

RESEARCH REPORT

**A REFLECTION ON SOCIAL SCIENCE TEACHERS' PEDAGOGICAL
CONTENT KNOWLEDGE AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR LEARNER
PERFORMANCE: A CASE OF SCHOOLS IN MPUMALANGA
PROVINCE, SOUTH AFRICA**

BY

DAVID MATHABI MASHILOANE

Dissertation

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER'S IN EDUCATION

In

CURRICULUM STUDIES

In the

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

(School of Education)

at the

UNIVERSITY OF LIMPOPO

Supervisor: Dr. M.C. Modipane

Co-Supervisor: Dr P.J. Sefara

2023

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my late parents, Josiah Nondathane Mashiloane and Mitah Kekulana Mashiloane.

DECLARATION

I, Mashiloane David Mathabi () declare that:

A REFLECTION ON SOCIAL SCIENCE TEACHERS' PEDAGOGICAL CONTENT KNOWLEDGE AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR LEARNER PERFORMANCE: A CASE OF SCHOOLS IN MPUMALANGA PROVINCE, SOUTH AFRICA

Reflects my own work and that all the sources that I have quoted and used have been acknowledged accordingly and indicated through references and that this work has not been submitted before at any other institution.

Signature: _____



Mashiloane D.M.

08 December 2022

Date

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Firstly, I want to acknowledge the sterling work done by my supervisor, Dr M.C. Modipane for the patience, boldness, encouragement, guidance and support in going through the dissertation right from the initial stage of the proposal stage up to the final stage.

Secondly, my gratitude goes to my family, my wife Annah Mashiloane, my four daughters Valencia, Nthabiseng, Matsepo, Kgomotso Mashiloane and my granddaughter Hope Zulu, for their understanding and support throughout my study.

Furthermore, I would also like to acknowledge Professor S.J. Kubayi for taking his time in reading and editing my work.

Lastly, to the District Director, Circuit manager, school principals, teachers and learners who participated in the study.

Thank you, may God shower you with all blessings.

TABLE OF CONTENT

Contents

CHAPTER ONE

TITLE	PAGE
1.1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY	1
1.1.1. Clarification of the key concepts of the study	3
1.2. AIM OF THE STUDY	7
1.3. OBJECTIVES	7
1.4. PROBLEM STATEMENT	8
1.5. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	9
1.6. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS	9
1.6.1. Relationship with participants	10
1.6.2. Anonymity	10
1.6.3. Confidentiality	10
1.7. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	10
1.7.1. Research Design	11
1.7.2. Population and Sampling	12
1.7.3. Data collection	13
1.7.3.1 Interviews	13
1.7.3.2 Documents analysis	14
1.7.3.3 Data analysis	15
1.8. QUALITY ASSURANCE	15
1.8.1. Credibility	16
1.8.2. Dependability	16
1.8.3. Confirmability	16
1.8.4. Transferability	16
1.9. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY	17
1.10. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY	19
1.11. CHAPTER OUTLINE	19
1.12. CHAPTER SUMMARY	20

CHAPTER TWO

2. LITERATURE REVIEW	21
2.1. INTRODUCTION	21
2.2. OVERVIEW OF THE PROBLEM	21
2.3. MODELS OR SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT OR THEORIES	22
2.4. CHAPTER SUMMARY	26

CHAPTER THREE

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	28
3.1. INTRODUCTION	28
3.1.1. Methodological perspectives	28
3.2. RESEARCH PARADIGM	29
3.3. RESEARCH APPROACH	30
3.4. RESEARCH DESIGN	32
3.5. SAMPLING	33
3.5.1. Description of the selected area of study	35
3.5.2. Information about teachers	37
3.6. DATA COLLECTION	37
3.6.1. Semi-structured interviews	38
3.6.2. Observations	39
3.6.3. Document analysis	40
3.7. DATA ANALYSIS	41
3.8. QUALITY ASSURANCE MATTERS	42
3.8.1. Trustworthiness	42
3.8.2. Credibility	42
3.8.3. Dependability	43
3.8.4. Confirmability	43
3.8.5. Transferability	44
3.9. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY	44
3.10. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS	45
3.11. SUMMARY OF CHAPTER	45

CHAPTER FOUR

4. DISCUSSION: DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION	47
4.1. INTRODUCTION	47
4.2. THE CONTEXT OF THE STUDY	47
4.2.1. Findings from the case study	47
4.2.2. Biographical information	48
4.3. BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION OF SCHOOLS	48
4.4. BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION OF PARTICIPANTS	50
4.5. DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATION	51
4.5.1. Classroom observations	51
4.5.2. Classroom management	52
4.5.3. Teaching and learning methods	55
4.5.4. Qualifications of teachers	57
4.5.5. Teaching and learning materials	58
4.5.6. Summary of findings.	58

CHAPTER FIVE

5. FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY	60
5.1. INTRODUCTION	60
5.2. THE FINDINGS	60
5.3. RECOMMENDATIONS	62
5.4. CONCLUSION	63
5.5. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY	63
5.6. POSSIBILITIES FOR FURTHER RESEARCH	64
6. REFERENCES	65
7. ANNEXURES	76
7.1. ANNEXURE A	76
7.2. ANNEXURE B	78
7.3. ANNEXURE C	79

7.4.	ANNEXURE D	80
7.5.	ANNEXURE E	89
7.6.	ANNEXURE F	90
7.7.	ANNEXURE G	91
7.8.	ANNEXURE H	93

CHAPTER ONE

1. INTRODUCTION

Teaching is a challenging profession that calls for the integration of numerous specialized knowledge domains. These specialised skills include pedagogical expertise, subject matter expertise and learner-centred expertise. Schools need qualified teachers who are knowledgeable in the teaching craft if they are to use this kind of strategy. According to Attard, (2011) one of the most significant factors influencing students' interest in Social Sciences is teachers.

1.1. BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

The study's primary goal was to assess the pedagogical content understanding of the Social Science teachers and its effects on Senior Phase (Grade 7-9) learners' academic performance in a few Mpumalanga schools. The chapter covers the study's history as well as its goals and objectives. The issue statement, theoretical framework and ethical considerations are further highlighted in this chapter. Also mentioned are the research approach and design. The procedures for gathering the research data are then highlighted. This then cover the quality control, the study's importance and its limitations. The study ends with a chapter summary and chapter outline.

History and Geography were combined at the grades 7-9 level and given the name "Social Sciences" (SS) under South Africa's new educational system. The aim of integrating these subjects was to make learners know the vital role of democracy, the rights of people and their surroundings Doe (2002). However, merging these subjects has its challenges. The government of National Unity in South Africa has changed various curricula since the country's 1994 national democratic elections in an effort to democratize education and end prejudice in the post-apartheid educational system, Ndimande (2013). Due to the new changes in the curriculum, schools started to experience underperformance in various subjects, including Social Sciences. There has been underperformance in Social Sciences for the past four years. This is evident during the annual analysis of results. In the Outcomes-Based Education (OBE) curriculum, the subject was referred to as Human and Social Sciences (HSS), but its

name was later altered to Social Sciences, Doe (2011). This study shows that learners' performance deteriorates in terms of average achievements in Social Sciences between the years 2016 and 2019.

YEAR	2016	2017	2018	2019
School A	65%	60%	61%	57%
School B	45%	47%	39%	48%
School C	47%	50%	41%	68%
School D	47%	59%	48%	55%

Maarman and Mbawuli (2017) argue that the education system of South Africa is facing many challenges. This is expressed in different grades (Grades 7-12) based on the annual pass rates, learners are underperforming in various grades. Nyambe, (2015) highlights significant issues with the educational system, particularly those relating to students' poor performance when compared to other nations. This study is based on the researcher's observations of the underperforming Social Science teaching in Grades 7 and 9 during the preceding four years as well as their own personal experience. This has been a general concern among teachers of this subject in South Africa. Teachers generally need to know the learning material of what they are doing, and how to teach it, Shulman (1987).

Social Sciences teachers, like teachers of all other subjects, should be subject specialists in their fields. They must be knowledgeable about both the subject matter they teach and the teaching techniques. In addition, they must know how to assess it and be competent, Shulman (1987). According to Mwindi and van der Walt, (2015) learners due to their limited language skills will be unable to produce knowledge on the relevant subject matter This prompted the researcher, a seasonal Social Sciences teacher, to research the connection between instructors' Pedagogical Content expertise and students' success in the Social Sciences as a combined subject in Grades 7-9 in South Africa.

According to Magano (2009), curriculum changes have a direct effect on how teachers teach learners in the classroom. We must understand the level of teachers' content

knowledge on the academic performance of schools Jotia & Matlala (2011). In his study, Nielson (2011) argues that teachers of Social Sciences also come across stumbling blocks to teach content-related subjects as compared to specialised subjects. Gess-Newsome (2015) believes that the orientation and conviction of teachers according to the knowledge model of their pedagogical content is important in terms of their knowledge base and their practice in the classroom. Clausen (2016) assumes that a weak Social Sciences Teacher Basic Knowledge Background (TBKB) reveals all problems in the teaching of the subject. According to Segall and Garrett (2013), Social Sciences teachers are not sure how to include racial diversity in the curriculum due to obstacles and personal fulfilment.

