst the second group sees them as agents of change. These contrasting views of teachers, and the role they play in their development brings to the fore the important issue that teachers should not be seen and treated in the same way, as some are more knowledgeable and better educated than others; also, some may behave in a more professional and autonomous manner than others.

TD scholars such as Hargreaves (2002) & Kelley (1993) argue that, because teachers' status and conditions of work differ widely in time and place, their developmental needs differ as well. As a result, it is important for teacher development interventions to take into account teachers' classroom contexts, conditions and needs. The implication this has on TD interventions is that they need to be designed in a manner that is appropriate and relevant to the targeted group of teachers. For example, teachers with poor content or pedagogical knowledge should not be asked to reflect and share their practices until they are more in control of their specialized knowledge.

In South Africa, particularly because of the increasing evidence that learner's literacy and numeracy levels are well below the level at which they are supposed to be, there are increasingly new in-service teacher development interventions which aim at improving learner's language and mathematics skill and competency (Fleisch, 2002). Many of these interventions are small scale programs run by Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) or individual districts, but there are also large-scale provincial interventions aimed at improving teacher's skills and school performance. This research explores one of these interventions, namely the Gauteng Primary Language and Mathematics Strategy (GPLMS) of 2011-2014, it aims to explore teachers' views and experiences of this provincial intervention and their perception and experiences of using its coach mediated Lesson Plans.

1.1 Contextual background of in-service teacher education in post-1994 South Africa

The need for the improvement of in-service teacher development interventions in post-1994 South Africa has long been recognized by stakeholders such as Education Departments, teacher unions, teachers and various service providers. As Fleisch (2002, p. 100) laments: "On the eve of the 1994 elections, most disadvantaged schools, particularly in urban areas, were on the brink of collapse," Fleisch (2002) further argues that there was a serious deterioration of the culture of teaching and learning in most black schools in the country. This was mostly due to very poor learner results and the fact that that pre-1994, many black teachers had developed a 'militant' attitude against the old authoritarian system of education, including the way the schools they were serving were run and towards the many school improvement initiatives that had been implemented in a top-down approach, in which they felt, they had no input with regards to planning and implementation and the grossly disparate differences of racist administrations in the education system. The newly democratically elected government was faced with a task of not only bringing into these schools a sense of functionalism, but also to instill in the young novice teachers, who having been influenced by their active participation in the overthrowing of the apartheid regime, a sense of professionalism, accountability and participatory ethos and discipline."

Also, the new government faced the challenging task of coming up with innovative ways of creating a conducive, all inclusive participatory environment with teachers and their unions, where necessary teacher and school reforms could be developed and implemented.

It is from this perspective that many post-1994 education policies were developed through long consultative discussions, negotiations and forums which involved various relevant stakeholders. The government accepted and began to employ the principle of involving teacher representatives from unions in consultative processes or setting up special task teams made up of experts, stakeholder representatives and department officials in teacher development matters. De Clercq (2010) researched the various developments that took place in an attempt to better TD policies and programs and highlights the following: In 1995, the Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC) was institutionalized as the democratic collective bargaining forum where teacher unions could have an influence over some teacher-related policy decisions relating to various issues such as teachers' conditions of

service, professional status and development. This led the ELRC to subsequently draw and sign important development agreements in 1998. One of these was the Educators Employment Act policy and a semi-independent statutory professional body titled “The South African Council of Educators” (SACE), which was institutionalized and was made up of representatives from education departments and teacher unions. This body’s main mandate was to regulate the teaching profession.

One of the systems initialized by SACE was a teacher “Development Appraisal System” (DAS), which was motivated by the South African Democratic Teacher’s Union (SADTU). DAS was a system that stated that teachers, together with their selected peers were given a responsibility and mandate to identify their own strengths and weaknesses from which they would then have to draw up a professional growth plan. The growth plan had to specify the areas in which they thought they needed development. However, little development and support followed from the department and districts after these growth plans were drawn up.

Schools and teachers continued to feel frustrated at the lack of meaningful support and development opportunities. A reformulated teacher appraisal system, known as the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) was formulated and implemented in 2003; this was again poorly implemented because it depended on the subsequent provision of customized quality TD programs and interventions which did not exist (Fleisch, 2002).

De Clercq (2010) further elaborates that at the same time that this proliferation of policies were being formulated and implemented, the department of education set up a Ministerial Committee to look into Teacher Education and Development (TED). This committee delivered the 2005 National Framework for Teacher Education report which introduced the idea of life-long learning for teachers. It planned for and stipulated frameworks and policies for the Initialization of policies and programs for the recruitment of new teachers and the development of in-service education for teachers such as the Initial Professional Education of Teachers (IPET) and the Continuing Professional Teacher Development (CPTD) these programs were supposed to be used for the pre and in-service professional development of teachers. However, no concrete TD systems, plans, strategies and budget allocations were made available to support these programs.

According to De Clercq (2010), a pilot Continual Professional Teacher Development (CPTD) system document was produced in 2008 by the Department of Education (DoE) and the South African Council of Educators (SACE). The documents stipulated that teachers had to earn 150 professional development points per three-year cycle in three different areas of development priorities; namely the 1.individual 2.chool and 3.their profession. The meaning of what warranted a PD point continued to be a subject of contestations among stakeholders, threatening to make the system rather bureaucratic.

These previous, seemingly ambitious teacher development-related policies had a problematic assumption, that of teachers who were supposed to be sufficiently capacitated to act and behave as professionals with positive attitudes and competences that would enable them, to be able to diagnose their own developmental needs and show commitment to improve their practices (Barasa & Mattson, 1997) & (De Clercq, 2010).

Fleisch (2002) notes that the stark reality was that most teachers were rather insecure and defensive about their teaching practices, as they were continuously struggling to cope with their day-to-day teaching duties due to the radically changed, post-1994, over-ambitious OBE curriculum framework. The other problem with the implementation of TD policies was the lack of well thought-through implementation strategies, which had to take into account the different needs of teachers and the Education Department's capacity (and those of other service providers) to meaningfully support teachers with their development needs. In addition, most TD programs took on a one-size-fits-all planning and implementation approach, disregarding the vast and varying school and teacher contexts that existed as well as the varying levels of knowledge and capacity to implement these programs. As a result policy makers quickly discovered that there were clear disparate differences between schools. The well-performing schools were seemingly better equipped to find developmental support for the implementation of these policies than poorly performing schools. Education Departments, as Gallie (2007) and De Clercq (2010) explain, failed to clearly envisage the effective implementation of the sophisticated 1998 DAS and later the 2003 IQMS policy as these clearly required, for their effective implementation, solid stability, trust and respect within the school authority or School Management Team (SMT) and between the teachers they were meant to evaluate.

Rogan and Grayson (2003) attest to this and explain that National Education Departments often make the serious mistake of expecting Provincial Departments to implement policies in the same way, at the same pace and at the same level of understanding, irrespective of individual schools' profiles and capacity.

To address the continuing woes and lack of direction in the development field of South African teachers, in mid-2008, a Teacher Development Summit was held with all relevant stakeholders, such as the ELRC, the South African Council of Educators (SACE), the Education Training and Development Practices Sector - Education and Training Authority, the Department of Basic Education (DBE), the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), Higher Education of South Africa-The Education Deans' Forum (HESA-EDF) as well as teacher unions and educationists (DBE/DHET, 2011). This summit generated a collaborative spirit and a commitment by all involved in addressing the issues that arose in a declaration and came up with guiding principles for a nation-wide Teacher Development Strategy and Plan (ISPFTED, 2011-2015 p. 1). The Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development (ISPFTED) was published in 2011 based on the findings from the 2008 summit as a 15 year-long term plan to improve TED and to address the quality of learning and teaching through a high quality standard TD system which conceived teaching as a life-long learning career.

Five key areas were identified as those needing serious intervention.

1. Lack of access to quality TED opportunities for prospective and practicing teachers.
2. Mismatch between the provision and demand of TED for the different teacher competencies.
3. Failure of the system to achieve dramatic improvement in the quality of teaching and learning in schools.
4. Fragmented and un-coordinated approach to TED.
5. The tenuous involvement of teachers, their organizations and other role players in teacher development TD.

A final challenge that was noted in the summit regarding post-1994 TD programs experienced, according to Fleisch (2002), was the lack of evidence-based effective TD programs. This explains why the ISPFTED (2011-2025) document also specified that the Professional Development (PD) strategies listed in the plan had to be based on evidence-based theory and research.

1.2 Problem statement

There has been mounting pressure on the South African Education Department, TD institutions and service providers to improve the appropriateness and effectiveness of development programs for schools and teachers. More recently, there has been added pressure for TD programs to have a positive impact on teacher's practices and learner's performance in underperforming schools, these are schools that performed below the set minimum passing requirement of the time. De Clercq and Shalem (2014) highlight the plight of South African teachers, how they have different levels of competences and face a variety of difficult working conditions and challenges more especially they state that they "have weak subject content knowledge" (De Clercq and Shalem, 2014, p. 23). This means that they need different development interventions that possess contextually appropriate purposes, content and forms, which should be customized and rooted in their specific school contexts.

A shift is slowly occurring from the usage of off-site in-service TD initiatives such as workshops, which usually focus on improving teacher's knowledge, on the grounds that these TD programs do not impact on learner's results and/or the teachers participating in such programs. Teachers do not appear to be able to translate and re-contextualize what they have learnt into their classroom practices (De Clercq and Shalem, 2014), hence, the move more favoured has been one that uses more on-site (on school premises) interventions to improve school performance and teacher's practices.

Large-scale, on-site instructional reforms have been noted to be becoming popular in countries such as the UK and USA where teachers are provided with a standardized curriculum or with lesson plans which stipulate the 'preferred' instructional practices which have to be utilized by teachers in their classrooms (De Clercq and Shalem, 2014).

This research focused on a Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) intervention strategy, which after the repeated failure of previously implemented TD interventions was formulated. It aimed to redress the past problems of teacher's lack of content knowledge and pedagogy skills acquired under the apartheid dispensation and further aimed at improving learner performance. Research from TD scholars such as De Clercq and the Needu (2013) report had shown and pointed to the learner's low performance being due to teacher's low content and pedagody competency. This intervention targeted teachers from poorly performing primary schools and aimed at improving teacher's teaching practices by supplying coach mediated annotated LP's and other resources, whilst monitoring the experience and impact these tools had on teacher's classroom practice.

The development of the 2010 Gauteng Primary Literacy Strategy (GPLS), later renamed the Gauteng Primary Language and Mathematics Strategy (henceforth, GPLMS) in 2011, fell into the existing and ongoing plans of the vision, mission and framework of the (ISPFTED 2011-2025), of "highlighting and addressing the challenges being experienced by teachers in the area of teacher education and development and to address the quality of learning and teaching through a high quality standard TD system" (ISPFTED, 2011-2015) by attempting to bridge the gap by supplying annotated lesson plans that would enable teachers to give the best standardized quality of teaching to learners. GPLMS (2011-2014) was also implemented after a similar literacy intervention named the Foundations for Learning (FFL) (2008) and during the reform and strengthening of the then National Curriculum Statement to the new Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements. The GPLMS intervention translated and adopted the existing GDE vision and mission statement which states that: "by the end of primary school, all Gauteng learners must be able to read and write for purpose and enjoyment" (GPLMS, 2011-2014, p. 5).

Before the formulation and implementation of the GPLMS, numerous explanations and reasons had been sought and presented for the poor learner achievement in literacy and mathematics. Explanations varied with the 3 most popular ones being that: 1) the current assessment tools in the South African curriculum were not a true reflection of the actual learner performance 2) the possibility that intervention and development strategies so far implemented were, in this regard inappropriately done and 3) the possibility of these intervention and development strategies not being successful. The GDE recognized the fact

that even if reason 1 could be a possible occurrence in South African schools, it was unlikely to be the main cause of this poor performance and that reasons 2 and 3 could be the most likely causes. The unavailability of resources had been one of the hotly debated issues as contributory factor to poor learner performance. The learner's test results had actually revealed that, even in places where resources were fully available, learner's achievement in literacy and mathematics remained low (GPLMS, 2011-2014). The GPLMS was implemented to address possible cause number 3, which became a different approach to the way T.D had previously been carried out in order to improve learner results.

The National Evaluations Education Development Unit (NEEDU) (2013) report showed that, in as much as the 1997 Language in Education Policy (LIEP) of South Africa states that learners have a right to learn in their home language (HL), the South African School's Act (SASA) (84) of (1996) stated that School Governing Bodies (SGB's) held the power to determine the schools' Language of Learning and Teaching (LOLT). And even if schools were utilizing the right stated as in the Language in Education Policy (LIEP) of (1997) to home language teaching, the vast representation of languages in schools would evidently end in the other Home Languages being excluded or side lined (NEEDU, 2013).

In the midst of flailing English literacy achievement by learners, the NEEDU (2013) report also found that most schools who offered English as the LOLT included schools situated in townships and rural areas and some of these schools offered no African languages as an alternative LOLT. The report attributed this phenomenon to parents of these learners and those demanding that English be the LOLT as they believed it would "expose" and improve their children's chances of success (NEEDU, 2013). Another problem in using official home languages as the LOLT is the fact that many African languages have different dialects depending on which part of the country the language is spoken, this would give rise to problems and challenges for resource compilers. Further challenges were in training teachers to learn and therefore be able to effectively teach concepts in African languages in subjects like mathematics and science as no known terminology of concepts in these subjects were known of in the African languages (NEEDU, 2013). The report then concluded that capacitating teachers through one or another TD model which provided resources would be the most important strategy for these struggling schools.

The GPLMS (2011-2014) was a multi-pronged intervention strategy, consisting of various components. The aim was to assist teachers improve learners' language and mathematics achievement by changing teacher's practices (GPLMS, 2011-2014, p. 14). The GDE had noted the poor content and pedagogical knowledge of teachers and the slow pacing of work in their classrooms which resulted in learners not being exposed to and completing the whole stipulated curriculum and thus not being able to achieve required results in national assessments. The GPLMS assumed that effective classroom practice could be scripted, it's aims were "if teachers are taught to follow script and expert pedagogues, the learners will be presented with a far more coherent induction into the disciplinary field" (GDE, 2011-2014, p. 17). the strategy provided scripted lesson plans to provide teachers with direct guidance and usable teaching resources which were to help teachers pick up the teaching pace in classrooms, as well as to bridge the gap between intended and delivered curriculum (GDE, 2010-2014) and as a consequence, ultimately improve learning and learner results.

The GPLMS provided teachers with supportive teaching materials, readers, posters, flashcards and most importantly, scripted lesson plans which were mandatory for teachers to follow. In addition, just-in-time, off-site training together with on-site coaching was provided to assist teachers in understanding and implementing the scripted lesson plans in their classrooms. By 2014, coaches no longer visited teachers in their classrooms but teachers were expected by the District or their SMT to continue using the GPLMS lesson plans.

The GPLMS was also more prescriptive than previous development programs. The issue concerning cost effectiveness came to the fore, affecting the proper testing of materials, such as the textbooks and lesson plans that could not be piloted or field tested to prove their effectiveness before being distributed (GDE, 2010-2014). These material's review and revision was subsequently then done during the implementation stage.

1.3 Aims and research questions

This study's central aim is to explore the views and experiences of teachers regarding the introduction of the GPLMS intervention, the usage of its coach mediated lesson plans, with and without the mediation of coaches as well as the experiences of the teacher's usage of other resources such as readers, posters, flash-cards that were supplied with the lesson plans as a form of support to teachers. The site of this research was two primary schools in Johannesburg and Ekhurleni as well as their views on the impact this intervention had on teachers' practices and knowledge.

The four main research sub- questions are therefore as follows:

1. How do teachers perceive the introduction of the GPLMS and its lesson plans?
2. What are teacher's views, experiences and responses regarding the implementation of the GPLMS lesson plans?
3. What are teacher's views, experiences of and responses towards coaches?
4. What are teacher's experiences and views and responses regarding the use of lesson plans with and without coach's supervision?

1.4 Rationale

The interest for this study was spurred by the National Education Evaluation Unit (NEEDU), 2013 report which cited the Western Cape's 2009 Literacy and Numeracy Intervention (LitNum) and the Gauteng Primary Language and Mathematics Strategy (GPLMS) as thus far, being the two most effectively implemented teacher development strategies in South Africa. These two strategies further proved to have had the most positive impact on classroom practice and subsequently, learner results. The GPLMS (2011-2014) became one of the biggest on-site large scale teacher support interventions to be implemented in more than 800 poorly performing primary schools over its running period.

This small scale qualitative research is focused in bringing to the fore the views and experiences of six teachers from two primary school schools that had been targeted to implement the GPLMS (2011-2014) intervention. It is hoped that the findings of such a research can complement and/or add to similar case studies on large scale teacher

interventions by identifying new trends or patterns on the potential and limitations of interventions based on scripted lesson plans mediated by coaches.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to understand teacher development and to locate the study within the relevant international and local literature. The literature reviews what teacher development is, the literature then identifies the role and purpose of teacher development, the different types and forms that teacher development can take, depending on its target and purpose. The literature further analyses the common misconceptions associated with teacher development and how it is perceived by experts and participants with a specific emphasis on the use of coaches and lesson plans as development tools. The literature also focuses on what makes a teacher development intervention effective.

The literature identifies the following areas as key factors for successful teacher interventions; the purpose, content, form or mode of delivery and context in which development occurs. The literature further identifies, compares and contrasts two theories of teacher change and their impact on the formulation and implementation process of Teacher development (TD) interventions.

2.1 How is teacher professional development defined?

Teacher development is perceived differently by different researchers. According to Villegas-Reimers (2003, p. 11), Teacher Professional Development (TPD) refers to the development of an individual within their profession. Villegas-Reimers (2003) states that TD takes form in formal ways, whereby teachers attend workshops and programs organised by the school or by the district, or informally whereby teachers autonomously or together read and engage with different professional or educational material with the aims of developing themselves.

Whilst TD is supposedly meant to be seen in a positive light by teachers, Villegas-Reimers (2003) highlights the different perspectives on TD shared by teachers and the designers of such programs and states that some teachers view teacher development negatively when they view TD as associated with the perception that they need development because they are not executing their job at an appropriate level. This can therefore affect their views on the purpose of why they need to be involved and engaged in teacher development programs. Clarke and Hollingsworth (2002, p. 948) criticize the view stated by Villegas

Reimers (2003) of how Professional Teacher Development (PTD) is often perceived, as a means of correcting or adding to a deficit in teacher skills and knowledge. This negative assumption, she states, has led to designers of PTD programs designing TD programs and interventions in the form of once-off workshops aimed at improving prescribed skills and knowledge, this approach and form of development further perpetuates the perception of teachers being seen as people who lack agency, capacity and a reflective nature, to whom development is done to as opposed to people who take part in, influencing and shaping their development through reflective participation. Villegas Reimers (2003) further adds that the once-off workshops have been ineffective and are the reason for the much needed attention and reform in the approach to TD studies and initiatives.

This polarisation hints at the fact that teachers within a country or across different countries are not all at the same level as some enjoy a better status than others, some have more expertise and knowledge than others, some behave in a more professional and autonomous manner than others. TD scholars (Hargreaves, 2002, Kelley, 1993) argue that, because teachers' status and conditions of work differ widely in time and place, their development needs are different and need to be carefully identified and responded to. Since the one-size-fits-all TD approach does not work, it is important for TD providers to have an understanding of teachers' specific context, conditions, levels of expertise and development needs before designing TD interventions that are appropriate and relevant. For example, it seems inappropriate for teachers with poor content or pedagogical content knowledge to be asked to reflect and share their practices with school colleagues if they do not have much control over their work knowledge.

This explains why many teacher development interventions, which have not been very successful, have become an area of great interest and debate in various countries in an effort to understand what are the most appropriate or best TD practices? And for what kind of teachers, given their different context, knowledge, expertise and development needs.

Welch (2012) states that the impact and the perception towards the importance of TD has on its participants, highlights how TPD in South Africa is often viewed by teachers as an upgrading exercise. The problem with this approach is that teachers end up playing "catch up" which ironically they never do as courses are constantly being added at different

institutions always deeming the previous course that the teacher was doing inferior not enough. Other challenges noted by the NEEDU report of 2013 are that South African teachers who are already in-service sometimes engage in professional development as a means of "paper chasing" so as to get certificates and degrees in order to earn the government's incentive of the once off bonus for upgrading one's qualification. Teachers then end up choosing easy courses and subjects that do not ultimately impact positively on their teaching practices.

The problem that Welch (2012), Clarke & Hollingsworth (2002) and the NEEDU (2013) report bring to the fore is that, as a result of this negative perception to TD, most TPD programs end up seeming futile and not enhancing true and reflective teacher development.

Contrary to the view that the capacity of the teachers who participate in development programs are incapable professionals and thus need development, studies from Villegas Reimers (2003) have actually shown that teachers who are already in service are more often than not, professional workers who are doing their best and are hard workers even when the situation seems dire.

This research will therefore be sensitive to the two main groups of teachers that TD programs/initiatives serve. The first being those who perceive themselves as professionals and can identify, through reflection, their development needs and those who are still struggling in identifying themselves as professionals, who might need to be helped in identifying the kind of development they need to enable them to correct and strengthen their practice. This could then enable them to begin to identify themselves as professionals by building in them a reflective nature.

What Welch (2012) emphasises, is that regardless of how a teacher perceives themselves, teachers have and do realise the important need for them to take part in some form of development and their need to be life-long learners, as it stated in the South African Norms and Standards for Educators (2000, p. 13), which specifies that teachers need to be constantly learning to keep up with the global systems that are frequently adapting and changing.

A review of the literature within the TD field shows that studies conducted by scholars such as Villegas Reimers (2003), Guskey, (2002), Welch (2012) take on the assumption that good teaching methods have a positive impact on learning and that becoming a 'good' teacher is a process that takes time because the acquisition of the necessary skills is indeed a complex process (Villegas-Reimers, 2003). Hence, the crucial need for teacher development for all practising or in-service teachers.

Villegas-Reimers (2003, p. 15) emphasizes that TPD studies should encompass an overall view of the development of the teacher, development programs need to recognize the different needs of the teacher as well as to look at: a) the content of the development, b) the process as well as; c) the context in which TD takes place. Therefore, a successful teacher development program needs to take heed of the existing personal perception towards the development of its target teachers, as their perceptions can influence how well they assimilate the information, skills and knowledge given and shared in the program. The above statement by Villegas-Reimers (2003) does indeed show the complexity of the field of teacher development, let alone the successful administering or implementation of a teacher development program or initiative.

The purpose of this research aims to explore how teachers perceived the experience of using coach mediated lesson plans and other teaching and learning support materials supplied in this intervention, such as flashcards, readers etc. as tools to improve teaching and learning in the GPLMS in Gauteng, South Africa, which mostly was implemented for schools that were underperforming in literacy and mathematics.

Add international literature

2.2 The role and purpose of teacher development

Guskey (2002, p. 382) states that the purpose of TD is "to bring about a change in the classroom practice of teachers." Welch (2012) concurs with this view and emphasizes that the purpose of TPD should not be about teachers getting a better qualification and bettering themselves, their pay-check or aiming at getting a better job. But agrees with Guskey's (2002) view that it should actually always be thought of in terms of how the development

initiative enables the teacher(s) to acquire knowledge which will in turn impact on teaching and learning and subsequently on learner performance.

A close reading of the literature shows that there is global mounting pressure, including in South Africa, on countries to decrease their government funding towards education, with a simultaneous co-existing need to increase the quality of learners' performance in numeracy and mathematics (EFA 2002). As a result governments have begun to evaluate and look into how to make teacher development initiatives more effective in terms of yielding higher learner results at lower costs. The South African education department has seen, from data collected from the Annual National Assessments (ANAs) which monitor learner's performance in numeracy and literacy that its learners achieve far lower results as compared to their neighbouring African counterparts in these subjects. This data has also played a huge contributing factor to the field of teacher development becoming one of the major areas prioritized for improvement in South Africa (EFA 2002).

2.3 Different forms of teacher development and their impact

There are two major forms of teacher development: the first is the "traditional form," which is characterized by the employer having control over what is to be learned, and the second one which is the standard-based system where professional bodies have a say in the goals and the process of how the program is to be implemented. A South African study conducted by Ryan (2007) gives a more in depth definition of the two approaches to teacher development programs. However Ryan (2007) describes these approaches differently based on where they are initiated from. He describes them as District or government- initiated programs and school-initiated programs. The former often characterized by ad hoc, once-off programs which are usually of short duration where little follow-up is done afterwards to note the impact on teaching and learning.

Ryan (2007) further explains how district or government- initiated TD programs are associated with mass workshops which are often organized without teacher's participatory input, these forms of TD he adds, are usually conducted "off-site" or away from the schools and focus on improving teacher's subject or content knowledge and occur formally away from the teacher's workplace. School-initiated programs are more on-site. These programs

Ryan (2007) states are usually organised and held on the school premises and address the practical competency or 'teaching methodology' of teachers and use methods or tools such as mentoring, coaching, peer–observing or cluster teaching, where teachers would observe 'peers' or 'mentors' teaching. The school therefore becomes the direct site for the implementation of the development program.

Ryan (2007) further highlights that there is often conflict as to which approach yields better results. Ideally the teacher development programs designed using the "standard based system or on-site" approach are typified as the programs that will yield better results as their grassroots and participatory approach takes into consideration the actual needs of teachers.

In South Africa, the various Departments of Education have over the years adopted a more "traditional form" or "government/district led" "off-site" approach when developing teacher development programs but have in recent years attempted to incorporate more of a teacher-driven element. The implementation of the IQMS (2003) and CPTD (2008) programs were examples of such initiatives, programs or policies, where district clusters, together with teachers started having more input in the kind of development they needed and wanted as it was clear that a one-size-fits-all approach to teacher development could not succeed.

In Ethiopia, the government implemented an on-site teacher development program for teachers who had little or no pre-service training, who in this instance recognised themselves as workers, how they, the Ethiopian government were able to identify the teacher's needs, and how through the program were able to build their identity as professionals.

In 1994, Ethiopia embarked on expanding their education access. Their aim was, like many developing countries, to expand education to previously marginalised learners at the primary level. The result of this expansion was an unprecedented inflow of learners into schools which then caused classes to be overcrowded and a shortage of available resources and qualified teachers (Maekelech, 2002). As a result, the Ethiopian education quality deteriorated, to a point where little learning was taking place in these classrooms. Two models were initially implemented to address this issue of education quality, these

programs were characterised by the government determining what kind of development teachers needed, and teachers were made to attend workshops or upgrade their degrees at higher learning institutions such as universities. These programs did not yield direct impact on learner's results. In response to this issue, a new onsite-based teacher development system was introduced (Maekelech, 2002). This system, allows for frequent staff development programs at school level, they are practical and based on the needs of the primary school teachers. The teachers themselves become the facilitators and this proves to also be cost-effective.

This system which was initially being met by resistance by teachers, as it seemed like they had a lot to prepare for, and had to be directly engaged in the program, teachers had come to get used to the cascade workshops which enabled them to travel and meet new colleagues, also teachers had an impression themselves as not being able to facilitate their own learning, even when given adequate support and resources. Teachers assumed training had to be given by 'experts'. After much negotiation, this program was piloted in a few schools, the program later proved to be very effective and popular with teachers and subsequently implemented throughout the whole region, according to Maekelech (2002), it addressed the issues the teachers themselves had problems with. Furthermore, teachers valued and supported the cluster teaching and group work methods which were the main strategies being used in this program. They experienced and believed that these methods were indeed effective.

Andrews et al (in Maekelech, 2002), having consulted 19 professionals of teacher development from all over the world, agreed that the TD models and programs that have proved most successful have been school-based, and existed throughout the long career of teaching with content largely determined by teachers' needs and are initiatives initiated or taking place at the school level (Maekelech, 2002).

According to Maekelech (2002) an on-sight cluster in-service teacher training program was implemented in Ethiopia and it the findings during the implementation showed that the upgrading of teacher qualifications in colleges and universities did not necessarily make an impact on learner achievement, this is because those programs aim at giving teachers higher degrees and subsequently higher pay, rather than improving teaching and learning

techniques. As a result they do not have “strong linkages and support with classroom practice” (Maekelech 2002. P 9). Similar results were seen in the typical one-type workshop approach programs. Taking over and above the above mentioned characteristics that enabled the success of the development program, this program, “The Integrated In-service Teacher Development and School Leadership program in Tigrai in Ethiopia was successful overall because it was well planned and piloted for a period of five years, careful planning was done from how the clusters were going to organized, it had clear and precise goals and a constant monitoring was done with the schools in the clusters and programs.

Villegas-Reimers (2003, p. 11) states that in South Africa there has actually been a mixture of “traditional/district-led/off site initiatives” and “standard based/ on-site/ school initiated-development initiatives” offered to teachers when she states that “The forms of professional development offered to teachers have been in the form of internal staff development or in other instances in the form of workshops or short-term courses.” According to Villegas-Reimers (2003, p. 11) there was still a problem with these programs as these were often not related to teacher’s needs nor did they lead to an ultimate impact on teaching and learning even after implementation, there still remained a number of teachers who had still not developed a reflective nature towards their practice, who after participating in these programs still remained comfortable with being helped to identify what area(s) they needed development in. Thus there still exists a debate on whether development offered to South African teachers has thus far enabled teachers to identify themselves as independent ‘professionals’ or dependent ‘workers’. However, it seems, judging from the forms of teacher development programs initiated by the Gauteng Department of Education so far, that the majority of teachers still do not fully perceive themselves as professionals. This goes to show that, whilst the site of the development is important, it is not the “be all” solution to the issue of improving teaching practice and this has influenced the formulation and implementation of more recent and different forms of teacher development initiatives such as the GPLMS (2011-2014).

Feiter, De Vonk, Akker, Van Den (1995, p. 49) argue that teachers have specific development needs, which TD interventions need to speak to, such as

1. Content knowledge- refers to the actual content that has to be learnt by learners, the concepts and skills.

2. Pedagogical content knowledge- refers to the methods teachers use to teach the content knowledge, the actual methods of instruction or practice.
3. Knowledge of learners, of educational contexts, settings and governance- refers to the knowledge a teacher has to have in order to 'read' and 'learn' which will enable them to adapt to the learners needs, their, and the schools context setting and governance.

The GPLMS seemed to address the second category of knowledge, which according to Feiter et al (1995, p. 49) can be approached using three perspectives, namely:

I. Discipline perspective- is concerned with content knowledge and the understanding and organization of concepts
II. Pupil perspectives- concerns itself with rich factual knowledge and different methods, analogies, similes and metaphors of explaining content to learners
III. General methodology- is concerned with the knowledge of and insight into different ways topics can be taught to learners and weighs the pros and cons of each (Feiter et al, 1995, p. 49-50).

Governments are pressurized to decide which TD programs would have a greater impact on learner performance making them most effective and most economically viable to fund, Guskey (2002) states that there is pressure put on funding agencies, governments, legislators, policy-makers even the public in general for the evaluation of the effectiveness of teacher development programs" (Guskey, 1994, p. 42). He further argues that the evaluation of teacher development initiatives also helps improve TD programs being formulated and helps inform decisions about what types and forms of teacher development are worth investing in.

Guskey (2002, p. 46-47) identifies four levels against which to evaluate the effectiveness of a teacher development program/intervention.

1. **Participant's reaction** – this initial level looks at the participant's reaction to the development, it asks questions like whether the participants enjoyed the development or not.

2. **Participant's learning**-looks at the participant's enjoyment of the developmental experience, whether they learnt any new knowledge or skills during their development and the measurement of these.
3. **Organization, support and change**- at this level, the highlight is no matter how good the development program is, or the quality of new knowledge and skills teachers could get, if the goals and intentions of the development are not aligned to those of the organization, the organization being the classroom, school or district in which the skills and knowledge are going to have to be implemented then the development program becomes futile. Thus it is important for development program designers to look carefully at the organization's capacity to support what it will be able to offer to the recipients of the development.
4. **Participant's use of new knowledge and skills-** the last level evaluates whether the knowledge gained made a difference in the participant's teaching or pedagogical practice. This level of evaluation cannot be done at the end of the program, as the implementation of new knowledge and skills are a gradual uneven process. The evaluation of the impact of the knowledge and skills might need to be made at different intervals throughout and after the implementation.

Hammond & McLaughlin (1997, p. 598) give a similar yet slightly more detailed perspective to what makes TPD intervention a success.

They state that

> It must engage teachers in concrete tasks of teaching, assessment, observation, and reflection that illuminate the processes of learning and development. It must be grounded in inquiry, re flection, and experimentation that are participant-driven. It must be collaborative, involving a sharing of knowledge among educators and a focus on teachers' communities of practice rather than on individual teachers. It must be connected to and derived from teachers' work with their students. It must be sustained, ongoing, intensive, and supported by modelling, coaching, and the collective solving of specific problems of practice. It must be connected to other aspects of school change.

2. 4 Coaching as a teacher development tool

Lord, Atkinson & Mitchell (2008) state that TD Scholars cannot come up with one universal meaning for the term coaching. There is usually a misunderstanding between coaching and

mentoring because of the similarity between the two, as “both are concerned with professional career development and both have strong links with action learning because they are focused on problem-solving and the continuous process of learning and reflection” (Lord, Atkinson & Mitchell, 2008, p. 10).

However, there are slight differences between the two; the Oxford South African Pocket Dictionary (3rd edition p. 562) defines a mentor as “an experienced person in an organization or institution who trains and advises new employees or students.” Mentoring, unlike coaching, usually happens at the beginning of one’s professional career; it is characterized by an expert-novice relationship and is concerned with growing an individual both professionally and personally. The mentor will have a more personal and broader commitment to the individual and has a much longer time frame of implementation than coaching. Coaching on the one hand is concerned with the developing and improvement of a specific area of performance or skill.” (Lord, Atkinson & Mitchell, 2008, p. 10)

A definition related to the teaching context, of the term coaching is given by Neuberger (2009, p. 2). Neuberger (2009, p. 2) defines coaching as “a form of development, where expert coaches from outside the organization are sourced to provide a one-on-one learning opportunity for teachers. Coaching encompasses the supervision of the teacher inside the classroom by the expert of the specialty with regards to teaching practice and feedback sessions, while mentoring is carried out by a more experienced person within the same organization.

Neuberger (2009, p. 2) further adds that “coaching puts more emphasis on facilitating the performance and development of another.” Li and Chan (2007, p. 343) also give a similar definition of the term coaching and state that, “It is usually carried out by an outsider and can occur in any stage of the career of the person to whom the coaching is being administered to.”

Beyond the education sector, coaching has evidently become a widely and popularly adopted development practice, especially within the corporate world. Whilst in the education sector, it is still a fairly new practice. Some reasons for the lack of using coaches to develop teachers are that schools have not been making this form of development available to teachers, or have viewed it an impossible task due to the lack of classroom

space, funding and the tight time constraints of the daily activities within the profession. There has also been a heavy reliance on the practice of providing to teachers, once-off workshops as a form of development. Another hindrance to the provision of coaches as a development tool might be the teachers themselves. Li and Chan (2007) elaborate on this point and raise the issue of how some teachers find it comfortable and easy to ask a friend for help than it is to ask staff members, let alone a stranger. In South Africa, it is publicly known that teacher unions have also acted as a hindrance to this form of development, whereby they have in previous years barred outsiders, who were then called inspectors coming in for whatever reason to sit in on teacher's lessons (Masterson 2013).

Despite these challenges, coaching is currently gradually gaining popularity in the education field. One of the most favoured forms of coaching in the education sector is known as "content-focused coaching, which enables a coach to meet on a one-on-one, on-going basis with a teacher to plan, observe and reflect on actual lesson plans" (Li & Chan, 2007, p. 341). The focal role of the coaches in this instance is in assisting the teacher to identify their needs in terms of knowledge, beliefs and skills, that is to say what the teachers know and ought to be doing and the gap that exists between these dynamics (Li & Chan, 2007).

A similar development approach was adopted in Hong Kong. The aim of this development program was to improve and develop teachers' competency in teaching the English Language. It was hoped that the new partnership program, which was going to make use of coaches "was going to create an effective professional development environment for teachers- that was going to provide ongoing support and form a community of practice focused on instructional methods, curriculum innovation and introduce new formats for instructional delivery" (Li & Chan, 2007, p. 341). Prior to the implementation of this partnership/coaching program, as in the case of the South African education department, schools in Hong Kong had embarked on a few other development programs and reforms such as the analysis of teacher's professional competency, the amendment of the curriculum, course books and assessments. Furthermore training sessions were also held to help teachers understand the new curriculum reforms, all of these reforms and development strategies, just as in South Africa, did not have an impact on classroom practice (Li & Chan, 2007).

Li & Chan's (2007) report states that the study of the Hong Kong partnership project revealed an interesting finding that, after 18 months of the implementation of the project, the relationship between the coaches and the teachers had become more complicated than expected (Li & Chan, 2007, p. 341).

As a solution to the strained teacher-coach relationship, Li & Chan (2007) suggest that in order for the coaching process to be successful, the coaches need to have the following key characteristics; high quality personal and interpersonal skills, mutual trust, confidence and respect. As insensitive and judgemental feedback on performance could affect teachers' confidence negatively and damage the learning relationship. Not only that, they add that the coaches need to possess an array of skills because they perform multiple tasks and their success can be guaranteed if the constituents involved in the program such as the SMT, principal and the teachers give them adequate support.

The justification for the formulation and implementation of the GPLMS (2011-2014) in South Africa bears strikingly similar characteristics to Hong Kong's case. A criticism of the lack of impact on classroom practice the popular and widely used once-off, off-site workshops held by districts had with teachers, quoting how these workshops which often focus on teaching them new content knowledge left them unable to practically implement what they had learnt in the classroom. The solution to this problem was a call for more school based, active, collaborative, progressive reforms that were closely focused on pupils learning and embedded in teachers' everyday work" (Li & Chan, 2007, p. 344) such as on-site initiatives which use coaches.

A study, conducted by Masterson (2013) on South African Foundation Phase Teachers' Experiences of Literacy Coaching in the GPLMS intervention, aimed to find out whether having a coach going into the school and classroom with the aims of developing the teacher; a practice previously prohibited by teacher unions, would bring about a change in teachers' practices. The use of GPLMS coaches, she states, then enabled a more rigorous form of on-site learning opportunity to take place for the teachers. The study further showed that change indeed was seen. The findings also highlight what strategy in the intervention motivated changes in teacher's practice.

Masterson's (2013) findings confirm Li and Chan's (2007) findings, that the coaching strategy is more successful if: 1) teachers and coaches act as colleagues or equals who are willing to listen to feedback from each other more than if they act as a form of surveillance or display a top down expert learner relationship and 2) coaches need to be trained first, as coaches acting on their knowledge would be insufficient. Li and Chan's (2007) study also found that teachers were more likely to change their own instructional practices when coaches came into their classrooms and worked together with them on some innovative instructional techniques, not only that but be able to demonstrate these techniques and to co-teach with them where possible.

Li and Chan (2007) as well as Masterson (2013) do however point out that coaching remains an expensive form of teacher development intervention as more often than not programs using coaches have to source coaches from external Non-Governmental Organization's (NGO'S) who are trained and able to assist teachers in the classrooms. However in the instances where funding is not a hindrance and schools are able to employ coaches to develop teachers, Masterson (2013) claims that coaching can be an effective tool for mediating and modelling new teaching practices to teachers. This finding is supported by Li and Chan (2007) findings that showed that in some circumstances coaches had been valued by teachers and principals and had aided in teacher improvements.

The complexity of the acceptance of the relationship between coach and teacher is one that should not, however be overlooked. Li and Chan (2007) warn that schools that have coaches should not fool themselves and think that the interaction between coaches and teachers is going to be a smooth one, not where people's competency and professionalism are under the spotlight and the ability to teach effectively is being questioned, where people's beliefs and attitudes are part of the equation. They suggest that SMT's need to anticipate the complexity of the interaction between the coaches and teachers and make relevant provisions of how to deal with these as they arise.

2. 5 Lesson plans as a teacher development tool

TD scholars agree that lesson plans (LP's) are very important supportive tools in the teaching profession. Black & Atkin (1996, p. 10) define a lesson plan as "a detailed written outline

that includes the intended sequence of classroom activities and directs the instruction process."

Langsford (2013) and Matimolane (2004) agree that lesson plans play an important role in a teachers' preparedness for his/her lesson as they enable teachers' to think about the resources they are going to need, the structuring of the content and the pacing of the lesson as well as the link with previous and subsequent lessons. Matimolane (2004, p. 16) explains how LP's could help teachers to develop a reflective nature about their teaching practices. This point also supports the argument made by Welch (2012) about providing the kind of development that will help improve teachers by making them more reflective in their teaching.

Despite the obvious popularity of LP's within the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS) and GPLMS, Langsford (2013, p. 4) further adds that lesson plans are important as "they are symbols of teacher's professional identity, pedagogical knowledge, accountability, power and politics, especially when they are used as an intervention strategy."

According to Matimolane (2004), all teachers, whether pre-service (pre-set) or in-service (in-set) should be engaged in the process of being taught how to utilize LP's at all times as it is the means by which curriculum requirements are translated. It is no wonder much of the pre-set training of aspiring teachers focuses on this aspect of a teachers' professional identity.

2.6 Scripted lesson plans

Matimolane (2004) explains that there are different styles and forms of lesson planning but that the underlying foundation is to have set goals, plan and a proper sequence of activities to be taught. Holding similar views is the South African Department of Basic Education (DBE), and that is that, a teacher who writes out lesson plans is able to teach better. Langsford (2013) states that there are three different forms of lesson plans, namely:

1. Self- generated templates that a teacher fills in;
2. The array of different types of formats that teachers use to document their individualised styles of planning

3. Scripted lesson plans given to the teacher, written by a government department or other organization.

This research focuses on the third type of lesson plans as the object of study.