More concerns about poor performance were reported by Stanton (2015), that textbooks used in schools are of a foreign culture or European orientation. Hobbs (2018) states that teaching a combination of History and Geography in Social Sciences as a subject requires a broader scope and ability to succeed. The knowledge of Social Sciences teachers' educational content will be the main emphasis of this study and the implications thereof for learner performance in the subject. Looking deeper into previous studies, the main focus is on the Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) of Geography teachers and not on the field of Social Sciences Birdsall (2015); Lane (2015). Lambert and Biddulph (2015) emphasise that teachers must have detailed theoretical knowledge comparable to the curriculum of the scientific discipline and not learners' cultural background. Van Staden (2016) makes reference to intricate issues like deprivation, and the quality of school and home language data, including literacy and illiteracy. Ali, Haider, Munir, Khan and Ahmed (2013) accept that several factors contribute to student performance. The researcher considers the implications of Social Science teachers' pedagogical content understanding for learner performance.

1.1.1. CLARIFICATION OF THE KEY CONCEPTS OF THE STUDY

This section makes important ideas clear in the study which is: pedagogy, content knowledge and social science.

Pedagogy is the art of teaching or imparting knowledge and skills. First, it is difficult to understand pedagogy Shulman (1987); Nind, Curtin & Hall (2016); and second, it is beneficial to concentrate on both topic knowledge and pedagogical knowledge when

learning pedagogical content, rather than just one or the other. Pedagogies must provide for students' needs. Curriculum creation must take students' requirements into account Dunn, Niens & McMillan (2014) and encourage active participation through carefully thought-out instructional plans Sandvik, van Daal & Ader (2014). Examples of pedagogical skills include, asking students questions to find out their prior knowledge, alternating the tone of voice, changing up the classroom layout, differentiation, rewards for effort and setting high expectations.

Content knowledge focuses on teaching with an emphasis on the introduction of basics in the teaching or integration of subject matter and competent teaching of the subject. Furthermore, content knowledge includes the ability to use reasoning and proof to make and invest in the subject being taught. Content knowledge used in understanding, recognizing and responding to the content problems encountered in Social Sciences subject matter teaching. Knowledge is the centre of the curriculum for educator preparation and the basis for learning and teaching Mumbly & Russell (1995). An example of knowledge is learning the alphabets, having the ability to find location as in Social Sciences i.e. Geography and remembering details about an event i.e. History. Furthermore, knowledge of the subjects to be taught is referred to as content knowledge. The comprehension of one of the topics and the willingness of teachers to communicate information with students are dependent on the expertise they have obtained. For this study, content knowledge will be described as both knowledge of concepts, procedures, learning standards, standardized tests in Social Sciences and academic teams. The kind of content knowledge in Social Sciences can be associated with classwork, where learners make helpful connections between their previous learning experiences, the content and the assigned classwork. This must take place in both Geography and History as Social Sciences.

Pedagogical knowledge covers comprehension of sources, application of Geography or history skills, learning methods applied in Social Sciences and teaching methods. Pedagogy is the art of teaching students. Furthermore, pedagogy is the vehicle that develops the skills students to display mastery of the content. Awareness of pedagogical knowledge is regarded as the teacher's knowledge to use his or her knowledge (Ball, 2005). According to Shulman (1987), by bringing the knowledge of the subject issue in question to teaching, this kind of teacher knowledge goes beyond subject matter knowledge. This further includes involving the relationship between

understanding of teaching materials, how to transfer the subject matter and the knowledge of learners in Social Sciences on map reading and interpretation skills that the subject matter may be understood by learners. The teaching knowledge base identifies a set of abilities necessary to be a successful teacher. Process knowledge is a component of pedagogical knowledge, implementation, education techniques and instruction. Without assistance that fosters the development of the substantial skill required in both material and methodology, the teacher and the teaching are constrained. We recognise that professional learning must be based on student results; it is ongoing, cooperative and improvement oriented awareness of teacher expertise and pedagogical content knowledge Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Howell (2018).

Pedagogical content knowledge has been described by Shulman (1987) as a significant factor in terms of the effect teachers can have on improving poor performance in history. Thus, the specific area of teaching expertise that sets the skilled teacher of a particular subject apart from the subject expert is the understanding of pedagogical material. Teachers' knowledge of a particular topic and their capacity to impart it to students stem from their body of knowledge. Tom and Valli (1990) believe that not all educational researchers agree with what adequate knowledge of teachers is. Effective teachers construct assignment that are pertinent and appropriate for their learners and create effective questioning and evaluation strategies to assure understanding using what they know about their learners. Teachers need to have excellent pedagogical content understanding to do this effectively PCK: Shulman (1986)

One of the theoretical constructs that recognise the pedagogical content understanding of teachers, which is the focus of the research, is the classification of teacher knowledge Shulman (1987). Adekunle (2001) recognised that while teachers need to understand the material to teach, equally important is for educators to comprehend how to transform the knowledge into a fruitful educational encounter. This means that the notion by teachers of pedagogical content understanding in history is necessary for Social Sciences. Brophy and Alleman (1991) give us good insights, arguing that the aim of education in history is to supply students with the information, they lack the knowledge, values, and abilities to comprehend contemporary life, engage successfully in pro-social society, and be responsible citizens.

According to the definition of PCK, it has to do with how the subject is represented so that others can understand it. It also entails being aware of the factors that influence how simple or challenging a given subject is to learn Shulman (1986:9). If teachers are positive about the awareness of the subjects they teach, have an understanding of common misconceptions of learners in the classroom and have techniques to induce the conceptual shift of learners through PCK, it will be far easier to handle motivational problems. Teachers must possess a solid pedagogical content knowledge of history to enable learners to understand the facts, ideas and generalizations taught in history and for favourable attitudes. This understanding derives from history courses, courses in education, expertise and professional development. The preparation of history teachers should concentrate on the knowledge of pedagogical content understanding that works in particular with Social Sciences' nature and with ideas, tactics and skills at the appropriate level for teaching history in Social Sciences.

PCK is also hard to know and teachers themselves struggle to explain their knowledge and how they acquired it Shulman (1987:6). Not just what others do in situations of teaching and learning, but what they consider as meaningful, significant and relevant Nind, Kilburn, Luff (2015). Beyond the individual PCK components to the relationships between them, knowledge of learners and their characteristics, educational contexts, and educational goals are all topics covered by PCK, along with subject knowledge, general pedagogical knowledge, curricular knowledge, and knowledge of learners, intent and principles Depaepe (2013). Additionally, the way that people view PCK has evolved from being viewed as largely static to being dynamic, both reacting to context and evolving through classroom experience Oleson & Hora (2014); Lee & Luft, (2008). Bloemke (2014) describes PCK as an understanding of teaching and both the concept of learning and the techniques of instruction.

In the new education system of South Africa, history and geography were integrated in grades 7-9 (Senior Phase) and termed Social Sciences (SS). The aim of integrating these subjects was to make learners know the vital role of democracy, the rights of people and their surroundings Department of education (2002); Doe (2002). It seems, however, that merging the two components of history and geography has its challenges. Since the 1994 democracy in South Africa, the elected government made

several curriculum changes to democratise education and eliminate discrimination in the post-apartheid education system Ndimande (2013).

Due to the new changes in the curriculum, schools experience underperformance in various subjects, including history in Social Sciences. There has been underperformance in history for the past five years. This is evident during the annual analysis of results. This subject was known as Human and Social Sciences (HSS) in the Outcomes Based Education (OBE) curriculum and was later changed to Social Sciences (SS) Doe (2011). This study shows that learner performance deteriorates in terms of average achievements. In many schools, teachers are trained in either Geography or History. There is a challenge of underperformance in history as a school subject. It seems that teachers' PCK in history is not at the required level. If teachers' PCK is not at the required level, this is likely to contribute to the poor performance of learners.

1.2. AIMS OF THE STUDY

This research study aims at reflecting on Social Sciences teachers' pedagogical content understanding for learner performance at schools in Mpumalanga province, South African.

1.3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The researcher concentrates on the following in order to accomplish the aforementioned goals:

- To identify Social Sciences teachers' subject specialisation.
- To establish the level of training teachers received in both components of Social Sciences?
- To establish how teachers strike a balance in the teaching and learning of Geography and History as components of Social Sciences.
- To consider how learner performance is affected by Social Science teachers' pedagogical content understanding.

Secondary research questions:

- What is the teachers' subject specialisation in Social Sciences?
- What is the level of training the teacher received in both components of Social Sciences?
- How do teachers strike a balance in the teaching and learning of Geography and History as components of Social Sciences?
- What are the implications of Social Science teachers' Pedagogical content understanding on learner performance?