There are several advantages of using scripted LP's as stated by Langsford (2013) and Matimolane (2004); they state that well prepared lessons can improve overall classroom management and control. Another advantage pertains to where there is a new curriculum as with the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements curriculum in South Africa which was implemented for the first time in 2011, scripted LP's could ensure that the teacher can set goals and consider the logistics of delivering the lessons, the transition could be smoother and full curriculum coverage could be attained. Scripted LP's, they add, also create a uniform standardized curriculum for all to follow. Also, teachers become motivated to use a wider variety of texts, methodologies and activities. Furthermore Supplied scripted LP's can provide teachers with a record for future use and save teachers lots of time by giving them extra time to prepare for subjects which do not have supplied lesson plans, Matimolane (2004) adds that scripted L.P's could act as reference during actual teaching. Teachers utilizing supplied LP's also spend less time preparing for lessons on the spot and more time helping learners in need and this ultimately gives them a confidence boost during learner contact time. Most importantly, in the unfortunate case of absenteeism, it is easy for a substitute teacher to cover for and teach for an absent colleague (Langsford 2013, p.19).

Reeves (2010, p. 14) concurs with Langsford's (2013) benefits of scripted LP's when he highlights the importance of Scripted Instruction "as a genuine professional development tool." However the Scripted lesson plans in Reeves (2010) study seemed a bit more extreme and rigorous than the ones in this study as they directed teachers on how to teach and even how to talk, with instructions of teachers actions written in parenthesis next to the words.

Despite all the positives associated with preparing scripted LP's, Langsford (2013) highlights that some teachers, especially those that have been practising for many years, feel that preparing LP's is a time-consuming and unnecessary exercise, and that they engage in lesson planning because it is a requirement from the department of education, these teachers also feel that lesson planning and the usage of LP's is only important for inexperienced teachers who are new to the teaching field. This explains and supports why making available some

exemplars or even lesson plans for each day of the school year is more useful to teachers. As they would not all have to start from scratch when preparing their lessons but can instead adapt existing lesson plans in their subject and grade.

Despite all the positive attributes to using scripted LP's to guide teacher's teaching, there are some negative aspects. Beatty (2011) states that the scripted lesson plans take the professionalism out of teaching, with teachers stating that they limit their autonomy and view teachers as de-skilled technicians.

Other disadvantages identified by Langsford (2013) are that teachers become overly dependent and grow to be uncritical of the lesson plans and their teaching, supplied LP's disadvantage teacher's chances of acquiring their own lesson planning skills. Often teachers become lazy and do not even read the supplied lesson plans before class. Langsford (2013) adds that supplied LP's usually assume a one-size-fits-all approach and in turn may not always fit the context of every school, or religious holidays or celebrations taking place within a community. Supplied scripted lesson plans could use simplistic language to try and accommodate a wider audience which could be patronising for others. Time allocation and pacing could be too fast or too slow for other teachers.

There are different debates on LP's but most seem to argue for the use of scripted LP's. They show that the use of LP's is indeed an effective development tool that could help teachers in developing different areas of their careers. However the use of LP's is not without criticism, such as the issue of taking away teachers autonomy and the issue of supplied LP's adopting a one size fits all approach in their design and therefore not accommodating different skills. These different debates on the use of scripted LP's will inform this research and help in evaluating the teachers in this study's perceptions and views of the use of scripted LP's and coaches in the GPLMS program.

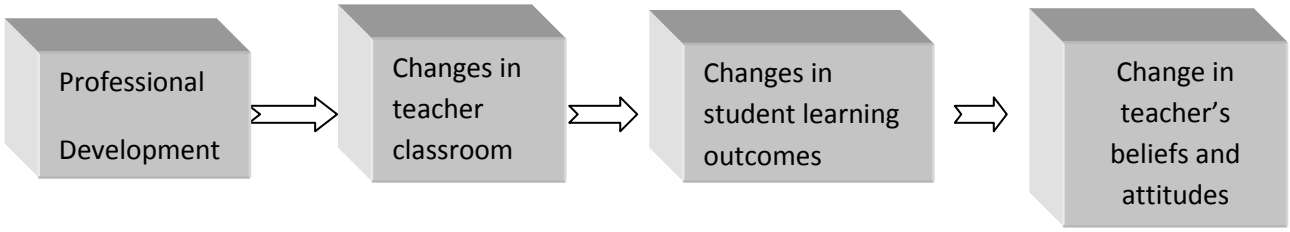
2.7 Process of teacher change

Debates about the process of teacher change once an intervention is introduced are on the sequence of change during the intervention implementation, on whether a "change in teacher's practice" or "change in beliefs" occurs first.

Guskey's (2002) model of teacher change and Clarke and Hollingworth's (2002) interconnected model of professional growth are two approaches that attempt to explain this seemingly complex process. Guskey (2002) and Clarke and Hollingsworth (2002) seem to be alluding to the fact that TD experts need to consider these two approaches when introducing TD interventions, as any intervention needs to be sensitive to the way the process of change in different teachers occurs.

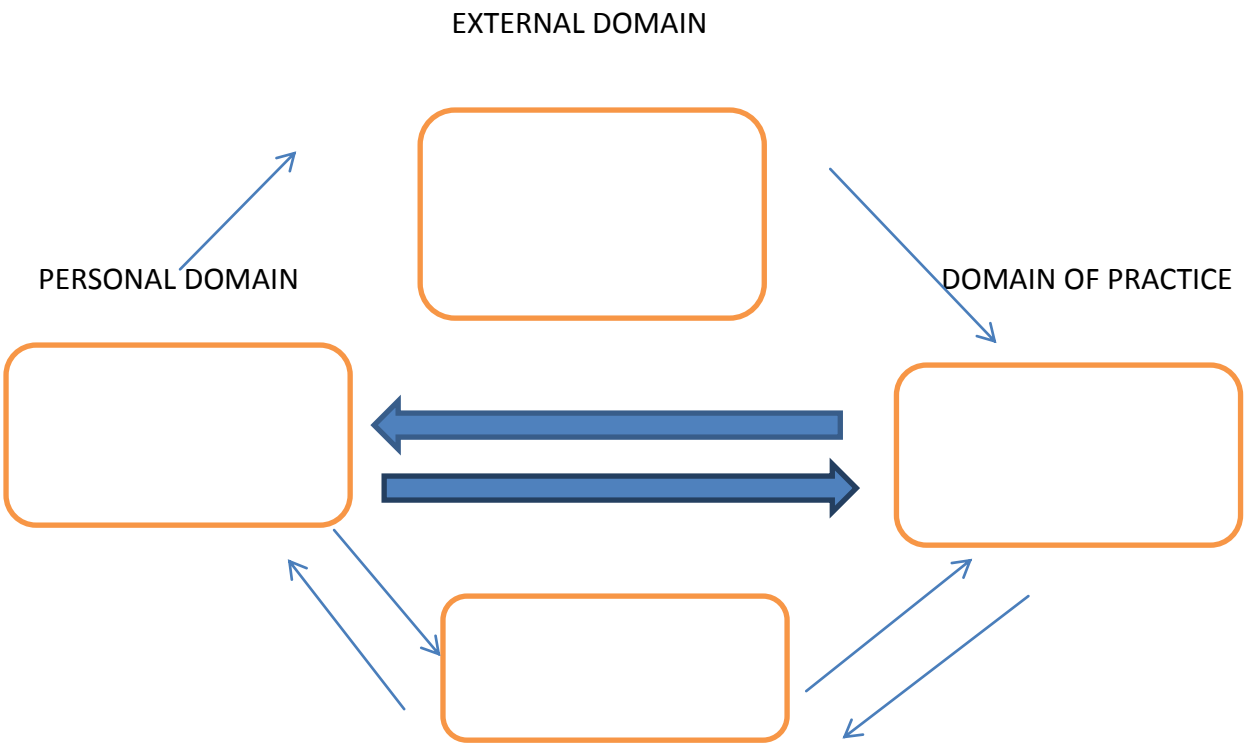
Guskey (2002) argues that some PD programs do not work because they are not sensitized to the cultural and emotional behaviours of teachers and that there are aspects of teacher change which affect whether a change is sustainable or not. Guskey (2002) argues that change is a gradual and difficult process and those involved in organising and giving TD need to ensure that teachers receive regular feedback on student learning progress. He states that a balance between continued follow up support and pressure also needs to be given.

His model for the process of teacher change is as shown in the diagram below



Guskey's (2002, p. 383) model of change argues that it is the experience of a successful implementation, measured by learner's results, which will ultimately change teacher's attitudes and beliefs towards the intervention or program. Guskey (2002) disagrees with the common belief that teacher's beliefs and attitudes need to be changed first before the teacher's classroom practice and subsequently ideal student outcome or results are achieved. Clarke and Hollingsworth (2002) offer a differing view which disputes Guskey's (2002) simple linear process and argue for a more complex process of change. Clarke and Hollingsworth (2002) describe the life of a teacher as having four domains, 1) the external domain, which has to do with the teacher's sources of information, stimulus and support outside of the teacher's professional world which act as stimuli. Examples of these are P.D programs and discussions with fellow colleagues 2) the domain of practice, which is the teacher's classroom and school environment and overall professional identity and the way in which the teacher experiments with different teaching pedagogues and professional

experimentations within their profession; 3) the personal domain, which involves the teacher's beliefs, attitudes, knowledge and values within their profession and 4) the domain of consequence - also termed the "salient outcomes" which is the aspect of teachers' professional life that deals with consequences of decisions taken within their professional life and the reflection or beliefs that prompted the action thereof (Clarke and Hollingsworth, 2002, p. 950).



Clarke and Hollingsworth (2002) claim that change can begin through external stimuli in any of these domains and that initial change will have an influence through the teacher engaging in an active process of "reflection" and "enactment" in the other domains, Enacting is defined by Clarke and Hollingsworth (2002, p. 950) as "acting not just for the sake of acting but as the putting into action of a new idea or belief or a newly encountered practice from simply acting, whilst reflection is defined as an active, persistent and careful consideration." Clarke and Hollingsworth (2002) also state how the balance between restrictions or support for particular types of participation, encouragement or discouragement to experiment with new teaching techniques, administrative restrictions or support in the long term are pivotal in the sustenance of an implemented TD program.

Clarke and Hollingsworth (2002) model suggests that changing classroom practice cannot be mastered by isolating participant's pre-existing constructed perceptions, as the resulted

change outcome will always reflect teacher's pre-existing perceptions and acceptable classroom practice. The two teacher-change models also suggest that the solution to successful TD implementation is that interventions cannot embrace a one-size-fits-all approach.

Guskey (1994, p. 48) however refutes arguments of one approach being better than the other and argues for an "optimal mix" in approaches to teacher development. The emphasis should rather be on the importance of looking into and understanding the individual and differing contexts in which the development program might be implemented, the geographical needs and contexts of the schools from which the teachers participating in the development program come from and the teachers themselves.

Guskey (1994) offers a useful framework for the implementation of a successful TD program.

1. Recognise that change is an individual and organizational process.
2. Think big and start small- the program must not take on too much.
3. Work in teams to maintain support (acknowledging professional learning communities)
4. Include procedures for feedback on results of the program.

Another element which influences teacher's reactions to TD is their stage of professional growth. This is why Feiter *et al* (1995) argue that TD interventions should be tailored more specifically to teachers' competences, according to the stages of a teacher's work-life and identity. They suggest seven stages in a teacher's professional life:

1. The 'pre-professional phase', or the period of initial education and training;
2. The 'threshold phase', or the first year of teaching;
3. The 'phase of growing into the profession', or generally the period between the second and seventh year of service;
4. The 'first professional phase';
5. The 'phase of reorientation towards oneself and the profession', sometimes indicated as the mid-career crisis;
6. The 'second professional phase';
7. The 'phase of winding down', the period before retirement. (Feiter et al, 1995, p. 48)

Feiter *et al* (1995) argue that, once teachers have passed the threshold phase, they focus on the day-to-day mastering of their jobs and concentrate more on being accepted by their colleagues, learners and work community. Past this stage, they focus on mastering their

careers and try out new methods of teaching. Teachers going through this stage of professional growth are willing to attend workshops to increase their teaching skill and these teachers will often voluntarily seek development opportunities. After 5 years they reach a stagnant phase, feeling that they have learnt all that they can, they base their practice on their gained experience.

The impact of the stages of teacher's professional growth is that reflective thinking in teachers can only be achieved if teachers possess a personal perception, capacity or view of themselves as a professional (Feiter et al, 1995).

From the above claims, one can deduce that the same TD program will not suit and will have an impact all teachers in the same assumed manner, as teachers are at differing stages of professional development with different knowledge, competences and identity. This explains why past teacher development programs in South Africa had a problem of "fit," according to Fleisch (2002, p. 96) "success and failure of school reforms hinges on the fit between school types and reform models."

2.8 Conceptual Framework

The literature reviewed on TD informs the study on different accounts. Firstly, the literature shows what a complex issue TD is and how TD programs can take different forms and happen at different sites, and will benefit different teachers according to the varying competences they have and need to improve on. As a result, it shows how teacher development programs can never be a one-size-fits-all exercise and that education departments or other TD providers cannot take for granted that one form of TD will suit all teachers. Thus the research questions aim to look at teachers "perceptions," "views" and "experiences" towards coach mediated lesson plans. As the literature has indeed shown that TD cannot be a one size fits all task and that different teachers' will perceive the development they receive differently (Guskey 2002).

The literature reveals that many TD interventions do not necessarily have an impact on teaching and learning and improve learners' results. This might be due to programs not addressing the priority needs of teachers, or not being contextually sensitive or might be implemented with a lack of proper evidence-based research on whether they will work or not work on the teachers for whom they are designed for. Effective TD programs are those

that improve the knowledge and practices of teachers, including the ability to reflect on their teaching and improve the teaching and learning process (Clarke and Hollingsworth, 2002).

The literature notes how the approach to teacher development programs will be influenced by assumptions about how specific teachers are ready to change and learn. Some teachers need to see and experience different teaching practices before changing their beliefs and attitudes, while others need to be convinced and change their beliefs before changing their practice.

Thus the research questions attempted to explore this phenomenon, in trying to enquire how useful teachers viewed, perceived and experienced using the coach mediated lesson plans with or without coaches in order to try and elicit if ever, whether it was the beliefs or practices that were changed first whilst getting raw data on their view on the improvement of the ANA results and how far they attributed to the improvement if any.

The literature also reveals how teacher development programs have different forms and can be difficult to implement effectively, whether off-site or on-site. Coaching as a form of on-site TD can support and develop teachers by modelling the new promoted practices, by monitoring and giving teachers' feedback on their practices, by making them reflect on how they can improve. One condition, however, is for the coaches to have sufficient knowledge expertise and soft skills necessary to create trust and respect between themselves and teachers so that the latter are aware of what and how they can improve and gain the confidence to translate what they have learnt into practices. For this reason the research delves into the relationship, the perceptions and views teachers had with the coaches and try and understand what influenced these perceptions (Li & Chan, 2007)

Realising the importance of coaches from the literature, the research questions further probe on the teacher's perception of the knowledge of the coaches, as they were the immediate mediators of the lesson plans to the teachers.

This research, therefore, is not assuming that the one-size-fits-all GPLMS intervention will benefit all teachers, as some may need TD programs with different focus and form. It was interested in understanding what kind of teachers are keener to change their practices and

why. But more importantly it was interested in understanding which kind of teachers felt they had benefited or not from the GPLMS intervention and its different components.

Chapter 3: Methodology

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the research methodology and design used in the study and explains the appropriateness of the chosen methodology for the study. It also explains how the two schools and their participants were chosen, the kinds of data collection instruments used as well as the way the data was collected and analysed.

3.1 Research Design and methodology

a) Qualitative research design

This research is a qualitative research. According to Schumacher and Macmillan (2006, p. 320), "qualitative research is an accepted methodology for many important questions with significant contributions to both theory and practice. Its main purpose is to provide an in-depth description and understanding of human phenomena, human interaction, and/or human discourse. Qualitative research is concerned with the 'how and why' of a specific phenomenon" (Lichtman, 2006, p.8).

A qualitative research design uses methods that are distinctively different from those used in quantitative studies, quantitative design is systematic and presents data using statistics, whilst qualitative research emphasises gathering data as naturally occurring phenomena. With qualitative research, data is mostly presented in words rather than in numbers (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006).

This research aimed to describe and understand the views and experiences of teachers' regarding the introduction of the GPLMS intervention, the usage of its coach mediated lesson plans, with the mediation and without the mediation of the coaches as well as the experiences and responses of the teachers' use of other resources such as readers, posters and flashcards as a form of support to teachers. Qualitative research design appeared to be most appropriate for the following reasons:

1. A qualitative research is sensitive to the context in which phenomena occur.

2. Unlike in quantitative research where secondary data can be relied on, in qualitative research the researcher is the key instrument of data collection (Creswell, 2007). Data is collected from primary sources, in the natural setting or site where the participants experience the issue or problem rather than relying on a single source for data, in this case, the primary sources and sites being six teachers' at two Johannesburg schools. Data can also be collected using multiple forms such as interviews, observations and official documents (Creswell, 2007).

3. Qualitative research design allows for a rich narrative description and analysis of the data; through inductive and deductive logic, where patterns, categories and themes are constructed. This also means the "researcher constantly goes back and forth between the themes and database until an establishment of a comprehensive set of themes is done" Creswell (2007, p. 45).

4. Qualitative research design gives room for participant's different perspectives (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006).

5. Qualitative research also allows the researcher to give a holistic account of the picture or problem being studied as it allows the researcher to report on multiple perspectives and identifying the many facets of the situation and then ultimately drawing the broader picture (Creswell, 2007).

Creswell (2007, p. 15) states that "Whether we are aware of it or not, we always bring certain beliefs and philosophical assumptions to our research, a close tie exists between the philosophies that one brings to the research act and how one proceeds to use a framework to shroud his or her inquiry" thus qualitative research allows and is more suited to allow for such inputs from the researcher.

There are different approaches within qualitative research design which a qualitative researcher can use to not only understand the beliefs that he/she brings to their study but to also use to "actively write about these beliefs and theories" (Creswell, 2007, p.15).

For the purpose of this research, the interpretivism approach seems the most befitting framework to use in explaining the process the researcher used to infuse their beliefs and theories Cresswell (2007) talks about into the study. Cresswell (2007) defines Interpretivism

as being rooted in the understanding that the social world or reality is not out there as an amalgam of external phenomena waiting to be uncovered as facts but that it is a construct developed by individuals who make or give meaning to their world and reality and by doing so they concurrently "develop subjective meanings of their experiences. These meanings then become directed toward certain objects or things. In interpretivism, the individual seeks to understand the world in which they live and work, the research is therefore grounded in people's experiences and perceptions of their reality, as a result these meanings can be varied and multiple" (Creswell, 2007, p. 25).

"The goal of this research, then, is to rely as much as possible on the participant's views of the situation." According to Creswell (2007, p. 25-26), in interpretivism, the research questions are typified by general questioning, as the researcher attempts to understand the participant's constructed meaning of situations, formed through the interaction of their social, historical and cultural norms that operate in their lives. Thus the interpretivist researcher focuses on the process of interaction the participants' experience as well as the specific contexts in which people live and work (Creswell 2007).

In this research, the specific approach used under the interpretivsm paradigm was the case study approach which focuses on "a unit of analysis where a single entity or phenomenon, around which there are boundaries is studied to achieve an in-depth understanding through in-depth data collection, involving multiple sources of information such as observations, audio-visuals, documents and reports. It is an in-depth study of a specific program, activity or phenomenon at a certain point in time" (Creswell, 2007) and in this instance the specific phenomena being the teacher's views and experiences of the use of coach mediated GPLMS lesson plans.

"The goal of the research, then, is to rely as much as possible on the participants views of the situation", according to Creswell (2007, p. 25-26). The research questions are typified by general questioning, as the researcher attempts to understand the participants constructed meaning of their situations formed through their social and historical and cultural norms interaction that operate in their lives.

b) Case study

This research is a "heuristic case study" of 6 teachers and their shared experience and phenomenon. Their shared phenomena being their usage of coach mediated GPLMS LP's. "A heuristic case study not only looks at a single phenomenon in depth but attempts to explain the reasons for a problem, and why the innovation worked or did not work, it evaluates, summarizes and draws conclusions, thus increasing its potential applicability (Merriam, 1998, p. 31).

Similarly this research aimed at looking at the lived experience of the teachers' use of GPLMS LP's, how applicable these were in the contexts of their schools and also if they did indeed serve the purpose of being developmental tools.

Considering Creswell's (2007) & Merriam's (1998) stated benefits of using a case study approach which is that "it awards for an in-depth, holistic, rich understanding and account of the case through its various methods of data collection. The researcher embarked on collecting data using different methods. This was done, not only to get an "in-depth understanding but also to be able to gain a better understanding and validate participant's views. Furthermore Merriam (1998) adds that case studies "offer insights and highlights meanings to the reader and expands the reader's experiences, thus making it an ideal design in the education field and have proven particularly useful for studying educational innovations, for evaluating programs and for informing policy" (Merriam, 1998, p. 41).

There are disadvantages to conducting case study research. Creswell (2007) states the disadvantages and difficulties in embarking on this approach of study, stating, how Case studies can be time consuming, strenuous and costly to researchers. Also the nature of the way the findings are presented may ultimately be too detailed, too lengthy or too involved for policy makers and educators to examine and use. Another issue with case studies is their tendency to either oversimplify or exaggerate phenomenon. As a result Merriam (1998, p. 42) suggests that readers should rather view a case study not as the whole picture but a "slice of life."