1.4. PROBLEM STATEMENT

In any education system that runs effectively, teachers should possess the requisite qualification for the subjects they teach and Pedagogical Content Knowledge for the subject that they teach. They must be knowledgeable about the subject they teach and how to instruct it. They need to be specialists in what they teach. Ideally, a teacher who teaches any subject in school must know both the content and how to teach it. However, in many schools, teachers are trained in either Geography or History. In the analysis of academic results from Grades 7-9 in Mpumalanga in the past four years, there is a question of underperformance in Social Sciences.

It seems that teachers' PCK in Social Sciences is not at the required level for both components of the subjects. They are either knowledgeable in History or Geography. If teachers' PCK is not at the required level, this is likely to contribute to learner performance issues. Since there has been significant underperformance among Social Sciences learners (Grade 7-9) at the Senior Phase level in Mpumalanga Province of South Africa since changes in the curricula in 2012 Doe (2012). If teachers' PCK is poor, not only is academic failure stressful for learners and parents, but the consequences on society are equally serious Aremu (2000).

The performance of learners at school is informed by the quality of education Waseka & Simatwa (2016). The issue is that learners won't be aware of the connections between the democratic, cultural, economic, social, civic and political systems as well as the relationship between people and the environment if learners continue to do

poorly in Social Sciences at the Senior Phase level. While literature reflects on several factors that contribute to poor performance in Social Sciences, not much is said about Teachers' Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) as a possible factor. This study, therefore, seeks to focus on the pedagogical content understanding of Social Sciences teachers and its consequences for learner learning in the South African province of Mpumalanga.

1.5. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework as defined by Abend and Gabriel (2008) is the basis from which all knowledge is built for a research study. Theories are crucial in research because they allow an individual to understand the reason why people act in a certain way. They also assist to provide the relevant intervention. The theory is further defined by Mutenherwa and Wassennar (2014) as the scope on which one perceives a situation amongst certain variables and varies according to one's point of view and depends on the particular situation under discussion.

This study is guided by Shulman's (1989) theory of Pedagogical Content Knowledge because the theory emphasises that a special focus must be directed to what he calls Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK). Shulman (1986) defines PCK as teaching a subject with emphasis on the implementation of basics in teaching. Shulman (1986) further posits that future trainer training efforts will need to be regulated to take into account the connections between content material and process. The synthesis of subject matter expertise and pedagogical understanding is referred to as awareness of the pedagogical content. Awareness of the pedagogical material describes the incorporation of subject matter expertise and the professional teaching of that particular subject. Pedagogy is the art of teaching or imparting knowledge and skills. The theory of Shulman (1986) is relevant to this investigation since it will help the researcher consider the PCK of Social Science teachers and its implications for learner performance. This theory will serve as a torch which will assist the researcher to make meaning of the findings of the study.

1.6. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Burgess (1989) notes that ethical considerations are necessary for educational research since ethical data must be derived from the environment of the analysis.

Principles and values that deal with the question of what is right and wrong in human affairs are referred to as ethical concerns. It differentiates between bad and good behaviour. The researcher complied with all requirements of ethical principles. In this instance, it includes the relationship with participants Simelane (1998), anonymity and confidentiality Saslow (1992) and no deception of the subjects Strijdom (1998). During the research, confidentiality has a serious effect Strijdom (1998). Ethical considerations are further guaranteed under various headings as described by Simelane and Strijdom (1998) and Saslow (1992).

1.6.1. Relationship with participants

The researcher built a trusted and good relationship with all participants in the study. The reason to conduct the study was fully explained to all participants.

1.6.2. Anonymity

By excluding participant names and any other form of personal identifying, the researcher secured participant anonymity. Their real names were not revealed and the names of schools selected were not identified. They were classified in terms of alphabets, for example, school A and school B.

1.6.3. Confidentiality

Participant's personal information was treated carefully and would not be known Baez (2002). Dissemination of letters of confidentiality was signed. Participants' physical and psychological health was assured McDemid (2014).

The researcher considered seeking permission to visit individual Social Sciences teachers and sampled schools. Therefore, an application to the appropriate education authorities to do research at the Senior Phase schools in Steve Tshwete 2 Circuit of Mpumalanga Province was submitted. A request for ethical clearance was received by the research ethics committee at the University of Limpopo. Due consideration of ethical procedures was ensured by the researcher.

1.7. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

According to Flick (2014), a research design is a study programme. A qualitative case study design was used in this investigation since, in its broadest sense, the qualitative

research model refers to research that gives meaning, knowledge or interpretation to the participants. Merriam (1998) defines a design for research as an architectural design, and a strategy for compiling, arranging and information integration. Because of this, the methodology of qualitative research to its fullest extent applies to investigations that elicit meaning-related participant stories of meaning, memories, or expectations. Participants were interviewed to gather descriptive information.

The study seeks to comprehend people's perspectives, perceptions and knowledge of a certain event, the current study falls under the umbrella of phenomenology, Leedy & Ormrod (2010).

The methodology is a procedure used during a field study Kothari (2004). The study followed the qualitative approach. Therefore, the study was carried out in seven Senior Phase schools in Steve Tshwete 2 Circuit of Mpumalanga. The discussion in this chapter revolves around understanding teachers' pedagogical content understanding for learner performance.

1.7.1. Research design

The researcher provided a thorough investigation of the phenomenon using a descriptive case study methodology. The research study was designed to reflect on Social Sciences teachers' pedagogical content understanding for learner performance at the senior phase level. The study used the qualitative case study design since, in its broadest sense, the qualitative research model refers to research that gives meaning, knowledge or interpretation to participants. The qualitative approach, as described by McLeod (2019), is based on the understanding of human behaviour or things that are taking place in their natural settings. Merriam (1998) defines a design for research as architectural design, a plan for assembling, arranging and integrating information. According to Flick (2014), a research design is a study programme. This research study was designed to reflect on Social Sciences knowledge of educational content by teachers and how it affects learner performance.

In-depth information from participants was gathered through interviews. The researcher followed a phenomenological theoretical perspective. In this analysis, the researcher tried to understand the specific context and situation within which Social Sciences were taught, learner performance is influenced by the subject matter

expertise of the teacher and how they present it. The study was conducted in seven selected schools to find out about the PCK of Social Sciences teachers and factors affecting learner performance. The researcher focused only on seven schools around Steve Tshwete Circuit 2 in the Nkangala District of Mpumalanga Province. In the analysis, the researcher tried to understand the specific context and situation within which Social Sciences were taught, learner performance was influenced by the teacher's subject understanding and instructional strategies.

1.7.2. Population and sampling

A tiny sample of a larger group is chosen, examined, and taken during sampling. As stated by Flick (2014), sampling is a crucial stage in qualitative research since it helps researchers create the cases they would be analysed in their study. Korstjens and Moser (2018) define sampling as a sample selection technique which will provide quality information relating to the phenomenon under investigation. In this investigation, the researcher chose seven Senior Phase schools as a site for conducting the study. The researcher used the Social Sciences analysis of results to select the schools. Purposive sampling was done. From each of the seven (7) schools, the researcher chose one (1) teacher per school from the six schools and two at the seventh school in Steve Tshwete 2 Circuit who teaches Social Sciences in the Senior Phase. These teachers are regarded as information-rich participants because they teach Social Sciences in the Senior Phase and have experiences to share regarding their familiarity with the subject matter, and their expertise and skills in the teaching and assessment of the subject.

The schools and participants were allocated the following codes to ensure anonymity: SAT1 (School A Teacher 1), SBT2 (School B Teacher 2), SCT3, SDT4, SET5, T6, SFT7 and SGT8. From the seven selected schools, the study was based on two cases of underperforming and two performing schools in the Social Sciences subject. The researcher employed purposive sampling to compare good practices between the best performing and underachievement schools. The sample included seven schools, grade 7, 8 and 9 learners and eight Social Sciences teachers. Twenty students from each school were chosen from class lists. This included underachieving and best performing learners.

The reason that necessitated the researcher to choose only seven schools for observation and interviews was that this number is manageable, taking into consideration the timeframe to complete this study. To make the study economically viable, the researcher also looked into the availability of resources and distance from the researcher's place. The schools were purposely selected as a result of the researcher's access to such institutions and Social Sciences teachers.

1.7.3. Data collection

Semi-structured interviews were used in the study, observations and document evaluation to collect the data. Barber (2012), Yin (2000), Stake (1995) and Merriam (1998) are in agreement that researchers in qualitative studies should collect data from multiple sources. Merriam (1998) offers careful instructions on data collection methods, suggesting that the researcher must be cautious in conducting successful interviews and in collecting data from documents and observation. The selected data collection methods allowed the researcher to comprehend the emotions, attitudes and environment of participants. The researcher must arrange the data collected so that they are in a text format. Merriam's (1998) data collection viewpoint offers more detailed and systematic advice on data collection procedures.

The researcher arranged data clearly and understandably during this stage of data collection. The investigator analysed and transcribed recorded audio tape data. The data was supplied with codes to make them easily accessible and easy to use. This simplified the raw data and reduced it to simple messages. Interviews were condensed and transcribed in print format. The researcher employed a variety of sources to gather information for the study in order to gather various information on the same phenomenon.