3.2 Sampling of participants/subjects

According to Merriam (2009, p. 76) a sample in a research study is the site, events or activities that could be visited or observed, people who could be interviewed and documents that could be read as a means of the unit of analysis.

She further states that there are two types of sampling, namely: "probability" and non-probability" sampling (Merriam 2009, p. 77). "Probability sampling (of which simple random sampling is the most familiar example) allows the investigator to generalize results of the study from the sample to the population from which it was drawn. Probabilistic sample is not necessary or even justifiable in qualitative research" as it becomes more of a statistical issue which will subsequently fall under quantitative research (Merriam 2009, p. 77).

The more appropriate form of sampling for qualitative research is "non-probabilistic sampling," with the most common form of it being purposeful sampling (Merriam 2009, p. 77). "Non-probability sampling does not include any type of random selection from a population. Rather, the researcher uses subjects who happen to be accessible or who may represent certain types of characteristics" (Schumacher & McMillan, 2006, p. 125).

Consequently, for both the selection of the sites and participants, the researcher embarked on a type of non-probability sampling called purposeful sampling, and "convenient sampling, which has to do with the selection of a group on the basis of being accessible or expedient thus making it convenient to use the group as subjects" (Schumacher & McMillan, 2006, p. 125). "The concept of purposeful sampling is used in qualitative research and it means that the researcher selects individuals and sites for study because they can purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem and central phenomenon in the study" (Schumacher & McMillan, 2006, p. 126). Merriam (2009, p. 77) explains it in a similar way stating how "Purposeful sampling is based on the assumption that the investigator wants to discover, understand and gain insight, and therefore must select a sample from which the most can be learnt."

The sites for the study were two Johannesburg primary schools. The choosing of these schools was purposefully selected based on them having had implemented the GPLMS intervention, which is the intervention in the research study, as they both had become "underperforming schools" which means they had achieved poor or lower learners'

averages in the ANA results of 2010 than what the department had set to be the minimum achievement.

The researcher also selected these two public primary schools on the basis of convenience, as it was difficult to find GPLMS schools which were easily accessible to the researcher and where teachers were willing to be interviewed. In these two schools, the researcher knew the principals and some teachers which made it easier to get access and permission to do research at the sites.

The second stage of the sampling involved the selection of participants who could provide rich information to address the purpose of the research (McMillan and Schumacher, 2010). The teachers were purposefully selected as teachers who had or did teach English and Mathematics using the GPLMS intervention. The researcher wanted and aimed at selecting a wide range of teachers in terms of their qualifications, content knowledge of the subjects taught, their extent of teaching experience and their phase specialization. One Head of Department (HOD) at school level, who taught English, was part of the sample. This added to the variety of responses, as the investigator thought it would be useful to hear the HOD's experience as part of the school's management of using the GPLMS coach mediated lesson plans, and to compare these with the other Post Level 1 teachers in the sample who held no position in the management structure of the school. Three teachers from each school participated in the study willingly.

School A Participants' profile

T1, a fairly new teacher in the profession, remarked that she took up teaching because she didn't have a choice and it was one of the few professions in which she could easily find a job. She seemed to be satisfied with her situation today.

T2 was initially employed as a remedial specialist at the school. In her approximately 20 years of experience, she had taken various service breaks and had just come back to teach in a mainstream classroom, she was now teaching Grade 5 English. She stated how she was currently looking for a post in a private remedial school, where she could use her remedial/aid skills and qualifications.

The HOD, a very active SADTU member held a position in the union branch executive as an education convenor and within the union worked at the education desk which reviews feedback from teachers about the various programs, such as the GPLMS, which are implemented in schools. The HOD remarked that she enjoyed her work and her teaching but did not enjoy the GPLMS implementation process.

School B participants profile

All three teachers from the second site were Post Level 1 teachers and appeared to be enjoying teaching. T2 and T3 were less experienced than T1. T1 was originally trained for foundation phase and taught a variety of grades across this phase. For the last few years, she had been teaching Grade 3 classes. She loved teaching and being in the classroom and what she enjoyed most about teaching was to break down difficult concepts and seeing how her learners ended up understanding these.

T2 and T3 remarked how they loved teaching but felt that they were reaching what Feiter et al (1995) describes as the stage of stagnation and wanted to explore more lucrative positions in their profession. That is one of the reasons they cited for embarking on further university studies to broaden their possibilities of promotion in and outside the school environment. They were both undertaking their Masters in Education Degree at Wits University and had taken up curriculum studies as a major for both their honours and masters' degrees.

These six teachers from the two schools of slightly different but similar contexts, which will be profiled in more detail in sections 3.3 and 3.4 had different characteristics and were varied in those respects already mentioned. The researcher purposefully selected these participants and saw them as a holistically befitting group who would be able to adequately answer the questions and give light to the research topic about their experiences and perception of the GPLMS implementation, how they found the usage of the LP's and other resources and how they coped with the supervision of the coaches, and the how they coped with implementing and teaching from the GPLMS lesson plans where the coaches where no longer visiting them in the classrooms and schools.

3.3 School A profile

School A is a co-ed previously model C primary school in the Johannesburg East district. The school is situated in an area that was in the pre-1990s, a predominantly middle class residential area. Subsequently, the area became known for drugs and petty crimes and the prices of houses plummeting and more and more residents abandoning their homes. As a result, these houses became refuge to squatters, many of whom were foreigners. The school mostly serves learners from previously disadvantaged backgrounds, either from low middle class families or from families who did not speak English at home, especially from families which are from neighbouring African countries.

It is a quintile 4 school which charges school fees. It has a fully functional computer centre, but no library. The teachers, including a few foreign teachers, are qualified and many have with the majority having been teaching in model C schools. A few teachers are from rural provinces such as Limpopo and KZN. The teacher/learner ratio is +/- 1: 40. The learners often partake in district organized quizzes and had in the previous year won the literacy quiz.

Since the GPLMS implementation in 2011, the school saw an improvement in the ANA results from 54% in 2012 to 63% in 2013 and 63% in 2014.

3.4 School B profile

School B is a former model C school in the Ekhurleni South district which inherited many learners from a nearby township school which closed down about 2 years ago. The school is well resourced with a fully functional computer centre. Most teachers were appointed when the school was a model C school. The school does not have a library.

In 2010, when the school merged with a school serving kids from the nearby squatter camp, teachers' had to face the challenge of teaching new learners from disadvantaged backgrounds. From the merger, the school ANA results began to drop. Most teachers blamed the arrival of the learners from the squatter camp school for this. However it was clear that the ANA results had been on a gradual decline since 2010 but they were only declared an underperforming school which had to fall under the GPLMS intervention in 2013. The researcher could not obtain the results prior to 2012 as the HOD claimed that these had been kept at district offices and they had no record of them on the school. The results at

hand were from 2012 and showed a slight improvement in mathematics in grades 3-6 from 38% in 2012 to a 45% average in 2013 and a slightly better 49% average in 2014. English results from grades 3-6 have remained on a plateau from 2012 with an average of 59% in both 2012 and 2013 to 57% average in 2014, leading some teachers to believe they should no longer be classified as an underperforming school, as these results were not of their own doing.

Another important feature of this school was the absence of a formal leadership structure. Racial tensions and volatile relationships existed amongst staff members. The white principal and a white intersen HOD recently resigned because of pressures from the mainly black SADTU Post Level 1 staff members, rendering many senior management posts vacant. One of the participants in the study, participant T2 had to unofficially fill in the intersen HOD's post, even though she was a PL1 staff member and was not officially placed in the acting HOD post. The micro-politics and racial tensions among staff were constantly being played out in front of the learners leading to an environment of non-accountability from teachers but also from learners who did not appear motivated or engaged. Recently, one teacher incited learners to go on a protest against the current acting principal, whose of the Indian race.

3.5 Data collection instruments

Qualitative research and case study designs usually rely on the collection of data through interviews, questionnaires, observations and/or document analysis. Unlike in a quantitative research design, in a qualitative design the data is conveyed in words. (Merriam, 2008) The researcher chose document analysis and Interviews as means of collecting data, however interviews were the main means of data collection because she wanted to elicit perceptual data about the usage of the GPLMS LP's and resources with and without the supervision of the coaches.

a) Document Analysis

Document analysis involves locating materials; materials according to Merriam (1998, p. 112) being "ready-made sources of data easily accessible to the imaginative and resourceful investigator. The benefits of using documents to collect data according to Merriam (1998) is

that unlike interviews and observations that are designed to suit the topic being studied, documents when they are drafted are not limited to this particular purpose and therefore do not add to any form of biases.

The issue of whether documents are primary or secondary sources is one that cannot be negated; primary sources are those documents that were written first hand by the people who had experienced the phenomenon whilst secondary documents are written at a later stage by those who had not directly experienced the phenomenon (Merriam, 1998).

The researcher analysed what Merriam (1998) terms, public records. These are documents made available to the public about an event that has occurred. Official documents such as GPLMS LP's and GPLMS policy documents, papers reviewed from other researchers on the implementation of GPLMS, GDE documents and academic papers that reviewed GPLMS's initial implementation successes and failures. The structure of the lesson plans, subject-guides and how they designed these lesson plans. This enabled the researcher to analyse, together with the participants' response the validity of the data and responses.

b) Interviews

Interviews are "the most common and powerful way in which we try to understand our fellow human being. The main purpose of an interview is to obtain a special kind of information. Using interviews helps in being able to acquire concrete insights, understanding, meaning, constructions and perspectives of the interviewees own experiences or knowledge on various issues" (Denzin & Lincoln in Chitera, 2009, p. 77) "responses can be probed, followed up, clarified, and elaborated to achieve specific accurate responses," (McMillan & Schumacher 2010, p. 205).

According to Merriam (1998, p. 71) the most common type of interview is the "person-to person interview," McMillan and Schumacher (2010, p. 205) state how "non-verbal as well as verbal behaviour can be noted in face to face interviews" interviews are not limited to face to face interviews only as "interviews can also take place in groups, although these are not commonly used in case studies, the benefits of interviews are that they enable the researcher to achieve specific accurate responses, by finding out what is in and on someone else's mind (Merriam 1998).

Merriam (1998) states that interviews are essential in instances where one cannot observe behaviour, or understand feelings and perceptions and people's interpretation of the world around them.

It was therefore appropriate to use interviews in this research to elicit and understand teacher's views and experiences towards the use of the GPLMS LP's and the coaches.

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2010) the disadvantages of interviews are their potential to subjectivity and bias, whereby the researcher might in his/her structure of questioning ask questions to support his/her own or particular point of views or the interviewers perceptions, another issue they raise is the fact that they are time consuming and might be costly to conduct. They also raise the issue of anonymity which is problematic with face-to face interviews, this they add might cause the interviewee to be uncomfortable in answering some questions and unwilling to report on true feelings.

This issue of a possible bias was avoided by the interviewer by using other data collection instruments such as document analysis and the use of semi-structured interview, rather than an open ended interview whereby the questions to some degree were prepared before the interview.

There are different kinds of interviews in a case study approach, each with their own place and importance according to what is being studied and according to the amount of structure the interviewer requires. "Highly structured interviews" (Merriam, 1998. p.74) which according to McMillan & Schumacher (2010) are followed by a set of choices and the respondent selects one of the choices as the answer. Semi-structured interviews are those questions that have no choices from which an interviewee can respond from. McMillan and Schumacher (2010) state that these questions are phrased for individual responses, they are open ended questions but are specific in their intent, and lastly the "unstructured/ informal interviews" (Merriam, 1998, p. 73). They allow a high degree of objectivity and uniformity yet allow for probing and clarification. Unstructured/informal interviews also award the interviewer an opportunity to expand on questions, the questions are usually open ended thus enabling researcher and participate to have a free open like conversation with the interviewee

Whilst the positive aspect of the prepared questions and their sequencing might be a good thing for the purpose of organization and overall preparedness of the interview, the disadvantage of using highly structured interviews is that they are a rigid form of extracting information; they do not give an opportunity for the researcher to explore and further probe answers and might limit the researcher's understanding perspectives of interviewees (Merriam, 1998).

The researcher can however use highly structured questions in an interview to elicit socio-demographic data such as age, income, history of employment, marital status, etc. (Merriam 1998, p. 74).

For the purpose of this research, the researcher used a combination of semi-structured and highly structured interview approach, as these enabled the researcher to select topics on which she was going to ask the participants in advance. But the researcher also kept the openness and ability to decide on and change the sequence and wording of the questions during the interview if the need arose in order to further question and illicit the responses desired (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010, p. 355), and this made the interviews conducted semi-structured.

This enabled the participants through probing to "define their world in their own unique ways" (Merriam 1998, p. 74). "The interview consisted of some less-structured questions; the majority of the questions were however structured in a more exploratory manner which had not been prepared or pre-worded but arose during the interview sessions.

The flexibility of the semi-structured interview method enabled the researcher to engage with participants in a conversational and situational manner, as a result, the researcher obtained data from participant's meaning, how they conceived their world and how they explained or made sense of the important events in their lives, especially pertaining to the GPLMS LP's and coaches (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010).

However, the main limitation of interviews is that they can be time-consuming, and information may be given based on bias, either towards the researcher or the topic. In such cases the researcher can be told "what the participants' think he/she wants to hear," instead of their perspective and experience (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010, p. 355).

Thus it was very important, before interviews to notify participants and make them aware that they needed to be honest with the interviewer and for a trust to be built between the researcher and the interviewer. This was done by assuring them that whatever they said would not be used against them in anyway but was merely for study purposes. Probing, during interviews also became an important tool to help the researcher get to the core of the issues. The researcher had to work on the participant's time table and availability, of which some participants decided not to participate in the study or change pre-arranged appointments.

Finally, Merriam (1998) warns, which the researcher had to be mindful of, that, when conducting a case study research, the researcher also needs to be aware of his/her own biases which might contribute to the end product. As a result issues of reliability, viability and generalizability are of crucial importance and need to be heeded and taken into account.

3.6 Validity

"Validity refers to the degree to which scientific explanations of phenomena match reality, it refers to the truthfulness of findings and conclusions" (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010 p, 104). According to McMillan & Schumacher (2010), explanations about observed phenomena, as is the case in qualitative research design, approximate what is reality or truth, the degree to which explanations are accurate comprises the validity of the design" (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010, p. 104). Scott & Morrison (2006) further state that validity is about whether the research is testing what it aims to test.

In qualitative research the reader needs to be aware that "one can never really capture reality, validity then becomes a goal rather than a product, it is never something that can be proven or taken for granted, what more, it is also relative, It has to be assessed in relationship to the purposes and circumstances of the research, rather than being a context-independent property of methods or conclusions" (Merriam, 2009, p. 214). Because the objects of study in qualitative research are humans, it will suffice that humans will construct their reality and experiences differently, the way they experience one phenomenon and make meaning of it will be different, and thus the internal validity of such research is of utmost importance (Merriam, 2009).

The researcher ensured validity by checking that the interview questions were appropriate, pertinent and relevant to the research focus and what the research intended to test. The researcher ensured that the interview questions were clear and unambiguous. The interview schedule was then submitted, examined and approved by the University ethics board. During collection of data, the data was further strengthened by probing and questioning the participants when their answers were ambivalent or contradictory. This technique, Merriam (2009, p. 217) calls "member checks," this is "where the researcher solicits feedback from his/her participants on emerging findings so as not to misinterpret the meaning of what participants say and do and the perspective they have on what is going on. It also becomes an important way of identifying biases and misunderstanding of what is observed."

"Although qualitative researchers can never capture an objective truth or reality" (Merriam, 2009, p. 215), the researcher attempted to strengthen the validity of the data collected by using the method of triangulation, whereby data was not only collected from three sources, but once collected was also set against and compared with the literature that existed from researchers and scholars who had previously conducted studies on the GPLMS intervention, its implementation, successes and failures.

3.7 Reliability

Reliability can be defined as: "the extent to which measures are free from error" when the instrument has little error then the more reliable they are (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010, p. 179). It is concerned with "the extent to which findings will be the same if done again" (Merriam, 1998, p. 55). This refers to the objectivity of the answers given by the participants.

To ensure genuine responses, the researcher embarked on selecting a sample of varied characteristics as discussed earlier in the section titled participant's profiles. The researcher conducted the interviews during the most conducive times, when the participants indicated the best time to be interviewed. Special attention was paid so that no subjectivity or bias interfered in the interviewer-interviewee relationship and that the answers were as genuine as possible.

The researcher was aware of issues of generalizability, as a result this research did not aim to make generalizations to the wider public but merely aimed to "make teachers and other clinicians more informed on this one phenomena" (Merriam, 2009. p. 224). "The research started with a hypothesis that reflected a situation-specific condition in a particular context" (Merriam, 2009, p. 225), the researcher hoped that "conditions discovered in this research can offer practitioners some guidance in making choices-the results of which can be monitored and evaluated in order to make better decisions in the future" (Merriam, 2009. p. 225), when pertaining to using coaches or scripted lesson plans as a means of teacher development tool. Instead of generalizations, the researcher promotes "extrapolations" (Merriam, 2009. p. 224). These are defined by Merriam (2009, p. 225) as modest speculations on the likely applicability of findings to other situations under similar but not identical conditions, as every study, every case every situation is theoretically an example of something else. What we learn and can generalize therefore lies in what we learn in a particular situation which we can then transfer or generalize to similar situations subsequently encountered. "

Prior to data collection, the researcher had under the University's rules and regulations vowed to conduct the research in an ethical manner. A research proposal stipulating how and when the data was to be collected was submitted to the Universities ethics committee and the relevant approval was received.

3.8 Data analysis

Hatch (2002, p. 148) mentions that "data analysis is a systemic search for meaning. It is a way to process qualitative data so that what has been learned can be communicated to others. Analysis means organizing and interrogating data in ways that allow researchers to see patterns, identify themes, discover relationships, develop explanations, make interpretations, mount critiques, or generate theories."

In qualitative design, the data analysis is partly of an inductive nature. An inductive approach to data analysis is one where the researcher moves from the specific to the general and builds to a conclusion. In this approach, one thing leads to another, a kind of scaffolding (Lichtman, 2006).

The data analysis is carried out throughout the study and can change and be altered during the research (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010).

On the contrary Merriam (1998, p. 216) points out that "data analysis may present other ethical problems since the researcher is the primary instrument for data collection, data have been filtered through his or her particular theoretical position and biases."

"Data analysis in a qualitative study is done simultaneously with data collection" (Merriam, 2009, p. 171) thus during and after the data collection, the researcher went through and coded the data collected to see if she could find a recurring them. The interview recordings were transcribed verbatim, the data was broken down into meaningful bits of information, by means of "open coding" (Merriam, 2009, p. 171), that is to say, at the initial stage the researcher highlighted from each interview transcript any parts of the interviews she deemed relevant to the research question and organized these into categories and coded depending on patterns observed. The researcher identified and named patterns and relationships in the responses of the participants in an attempt to answer the study question (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010, p.367). The common codes were then grouped together, named according to the themes covered in the questions.

The researcher then used a mixture of "interpretive commentary" and "particular description" in the presentation of the data. Interpretative commentary is defined by Merriam (1998, p. 235) as "a framework that provides for understanding the particular and general descriptions just discussed" and follow the quotations of the participants response in order to help guide the reader to see the analysis pattern of the research. (Erikson, 1986 in Merriam, 1998, p. 235), whilst "particular description consists of quotes from people interviewed…" (Merriam, 1998, p. 235)

The researcher abandoned the narrative and embarked on a theorizing of the data (Merriam, 2009, p. 188), where the researcher "allowed herself to look at the data and draw inference about future activity" (Merriam, 2009, p. 188).

3.9 Ethical consideration

This research was carried out with professional integrity as the researcher ensured that she adhered to qualitative research ethical guidelines. The research proposal was submitted to

the Wits School of Education Ethics Committee, was approved and received the protocol number: 2014ECE033M.

Permission was also sought and attained from the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) to carry out research in the two selected GDE schools and then from the school principals to interview six teachers (see appendix C). The researcher ensured that she heeded to participants' time and that she set up appointments at times that best suited the participants. The researcher had to take into account the preparations that teachers were doing for the Annual National Assessment (ANA) exams and thus had to go and collect data shortly after the writing of the ANA exams. The researcher ensured that the interview questions were non-offensive, non-discriminatory and not suggestive.

The researcher provided the principal and the participants with an introductory letter on the nature of the research. Participants were requested to give their consent by signing consent letters, agreeing that they were choosing to voluntarily participate in this study and could as a result pull out any time. Anonymity and confidentiality were ensured as pseudonyms or codes were used instead the names of the schools and participants. Furthermore, they were told that the data collected was not going to be made accessible to any other person and was to be destroyed after 5 years. Because their participation was voluntary, participants were made to fill in consent forms before the interviews took place.

The research signed a confidentiality clause with all the participants and ensured the participants that their identities would remain anonymous at the presentation of the data. This also ensured trust and openness was achieved during data collection.

3.10 Limitations to the study

This study was a small scale study undertaken within a limited time-frame (July to September 2014). There was therefore a time limitation for data collection. Some teachers, who initially volunteered and gave consent to participate in the study later withdrew due to work pressures and other personal commitments as the interviews had to be conducted after school hours. The limited scope of this study did not permit the researcher to evaluate the main reasons for the improved ANA results as this was not the scope of the study and could be a topic for further research and study.

Using interviews as the mode of data collection has limitations in itself. Purposeful and convenient sampling have a limitation in that results or data collected are dependent on the unique characteristics of the participants and their experiences, for the fact that a certain type of participants are chosen and there may be a bias towards the topic. It is therefore difficult to generalize the findings which will only indicate a trend to be explored in further research.

Time was a real challenge during the collecting of data as teachers were focused on the preparation of the upcoming Annual National Assessment (ANA) exams thus giving attest to Merriam (1998) concerns of time

Chapter 4: Data Presentation

INTRODUCTION

This chapter starts with a brief background of the GPLMS intervention, its aims and various components with the view to contextualizing the interview data. This first part relies mainly on GDE documents as well as on some secondary literature on the GPLMS. The second part is a presentation of the data obtained from the empirical research at two former model C primary schools which had been selected to implement the GPLMS intervention.

4.1 Overview of the GPLMS intervention

The attention and focus of Provincial Education Departments were on providing better quality education and improving learners' average results. This was done through various TD interventions which consisted mainly of off-site programs in the form of short to medium workshops and cluster meetings that focused on teachers' content knowledge, classroom management, discipline and computer literacy (De Clercq and Shalem, 2014). These programs were once-off, fragmented and were not perceived as having a real impact on changing teaching practices and learners' results, the programs did not address the needs of teachers of poorly performing schools (Botha, 2014).

Whilst the review of the literature has shown the improvement of teachers' practices as an important approach to improving learner performance, The most important principle of the GPLMS was to improve learners' results through the improvement of classroom teaching practices (GDE, 2011-2014 p. 13). It was partly influenced by similar systemic interventions launched in Britain, the US and Canada but was adapted to the South African context and its underperforming schools (GPLMS, 2011-2014 p. 18).

Previously, one similar large-scale literacy program, the Foundations for Learning (2008) campaign, which was introduced in 2008 in foundation phase primary schools, had relied on the provision of detailed lesson plans as a teacher development tool. It provided schools with ample literacy resources, lesson plans, and teacher training for reading out aloud. It also gave specific directives regarding times, resources, teaching activities for literacy teaching in grades 1 to 3. However the LPs of this intervention, which were not evaluated on the ground, did not have a strong link to the recommended reading activities teachers were supposed to do (Botha, 2014).

The GPLMS intervention was supposed to improve on the Foundations for Learning (2008) campaign and its lesson plans by providing resources and support which were directly aligned to the GPLMS lesson plans. The aim was to improve learners' results in underperforming schools by changing teachers' practice. In 2011, teachers from the 792 lowest performing schools in the Gauteng Province were targeted for increased support in the form of readers, teacher and learner material as well as lesson plans to guide them on a daily basis about what and how to teach their learners. In addition just-in-time training and on-site coaching was to be provided to teachers (GPLMS 2010-2014, p. 18).

4.1.2 Different components of the GPLMS

The main component of the GPLMS was the detailed scripted lesson plans which specified the pacing, sequencing of content knowledge as well as teacher and learner activities and assessment for each day/week of the school calendar. These were mandatory for teachers to follow (Botha, 2014).

> Lesson plans… include assessment activities, marking guides and recording tools. The lesson plans integrate the content and assessment required by CAPS into a structured, day by day programme... The assessment activities in the lesson plans include formal and informal assessment. In order to manage the pacing of the Lesson Plans, and to lessen teacher workload, teachers are supported with clear time allocations, weekly routines, revision weeks and marking guidance. In addition, coaches have been trained to provide support with remediation, re-teaching and multi-level/multi-grade teaching…

In Foundation Phase, lesson plans were produced for Home Language (HL) such as isiZulu, isiXhosa and Afrikaans, First Additional Language (FAL, English) and Mathematics. In Intermediate Phase, lesson plans existed for HL (English), FAL (English) and Mathematics (in English). Botha (2014) explained the reasons behind the introduction of expert-designed scripted LPs:

1. A previously lack of planning by both SMT's and teachers
2. Absence of pedagogy and poor/incomplete curriculum delivery
3. The evaluation of previously implemented literacy programs and their poor impact
4. The constantly changing or upgrading of the post-1994 South African curriculum

According to Langsford (2013, p.11), the GPLMS lesson plans were seen as a crucial component of the strategy. A lot of emphasis and funding for their development and

implementation was provided. Once introduced, they went through several rounds of review and revision.

In addition, matching or aligned support materials were secured from several different publishers. There were teaching and learning materials as well as readers and a phonic programme. Another on-site support component was provided in the form of coaches who were recruited by education NGOs and appointed by the GDE to support and monitor teachers in their classrooms, and "coach" them in the interpretation and execution of the lesson plans. According to the NEEDU report (2013, p. 6): "Teachers were visited fortnightly by their 'coaches' to assess and assist progress and to assist with the delivery and comprehension of lesson plans". Coaches were also trained and retrained so that they all knew their duties and used standardized measures and tools in their evaluation of the teachers (Botha, 2014).

The GPLMS intervention was constantly monitored and evaluated. Data and statistics on learners' performance were kept to monitor and analyse the impact of the GPLMS intervention over time (Botha, 2014). Thus, the GPLMS expected greater accountability from teachers who not only had to follow the LP's but also had to compile learners' portfolios and accurate records of learners' marks.

4.1.3 Assumptions of GPLMS components

The GPLMS was designed with the assumption that teachers did not possess the basic content and pedagogical knowledge and methodologies to deliver well the curriculum. In that sense teachers were seen as workers who had to be told what to do as well as when and how to do it. This view was in line with reports in a school evaluation report (NEEDU report, 2013) which attributed the low performance of learners to the poor performance of teachers. There were two main reasons mentioned in the report of why teachers were not yielding the best results from learners. The first possible reason was that teachers "won't", implying that they were either being purposefully defiant and "ill disciplined by coming late for school, as well as displaying high levels of unaccountable absenteeism". If this assumption was correct, then it should have been clear that what was needed was the improvement of the school management capabilities to manage staff members and not how to improve and introduce teachers to more effective teaching and learning activities in the

classroom (NEEDU 2013). The second possible reason was that teachers "can't". This assumed that teachers were not capable to deliver content knowledge to learners. The NEEDU (2013) report appears to argue that this is the most likely cause for learners' poor performance and that therefore it was imperative to effectively capacitate teachers (NEEDU 2013).

The NEEDU (2013) report disregarded other contextual factors that might have added to the teachers not delivering the curriculum content well. Such contextual conditions ranged from children having to walk long distances to school, teachers working with severe shortages of resources, especially in rural areas where basic school infrastructure and buildings were dilapidated or non-existent and where learners were being taught under trees and some lessons being cancelled when the weather was not favourable.

The report focused on why teachers in schools with enough resources still failed to utilise these to get their learners to read at an adequate level. Thus, NEEDU (2013) focused on teachers' competency in the classroom, by conducting maths and literacy tests on grade 4 and 6 teachers to test the content knowledge which they taught. The findings showed that teachers scored a high 71% in retrieval questions and a lower 55.2% in cognitive, or inferring questions which required interpretation (36.6%) and evaluation (39.7%). In maths, teacher's scores were 67.2% in arithmetic operations, 49.7% in fractions, ratio and probability and a lower 46.5% in their algebraic logic to solve problems. These scores showed that "South African primary school teachers generally exhibited poor subject knowledge in language and mathematics" (NEEDU, 2013, p. 8). The report further concluded that many teachers nationwide did not know how to teach and implement curriculum in their classes because of their lack of content knowledge. It also mentioned the lack of knowledge from subject advisors, circuit managers and many officials higher up in the system (NEEDU, 2013, p. 8).

This may be one reason why the then MEC for Education, did not involve teachers, HODs or district officials but decided to adopt a systemic 'top down' development and implementation approach to the GPLMS intervention, where "rational prescriptions" by the state bureaucracy were given to the independently recruited coaches (De Clercq, 2014).

The empirical data of this research was collected from six teachers from two Johannesburg primary ,schools and was grouped into the following themes: 1) perceptions of the

introduction of the GPLMS intervention, its lesson plans and other material resources; 2) experiences and responses regarding the implementation of lesson plans; 3) experiences of, and responses towards the coaches and their role in the LP implementation; 4) experiences and responses regarding the use of LPs without coaches and finally 5) perceptions of the GPLMS impact.

Data from School A is first presented and data from School B follows next.

The 6 participants from 2 different primary schools taught English and mathematics at different grades and phases and had been under the GPLMS intervention for at least 2 years. Individual interviews were seen as most appropriate because they could be used to further probe, follow-up, clarify and seek elaboration of the views and experiences of teachers.

4.2 School A: Participants' profile

Teacher	Position held at the school	Years teaching	Qualifications	Grades teaching	Subjects currently teaching
HOD	PL 2	16 years	Diploma and an Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE) course on inclusion	6	English
Teacher 1	PL 1	2	Marketing diploma + Advanced Certificate in Education(ACE), Bachelor of Education	6	English
Teacher 2	PL 1	20 (with breaks in	Remedial specialist teacher	5	English

		service)			

When the participants were asked how they felt about and coped with the demands of the profession, participants had similar views. They all lamented the fact that how they were not coping to keep up and were frustrated with the amount of paper work. In this regard the responses pointed to ambiguous and mixed feelings about the appreciation of the distribution of the GPLMS lesson plans, which meant that some of the paper workload could be alleviated. Some respondents stated how the lack of resources was making their job difficult and provision of more resources, would make teaching and learning more easier and fulfilling.

> *There's a lot of paperwork, when I talk about paper work, I mean everything must be written in black and white by the teacher and in the classroom as a teacher, you explain to the learners and they do written tasks and you must mark that as well, there's a lot of marking to do. It's what mostly stresses me. And the resources as well are not enough. So you have to write notes on the chalkboard in this time and era you can imagine that! It's like we are going back instead of moving ahead.*

The HOD felt that resources like overhead projectors would make their work much easier as it would be able to present the work, corrections etc. on the overhead transparency and these would be able to be kept and used for much longer periods.

T1 was a first year teacher, who had previously been working in the private sector for more than 10 years. She held a marketing degree and had completed the one year long Advanced Certificate in Education which qualified her to acquire a Bachelor of Education degree as per requirement and provision in the Framework on Teacher Development (2006) p. 24. The teacher stated that being a new teacher was difficult, but was slowly coping with the demands of her job:

> *…initially when I started I was like, oh my gosh what am I doing here? I felt so out of place…as if I didn't fit in at all but as soon as I sort of found my feet, everything started making sense, I started to see what was expected of me, I started to get used to the routine…the administration part of it, so as time went on I started to feel like ok, I also started to get used to the routine. it started to come together and I started thinking this is not really bad. I wouldn't say I'm over the moon with it, but I'm here up until I move away from it or find something better, so I thought I might as well give it the best that I can.*

T2, the longest serving participant in the three, who had 20 years of service in different schools as a remedial specialist, complained about the amount of assessments they had to do in a context of poor resources:

> *Since I'm foundation phase-trained, it's quite a challenge teaching mainstream intermediate and senior phase English. Another issue for me is overcrowding, because obviously when you mark you feel it and think what am I doing here? This school is one of the poorest schools that I've ever taught in, honestly.*

T2 had another bigger problem:

> *I'm fed up really, at my age, always changing phases and subjects, all that is tiring. So I am looking for a job where I can teach my specialization which is foundation phase. I don't want to teach English at Intersen phase because I am not an English specialist.*

Teachers teaching subjects or grades for which they were not initially trained is a common occurrence in South African schools, mainly because since the late 1970s, the production of new teachers did not match the fast expansion of urban schools, the problem was also exacerbated by the closing down of teacher colleges, thus the Framework on teacher development of (2006) was designed, to attract and outline new ways of recruiting more teachers to the profession.

All these teachers were frequently engaging themselves in various development programs and were asked to comment on the best TD program from which they had learnt or benefitted from before the GPLMS. The responses gave meaningful insights as it appeared that although the teachers did indeed engage in in-service development programs, they however could not in some cases see the relevance of some of the system/department initiated programs they had engaged in had in their practice. Both the HOD and T2 couldn't identify any district- or department-led teacher development but mentioned that the programs that stood out for them and from which they had learnt a lot from were those they had independently sought and attended.

> *For me it's the courses that I've been doing with Wits mostly, like I did an ACE course on inclusion, and this thing on LSEN, they were teaching us how to deal with learners who have barriers, how to teach them, and what are the symptoms that you could identify in order to diagnose that really this child has a problem, be it a social problem or whatever, and how you can counsel that child. And that I did for two years.*

Whilst T2's only memorable in-service development program she could recall enjoying was a course on HIV/Aids she had attended back whilst still serving as a School Based Support Team (SBST) member. These views on system/department initiated programs reflected back on and supported Villegas-Reimers (2003, p. 11) findings on how system/department initiated programs were often not related to teacher's needs and neither did they lead to an ultimate impact on teaching and learning and how these programs were not sensitive to actual teacher's developmental needs and the serious need the teachers had for more on-site development programs that could make a difference on teaching and learning practices.

Being a fairly new teacher, T1 said she had been to a few district-led workshops and that the GPLMS was her first on-site TD program.

4.3 School B: Participant's Profile

	Position held at the school	**Years teaching**	**Qualifications**	**Grades teaching**	**Subjects currently teaching**
Teacher 1	PL 1	8 years	Diploma in education (specializing in the foundation phase	3	Foundation phase subjects (Literacy, numeracy, Afrikaans and life skills)
Teacher 2	PL 1	5 years	Bachelor of Education (Hons) in curriculum studies; currently undertaking Med	6, 7	mathematics
Teacher 3	PL 1	5 years	Bachelor of Education (Hons) in curriculum studies; currently undertaking Master of Education in curriculum studies	1	Foundation phase subjects (Literacy, numeracy and life skills)

Participants in school B held similar views on teaching as a profession; they stated how they enjoyed the profession except what they perceived as the insurmountable amount of paperwork. T1 loved how through the teaching profession she could make a difference in children's lives, especially when she saw how the learners would finally grasp a difficult concept. She stated how this overrode all the problems especially with the working conditions and low salaries teachers had.

T2 and T3 seemed to be losing their love for the profession, after only teaching for 5 years, they both mentioned that they were currently undertaking further studies to be able to get promotions and move out of the classroom. They stated problems such as de-motivated learners and difficult working conditions as the reasons of wanting to leave the teaching profession.

Throughout the interview it became evident that T1 was rather confident about her abilities as a teacher, as evidenced from what she explained about her strengths when asked about her perceptions on the initial GPLMS training:

> *On one occasion, when we went for GPLMS training in Soweto, the coach asked for someone to read aloud. I read, how I normally do, varying my tone, with special expression where needed. The entire room was still. I felt overwhelmed, not even a whisper, when I was done, everyone stood up and clapped, I had an audience. They were really impressed with my reading and I felt proud, where fellow colleagues recognised passion. I thanked everyone for listening so attentively.*

Concerning development programs, especially system/department led initiatives; all three teachers had previously attended various off-site training workshops offered by their district. T1 stated that there was no particular workshop that really stood out for her as some were good and some bad and that, since they were so accustomed to workshops, her only reason for attending these workshops was because it was compulsory, but that she never learnt much in these workshops. T2 and T3 mentioned that none of the TD programs they had previously attended which had been organised by the district stood out for them or taught them much. T3 said:

> *…Not even the ICT programs as they were irrelevant to my phase, they only introduced us and taught us how to use games with learners which mostly were for enrichment.*

T2 and T3 could both attest to how they thoroughly enjoyed their postgraduate studies. T2 said:

> *I loved my honours and masters courses on curriculum as every time I attended I knew that I was doing this to be able to leave the classroom. It was paving a way for me to getting a better job. Also the curriculum component taught me to look at teaching practice differently. There's just something fascinating about learning about how learners learn.*

This response demonstrated as in schools A's responses that teachers enjoyed more the development programs they sought themselves than those offered by the department and districts.

Teacher's views and perceptions towards top down TD interventions, the GPLMS and its main components of standardized lesson plans and coaches

This theme addresses the overall perceptions of teachers towards the GPLMS, the top-down manner in which teachers felt it was implemented and its lesson plans and coaches and their feelings on its failure to meet the needs of the context of their school and learners.

4.4 School A: General perceptions about the implementation of GPLMS, its LPs and other material resources

The introduction and usage of lesson plans as a development tool to strengthen teaching, as was done in the GPLMS was not a new idea to teachers as all the participants stated that in all the years of their respective teaching careers, the department of education had always set as a requirement for teachers to plan for lessons by drawing up LP's in conjunction with detailed learning programs and work schedules. With the longest practising participant in the group, T2 attesting to the importance of a teacher's need to derive and use LP's to guide and channel lessons stating how useful they were as they helped teachers to prepare and know what they were supposed to do in class. As a novice teacher, even though she could not compare between the experience of deriving her own LP's to that of being given LP's that were already prepared, nevertheless T1's response substantiated the view that the other two teachers held about the importance of utilizing LP's in class as she mentioned that she knew and remembered from her ACE training how important it was to use LPs to guide her on how and what to deliver in lessons.

When probed on how detailed and how confident they were in using the LP's that they were mandated to and had derived on their own capacity compared to the GPLMS lesson plans, the HOD's response revealed insight that showed that, although teachers felt their autonomy at planning and pacing themselves in their lessons and classrooms had been taken away from them when these LP's that told stipulated how and what to teach were handed to them, the confidence they previously had of the quality of their own LP's was low. Her response was:

> *Well I can say they were fairly detailed, 'cos you had to look at the Learning program which would then inform the work schedules, which would then inform the LP's, that you were going to draft yourself. So you just planned anyhow, and no-one was really quite sure if we were doing the right thing, 'cos one would tell oneself you're doing the right thing and then, when the department comes, they tell you no, you don't have to do it this way, this is the way you're supposed to do it.*

The responses further showed that the participant's initial reaction to the implementation of the GPLMS and its LP's was negative. Though citing different reasons for this view, the common reason for the negativity seemed to be in the way it was introduced to them. The teachers felt that they had no say in the way it was planned and implemented. This view corresponded with Ryan (2007) study findings that showed that District or government-initiated programs were usually planned and implemented without teachers' participatory input. They also mentioned various other reasons about the intervention strategy not meeting their schools' and classroom's contextual needs. As part of the school management, The HOD noted on its introduction at their school that:

> *People's response was quite negative, it's in its fourth year running now, even though back then, I was not doing it yet because I was teaching Social Sciences. I was also criticizing it every day because I'm on the SADTU education desk. When teachers come with their reports or feedback, we would scrutinize them and really see that the particular program is not perceived in the way it was intended.*
>
> *The GPLMS makes kids as if they are computers, 'cos when you load information on a computer, you save it and when you need that information you get it back; also these kids are too slow for this program.*

The negative perception to its introduction by participants urged the researcher to question further on whether they were not notified or trained prior to its implementation, to this the

HOD remarked how they had gone to training before they had to implement the intervention but stated that to her, the GPLMS training was good "in theory". She mentioned that it had been difficult to translate what they had learnt during the training sessions into classroom practice. The main issue she remarked as being positive and well-constructed and could comment positively on, with regards to the intervention strategy tools was about how well and thorough and expertly designed the LP's as a source of support were. She further mentioned how the posters were still being positively used by some of the teachers.

> *They will give you flash cards (words) and then the posters… their posters are nice, the flashcard words are nice, even the LP's are nice…..*
> *Before GPLMS the walls were empty, no stimulus, now there are posters, words, vocabs, keywords etc. Because people were so relaxed, and when I'd say I'm coming for IQMS crits, people would do flashcards and resources at that time when they knew that I, as an HOD, am coming to class, as a once-off thing. But now they are forced to put up numbers on the walls, as to what are fractions etc. but it's still the English and maths classes that are improving on this aspect, when you visit other learning areas, there's still nothing on the walls.*

T2 and T1 did not have the opportunity to attend the initial GPLMS training workshops because at the time, T2 was not teaching Intersen English at the time and T1 had not yet been employed as a teacher.