1.7.3.1. Interviews

Semi-structured interviews are driven by a collection of questions that appear on a schedule for an interview Terre Blanche & Durrheim (2014). The study used open-ended semi-structured interviews to collect data. Qualitative research is best suited for these types of interviews. The cause is that two individuals converse with one another about a specific subject. It is adaptable since the interviewee is free to express

their viewpoint. In line with the qualitative approach, and as guided by the interpretive paradigm, these interviews will be conducted with each one of the eight (8) teachers at their schools which are familiar environments to them.

This technique has its advantage, particularly in this study as it is a powerful tool to understand the experience of individuals and to gain insight into educational issues and people whose lives make up education. However, this technique generally has its disadvantage in the sense that if the interviewee is aware of the interviewer's point of view, it may be prejudiced and deceptive. Therefore, in this study, the researcher chose an interview because of its adaptable nature rather than a questionnaire. Through interviews, judgements could be made based on hesitations, facial expressions and tones of voice, but this is impossible with questionnaires. To gain clarity, additional inquiries were made in response to the teachers' responses. According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000:42), interviews will provide the researcher with detailed information about the participants' true intentions and feelings. After permission was given, all the interviews were taped. The constant comparative approach was utilized to analyse the interview data, it is characterised as a technique for data analysis where the researcher contrasts the data's points of similarity and difference in order to develop the major theme.

1.7.3.2. Document analysis

Written, printed, visual, or electronic resources that provide information, provide proof or serve as official records are categorized as documents by Savin-Baden and Major (2013). Documents were used to analyse how learners perform in their written tasks: assignments, tests and projects. The following documents were also analysed to examine topics and abilities in order to decide if they are at the required levels in terms of the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement: subject policies and assessment policies, and the Social Sciences syllabus. Learner promotion schedules and CASS mark sheets were also included in the examination of documents. Reports were also used to gather data and to evaluate the classroom experiences, assessments, question papers and assessment practices of learners.

The employment of strategies in the classroom when teaching Social Sciences was prioritized. Records were reviewed to determine the degree to which the Social Sciences syllabus presents the material. The researcher specifically reflected on

Social Sciences teachers' pedagogical content in understanding the learner performance. All of the above-mentioned documents were examined. The results of this examination are presented in chapter 4.

1.7.4. Data analysis

Data inspection is the procedure behind data analysis, changing, clarifying and modelling to gather relevant data and draw conclusions and help the researcher's decision-making Judd (1989). Advice given by Yin (2014) and Merriam (1998) is that data such as field notes should be organised in text form. The researcher arranged the collected data in such a way that they are in a text format and can help answer the research questions. The investigator analysed and transcribed recorded audio tapes. The data was supplied with codes to make it easily accessible and easy to use. This simplified the raw data and reduced it to simple messages. Interpretation of data, according to Flick (2009), improves with time. Merriam (1998) defines data analysis as making sense of the data. This requires combining it into one unit, reducing the amount and explaining what participants' comments and the researcher's reading and observation. Merriam (1998) further describes data analysis as a phase where data makes sense. The goal of the data analysis approach is to organize the information gleaned from the generated data to make it easier to handle. When classifying the data, while listening to the recorded interviews, the researcher read them over and again.

1.8. QUALITY ASSURANCE

Quality refers to the standard of something being measured against other things. According to Smith and Hodkins (2008), quality is explained through the validity and reliability of the study. In addition, Loh (2013) suggests that in order to ensure consistency, the analysis will first be trustworthy or reliable. The information must be trusted when tested against quality criteria. The researcher repeated interviews and other data collecting techniques. Between qualitative and quantitative approaches, as indicated by Flick (2009), each approach follows its quality criteria. The following aspects of quality assurance in qualitative research are discussed, namely, credibility, dependability, confirmability and transferability:

1.8.1. Credibility

The ability to have faith in study findings is what is meant by credibility (Holloway & Wheeler, 2002; Macnee & McCabe, 2008). The researcher checked whether what is said was true, for example, in the interviews (Ary, Jacobs & Walker, 2014). By examining the connections between the study background, chosen participants and research design, credibility was established. Member checks were also done by going back to participants being interviewed to confirm if data has been correctly captured. In this study, a member check was done during the various phases of the study in order to establish credibility.

1.8.2. Dependability

Dependability in research means that other researchers can borrow or use your study for their research work. Dependability is further defined by Loh (2013) as reliability testing and the process of enquiry on how data is collected and kept. The researcher employed an audit trail in this investigation to establish dependability: an audit of the method and product for data validation. The researcher explained how the data were gathered, documented and analysed by taking into account all study decisions and tasks (Bowen, 2009). The researcher also held observation reports, interviews and unprocessed data, papers and information from the field. The researcher also called on other researchers to evaluate the data separately and to compare the findings.

1.8.3. Confirmability

Anney (2014) defines confirmability as the extent to which other scholars can agree with the results of the study. It is when the research study confirms a particular theory. Confirmability, according to Baxter and Eyles (1997), is the degree to which an investigation's findings can be corroborated by other researchers. The researcher ensured confirmability by enabling other researchers to test the results of the enquiry, and by ensuring that the results and data are not the product of the imagination of the researcher. In this study, confirmability was ensured through an established reflexive journal, which is a record that the researcher keeps for reflection on all of the fieldwork that was done, personal thoughts and incidents that arose during the study.

1.8.4. Transferability

Transferability means that when the results of the study are taken to another situation, they should derive similar results. According to Martin (2010), research results can apply to other settings from one conclusion. It refers to outside validity. The researcher

determined transferability and ensured that information is gathered and analysed in a way that can be helpful in other circumstances that are comparable Bitsch (2005). The value of transferability is that the findings of qualitative research with other respondents can be passed to another context. The researcher ensured transferability by presenting a detailed description and choosing participants intentionally. The researcher elucidated all the processes of study from data collection, background and final report output. He conducted purposeful sampling by choosing individuals and institutions, i.e. schools with Senior Phase level (Grade 7 to 9) to answer questions relating to the research study.

1.9. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

According to Regoniel (2015), the importance of the research indicates how the study contributes to research and its beneficiaries. The study was carried out because the problem of successful Social Sciences teaching is critical in the offering of high standard education. It is anticipated that the study's findings will be beneficial because they appear to demonstrate the PCK kept by participating teachers in the teaching of Social Sciences. The findings will help reorganize teacher training programmes to raise the standard of Social Science instruction. This will be a major contribution to educational philosophy in general.

Because it is individualized, Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) is a murky type of information that is challenging to isolate and investigate separately from other teachers know: knowledge bases are developed by teachers and are unique to them. This could pave the way for better ways of teaching Social Sciences topics that are difficult for students to grasp. Previous studies have been conducted but less was said on Social Sciences teachers' pedagogical content knowledge and its implications for learner performance. By bridging the knowledge gap between teaching practices and their knowledge base, the study will help. Therefore, this study will strengthen the understanding of teachers' knowledge of pedagogical content and its effects on learner performance. The following stakeholders will benefit from this study:

Social Sciences Teachers

Different education stakeholders might benefit from the findings of this study, which gave details on the Senior Phase (Grade 7 to 9) Social Sciences knowledge of pedagogical content and its effects on learner performance. The results might help Grades 7 to 9 Social Sciences Teachers in Mpumalanga Province, by providing them with good and acceptable teaching and learning methods that positively influence learners' academic achievement.

The Department of Education

The study's conclusions might be useful to departmental officials in Mpumalanga Province in terms of guiding Senior Phase (Grade 7 to 9) Social Sciences teachers to understand the pedagogical content knowledge in their subject. Through these findings, education designers might be assisted to re-visit the training of teachers with the content suitable to teachers' needs to teach Senior Phase learners.

Professional Development

Furthermore, the results from this study might determine a framework for developing Social Sciences teachers' manuals in professional development, and add value to the existing literature on effective teaching and learning in Social Sciences.

The learners

Any education system aims to ensure that learners' performance is improved in all subjects across the board, including Social Sciences.

Policymakers

In conclusion, for the ministry of education, the results of this research might be useful in the drafting of learning and teaching manuals and policies. In turn, this will improve quality learning and teaching for the senior phase schools. Therefore, a new theory on learning Social Sciences may be arrived at.

Researchers

New theories developed from this study will be of great benefit to present and future researchers.

1.10. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Similar to previous research projects, this one has some limitations. The following limitations were identified: the time to conduct the study was limited because of the prescribed period to complete the course. The research study was conducted in one circuit and does not cover the whole of South Africa. Furthermore, insufficient financial resources and transport costs going to and from the schools where the study was conducted required money. The sample size was also a limitation in this study because the study was only carried out in seven schools in Steve Tshwete 2 Circuit of Mpumalanga. A small sample assists you to investigate the research problem in a thorough and in-depth way, but a small sample undermines the chance to draw useful generalisations to contribute to a broader policy and recommendations on findings Merriam (2009).

1.11. CHAPTER OUTLINES

In order to give clarity in a description of how the research study is structured, an explanation of the thesis's structure is provided in brief. The structure of the thesis is as follows:

Chapter 1 describes the setting in which the research study is organized. It describes the current South African education system and the new changes and challenges thereof. It focuses on educational challenges experienced in the system, specifically in the subject of Social Sciences regarding Teachers' Pedagogical Content knowledge.