T2 could however give some information based on what she had observed with her colleagues who were attending the training and who had to implement it when it was first introduced in their school. Her observations were on a similar tangent as the views and experiences of the HOD. She had observed that most teachers involved in the program at their school had seemed rather unhappy when they were told about the initial implementation of the GPLMS; however this did not last long as she noticed that they slowly changed their perception after they attended the training. She felt that they appeared to have learnt a lot in the initial training as they kept talking about what they had learnt and generally seemed excited at the prospects of using the LP's and resources. When she was then moved to the intersen English department two years after its introduction at the school, T2 stated how she didn't view the implementation of the intervention as much of a challenge, it seemed she was more concerned and worried with her new and unfamiliar heavy workload which she attributed to now having to teach English to mainstream classes which was much more demanding than teaching English to remedial classes which is what

she had been trained for and had been doing for most of her 20 years of teaching. However what she said she did question with regards to the GPLMS before its implementation was the assumption behind the government's aim of implementing the seemingly mandatory LP's:

> *I think in their minds they had the perception that underperforming schools are not working, so they felt they have to make sure that these teachers are working and monitored. Yet, the results achieved are like that not because of the teachers really, but because of the quality of learners we are getting here.*

When asked what she thought the purpose of such explicitly designed LP's were for developmental or monitoring purposes, the HOD had this to say:

> *It's definitely for monitoring purposes because, if it wasn't like that, it wouldn't have some weeks with assessments that you need to submit at a certain time. For those lazy teachers that are not working, I can say it's effective but it can also cause a lot of stress to those teachers who may become absent. When absenteeism starts to increase, learners' performance will be affected, 'cos if a teacher is stressed and goes to a doctor and the doctor books them off for two weeks, it's the learners who are going to suffer and fall behind with their work.*

T2 responses were very different from the HOD's responses which alluded to her maintaining her overall negative views about the GPLMS throughout its implementation. In contrast to both the HOD and T2, T1 appeared rather enthusiastic and confident about the implementation of the GPLMS intervention and the prospects of receiving and using the LP's and resources. She admits to initially having some reservations about the whole idea but noticed a change in the views of other teachers which caused her to also become more positive about it.

> *I wasn't sure about it at first. I came into the school as people just returned from their training, and it seemed as if they were not very sure about it. However, with the help of the coaches, most of us started to get on with the program; we started to understand what the program was about and what was expected from us. You know, when something is new, it is initially not received well until you give that thing a chance… you get used to it and what it is about and, once we started understanding the program better, then things started to fall into place.*

Just like the HOD, once implemented the teacher liked the LPs and the accompanying resources. Such positive views could be linked to the fact that T1 started her first teaching

job in the school which had already been declared a GPLMS School and did not have any other experience of teaching before.

> *designers of GPLMS LP's have done a good job, especially for a person like me, where English is not my home language, they have designed the LP's in a way that makes it easy for me to teach English…... the lesson plans were fabulous cos of what they've done. They've themed the work, so during the term, you literally know that ok, term 1, I always have two themes, and those two themes come with their own posters, they gave us their own posters, then you obviously have to add on with your own resources but you do not have to stress about where am I going to get this and that. Within the theme, all the particular elements that go with the lessons are there, you must just add the vocab around the poster. So I am not complaining with the resources, cos even with the readers, they gave us readers, that they prescribed which come with the lesson plans.*

When it came to the usage of the LPs, all the participants argued that teachers faced problems for many different reasons. She mentioned that, when taking the school's context into consideration, the LP's did not allocate sufficient time or periods to cover the actual curriculum that was stipulated:

> *They overload the periods. For example, you have to take the learners outside for some reading, how do you do that because, by the time you get the kids settled outside, the first period is gone. And the second period you mustn't be doing what you are supposed to be doing outside, you are doing something else, so you are forever behind.*

The concern over this response was that could this have been attributed to poor classroom management skills of teachers or to refer the difficult realities of teaching in overcrowded classrooms or to the fact that the curriculum was indeed a saturated curriculum?

The HOD argued that the tight time frames of the LP's had increased teachers' already heavy workload and stress in many ways. Another referral was made by all three participants on the high number of assessments and the time it demands from her teachers, the HOD said:

> *...coming to assessment, it's also frustrating, 'cos in one week it stipulates two assessments which are one-on-one. When are you going to finish that, if you have 120 learners? Our classes are abnormally large, and they expect you to be done with that activity in three days, is that possible?*

The HOD also questioned the suitability of pacing of these LP's for their learners:

> *The lesson plans are good and coherent but I believe we should make our own time frame, according to our learners' needs, we don't have a problem as*

teachers, we can move fast but the learners won't benefit. …It treats our kids as if they are robots, and the pacing of it is just too much, we are not coping at all with the pacing...they need to reduce the activities within the LPs, they should consider arranging the assessments under task 1 and task 2 etc. just like in any other learning area.

T2 agreed with the HOD on this:

The lesson plans are good but I don't like the time frame 'cos kids don't get to grasp the concepts and you must move on, they drown the kids really... the stipulating of [what needs to be covered] *each week needs to go, the number of tasks needs to be reduced, at least a maximum of 4 and not 9 or 11, especially the oral ones which are one-on-one. They are killing us, and when I get to the third class I really don't want to listen or hear anymore*

4.5 School B: General perceptions about the implementation of GPLMS, its LPs and other material resources

T1 gave a very different picture amongst the teachers in this study. she appeared confident and enthusiastic about the GPLMS, its training and teaching approach and did not have much to say negatively about the intervention.

There was really never a practical moment that overwhelmed me with GPLMs, the workshops were very fruitful, the resources provided made teaching under the GPLMS a pleasure. From the training sessions, I also learnt that I could develop other educators. The GPLMS emphasizes on teaching learners to firstly understand the concepts in question like How? Where? Why? Before attempting answers, concrete examples are given by using daily examples.

T1 displayed a clear appreciation of the GPLMS as a multi-pronged TD program, this perception might have had a lot to do with the internal capabilities and confidence of the teacher. Thus this made her more responsive and open to new things.

GPLMS was one of my best TD experiences and so was the quality of resources and hand-outs we received, DVDs, CDs exemplars and the watching of movies. The coaches coming to help teachers synthesised and the delivery in the classroom was great.

T3 also appreciated the GPLMS program and liked the homework and extension activities as these were simple and straightforward.

T1 concurred with T3 and stated that another aspect appreciated about GPLMS was the Fact that LPs and resources were provided for them. She said the GPLMS gave them a "full coarse meal" and no other resources were needed as a result. She also mentioned the LPs' assistance regarding the workload of teachers:

> *The LP's are drawn up for teachers'; this was very welcomed as it eased the pressure of planning.*

All participants also stated how they had previously to GPLMS used LP's that they had derived based on the work schedules and learning programs. They drafted these themselves to prepare for their teaching but as in the HOD in school A, T1 recognised that these LPs were not fully appropriate:

> *Before GPLMS program, I used lesson plans from the curriculum, but these were very broad and I had to develop shorter and more detailed ones.*

T3 did not comment on her own LP's but shared her views on her dislike of the previous LP's that they were also provided with and had to use from a development program similar to the GPLMS, the "Foundations for Learning Program" and said:

> *The lesson plans we are always provided with are problematic, like the lesson plans from the Foundations for Learning Program. These lesson plans were straightforward and did not enhance critical thinking in learners. Also, a variety of assessments of learners were not implemented to cater for learners' different needs. The focus was on rote learning rather than on outcomes-based learning.*

In as much as she appreciated that the LP's were provided for them in the GPLMS T1 stated similar reservations as participants from school A about the level of work they were supposed to cover as stated in the LPs:

> *GPLMS LP's were of a lower or sub-standard level, I think this was done in order to help learners achieve better results but it doesn't match what learners are tested on in the ANA's. It's stupid, it consists of too many lessons, there is too much paper work …it doesn't allow for much professional judgment and I don't like it!*

Also whilst there were some aspects she liked about GPLMS LP's, T3 seemed to have mixed feelings about the LPs', especially about the quality of work and pacing, which seemed to be a common problem arising from both schools' participants.

> *The lesson plans are of a lower standard than what we used to prepare ourselves, they are also detailed and make you focus on the easier concepts i.e. the calendar or*

division. They are also long and boring. There is a lot of work in a short space of time. Like the lessons will expect you to do counting, mental maths and a cutting out activity in 30 minutes. Imagine! Grade ones take forever, they should have at least allocated one hour. Another problem I have is the lesson plans jump: today it's addition, Wednesday it's shapes, Friday it's subtraction…so it jumps between different concepts much too quickly.

Rather than using the GPLMS LP's T3 preferred to design her own LPs as that allowed her to plan and prepare according to her learners' needs. On the training received prior to the implementation of GPLMS, she like participants in school A mentioned that the induction was not sufficient enough and, as a result, teachers at the school were doing what they thought was right, instead of knowing for a fact what they were doing and how they had to do it. She had another concern:

Another thing, when will we ever be back to CAPS? Because now we are performing but are still not doing CAPS.

This concern showed that the CAPS did not allow for the recognition of growth. i.e. once a school was on the level required by the Department, for them to follow the normal curriculum.

T1 felt that she was able to follow the LP's quite well with no problems, she seemed to be the only participant that did not see any problem with the way the teaching of concepts were structured, what the participants described as "jumping." She stated how she was able to supplement the LP's with work she had had compiled from her years of teaching. She reiterated similar views to T1 of school A

We were told at the GPLMS training that we could add onto and custom fit the LP to suit our learners needs, yes the LP's on their own would not have been ideal for the learners we have here, especially since the merger with the learners from the squatter camp, but I found that when I supplemented and gave extension activities to the weaker learners, it worked pretty well.

T2 and T3 felt strongly about their views, they felt that the LP's were difficult to implement. T2 felt that she had to custom-fit the LP's to her own learners by adding on to the resources they already had:

Honestly speaking, these LP's are a nightmare to implement; the time frames are too unrealistic, and you know the kind of learners we have inherited here, are rowdy and rude, when they don't feel like working they just don't! At the same

time I must try and follow the pacing, how is that possible? Half the time we are dealing with issues that are not even class related. It's the teachers fighting all the time.

T3 was seemingly trying to make the best of the situation at hand

You know with the in-fighting at the school, I really just try and do the best that I can, it is difficult to try to adhere to the time frames of these LP's, even for myself as a teacher of grade 1's, you'd think these learners do not even recognize what's happening here but it does, and sometimes we are in the staffroom for long hours holding meetings that seem to have no end! By the time you come to class you've lost out on valuable time and these little ones can also sense the tension, honestly I try and refocus them but the situation in this place is just not conducive for us to implement these Lesson plans to the best of our ability.

What kept being re-iterated was that the school as a whole was not using GPLMS as expected at the time of the research. Teachers were using other materials and those teachers who were inciting the fights internally were the ones who had to implement GPLMS but they showed some militant opposition towards management and were therefore only doing the bare minimum when it came to GPLMS. The director of the district was even called in to the school but yet again, the union's interference made it difficult for him to instil proper disciplinary measures. Thus, whoever felt like implementing the GPLMS did so and whoever felt like they wanted to do it their way ultimately got away with it.

Two out of three participants in this school did not seem to agree with GPLMS, T1 seemed to be happy, whilst T2 and T3 seemed to have reservations about the program and its LP's unlike the participants in school A, who eventually changed their minds and perception about the intervention even after their two years of its implementation.

Theme 2 Teachers' views about the impact of prescribed LP's on teacher's identities

This theme addresses the teacher's responses with respect to their views and experiences on the usage of the prescribed GPLMS lesson plans and the impact it had internally and externally on their identities as teachers.

4.6 School A: Experiences regarding the implementation of the GPLMS LP's

The HOD sometimes made contradicting remarks and did not like the fact that concepts were jumping, but would during some parts of the interview state that the lesson plans were coherent, however, she was clear about what effects the pacing of these LP's and expectations of the assessments had on the staff and learners:

> *I really feel that our previous LPs were much better. With your own LPs, you know you are going to take this period to cover this whole work. But nowadays, you don't have a choice, you just have to run with it…every day you have an activity to perform, whether in the previous day you managed to cover everything or not, you must just move on and continue.*

The HOD had another criticism with regards to the LP's and complained about the lack of consistency in the order of work they had to follow in the LPs, and in particular with the tasks and skills to be covered in one week. The HOD said:

> *…when coming to practically using them! That's the most frustrating part for the teacher, how is the learner going to understand? For the teacher it's good but the teachers need to teach it to the learners… they are trying …the way they introduce stories, the mind map and so forth, it's good, but when it goes to the learners there is a lack of follow up. [*The LP's go*] from mind maps to adjectives the next day… yes the adjectives will come from that story but now…whilst you're still busy with that, you have to introduce a letter, then it's the invitation and then, you're teaching about a dialogue, so there is no consistency in terms of what is supposed to be done.*

The issue of the work being varied in one week was a challenge to all CAPS English users. The researcher noted that the structure of content was set in exactly the same way in the non GPLMS CAPS curriculum resources, and this point she relayed to the participants.

T2 shared the views of the HOD about how the GPLMS LP's jump from one task/skill to another within the same week:

> *I really struggled with the new themes that are there every day, 'cos when I got here last month, I was like, what's all this? Today it's reading & viewing and tomorrow it's listening & speaking, there's no continuity. Why do they do that? They have the weeks and the periods but unfortunately I'm always behind, and if you want to do things thoroughly, when you see that learners do not understand, you're already thinking, yoh! I'm going to be behind with week no. 6.*

4.7 School B: Experiences regarding the implementation of the GPLMS LP's

When asked about how it made them feel that the LP's were so prescriptive, T1 had a different take on the GPLMS LP's, she saw these as guidelines from which she could make some adaptations:

> *You know, as a teacher, you will bring your own perspective towards the lesson plans, 'cos you know best your learners.*

This view was the first view a participant had conveyed with regards to the prescriptiveness of the LP's. T2 and T3 were more sceptical about the GPLMS LP's. T2 thought that it was meant to give teachers an introductory foundation of how to teach concepts more effectively. Contrary to School A's participants, she felt the pacing was too slow for many learners:

> *We teach learners what is in the GPLMS and then comes the ANA, which is of a higher standard. Yes these GPLMS LPs were for slower kids, which is fine, but they allocate much longer time frames on concepts than in a normal curriculum or that performing schools spend.*

Fortunately, according to T2, they were told at the training that they were not forced to use GPLMS loyally but could change it a bit to suit their school's needs. It appeared to her as if it was not designed as a one-size-fits-all program for all schools.

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Theme 3: Teacher's experiences of the coaches as mediators of lesson plans: successes and challenges

This theme engages with the usage of coaches to mediate the lesson plans to the teachers, their perceptions of this rather new on-site form of development.

4.8 School A: Experiences and responses towards coaches

After the initial GPLMS training, teachers went for "just-in-time" monthly training sessions and coaches came to the school for English the Intermediate and senior Phase. It seemed as if a few different coaches came to the school as the participants named different people and reported rather different experiences of their coaches.

T1 seemed to have a good attitude and productive relationship with her coach. She said:

> *Obviously when we initially started it was intimidating, you're teaching, you're not even sure about what you're doing and how you're doing it, whether it's correct and somebody's there watching you. So when we started we felt like we were being monitored instead of being developed, but as I've said before we changed, we got used to them, well some of us, I can't say all of them, I'm one of those people who thought it's either you make the best of this or you stay miserable forever, I learnt to adapt and I learnt a lot from her*
>
> *Her strengths were always that, after she had observed my lesson, she would definitely tell me well… this is where you executed your lesson very well, and you could add this. I don't remember her ever telling me, that my lesson was really bad. Whatever weaknesses she observed she would say: "when you come to this stage, rather add this or that" in fact I don't remember her ever saying, "I prefer this or that". It was always about the lesson, learners and effective implementation of GPLMS and that was it.*

T2 did not have the experience of having a coach experience as such because she was not teaching English at Intermediate and senior level when coaches were there. She had meaningful insight:

> *Last year I attended one or two training workshops from the second coach (Kathy) whilst I was still teaching foundation phase. You know when they were quite good, she was actually excellent. So my perception was that, if teachers are getting this often, they must really be benefiting…..I also saw the first coach, Angela, around, she seemed very energetic but I could see how the teachers she was working with would shiver and run around like headless chickens whenever she arrived.*

This response shows that there was a problem in the relationship with the coach. The HOD agreed about the value coaches added to their development when she said:

> *Yah they really helped us. The previous one was really good, she could show you the loop holes, challenges and advantages…. and she showed you different methods, maybe four different methods so that you know, if you can't do it this way, do it this way, running that particular activity. Like with adjectives, kids did not know them, they confused adverbs and adjectives, but she came up with this thing of bringing a bag of oranges into the classroom, and asking learners to tell you what they see…they would then describe them. That's how I could introduce adjectives. So I loved the coach.*

However, when probed on what they did not like about coaches, T1 explained that they would have liked the coaches to do more modelling for them, as this would have been more helpful if they saw from the experts how to actually translate the lesson plans into actual lessons.

> *..in terms of the developmental aspect of it, it was merely them giving us feedback, where we did well or not, I just wish they had done more, like really empowering us, 'cos even when we went for the training, they would give us manuals, and read through the manuals, something that I could do and interpret at home. So I don't know if they took it for granted and assumed that (sic) agh! They are teachers'; they will know what to do…the depth of their development was not really as deep as we wanted it to be.*

The HOD complained about a similar problem:

> *I mean if you are just going to tell me how to teach nouns, let's make it practical, let's bring it to the class level so that I really get to see what you mean. Instead they just focused on the training and reading the manuals and they'd say, "make sure that when you go back to class, and you're teaching grammar, they call it language in context, you bring A,B,C,D. Model it for us so that I know what to do instead of me just listening to what they were saying.*

So it appears as if some of the coaches never modelled the practices and preferred teaching methods that teachers had to use, something that they were supposed to do. The HOD agreed that one coach's initial attitude was a problem:

> *She was quite nasty* [with teachers] *when the assessment was not done or delayed… teachers were always stressed and panicking, saying in distressed voices: Angela is here. Indeed, you would stay behind, trying to catch up because you're telling*

yourself I need to get up to date before she comes tomorrow… She had an attitude at the beginning, she used to say SADTU is making me stubborn, but I did resist. She would not be able to say: no you see…I couldn't do this or that……I would tell her: if you are here for two periods, I take half and you are going to take half. The first half, you will monitor or do whatever, the second half, you are going to show me and model for me what I need to do, you are not just here to assess or scrutinize me or look at my lesson like you do with other teachers. Yes, because, when she saw that you seemed afraid of her, she would make sure that every day she came in, she would start with you in the morning, trying to intimidate you by staying in your class for whole two periods and she does not want to take part.

The HOD addressed the issue and ensured the coach changed her negative attitude and way of working:

So when I became the HOD, I told teachers that we are going to work properly with this lady, I'm not going to be stressed. I quickly called her to order and said: listen you are not going to work like that. I cannot not have my break times during break because of you, because I'm sitting with kids catching up; these are kids and they are hungry. Afterschool, they are tired and need to go home and I'm not going to get into trouble with their parents on why they are late from school. But she didn't understand, she was very forceful, wanting things to be done her way. After a while, she started seeing us as human beings and agreed that we were not going to work like this anymore.

The teachers were uneasy about having strangers in the classrooms; a feeling that could be accounted for, to those who had been in the profession long enough, from having had the now phased out inspectors who used to come into classes and inspect teachers teaching abilities and who were known for being ruthless in terms of their feedback. The newer teachers who did not have the experience of inspectors had the backing and influence of unions who made members aware that the department was not allowed to send people to inspect their teaching. During the process of IQMS were accustomed to having people, fellow colleagues, sitting in on lessons and evaluating their teaching.

4.9 School B: Experiences and responses towards coaches

All three teachers felt somehow despondent towards the coaches. T1 did not feel she needed coaching at all, she even in this regard still appeared rather confident:

Coaches showed appreciation towards the lessons being taught to learners. I remember my coach looked forward to being in my class as my lessons were

innovative and humorous; she felt comfortable and could even complete her administration work in my class…..It depended solely on an individual if he/she needed coaches. I personally could make do without a coach…Teachers like me, never had a problem with coaches being present in the classroom.

Her belief was that coaches were needed by other teachers in the school and not her:

I encouraged our coach to go spend time with teachers who were experiencing greater problems in teaching lessons than me. This facilitated growth where needed. So the coach spent more time with educators that had difficulties in teaching because English was a language barrier.

T2 and T3 held similar views about them not needing coaches. They mentioned that they could just have been given the LP's and asked to follow them without having the coaches' assistant. They felt that the coach's content knowledge did not differ from what they knew and were currently learning in their postgraduate studies. T2 said:

The coaches, shame, they were nice, they seemed to know their stuff, it's just a pity that they also would come here, experience what was happening and would not come back, as a result we kept on changing coaches.

T2 further added that

The only problem I had was whatever they were teaching me, I already knew, so often I just sat and listened to the feedback because we had to, I mean after doing 2 postgraduate studies on curriculum, I could pretty well interpret the LP's. I really did not need the coach. I actually felt it was fine when we went off-site and had our meetings, I did not need the coach in my class. After all my class was achieving well, it was because of the grade 3 and 6 teachers that we were classified as underperforming to begin with.

The coaches in school B seemed to be well aware of the teacher's despondent and uncomfortable attitude to having strangers in their class. T3 added,

One coach even suggested that we have our training sessions off-site. Even when they came here, you could see that they were afraid of giving constructive feedback to the teachers because they were afraid they were going to be told off.

This comment raised some questions and concerns about the real relationship between teacher and coach during this intervention in many other schools

Theme 4: Teachers' experiences of using lesson plans without coaches

This theme explores the teachers' perceptions and experiences and feelings towards the leaving of the coaches. It looks at issues of autonomy and independence and how well the teachers were able to carry on using the lesson plans and resources provided to them in the GPLMS without the coaches' supervision.