Chapter 2 includes the research topic's literature review. The chapter reviewed literature relevant to Social Sciences teachers' pedagogical content understanding and its implications for learner performance. This includes conceptualisation of the study, historical overview of the problem, schools of theories and methodological perspectives.

Chapter 3 describes the research design and the approach taken for this study. The scientific paradigm, research approaches, sampling, data gathering, data analysis, research design, quality assurance and ethical matters will be discussed.

Chapter 4 discusses data analysis and presentation. It provides an analysis of potential contributing elements to Social Sciences teachers' pedagogical content understanding and its effects on learners' performance.

Chapter 5 gives an overview of the key conclusions with recommendations about the findings.

1.12. CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter addressed Social Sciences teachers' pedagogical content understanding and its implications on learner performance. It focuses on educational challenges experienced in the system, specifically in the subject of Social Sciences regarding Teachers' Pedagogical Content knowledge.

It further gives analysis of underperformance in Social Sciences as a subject. The chapter further explored Social Sciences teachers' pedagogical content understanding. The next chapter contains the literature review.

CHAPTER TWO

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. INTRODUCTION

In chapter 1, the setting for the research was provided. Chapter 2 gives a summary and a critical analysis of the literature on the concept of pedagogical content knowledge of teachers, with particular reference to the pedagogical content knowledge of teachers in Social Sciences. In this chapter, recent local and international studies, journal articles and reports are reviewed. The chapter begins by identifying the study topic, and by making the case that the literature review has a fundamental role in research.

The literature review focuses on analysing a theory put forth by earlier studies that investigated the issue about Social Science teachers' pedagogical content understanding, especially in history. In addition, the chapter focuses on potential things that can cause learners to do poorly in grades 7, 8 and 9 with reference to Social Sciences. This chapter focuses on a discussion of a number of key aspects.

2.2. OVERVIEW OF THE PROBLEM

The origin of Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) dates back to 1986 when Shulman (1986) introduced the idea, referring to it as a "missing paradigm". Lee Shulman is recognised as the creator of the idea of PCK (De Miranda, 2008). By incorporating the idea of PCK, Shulman (1987) created a structure for teacher preparation so that programmes for educating teachers could incorporate CK and PK to prepare teachers effectively. PCK includes specific qualities such as differentiation, alternating the tone of voice, ability to trigger prior knowledge of learners, setting high expectations and rewards for effort that a teacher has (Shulman, 1987). This enables them to guide students towards understanding knowledge in a way that has relevance for them personally, including subject matter expertise and instructional content, general expertise in pedagogy, curriculum expertise, an understanding of learners' needs and qualities, and knowledge of the educational context and characteristics. Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS) gives teachers detailed guidelines

of what to teach and assess on a grade by grade and subject by subject basis. CAPS is more content-based, prescribes specific content and describes when it needs to be taught. Its emphasis is on promoting knowledge in local contexts while being sensitive to global imperatives. According to Chandler (2015), Social Sciences teachers' racial awareness has an effect on content and pedagogical choices made, impeding effective racial teaching and learning in the historical context. Lack of understanding of pedagogical content is a result of this approach to educational policy. It discusses the policy statement with the aim of equipping learners irrespective of their socio-economic background, race, gender or intellectual ability, with the knowledge, skills and values necessary for self-fulfilment and meaningful participation in society as citizens of a free country.

Studies about the practice of racial practices, social studies and teacher preparation are disregarded and weakly theorised (King, Busey, Smith & Crowley, 2014). The issue of introducing racial awareness in Social Studies comes from many areas, including inadequate knowledge (Brown, 2011; King, 2014), distrust of teachers, acceptance of a colour-blind approach, progressive incrementalism and connection with multicultural links (Chandler & Mcknight, 2011). The study also found that teachers maintain the principle of white supremacy within their history classes through their race and history negotiations (Chandler & Branscombe, 2015). The pedagogy of the white teacher discussed as in the work of Chandler and Branscombe (2015) focuses on how white teachers handle their ideas about race, and how this manifests in their contaminated pedagogy. It is evident from the study that the problem of the race for many teachers of Social Studies is a challenge in terms of connecting with students.

2.3. MODELS OR SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT/THEORIES

This study will be guided by Shulman's (1986) theory of pedagogical content understanding because the theory emphasises that special focus must be directed to what he terms Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK). Shulman (1986) defines PCK as a teaching subject with emphasis on the implementation of basics in teaching. Shulman (1986) further posits that future training efforts will need to be regulated to take into account the connections between content, material and process. Awareness

of the pedagogical material describes the incorporation of subject matter expertise and professional teaching of that particular subject. Pedagogy is the art of teaching or imparting knowledge and skills.

Shulman (1986) elaborates on PCK as the presentation and transformation of subject content understanding by teachers in order to facilitate student learning. He also points out that PCK is valuable because it requires both pedagogical awareness of material and knowledge of the subject matter. Shulman's theory is pertinent to this investigation since it will help the investigator to reflect on the PCK of Social Sciences with a focus on history. Through this theory, Shulman and his equal partners were able to examine the originality of the code of behaviour understanding and fuse it into practice. Furthermore, Shulman (1987:8) described pedagogical content understanding as the "blending of content and pedagogy into an understanding of how particular topics, problems or issues are organised, represented and adapted to the diverse interests and abilities and abilities of learners and presented for instruction".

The underlying understanding of Social Studies education regarded as necessary to carry out the regular tasks of teaching Social Studies to learners is knowledge for teaching Social Science. Understanding of teaching different domains of subject expertise and pedagogical knowledge make up Social Studies Shulman (1987). This suggests that instructors' knowledge of pedagogical material is a crucial component of knowledge for teaching Social sciences, and in this instance, history as a subject. The challenge under investigation is that the pedagogical content understanding of history teachers appears to derail the teaching and achievement of the objectives of the subject negatively at the senior phase school level. This calls for teachers to provide knowledge of the subject, knowledge of pedagogical content Shulman (1986) and a working racial understanding of how history and racism interact in the Social Sciences and education system.

Recent research focuses on the empirical demonstration of PCK and its consequences Iserbyt (2017) and the perception of better PCK production interventions. The former consisted of confirming PCK as a measure of student achievement in historical education. Dipaepe (2013) found a study that exposed PCK through test methods, questionnaires, interviews, observation of lessons, observation of meetings, analysis of documents and mapping of concepts. The opportunity to

encourage the educational community should focus more on the expertise of teachers and increase the importance of professional practice has become increasingly important due to the work of the Carnegie Foundation and Shulman (2000), (2001),(2002). The category probably differentiates the comprehension of the information expertise from that of the pedagogue is pedagogical content knowledge. In relation to material interpretation Shulman (1986), the instructor has special duties. By observing their teaching performance without regard to the subject being taught, teachers may not be properly evaluated.

Research indicates that historical teachers rely primarily on subject matter information when teaching history material, which largely circumvents the production of PCK teachers in content courses Schmidt, Burroughs, Cogan & Houang (2017); Laursen, Hassi & Hough (2015). This is particularly troubling because, during the content courses, the creation of PCK is given up as a chance for education and is left untapped. Investigators debate that a single method course is not sufficient for teachers to build the requisite PCK, including pedagogical skills and understanding of teaching history teaching methods to be able to predict and correct conceptions and misconceptions of children's history Greenberg & Welsh (2008); Lutzer, Rodi Kirkman & Maxwell, (2007). In addition, expanding and intensifying PCK is important to improve the identity of a professional and the ability of teachers to teach Blomeke (2014). Unfortunately, research showed significant gaps in aspiring teachers' content knowledge and subject expertise.

History is about events, causes, the cause and consequences. Shulman (1986) noted that in terms of subject awareness or pedagogical skills, teacher learning has traditionally minimised teacher training and that the swing between these two has shifted back and forth continuously. By identifying pedagogical content knowledge as a required form of information that combines these two principles, he questioned this historical trend. Pedagogical content understanding is "pedagogical knowledge, which goes to the dimension of subject matter knowledge for teaching beyond the knowledge of subject matter per se" Shulman (1986). Recently, in creating the racial pedagogical content understanding (RPCK), Chandler (2015) expanded on Shulman's concept of pedagogical content knowledge to include race work in social studies, especial history. RPCK, as defined, is a term that, through the use of critical racial analysis, incorporates both race and content knowledge Chandler & Hawley (2017). A working

racial perception means that the systemic essence of race/racism should be taken into account by thinking about teaching history in Social Sciences and the resulting pedagogy King & Chandler (2016).

Teacher education in Social Sciences needs to step beyond the conceptualisation of Social Sciences as impartial and pure disciplines to see every region as having its own racialized backgrounds that impact the manner we interpret them. Furthermore, this stance makes it possible to consider the core of each of the topics, not only in the conventional context but through an additional racial lens, pedagogical content thinking, for example, Neumann (2012); Schmidt (2011). The articulation of the content knowledge of the lesson remains the conceptual basis from which the PCK's construction was derived and will proceed as a part of PCK Rusznyak (2010). Morrow (2007) states that teachers must understand how to make content approachable for learners, they require "... an articulated conceptual understanding of the content". While learners are encouraged to adopt whichever format fits the content the best (e.g. a concept map, flow diagram or paragraph), they are required to show how ideas are connected and how knowledge is arranged. Shalem and Slonimsky (2010) argue that the teacher must organize the material in a way that is appropriate for that material (emphasis in the original). For the creation of PCK, knowledge of the content knowledge is necessary (Grossman, 2005).

Despite the lack of a direct connection between explicit guidance and more open educational techniques is questioned in several disciplines (Bakker, 2018), this relationship is far simpler in history education, since the interdependence in historical activity requires students to engage in it; they need to do history. Despite the PCK being conceived more than 30 years ago by Shulman (1986), (1987), and the substantial attention provided to the idea in the research fraternity, there has been minimal agreement about how PCK is arranged, investigated or implemented Abell (2007). As a result, at the 2012 PCK summit held in Colorado, participants modelled a good professional model understanding and skills of teachers, including PCK Gess-Newsome (2015) by defined PCK as "knowledge of, reasoning behind and arranging for teaching a particular topic in a particular way for a particular purpose to particular students for enhanced student outcomes" Gess-Newsome (2015:36). It was found that PCK is no longer known as teachers' general knowledge base, or the knowledge base of a particular teacher. Instead, PCK is situated in a particular learning experience.

The link between PCK and practice is largely consistent, according to this PCK depiction, as it is seen as a personal source of expertise within this PCK that is supported in teaching and teaching preparation.

On the other hand, the current investigation contributes importantly to the current study literature, since there are few studies examining how carefully planned interventions affect instructors' acquisition of professional knowledge Evens, Elen, & Depaepe (2015). The planned teaching activities and methods we are implementing to elicit conceptual change will serve as a basis for researchers to design lesson series to encourage the growth of PST's professional knowledge in other areas. Furthermore, the study shows that intervention is successful in developing PSTs'. PCK should be led by a change in CK. This finding can demonstrate the strong relationship between the CK and PCK constructs Baumert et al., (2010); Depaepe (2015); Kleickman et al. (2015).

In most researchers, PCK is ignored as a chance for learning and is untapped. More work needs to be done to build a comprehensive PCK of history teachers, to be able to strengthen and correct conceptions and misconceptions of learners. History is about events, causes, the cause and consequences. Training in teacher training institutions should be strengthened to build stronger and more comprehensive pedagogical content knowledge for history teachers that will improve their ability to teach the subject of history. This should narrow the gap between teachers' content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge. Teachers must be able to articulate a conceptual understanding of the content of the subject. Knowledge of the content in history is vital. Few studies focused on the development of the professional knowledge of teachers. Therefore, this study wants to focus on the improvement of pedagogical content understanding for history teachers.

2.4. CHAPTER SUMMARY

The researcher in this chapter reviewed different literature related to Social Sciences teachers' pedagogical content knowledge. Definitions of concepts such as pedagogy, content knowledge, pedagogical understanding and PCK were given. The chapter showed changes that were brought up in Social Sciences that affected the teaching of history. The study indicated that the PCK of Social Science teachers is not at the required level. This research study brought forward the fact that future training efforts

will need to be regulated in order to consider the connection between content material and process. The gap identified by the researcher is that the educational community must become more attentive to the expertise of teachers and increase practice in the profession.

CHAPTER THREE

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES

3.1. INTRODUCTION

The literature that served as the foundation for this investigation was reviewed in the preceding chapter. The focus now shifts to the research strategy and technique used in this study. This chapter discusses the research paradigm, the research paradigm, the research strategy, and the study's research design used. A description and motivation regarding how sampling was carried out are also provided, data were collected and analysed as well as trustworthiness and ethical matters.

3.1.1. METHODOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES

For each instructor, researchers gathered rich data sources through observation of their surroundings and teaching, interviews and document analysis. These data sources were then triangulated to produce reliable findings Cohen, Manion & Morrison (2007). Most researchers used the qualitative research method because they indicated that it is suitable for examining participant processes and perspectives on meaning in certain circumstances. Using qualitative research, a case study enables a researcher to analyse phenomena holistically, allowing for the analysis of many points of view and the gradual emergence of complex patterns. Some of the studies grew of researchers' personal experiences and their graduate work. Some research studies use case studies with sampling methods.

Other researchers use a comparative perspective through a case study approach, after which conclusions from the interviews, in-class observations and document evaluations are presented. Most academic articles employ qualitative interview research. Each participant's semi-structured interviews, methodologies course outlines, reading lists, and documents like departmental purpose statements and programme course prerequisites. Additionally, it incorporates analytic generalization, descriptive coding, focused coding, and cycles of coding for data analysis. Some choose to do a theme work of qualitative literature study of certain scholarly works,

discovering recurring themes using open coding Corbin & Strauss (2008) give a thorough rundown of concrete classroom-based illustrations of learning possibilities.

Among the most popular qualitative study techniques is the case study. It is described as a comprehensive, detailed description and study of a variety of phenomena such as social unit, institution, person, programme or process or a social unit. It (case study) can be particularistic, focusing on particular situations, events, programmes or phenomena. It may be descriptive, increasing the reader's comprehension of the phenomenon being studied. Researchers will look for a research methodology to use when conducting their study once they have decided on their research topic and phenomenon of interest. In qualitative research, some researchers employ triangulation, while others use qualitative audio and visual materials.

3.2. RESEARCH PARADIGM

It was evident in chapter 1 of this research study that Grade 7 to 9 learners from seven selected schools in Mpumalanga fared poorly in Social Sciences for the period of five years (2015-2019). Therefore, it was important to define the appropriate paradigm for the researcher to use in the study. For scientific or research groups, paradigms are a way of thinking or a set of rules, defining significant issues, resolving issues for members and appropriate hypotheses, as well as approaches to solve problems found Le Grange (2014). A paradigm is a comprehensive way of thinking Neuman (2011).

A researcher paradigm is also a model or approach that a sizable proportion of researchers in the subject consider to be the standard due to having been validated and used for a considerable amount of time. A paradigm explains how meaning will be created based on our personal experiences from the facts we will collect i.e. where we are coming from. Morgan (2007) reminds us that research paradigm as a term has more than one meaning. The issue is that social researchers have solely concentrated on one of these versions, namely the version that views paradigms as 'epistemic stances'.

According to this, a paradigm is essentially a system of principles and methods used in the study. Researchers such as Greene (2008), Bryman (2007), Creswell (2007)

and Mertens (1998) each study used one of the three widely used research paradigms: constructivism, positivism and interpretivism. These paradigms seek to respond to three fundamental queries. What is the nature of knowledge to begin with, and how do participants and researchers interact (epistemological)? Secondly, what is reality's nature and what can be learned about it (ontological)? Lastly, how can a researcher acquire the abilities, and approaches?

In this study, an interpretive model was chosen as a structure to direct the researcher. As a structure of this research study, this paradigm was chosen because it is more versatile in terms of perceiving and interpreting the truth. One can empathize deeply with the respondent using the interpretive paradigm. This provides a chance for the researcher to make an effort to gain understanding and develop a deeper understanding of the challenges that the teachers experienced during the transition of education and curriculum reform, including that of the curriculum in Social Sciences.

The interpretive paradigm gave the researcher the chance to gain a better understanding of possible factors that may have consequences in a specific context for learner performance in Social Sciences in grades 7 to 9, namely, the Nkangala region, Mpumalanga.

3.3. RESEARCH APPROACH

The qualitative methodology of this study was chosen since the researcher wants to comprehend the phenomenon and trends in education. Carroll (2013) stated that method development to meet specific contextual issues created on the previous framework needs to be responsive and efficiently delivered. The researcher followed a qualitative case study design since the qualitative research model gives meaning, knowledge or interpretation to participants. The aim of qualitative research, according to Bush (2002), is to utilize non-statistical methods with a limited population sample and a surplus of data rather than representation in statistics that has been deliberately chosen. The investigation is integrated into the interpretive framework in an attempt to learn more about the phenomenon from the perspective of participants. The researcher tries to understand the specific context and situation within which Social

Sciences are taught, teachers' knowledge of the topic and teaching methods relates to learner performance.

The most common qualitative methods are focus groups, interviews and observations. Each strategy is suitable for collecting a particular type of data. It is appropriate to use participant observation to get data on naturally occurring behaviours in their regular contexts. Interviews are a good way to learn about people's backgrounds, perspectives, and experiences, especially when sensitive topics are being covered. Focus groups help to learn about the cultural norms of a group and for producing thorough summaries of topics that are significant to the subgroups represented.

A researcher is considered an 'instrument' in this research because all observations, interpretations and analyses are filtered through their lens. The researcher in this study used a phenomenological method because a school of philosophy called phenomenology places a strong emphasis on how people interpret and experience the world in their unique ways. To put it another way, phenomenology aims to understand how other people see the world. The design has a strong philosophical foundation and typically involves conducting interviews Giorgi (2009); Moustakas (1994).