4.10 School A: Experiences and responses regarding the use of GPLMS lesson plans without coaches

Participants in the research shared similar views about no longer working with coaches in their classrooms but they differed with views on the kind of support they felt they still needed. T1 was relieved about the withdrawal of coaches and suggested a new arrangement:

> *I felt a little bit of a relief (laughs out loud). I'd be lying if I said it wasn't a relief. Of course nobody wants to be monitored full time, it makes one uncomfortable, and I know for some teachers its fine. However, like I said, my coach was great, I still need her and I talk to her on the phone. Whenever I need help, I ring her up, and tell her I'm struggling with this and that, so how do I do it?*
>
> *I wish there was a platform where we could meet coaches out of school premises and engage them with whatever we might feel are still challenges and see where they can develop us, if there needs to be and how it can be done.*

T2 was also happy to use the LP's without the coach's supervision. She said she had learnt a lot from the coach but admitted that she needed more help:

> *Well I didn't mind having coaches around. What I experienced from the foundation phase coach is that she was very helpful. Of course I've learnt enough to carry on my own. I've learnt so much that, when I am a little bit behind, I know now how to manoeuvre so that I don't become so behind. With my lesson plans, what is really important is that I execute first and make sure that it's done, and when that's done, everything can follow. I still feel though I need a little more help with this.*

The HOD also welcomed the withdrawal of coaches and continues to use the LP's independently:

> *Eish! we were more than happy, we were fine actually. There's no support that we think we still need. You know with GPLMS, my wish was that they would have done*

away with the coaches and leave us just with the lesson plans. We would see how we implement them, not at their pace and pressure. Yes, we still use LP's as they are aligned with CAPS, their activities are the same as CAPS, even their activities in ISizulu.

Unlike T1 and T2, the HOD did not feel the need for more support but wanted another form of support for teachers to replace the coaches:

We still have a coach who brings stuff, even though they no longer come to classroom. She just sits in the staffroom and liaises with the HOD's. They are now saying: HOD's must train the educators but this is not part of my job, I have classes as well. When will I get time to educate these teachers? And we are still better in this regard, what about in those schools where the GPLMS is new to them because they are new HOD's who know nothing about GPLMS? So if they want to continue with GPLMS they should continue to workshop the teachers.

4.11 School B: Experiences and responses regarding the use of GPLMS lesson plans without coaches

T1 was clear and consistent regarding how she never felt she needed the coaches to begin with so she had no problem with them not visiting the classrooms anymore. She was confident about using the LP's without the coaches*:*

As long as I was given resources, I was well equipped to deliver. The resources made this possible and I did not need the coach there.

T2 and T3 were indifferent about the withdrawal of coaches since they both felt they did not need coaches to start with and should not have been labelled an underperforming school.

Theme 5: Assumptions about the teacher change process

Theme 5looks at the impact of GPLMS and the assumption it had on the process of teacher change.

4.12 School A: Perceptions of the GPLMS impact on school performance, teacher's teaching and knowledge

T1 felt that the GPLMS helped improve the teaching skills the teacher had. She could see a difference in learners' performance and the ANA results also improved. She said:

The ANA results went from 54 % in 2012 to 63 % [in 2013] *and this year its 63%. Even though we hoped it would be higher, we are happy because of the kind of kids we admit at our school. These claim that they should be in grade six and not five, yet they do not know how to write one word in English. We deal with that calibre of learners but we somehow manage. It is hard.*

Whilst noting the improvement in ANA results, the HOD was sceptical and warned about an opposite effect GPLMS as a whole could have.

Their aim is to improve the ANA results but I think the GPLMS can also make the results bad because the children are lost when you move so quickly onto the next theme. Even unions are fighting about this; they say it must stop…that GPLMS must go. No-one is happy about it.

On the impact of the GPLMS on her teaching practice, the HOD explained her mixed views:

It's my second year in the GPLMS program, and no, nothing changed in my teaching…ok well yes, something changed. I've got reasons why I say yes and no. Before, I wouldn't think: let me teach a story and break it down the way they do it. I did not know that you can start off with a mind map because I was not trained in the languages. Now when they talk about stories, I know what must be done. So I have learnt new knowledge.

But the disadvantage is that we now bombard the learners with a lot of information which they end up frustrated with. So, after you break the story down, you expect the learners to master a mind map and write a story at same time. But they are not able to write anything at all. This frustrates you and the learners at the same time; this is why I say yes and no.

The HOD also mentioned an unintended impact:

…the knowledge I learnt in the GPLMS with the writing process can also help me in my union work. I believe I can write better and produce better reports as a result.

T2 felt that her teaching skills and her ability to use the skills she had acquired had improved and that she could also use the core knowledge she had learnt from the GPLMS LP's in other subjects. T2 felt the results could not be seen because in their school teachers were not teaching what they were supposed to and trained for. This she attributed to the lack of teachers and management.

4.13 School B: Perceptions of the GPLMS impact on school performance, teaching and knowledge

The participants felt that their ANA results had slightly increased since GPLMS inception and therefore do not consider themselves as an underperforming school anymore.

T2 remarked that

> *Since the GPLMS we have managed to improve on our ANA results. Unfortunately it's the teachers who are still fighting with management that don't want to use the GPLMS. It is these teachers that still have very low marks in their subjects.*

T1 felt confident about her teaching ability before GPLMS implementation and her response about the GPLMS impact reveals some insightful perceptions:

> *I learnt a lot on different levels and use most of what I learnt. I follow some of the techniques I was taught, e.g. the listening and speaking methodologies. I learnt that proper pronunciation of words help learners spell correctly; I learnt that everyone has a different culture and has to work on their pronunciation. Also, I see respect for differences as more important.*

T2 and T3 were more sceptical about what they learnt. T2 said:

> *…Knowing my own learners, I can cater for their needs and can design lessons to address these. I don't need GPLMS lesson plans. Yes it was meant for learners with no foundation of concepts and I do not dispute that as there are some learners who do not have those foundation concepts. But really, ultimately I learnt nothing…. maybe nothing interests me anymore. However, I can't compare it with anything else such as CAPS, since we became a GPLMS underperforming school soon after it was implemented.*

T2 also felt that there was a disparate gap between the GPLMS content and what is tested in the ANA tests and that it would be better if there were no ANAs.

T3 had a very sobering view of the GPLMS impact on the divisive dynamics of the school:

> *Honestly the GPLMS has had very minimal impact on our results. Yes there has been an improvement but very minimum. If we could just stop fighting we could achieve far better results than this. However, it has enabled us to have access to a wide variety of resources and we welcome that very much.*

4.14 Summary of School A findings

The teachers in school A generally had a negative perception to the GPLMS and its LP's in the beginning, the uncertainties of beginning something new were very real, it was after the gradual passing of time, that they warmed up to the intervention. The coaches' presence in their classroom was also an unwelcomed feature at the beginning, especially with the coaches that did not display positive interpersonal skills, but once these were addressed they warmed up to the coaches and whom they perceived to have been very knowledgeable and helpful, however teachers felt the coaches could have done more in terms of modelling the different teaching pedagogies.

Whilst the structured form of the LP's were well accepted in helping the teachers deliver lessons and teaching them to some extents new teaching methodologies, the teachers had reservations with the pacing of the LP's and felt that the pacing was unrealistic for the ability of their learners. Despite their different scales of acceptance of the intervention, its LP's and coaches; all the teachers did note a difference in the school's overall ANA results. It was evident that unions and their influence still had an effect on the visitation of outsiders in the classrooms.

4.15 Summary of School B findings

The reality of the state of in-house politics in some schools and the lack of strong leadership and management were evident in the findings of school B. Coaches were often limited in doing their job as the school faced in-house fighting and the tensions seemingly made them do the bare minimum in terms of support.

It was not clear whether the teachers felt that they had learnt anything new by using the GPLMS LP's. The teachers in this school seemed not to see the need for the GPLMS LP's and coaches. The level of qualification of the teachers seemingly a contributing factor to this view. The teachers felt the coaches were an unnecessary feature of the intervention as the LP's were self-explanatory. However the teachers felt that the standard of GPLMS LP's were not on par with what was expected of the learners in the ANA exams, which is what they seemed to be always working towards and worried about. This might seem realistic as it was

because of the previous years' ANA results that the school had been classified as an underperforming school and had therefore had to implement GPLMS in their school. The participants felt the standard of achievement required in the LP's was lower than the standard in the ANA's.

There was a common consensus however on the fast and erratic pacing and sequencing of work. The positive aspect of the intervention was the supply of resources.

The teachers did not note any significant improvement in the school's ANA results.

4.16 Comparison between School A and School B findings

The findings from School A contain insightful and slightly contradictory views about the GPLMS. The novice teacher was more receptive to the program and its structure from the on-set whilst the more experienced HOD and T2 were more critical. The participants felt, and especially the HOD, that a loyal GPLMS implementation was an insult to their teaching ability and not appropriate for many of their learners. They argued that the content, pacing and structure of the LPs should improve and that there should be less assessments required.

School B participants were also not so keen on the GPLMS. T1 was the only teacher who seemed to be more receptive to the intervention. These teachers were relatively more qualified and that could be the reason they felt they did not need to be taught new methodologies. They held similar views to School A about the GPLMS pacing and sequencing not being suitable for their learners. Where they differed was that, whilst teachers in school A thought GPLMS lesson plans and content was too complex for their learners, teachers in school B felt that it was too low.

The different levels of qualification of teachers in School A and in school B might have been responsible for their different views about the assistance of the LP's with much less enthusiasm from the teachers in school B than the teachers in school A.

Most teachers felt that the LPs assisted them in acquiring some new content and teaching methodologies, except for the two participants embarking on their Master of Education degrees in school B. Teachers in both schools appreciated that the LP's explicitly stated the step-by-step of what and how they were supposed to teach as this gave them some confidence in knowing what and how to teach, especially the teachers who were not initially

trained in the subjects and phases they were teaching. This problem of a mismatch in subjects qualified for and subjects being taught came out of School A where most teachers were teaching subjects and in phases they had not been trained in at tertiary level. This seemed to add to their anxiety, especially when teaching in crucial subjects such as mathematics and language targeted by the GPLMS.

Different views on the coaches existed across all teachers. The novice teacher in school A viewed the coach in the classroom in a more positive light than the HOD and T2 did. Most participants from both schools agreed that the coaches were very knowledgeable about the content of the LPs but noted that they never modelled the new practices to the teachers. Teachers in school B did not seem to have a problem with coaches not modelling the methodologies as they felt the LP's were quite self-explanatory and that they were familiar with most of the methodologies embedded in the LP's. They did not feel the need for the coaches as they felt that they could have been given the resources and could have easily interpreted them in their classrooms. In school A coaches were seen as displaying counter-productive attitudes when supporting and monitoring teachers. The confident HOD ensures that coaches changed their attitudes by respecting and treating teachers as equal human beings after confronting the coaches about their problematic attitudes.

After the withdrawal of coaches, the LP's continued to be used more in school A than in school B. In school B teachers mentioned that they were supplementing the GPLMS LP's and resources. So while the LP's were perceived as partly developmental and partly controlling, most teachers wanted to exercise some agency in adapting LPs to their classroom context. How was this done and to what extent it was better or worse than the loyal implementation of the LPs remains to be researched.

Chapter 5: Analysis and discussions

Introduction

This chapter attempts to give meaning to, analyse and interpret the data by referring to the relevant literature. It is broadly structured according to the main themes of the data collection as well as using inductive analysis. It analyses and interprets the views, experiences and responses of teachers from underperforming schools to the GPLMS intervention and its coach mediated LP's.

The findings of the study note that, on the whole, the two schools had slightly different views and responses to the GPLMS intervention… School A was a lesser resourced school than school B and catered for learners from poorer socio-economic backgrounds.

The two schools had different leadership and management abilities. School A had a solid management team whilst school B clearly had serious problems which were impacting on the effectiveness of the intervention implementation.

The level of qualification of the participants in the schools' varied; this variance could be stated as one of the things that impacted on how the teachers identified and perceived themselves and how they ultimately received the intervention. One could, broadly-speaking distinguish between two types of teachers in the South African schooling system and in this sample. As scholars such as Guskey (2002) and Villegas-Reimers (2003) explain, there are those that identify themselves as professionals and seek development to strengthen their work and reflective competences in their teaching practice and those who see themselves as workers and prefer to be told how and what to teach. These two types of teachers are expected to react differently to the form of TD underpinning the GPLMS, and more specifically the standardized scripted lesson plans and coaching.

Villegas Reimers (2003) states this crucial relationship between these two concepts by stating that how teachers and governments/districts perceive teachers will impact on the way the intervention is introduced and received. This difference was evident, but findings also showed that some teachers seemed confused or were not sure on how they actually perceived themselves, whilst in others one could deduce a clear perception of themselves, in this regard the teachers in School A acknowledged, although with some difficulty that they

needed assistance and development with regards to their teaching practice. Whilst there were some challenges and tensions in the beginning with them accepting the GPLMS intervention and tools, these teachers ended up having seeing in a more positive light the usefulness and could state positive aspects about the intervention, whilst the participants in school B clearly saw themselves as professionals and generally maintained the view that they did not need the intensity and prescriptiveness of the GPLMS and its tools of development.

The participant's different knowledge, teaching experience and practices also shaped their response and view towards GPLMS and its used tools of development. Teachers with weaker knowledge of what and how to teach their subjects as well those at an earlier stage of their career showed a more likelihood to be more receptive to this kind of on-site professional development than the more confident and experienced teachers who seemed less readily and easily persuaded to loyally follow these expertly-designed standardized LPs, as they believed and had more confidence in their agency and ability to develop and adapt their own lesson plans to suit what they understood and believed would meet their learners' needs.

The above observation made by the researcher was further cemented by the findings that also showed that the GPLMS scripted lesson plans and coaches were perceived as meaningful forms of on-site professional development tools more in School A than in School B. However the participants in school A still had recommendations and reservations about the intervention. In both schools participants questioned the quality and appropriateness of the LP's because of the different classroom realities, contexts and challenges they faced in on a daily basis in their respective schools such as large numbers of learners, the fact that school A majority of the learners were foreign nationals and short periods which made it almost impossible to implement the teaching strategies listed on the LP's.

5.1 Teachers' views and perceptions towards top down TD interventions and its main components of standardized lesson plans and coaches

The study showed that teachers perceived TD in a positive light, all participants displayed a positive attitude towards TD in general and were aware and acknowledged the importance

of in-service for teachers, as Welch (2012) argues it is. This was seen when all the participants were able to mention how they had in different forms and aspects independently sought and had participated in different in-service development opportunities. Many of the participants, who displayed a more concrete view of themselves as professionals also mentioned how they initially did not like that they were excluded from the planning of the GPLMS intervention and saw the supply of GPLMS scripted lesson plans and coaches as an insult to their profession and ability as Villegas Reimers (2003) stated that teachers did not like to be accused of not doing their jobs properly, and did not see this intervention as an opportunity for them to develop and grow. As Villegas Reimers (2003) states, teachers did not like to be accused of not doing their jobs properly, and did not see this intervention as an opportunity for them to develop and grow. This again brought to attention, the tension in identity teachers had of themselves.

The teachers who appeared more confident in their teaching ability, these were mostly teachers in School B, preferred a form of TD which could improve their chances of promotion in and outside of the school environment rather than those that focused directly on changing and improving their teaching practice. The first negative response displayed by participants was towards the top down standardized approach the intervention took which, they believed, made the intervention to be inappropriate to their learner's needs and their contextual school realities. This is supported by Villegas Reimers (2003) argument, which states that designers who envision a successful teacher development program need to be aware of, and sensitive to, teachers' perceptions of themselves and their immediate challenges, needs and realities.

It can be assumed that the GPLMS designers believed that teachers from underperforming schools needed more on-site TD intervention with various support and monitoring components rather than the popular off-site teacher development workshops that focused tend to focus more on aspects of improving teacher knowledge as a means to improving teaching practice and eventually learner results, the participant's responses on the one hand pointed to a different view on the aims of the introduction of the GPLMS, the participants saw the implementation of the intervention in the same way Clarke and Hollingworth (2012, p. 948) put it when referring to how teachers view system-led TD: "as a means of correcting a deficit in teachers' skills and knowledge" or as one respondent said

that it was implemented maybe because the government believed that as underperforming schools, the low learner results meant that they were not doing their job properly and needed to be monitored in this regard. The reasons they stated for believing this was because they were not consulted or involved in the development of this intervention and regarded this a the reason why they did not initially not buy-into it, a condition without which, Guskey (2002) argues, the implementation of TD programs becomes very difficult.

The other objection to the system-led or top down approach to the implementation of the was the GPLMS was the assumption that in the supplying of standardized lesson plans and coaches to support and monitor the usage of these LP's teachers would be ready to loyally implement the LP's teaching strategies and comply with what the coaches wanted them to do. Clarke and Hollingsworth (2002) criticise this approach and state that the problem with such an approach is that:

> [It] see teachers as people who lack agency and to whom development is "done to" and as those who lack a reflective nature and capacity, as opposed to people who take part in, influence and shape to some degree their development process through reflective participation. …this approach has been ineffective and is the reason for the much needed attention and reform into the process of teacher development and change. (Clarke and Hollingsworth: 2002: 948)

This concurs with Langsford's (2013, p.10) research questions which asked two questions: "Firstly, who were the LP's really for? On whether they were an accountability tool prescribed by government and NGOs as part of interventions that take teachers large amounts of time to prepare, or whether they were support tools designed to guide and promote better teaching quality? Secondly, were lesson plans were being used, were they achieving their aims? "

One thing teachers concurred on was that, if the aim of GPLMS was to drastically change their teaching practices by making coaches available to them, the coaches should have modelled the new teaching practices for them, something that did not happen in both schools.

The teachers who most resisted this program or felt that it did not benefit them did not propose any concrete alternatives of how they would like to be developed.

5.2 Teachers' views about prescribed LP's on teacher's identities

All the participants agreed that lesson planning can assist teachers in being reflective in their teaching, as previously and with using the GPLMS LP's, at the end of their lessons, they were able to reflect on how much they needed to adjust their pacing in order to keep to the time frames and goals stipulated in the LP's.

The findings of the research showed that teachers recognise the importance of the LP's as tools that helped improve preparation. However the participants reaction at whether the new pedagogical strategies listed in the GPLMS LP's taught them new ways of teaching was split half way, with some saying they did learn new teaching strategies and others feeling that they already knew the strategies in the LP's, the teachers who were of the latter view were those in school B that were currently engaged in upgrading their qualifications and degrees to masters level.

All the participants were happy that being given the GPLMS LP's meant one thing could be struck off their already overloaded to-do list. Similarly, in her research, Matimolane (2004) argues that it is important that teachers are supplied with exemplars or even detailed lesson plans that can be used so that teachers do not have to start from scratch. In supplying these with the GPLMS, it seemed that teachers showed some appreciation regarding the LP's given to them but that this came at a heavy price of losing the autonomy in their teaching practice. All except the novice teacher in School A, preferred to prepare their own LP's. The reasons cited for the unhappiness of the prescribed LP's always referred back to how these prescribed L.P's were not contextually suited to their classrooms rather than if they were preparing their own as this would give them more autonomy to suitably adjust and amend teaching styles and pacing when needed, they stated that they did not want to have to follow the LP's rigidly but wanted the autonomy to adapt these LP's to suit their contexts and learners. As Matimolane (2004) suggests, some were not aware that they could do this but were made to believe by their coaches or during their training that they were supposed to follow the LP's strictly. These findings concurred with Langsford's (2013) definition of what LP's meant to teachers, that they are symbols of their identity as professionals, their pedagogical knowledge, accountability, power and politics. According to Langsford (2013), LP's are used as intervention tool which take away teachers' form of identity as

professionals and can be found as insulting their professionalism. This is exactly how teachers in school B felt about these LP's.

The data collected showed that to some extent the provision of the scripted LP's in the GPLMS was initially seen by some in a negative light where teachers felt the LP's took away their sense of autonomy and professionalism. Some teachers showed an appreciation of the LP's and stated how they acted as a guide and that they were made aware at the initial training that they had permission to change and adjust them slightly to suit their classroom needs. It seemed to be the more confident teachers and those who eventually developed a reflective nature through the implementation of the GPLMS, such as T1 in school A, who knew they could do this and were not forced to use the LP's stringently as argued by Beatty (2011) and Reeves (2010). Ironically, the provision of scripted LP's is becoming a popular used intervention tool for the development of professionalism and better teacher classroom practices.

A suggestion on how to deal with such challenges in future interventions is given by Langsford (2013) who states that in an effective TD intervention using LP's as a development tool, the LP's should not remain the same throughout an intervention and that, if the intervention is working, teachers should be progressing towards greater professionalism and become able to reflect on their teaching practice and adapt the way they teach. If the LP's do not evolve, possible feelings of being stifled will develop, as was the case for most teachers in these 2 schools. This phenomena could very well be one of the reasons why the teachers felt the way they did about the LP's. Furthermore, teachers were concerned about the sequencing of the LP's which appeared to be "jumping" from one task/activity to another much too brusquely. Langsford (2013: 13) also mentioned this:

> This haphazard and un-sequenced design is detrimental to learners because it is difficult to see how all the parts of language relate. It is not clear to the child that language works as a system and that mastering one concept will allow them to master another concept.

During their pre-service training, most teachers were taught to rely on rote learning as a teaching strategy. The teacher would repeat a concept until she/he assumes most learners have grasped it and then moved on to the next concept. The spiralling curriculum of Bruner's pedagogical theory states that learners have to give or construct some meaning to what they

learn. This explains why CAPS and the GLPMS language subjects were designed in such a way that the concepts/themes are rapidly introduced to learners and then teachers come back over and over again throughout the year in different contexts and with slightly different meanings. Some learners do not understand well a concept the first time they learn it. The idea is that, with those learners who are a bit slower and did not grasp a concept the first time around, they would eventually be given other opportunities to get it because it was repeated throughout the curriculum to make all learners eventually internalise the concept.

This method of teaching a concept does not appear to have been explained to the teachers (or the coaches?), and as a result, teachers did not understand why the curriculum seems to jump from one concept/task or activity to another so quickly and abruptly.

A solution to the negativity towards LP's is suggested by Langsford (2013) who states that, instead of teachers being forced to use the LP's throughout the intervention program, they could be firstly introduced to detailed, prescriptive LP's at the beginning of the intervention and, as they grow and develop, they should be guided to taking note of the LP's structure, time allocations, pacing etc. and be told to do their own by following a given template over time. Slowly, the templates could be taken away and teachers could be told to start developing their own. The above mentioned solution to the issue of teachers eventually no longer needing standardized LP's is tantamount to say that the purpose and aims of TD interventions should be developmental and for self-reliance and not for the purpose of continuous dependency. In their responses, the participants now felt that after using the LP's for several years, they were more confident and could use them as guidelines to now plan their own LP's more effectively which is supported by Langsford (2013) who argues that LP's can play a vital role in the teaching profession especially when they are used as a development tool**.**

5.3 Experiences and reactions to coaches as mediators of lesson plans and: successes and challenges

Neuberger (2009, p. 2) gives the following definition of coaching

Coaching is a form of development, where expert coaches provide "a one-on-one learning opportunity for teachers. Coaching encompasses the supervision of the teacher inside the classroom with regards to teaching practice and feedback sessions. "

The content-focused coaching sets forth a program whereby a coach meets with a teacher on a one-on-one on-going basis to plan, observe and reflect on actual lesson plans. A big part of the coach's work has to do with looking at the teachers' needs in terms of knowledge, beliefs and skills, or what the teachers know and should do, what they ought to be doing and the gap that exists between these two. The findings of this study showed that the coaches offered teachers a one-on-one session for feedback and development, something very close to Neuberger's (2009) definition of what a coach was meant to do. Some teachers in the study appreciated presence and expertise offered by the coaches, mentioning how some of the coach's interpersonal qualities and helped in building trust and good relationships between themselves and teachers. These coaches seemingly displayed the following qualities as stated by Li and Chan (2007) which aided the smooth relationship "high quality personal and interpersonal skills, mutual trust, confidence and respect." They seemed to be sensitive in their judgemental feedback on performance so as not to affect teachers' confidence negatively and damage the learning relationship. One coach, in school A seemed to not have mastered this skill in the beginning. This showed in the negative reception she received, but after being confronted by one SMT member she was able to work on her interpersonal skills and be able to work much better with the teachers

The major problem the participants had with their coaches was that they did not model the new teaching practices, something that went against what the GPLMS prescribed. This finding was as Li and Chan (2007) found that effective coaching must be based in the coaches being able to demonstrate the techniques the participants are supposed to exhibit. Whilst teachers were aware that coaching was an effective tool for development, most of them in school B did not find the GPLMS coaches a valuable source of support. This could be attributed to the fact that some GPLMS coaches were not as strong as or more knowledgeable than some teachers at school B. At school A, most participants were uneasy about being observed and monitored in their classroom. The coaches' presences evoked feelings of insecurity and of not being fully competent at their jobs, which explained why SADTU had maintained in previous years their stance on the inclusion of outsiders to monitor and help teacher's development process.

In their study, Li and Chan (2007) mention also that coaches are an expensive form of support. Coaches in school B did not come to classrooms regularly, because there was not enough funds to pay many coaches and for more than a 3 year period at a time. Teachers who participated in this study did not seem to share the same views when it came to the presence and subsequent absence of coaches as their experiences of them differed.

5.4 Experiences of using lesson plans without coaches

The responses reveal that even after the end of the four year implementation plan of GPLMS that all teachers continued using GPLMS lesson plans, even after the coaches were withdrawn from the classrooms in 2014. But the participants in school A felt that this was rather premature as most of them felt that they still needed assistance from coaches in one way or another, although they were sure that not in intensive one-on-one way. As stated before that the participants had a clear understanding of the purpose of LP's, the more confident teachers felt it was unnecessary to have coaches mediating the LP's to begin with as they felt that these were sufficiently annotated and explicit in their explanations of how and what they needed to do whilst the novice, inexperienced teacher did not mind them having the coaches at all.

The difference in views pointed back to the impact of teacher's view of themselves and their work. In school A where teachers were not as confident as the ones in school B, the coaches no longer visiting them in class was a bit of relief because they felt they could now gain back their autonomy and full control of their classrooms. Even though they seemed to understand the reason the coaches were there they could not help but feel that their professionalism and ability as teachers was being questioned and undermined, another reason for their relief stated by their teachers was their ability to now use the LP's independently. Without the coaches it seemed they felt they could now be able to not stick to the LP's as loyally and not have to feel accountable or guilty for doing that. However there was no evidence on whether their adaptation of the LP's was for the better or the worse.

5.5 Assumptions about the teacher change process

Every TD intervention planned and implemented has an underlying theory about the teacher change process. The findings in this study demonstrated that change was indeed as described by Clarke and Hollingsworth (2013) a slow and complex process where sometimes the occurrence and measurement of it could not to in some instances happen in great measure. Often there is an assumption that change is easy for teachers and that they will immediately see the benefit of the intervention and fall in line with what the intervention stipulates. This is not the case, as Langsford (2013, p. 7) mentions.

As stated in the literature review (Guskey, 2002, p. 382), states that "the purpose of teacher development programs is to bring about change in the classroom practice of teachers" and the two approaches are to either start by changing teachers' beliefs or changing teachers' practices first. The approach the GPLMS seemed to promote was a change in teachers' classroom practices first which is presumed will lead to a change in learners' outcomes which would then change teachers' attitudes and beliefs. The GPLMS seemed to aim at first changing teacher's classroom practice through the provision of the scripted LP's which stipulated what and how teachers had to teach, with the hope that this would bring improvement in learners' results and then hopefully different attitudes and behaviours and in teachers.

The issue of whether three years of GPLMS intervention made a difference in the teaching practices and now in the teachers' attitudes and beliefs still remains a debatable one that requires further classroom-based research. This study revealed that, while some teachers claim that it did not change the way in which they teach, others mentioned that GPLMS LP's enabled them to teach differently, especially by teaching them different pedagogical methods, and how to introduce different concepts. And indeed, it seems as if the GPLMS had a positive impact in improving the ANA results of these two schools.

According to Guskey's (2002) process of teacher change, change perceptions need to be sensitive to the different contexts in which the TD programs are supposed to be implemented. Such contextual issues range from having large number of learners in the

classroom and the feasibility or appropriateness of the LP's, activities and assessments. However, the GPLMS was not sensitive to such contexts as all the participants complained about the high number of assessments and the structure of the lessons. Teachers felt that they had no choice and felt that the GPLMS was something imposed on them by the education department without them having been consulted about their needs or having much choice in the issue.

Guskey (2002) also argues that it is "the experience of successful implementation that will ultimately change teacher's attitudes and beliefs". This seems to concur with the findings which showed that most of the participants ultimately felt that the GPLMS was a successful development program which to some extent changed classroom practice, whilst those who did not feel it was a successful program explained that there had been minimal change in their classroom practice.

On whether GPLMS followed The Clarke and Hollingsworth's (2012) approach to teacher change could not be illustrated in this research as there was not enough data on each teacher's process of change to verify whether and how the GPLMS produced different change sequences in the four teacher domains of change. However, one could surmise that the GPLMS disregarded the complexity of teachers' lives and the interaction of the different teacher domains. It came across that GPLMS did not take into consideration that change in the teachers' life can begin in any of the four domains and impact the teacher as according to Clarke and Hollingsworth (2012). The initial negative teachers' perceptions to this form of intervention in the case of these two schools show that many teachers felt they were merely forced to implement this intervention.

5.6 Conclusion and recommendations

This research has some limitations because of the small sample and limited time frame in which the research was conducted in, which means findings cannot be generalised. the evidence is mainly based on teachers' perceptual data which has its limitations and prevent serious triangulation, however the findings can be indicative of some trends and patterns which need to be tested in further research.

The research showed as Welch (2012) suggested that teachers do indeed react differently towards teacher development, this difference in reaction is due largely to the different

perceptions teachers have of themselves, either as professionals, who possess the agency and reflective nature or as workers who are comfortable in being told what and how to carry out their work. This study confirms Feiter et al's (1995) argument that teachers' responses to TD are partly influenced by their professional stage which impacts on their motivation and commitment to not only engage in teacher development and allow the process of change to happen but also to favourably consider the benefits of the development intervention. In this study, the novice teacher was more open to this GDE intervention as a system-led development strategy. She knew and understood that she still had a lot to learn and appreciated any development intervention that came her way.

Even though the teachers with more teaching experience and higher qualifications acknowledged the importance to engage in TD, they appeared less keen on this intervention strategy, more especially towards its coach mediated lesson plans. This could be related to the fact that these teachers see such system-led innovation tools as undermining their level of professionalism, their teaching autonomy and capacity. Most teachers in the study asserted that they would have felt more comfortable and would have had a more positive attitude to the GPLMS if they had a say over what they needed to be developed in and to some extent how to be developed. However it is appropriate to ask whether these teachers , prior to the implementation of the GPLMS knew their development priorities and needs and if so did they possess the internal commitment to find ways of improving their learner literacy and mathematics performance.

The findings of this study confirm claims made by previous research studies, such as Fleisch (2008), that a one-size-fits-all approach to teacher development, such as the GPLMS, was not viable or appropriate because schools and teachers in South Africa are capacitated very differently. This means that any teacher development program has to take into account the schools' and teachers' different contextual backgrounds and make the necessary adjustments when implementing teacher development interventions, as Rogan and Grayson (2003) argue. A one-size-fits-all approach will not cater to the needs of all teachers. As a result, TD innovators need to be aware and sensitive towards different needs and competencies of teachers so as to address them adequately.

The use of annotated or scripted LP's, as those used in the GPLMS intervention development is gaining popularity and has proved to be an effective development tool. On the whole, teachers collectively appreciated the clarity and detail in which the LP's were designed and this finding supported the claim made by Hiebert & Morris (2014) about effective LP's needing to explicitly state the goals to be achieved by learners, and give learners predicted answers, assessments and model answers.

The prescriptive LP's were welcomed by teachers, who were not so confident in the subjects the were teaching, especially the novice teacher who, together with the more experienced teachers cited that the manner in which the LP's were detailed taught them to some extent new teaching strategies. However, almost all the teachers did not like the design of the LP's, citing issues of fast pacing and erratic sequencing of work and in some cases, they cited that the standard of work was lower as compared to what the learners were expected to know for their ANA exams.

Other teachers who perceived themselves as not needing such detailed LP's did not like their prescriptiveness and rigidity, These teachers who preferred designing their own LP's based on their school and learner's needs, were those who had more teaching experience and possessed higher qualifications. What all teachers seemed to welcome however was how these LP's supplied to them eased their already heavily inundated workload.

The findings in the study proved, to some extent Hiebert & Morris's (2013) point that, when teachers are open to being given LP's, which are well-designed and properly annotated, teachers can learn new techniques or teaching strategies from these LP's, regardless of the number of in-service years and qualifications.

The findings on the using of coaches as a development tool was uniform in both schools: teachers eventually welcomed coaches in their classrooms, even if there was some resistance at the beginning. It is clear that the coaches' inter-personal skills and knowledge played a major role in either the positive or negative reception of the coaches. The approach of the coaches towards the teachers was a critical issue in determining how the teachers perceived and received the coaches' assistance and feedback. An effective relationship seemed to occur when the coaches were friendly and treated teachers as colleagues or as equals, and when they displayed positive people's skills. The coaches who

were sterner, cold and viewed themselves as knowing more than the teachers were met with more resistance and dislike from the teachers. A negative issue that was raised by participants pertaining to the coaches was that in conjunction to the coaches giving them regular oral feedback, the teachers felt that the coaches could have embarked on adopting an approach of modelling the new teaching techniques that they were supposed to use.

This goes to show that, in as much as teacher subject content knowledge is vital in providing quality teaching and learning, which the GDE regularly addresses by providing once-off, off-site teacher workshops. The GDE had, prior to the GPLMS intervention neglected developing teacher pedagogical competency development needed to impart knowledge, which teachers seemed to have been in desperate need of.

Regarding the effectiveness of any TD intervention, Guskey's (1994) program implementation framework identifies the following four levels which TD innovators should be aware of:

1. Recognise that change is an individual and organizational process.
2. Think big and start small - the program must not take on too much.
3. Work in teams to maintain support (acknowledging professional learning communities)
4. Include procedures for feedback on results of the program.

This study on the GPLMS (2010-2014) intervention and its use of coach- mediated lesson plans reveals various strengths and weaknesses when evaluated against Guskey's (1994) program implementation framework. The GPLMS (2010-2014) seemed to address points 2 and 4, by setting it out over a four year period with Foundation phase language and then including maths and Intersen phase as well as focusing and limiting its implementation to underperforming schools only. This finding shows that the intervention had to be gradually implemented, to a smaller sample contrary to the once-off development workshops that attempt to fit large chunks of content knowledge in *ad hoc* one to three days workshops for larger groups, districts or even national departments. Furthermore, GPLMS seemed to comply with the fourth point by having its LP's constantly reviewed and strengthened in the four years of its implementation. This was done with a team of coaches who gave the LP

designers or experts feedback on the strengths and challenges of the LPs and what had to be improved.

The GPLMS may be seen as wanting on the points 1 and 3 as the intervention adopted a one-size fits all approach with the same resources and LP's being supplied to all GPLS schools and teachers and with LP's not being designed to suit different school and classroom contexts. The coaches were supposed to work with individual teachers in acknowledgement that GPLMS teachers have different competencies and weaknesses which were to come up when following the LP's. The coaches seem to replace the usage of teams, this could have been done in the form of teachers targeted by the GPLMS intervention offering support to each other and sharing the challenges and strategies they experienced with using the LP's off-site among themselves. In the case of this study's two schools, teachers interviewed did not mention any form of school-based or cluster-based working team or professional learning communities. It appears as if the GPLMS program assumes that these teachers have not yet reached the professional stage, and largely still identify themselves as workers, "as those whom change is done to rather than agents of change" (Welch, 2012. p. 2), and as those who do not possess a reflective nature and capacity to their teaching.

Finally, teachers had contrasting views on whether overall the GPLMS LP's impacted strongly on teaching and learning and ultimately on learner results. Some teachers could see a slight improvement in learner achievement results through the ANA tests, whilst other teachers who were more confident about their past performance did not see any much difference.

5.7 Recommendations for further study

This study recommends that further focused qualitative research studies are to be undertaken to look at the impact of the GPLMS on different teachers' beliefs, attitudes and commitment to their work as well as how and to what extent the GPLMS and its coach mediated LP's actually impacted learner performance.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Teacher interview schedule

A. Participants' profile and experience of previous TD programs

2. How many years have you been teaching? Which grades and subjects have you taught?
3. How long have you been in this school? And what grade and subject are you teaching?
4. Do you enjoy teaching? What do you struggle most with in your teaching?
5. Can you give me details of your best experience of in-service TD program? Please explain the type of knowledge or competences that was targeted by this program and why it was effective for you?
6. What did you learn and did it change aspects of your teaching? Please explain.
7. Before the GPLMS intervention, did you use Lesson Plans (LPs) to guide your teaching? Elaborate on why you used LPs, what they covered, how detailed, how useful they were for you.
8. What other resources or support did you use to guide the sequence and pacing of your teaching? (planning with maths colleagues, access to textbooks, monitoring by HoD or district). Did you manage to cover the whole curriculum??

B. Teachers' Perceptions, Experiences and Attitudes towards GPLMS lesson plans and coaching

1. How did your school respond to the GPLMS intervention (when was it introduced in your schools)? Was it welcomed as a form of support or was it seen as problematic by your school?
2. Did your school receive quality GPLMS teaching resources to accompany the LPs?
3. As a teacher, did you think at the time that you could benefit from scripted LPs and a coach to improve your teaching? Elaborate
4. What did you like or not like about the GPLMS LPs? (too much or too little content details? their instructional routines, sequencing and pacing?)
5. Do you think it is better to follow expert-designed LPs or develop your own LPs, given that you know best your learners and school environment?
6. Was your coach useful in helping you adapt these LPs to your classroom learners? (Probe on coach's main strengths and weaknesses in terms of knowledge, quality of relationship; nature of feedback, assistance with pacing problems)

7. What were the main challenges encountered in your teaching when implementing your coach's advices?
8. What are the main advantages and disadvantages in following these LPs in your school?
9. Do you think these LPs were designed to make you teach differently and better? Or do you think LPs were there to control what, how and in what sequence you teach? Did you cover the curriculum by following the LPs and your coach's advices?
10. Did many of your learners benefit? Or did the majority struggle with the pacing? What did your coach advice you to do about this?
11. Do you think that, during these 2 /3? Years of GPLMS coaching, your teaching practices and knowledge improved? Give examples of positive changes or negative changes, if any?

C:Experiences of implementing GPLMS lesson plans without coaching support and monitoring

(with concrete examples of what LPs are used by teachers in what they taught just before preparing for ANA- could you ask to see their LPs and/or learners' workbooks?)

12. What was your reaction when you heard that coaches were not coming back to classrooms in 2014? Do you think you still needed access to coaches to support & monitor your teaching?
13. Did you learn enough to continue using these LPs on your own? What aspects of the LPs do you still follow or no longer follow? Explain why, with examples
14. Do you continue using the GPLMS resource materials and do you mix them with other resources? Explain
15. Will you be able to cover the whole curriculum this year?
16. What kind of support do you think you need now to improve your teaching and learners' results?

D. Impact of GPLMS intervention

17. Are you a more confident teacher as a result of the GPLMS intervention? explain
18. What has most changed in your teaching practices? explainwith examples
19. What kind of knowledge have you gained from the GPLMS intervention? explain with examples
20. What impact has it had on different kinds of learners in your classroom? Did your learners' results improve in the last 2/3? years?
21. What else changed in the way you deal with your learners or in the way your school works?
22. Is there anything else you would like to share about the GPLMS that you and I have not discussed so far?

Thank you for your participation

APPENDIX B-

INFORMATION SHEET ABOUT THE GPLMS RESEARCH

DATE: 22 September 2014

Dear Sir/Madam

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

I am doing research on teacher's perceptions and experiences and attitudes of coach mediated lesson plans in the GPLMS and it involves exploring how teachers perceived the experience of using coach mediated lesson plans as a tool to improve teaching and learning. And how teachers are now able to use the lesson plans now that the coaches are not in schools. The reason I have chosen you is because of my knowledge of your school's participation in the GPLMS program and you having been through a coach-teacher relationship to implement the GPLMS lesson plans.

You, as a participant, will be requested to kindly avail yourself for an in-depth interview that will take an hour to conduct. I will be using a tape recorder so as to have a free and open talk with you. The interview will be conducted after school hours at any place most convenient to you.

I was wondering whether you would mind if you could kindly avail yourself for a maximum hour long interview on how you have perceived this program and its coach mediated lesson plans.

Your name and identity will be kept confidential at all times and in all academic writing about the study. Your individual privacy will be maintained in all published and written data resulting from the study. The data collected from the interview will be stored in a locked safe for the duration of the study.

Thereafter the data will be destroyed 3 years after completion of the project and the obtaining of the degree. The data will be used in an unpublished Med thesis displayed in the Wits Education Library.

You will not be advantaged or disadvantaged in any way. Your participation is voluntary, so you can withdraw your permission at any time during this project without any penalty. There are no foreseeable risks in participating and you will not be paid for this study.

Please let me know if you require any further information.

Thank you very much for your help.

Yours sincerely,

SIGNATURE

_____

NAME: Gontse

ADDRESS: 2523 Lefatola Street

EMAIL: gontsemo@gmail.com

TELEPHONE NUMBERS: 0833106050

Appendix C

Teacher's Consent Form

Please fill in and return the reply slip below indicating your willingness to be a participant in my voluntary research project called: **An exploration of the teacher's and perceptions, experiences and attitudes of coach mediated lesson plans in the GPLMS- lessons learnt.**

I, _____ give my consent for the following:

Permission to review/collect documents/artifacts **Circle one**

I agree that the GPLMS documents and lesson plans can be used for this study only. YES/NO

Permission to be interviewed

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

I know that I can stop the interview at any time and don't have to answer all the questions asked. YES/NO

Informed Consent

I understand that:

- My name and information will be kept confidential and safe and that my name and the name of my school will not be revealed.
- I do not have to answer every question and can withdraw from the study at any time.
- I can ask not to be audiotaped, photographed and/or videotape
- All the data collected during this study will be destroyed within 3-5 years after completion of my project.

Sign_____ Date_____