The researcher used field research methods in this study, going out into the field to investigate the occurrence in its natural setting. It primarily relates to the participant observation method. The researcher made comprehensive field notes, which were then coded and subjected to several types of analysis. Understanding and examining the meaning of people or groups assigned to a social or human situation is a goal of qualitative research. The process entails new processes and questions, data gathering from participant settings, data analysis that progresses from specialised to broad themes, together with the researcher's judgement of the significance of the data.

A technique that seeks to "enter inside the brain of the subject being studied", as Kivunji and Kuyini (2017) put it, understanding and interpreting the subject's thoughts or the meaning the environment is conveying, is referred to as an interpretative paradigm. Views by Creswell (2007) indicate that the qualitative research approach enables the researcher to look into reality from the participant's point of view. Even

though Nind, Curtin and Hall (2016) indicate that the theory of teaching is difficult to know, the researcher decided to use a qualitative technique to examine the situation and think about the consequences of the teachers' pedagogical subject understanding for students' performance in the selected senior phase schools. This will be done to try to represent the diversity of that community Tobin (2000). Moreover, the approach to this study is qualitative in nature, descriptive, contextual and explorative Merriam (2015).

Using the qualitative approach, the researcher allowed free interaction from participants to reflect on the understanding of teachers' pedagogical content understanding and its implications for learners' performance. This allowed the researcher to analyse their content knowledge in Social Sciences during teaching and learning even though Nind, Curtin and Hall (2016) indicate that the theory of teaching is difficult to know. This approach to a qualitative study was of great help to the researcher as participants were interviewed, observed and documents analysed Creswell & Creswell (2018). The researcher tried to be fair in his interaction with participants.

The qualitative approach led the researcher to comprehend and examine the instructor's perspectives on this study. Also, further understanding and reflection on teachers' content knowledge and its implications for learners' performance Merriam (1998).

3.4. RESEARCH DESIGN

A research design is described as a sort of inquiry that uses a qualitative approach and offers a clear direction for a research design technique. Others called it the strategy of inquiry Denzin & Lincoln (2011). According to Flick (2014), a research design is a study programme. This study follows the qualitative case study design since the qualitative research model gives meaning, knowledge or interpretation to participants. According to Bush (2002), qualitative research's objective is to gather a wealth of knowledge rather than reflect it in statistics, and to do it by using non-statistical methodologies using a population sample that has been carefully selected. A research design, according to Yin (2009), is considerably more than just a work plan,

while Flick (2014) acknowledges that the study's methodology raises questions about how to plan a study. The primary goal of the design of this study was to ensure and understand the specific context and situation within which Social Sciences are taught, teachers' topic expertise and teaching methods relates to learner performance.

The qualitative approach, as described by McLeod (2019), is based on the understanding of human behaviour or things that are taking place in their natural settings. The qualitative research model refers to research that gives the advantages of using qualitative methods, intensive information that respects peoples' viewpoints and different contexts for comprehension of the scenario under study. It provides rich interpretation, description, verification and evaluation to participants. These purposes apply in this study.

The researcher used the descriptive case study design as defined by Merriam (1998). Under description, the researcher reveals the specific context and situation within which Social Sciences are taught, teacher understanding of the subject and their teaching methods related to learner performance at the senior phase schools level in Mpumalanga Province, South Africa. Based on this, the researcher's questions are stipulated as a process to reflect on Social Sciences teachers' pedagogical content understanding and its implications for learner performance. Furthermore, the researcher was able to assess the validity of a certain hypothesis, theoretical argument or generalisation in the real world. This thesis relates to this intent in the sense that by using interviews to develop a research question and related sub-questions, observations and record analysis, the study examined the validity of the assumptions.

Through the case study, the investigator was able to reflect on Social Sciences teachers' pedagogical content knowledge and its implications for learners' performance during teaching and learning in the senior phase classes.

3.5. SAMPLING

During sampling, a select few are recognized, scrutinised and taken as representatives of a bigger group. Korstjens and Moser (2018) define sampling as a sample selection technique which will provide quality information about the

phenomenon under investigation. Furthermore, Flick (2014) argued that sampling is a crucial step in the use of qualitative research because researchers build cases they are evaluating in their study in the sampling. If there is any hope of having faith in the validity and dependability of the sample's results, the sample must be carefully chosen Descombe (2003).

Teachers of Social Sciences were specifically chosen to participate in this study because they are regarded as information-rich participants who teach the subject in the senior phase and have experiences to share regarding their understanding of the subject content and their knowledge and skills regarding the teaching and assessment of the subject. The researcher has therefore chosen participants who are experienced with the phenomenon examined and was able to examine instances that were chosen as a sample through purposeful sampling.

To identify the four schools purpose sampling was employed for this inquiry. The following criteria were used to choose the seven schools: easily accessible to obtain data, availability of Social Sciences teachers in the senior phase (grades 7-9) and the availability of resources. As a result, the researcher had an easier time getting to the schools and finishing the work in the allotted amount of time for data collecting and completing the research within the timeline. Within the four selected schools, there is proof of underperformance by learners in Social Sciences, as discussed in chapter 1. As yet another factor in choosing the four institutions, this evidence was also used. The selected schools, including Social Sciences teachers, were readily accessible to the researcher. These preferred schools have been used for teacher interviews.

As potential participants of this study, eight teachers of grades 7, 8 and 9 who might be able to offer data were chosen. All the few chosen participants teach Social Sciences at the senior phase level. These instructors were chosen because the investigator respected their experience and expertise in teaching the subject. The majority of schools selected are situated in the township in the disadvantaged community, and two from former model C schools are situated in town.

In this study, confidentiality has a serious effect on working in a confidential way Strydom (1998). The researcher did not compel participants to reveal confidential information if they suspect that they will be compromised in one way or the other. The

real names of participants were not revealed and the names of schools selected were not identified. Schools and Teacher participants were labelled as follows: SAT1 (School A, Teacher 1, SBT2 (School B, Teacher 2), SCT3 (School C, Teacher 3), SDT4 (School D, Teacher 4. SET5 and T6 (School E, Teacher 5 and 6), SFT7 (School F, Teacher 7), and SGT8 (School G, Teacher 8). These codes would then represent the 8 teachers from the 7 schools.

3.5.1. Description of the selected area of study

The researcher selected seven schools in the study because, in 2019, the structure of schools and phases changed due to restructuring and re-alignment of schools. Initially, when we talk about a senior phase, it referred to grades 7-9, but after the restructuring, grade 7 was classified under primary schools and 8-9 at secondary or FET band. These changes compelled the researcher to expand the scope of the area of research, hence 7 schools were identified. All these schools are situated at Steve Tshwete 2 Circuit, Nkangala District of Mpumalanga Province, South Africa. The circuit is located 200km east of Mbombela city in Steve Tshwete Municipality.

The seven selected schools and their location are described. As previously described, due to anonymity, the schools were labelled School A, School B, School C, School D, School E, School F and School G. The following table gives a full description of the schools:

	School A	School B	School C	School D	School E	School F	School G
Type of settlement	Urban	Urban	Urban	Urban	Urban	Urban	Urban
Location	Town	Town	township	Township	Township	Township	Township
Quintile	4	4	1	3	3	1	3
Learner enrolment	508	300	1272	1039	815	878	1300

School A is situated in town, with good infrastructure, a double storey administration block and enough space for all administration employees. Each and every Departmental head has his/her own office and other staff members occupy the staffroom. The schoolyard is well looked after because the school can afford extra general workers. It is a fee-paying school classified as quintile 4.

School B is also situated within the suburban residential area 30km from school A. The school has an administrative block with sufficient office space and a double storey classroom with all the facilities. The yard is well looked after, with well-built sports facilities. The school is surrounded by mines and is classified as quintile 3.

School C is situated in the middle of the township along the main road. The school has an administration block with few offices. The other block of classes is still built with prefabs, which also include bricks and mortar classrooms. The yard is not big enough. There are no sports facilities, and the yard is well kept with trees that are well managed.

School D is just adjacent to school C in the same township. It is built with bricks and mortar. Buildings are scattered all over the yard, leaving the school with no space for sports facilities. The school has a hall also used as classroom. It is a no-fee school with learners above 1 000. There is one principal, two deputy principals, departmental heads and teachers.

School E is situated 3km away from school B and C. The school has an enrolment below 1000. It is a no-fee school, well built with bricks and mortar, with a library, a hall, and pavement outside the yard. The school has soccer and netball, security and well-fenced facilities. There is one principal, one deputy principal, departmental heads and teachers.

School F is situated 1km away from school E and along the main road as school C. It is fenced with palisades, and lockable gates, built with bricks and its vision is displayed at the entrance. The school is a no-fee with a learner enrolment of 878. There is no space for sports facilities. It is well paved with trees that are well taken care of in the

yard. There is one principal, one deputy principal, four departmental heads and eighteen teachers. The school is a no-fee institution.

School G is an old school situated 2km away from school 6, built with bricks, and is well fenced with palisade and lockable gates. The school has a high enrolment with more than 1000 learners. There is an admin block with offices, one principal, two deputy principals, departmental heads and teachers. It is a no-fee paying school with no space for sports facilities in the yard. The school yard is paved only in front of classrooms.

3.5.2. Information about teachers

Sampling in this study is done to understand and gain insight (Merriam, 1998), and to reflect on Social Sciences teachers' knowledge of pedagogical content and its implications for learners' performance during teaching and learning processes. The focus of the research is based on Social Sciences teachers. The study employed a purposive sampling strategy to determine the gender, qualifications, work experience and age of participants. Eight participants participated in the study. Their age ranges from 30 and 59 years. In terms of gender distribution, of the eight, five were male and three were female participants. Most participants are well qualified as per the Department of Education requirements. Most of these teachers have good teaching experience, and the majority of them have more than five years of teaching experience.

3.6. DATA COLLECTION

Barber (2012), Yin (2000), Stake (1995) and Merriam (1998) are in agreement that researchers in qualitative studies should collect data from multiple sources. According to Merriam (1998), the researcher must be cautious in conducting successful interviews and in collecting data from documents and observations. The researcher used semi-structured interviews and observations in classes and documents. The validity of the findings was improved by these combined data collection methods. Furthermore, Leedy and Ormrod (2010) note that the researcher gathers detailed info on the persons, programmes or incidents on which the inquiry is based in a case study.

Multiple methods, in particular, observations, interviews, and document analysis were employed to gather data. Additionally, focus groups and semi-structured interviews were used to collect data, with students providing suggestions and design ideas Neuman (2013). The researcher used semi-structured interviews to collect data. Semi-structured interviews are interviews driven by a collection of questions that appear on a schedule for interviews Terre Blanche & Durrheim (2014). In line with the qualitative approach and as guided by the interpretation paradigm, the researcher wants to obtain in-depth information from participants. Therefore, these interviews were chosen to gather comprehensive data from each one of the eight teachers at their schools, which are familiar environments to them.

3.6.1. Semi-structured interviews

Interviews that are moderated are driven by a collection of questions that appear on a schedule of interviews Terre Blanche & Durrheim (2014). They are used to gather the information that researchers are looking for. Furthermore, Creswell (2014) alluded that semi-structured interviews include emotions, feelings and inputs about with a specific research subject. In-depth semi-structured interviews and classroom observation instruments were used with every teacher Halcomb (2006); Barber (2012); Scale (2004) in the schools where they worked. Audio from the interviews was digitally captured and transcribed verbatim.

Two types of questions were used to establish the interview protocols. The initial inquiries were to establish rapport with respondents and to gather the most fundamental descriptive data. The second one was aimed at collecting information about the experiences of teachers, their reasons for planning their lessons the way they do, their classroom experiences, their professional expertise and the degree to which Social Sciences and teaching strategies were portrayed. The interviews were able to flow naturally as a discussion thanks to the scripts. This involved participants listening attentively as they responded and asked follow-up questions Maree (2016).

The interview questions were created and given to teachers on paper and digital forms. The purpose was to compile data on their pedagogical and Social Science training from the start to the end, work experience, working environment duties as a

teacher, and perceptions of how Social Sciences is taught. Classroom experiments were performed in a non-participation using field notes mode in sixty minute lessons with Social Sciences aims of education. The findings were conducted to observe educators and learners in their normal working environments, to provide a comparison to teachers' interview confirmation, as well as to further study and interpretation.

Semi-structured interviews are used to identify thoughts, emotions and points of view about a particular research subject Creswell (2014). It was decided to do a semi-structured interview to enable more in-depth, probing, and cross-referencing questions Neuman (2014). This thesis adopted the interpretive paradigm. Even with scant or no information on participants, their expressions and experiences are understandable Leedy & Ormrod (2014).

These interviews were conducted in an office away from classes, with identified Social Sciences teachers. Arrangements were done in advance for all the sessions. All interviews were conducted after working hours, and some during free periods to avoid class disruptions of learning and teaching processes. The settings allowed the freedom for all participants. Due to this, the research situation's reality was created, and it interacted with how other people constructed and interpreted the phenomenon under study Merriam (1998). Additionally, semi-structured interviews give informants the flexibility to convey their opinions in their own words.

In line with the interpretive paradigm when it comes to analysing qualitative data, there are a few steps to take as indicated in Creswell and Creswell (2018). This entails segmenting and disassembling information before re-assembling it. These are called interview protocols when conducting interviews. Firstly, this relates to the basic information about the interview, such as logistical arrangements that included date, place, time, interviewer, the introduction of the interviewer to the interviewee, opening questions, using probing questions and closing of the interview. Besides interviews, another method of data collection used was an observation, which is discussed below.

3.6.2. Observations

The observation was chosen as a technique for gathering data because it gave the researcher the chance to get active data from actual life circumstances Cohen (2011). According to Patton (2015), observation takes the researcher into the observed setting. In this investigation, the researcher used teaching related field notes and learning sessions in the classroom, study them and drew conclusions from the findings.

According to Cohen (2011), most studies occur over a protracted length of time, allowing researchers to form more personal and knowledgeable relationships with those that they are studying and the settings in which they operate. As a result, the researcher used observation in this study to assess whether the physical environment of teaching and learning is favourable to learning. Through classroom observation, the researcher was able to observe participants' behaviours and attitudes. Further objects of observation that were included in the study were teaching strategies, and materials for teaching and learning with learners' participation during the teaching of Social Sciences.

The observation was completely objective as the researcher observed the classroom without participating to record information as it happens Creswell & Creswell (2018). Resulting from the lesson findings, the researcher was able to assess the observed teacher's training needs. The researcher collected data on teachers' pedagogical content understanding and its implications on learners' performance through observation, interviews and document analysis.

3.6.3. Document analysis

According to Frey (2018), document analysis is a type of qualitative research that uses an organized approach to look at documentary evidence and provide answers to particular research questions. Public records such as official reports, minutes of meetings or personal documents like diaries, letters and personal journals are accepted as documents. All documents found in schools are vital to understanding the organisational setting Creswell & Creswell (2018). Information can be collected from relevant documents using document analysis.

In order to get an understanding of Social Sciences teachers' pedagogical content knowledge and its implications for learners' performance, documents such as lesson plans, curriculum and assessment policy statement (CAPS) and assessment policy were analysed through skimming. These are documents from the Department of Education that give guidelines for teachers to follow in the teaching and learning environment. The researcher also analysed lesson plans during observations to establish teachers' pedagogical content understanding and its implications for learners' performance during lesson content delivery. As evidence, the researcher used CAPS documents to determine whether teachers followed the document's recommendations during the teaching and learning processes.

3.7. DATA ANALYSIS

According to Gay, Mills and Airasian (2006), data analysis is defined as making meaning of data collected. Data analysis is further defined as the process of organising information received from the data generated to make it more manageable. The researcher analysed and transcribed recorded audio tapes, supplied with codes using thematic analysis. One of the most prevalent types of analysis used in qualitative research is thematic analysis. It emphasises analysis and identifies and interprets patterns of meaning within qualitative data Nowell (2017). As indicated by Braun and Clarke (2006), the thematic analysis offers a flexible strategy that may be organized to meet the demands of many investigations, as well as the potential to yield insightful and reliable findings.

Consistency should be the order of the day, according to Creswell (2014), to describe a systematic process for coding data that should be analysed and categorised into themes that represent the phenomenon of interest. The researcher analysed and transcribed recorded audio tapes supplied with codes. Furthermore, the researcher read and re-read interviews and scripts while listening to the taped interviews. Data analysis in this study began when the researcher started collecting data by using the constant comparative method. Comparative research analyses and compares two or more ideas or objects, and demonstrates the capacity to analyse, contrast, and review topics or concepts. It demonstrates how two subjects are comparable or unlike. A comparative study is further defined as research in which two or more curricular

approaches were examined over time as a comparison of diverse curricular approaches as well as a comparison of various curricular results Esser, Hanitzsch (2017). The researcher analysed data from interviews using content analysis, which entails comparing words using participants' answers and observations.

To get a feel of the entire dialogue, the researcher listened to every interview that was taped and re-read the notes obtained during the interviews several times before beginning the data analysis. The researcher contrasted the reactions of the interviewees while listening to the recordings. The researcher employed a comparative technique to guarantee that relevant structures, themes and patterns emerged from the day's data gathering. According to Creswell (2014), data analysis includes breaking down data and placing it back collectively once over again. Semi-structured interviews were transcribed and analysed and the data was organised into themes and sub-themes.

3.8. QUALITY ASSURANCE

3.8.1 Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness or qualitative validation is essential in order to maintain accuracy and consistency in a research project Creswell & Creswell (2018). A reflection on Social Sciences teachers' pedagogical content understanding and its implications for learners' performance ensured trustworthiness through criteria such as credibility, dependability and confirmability.

3.8.2. Credibility

Credibility is when the researcher checks what is said it is true as indicated by using a certain framework or model; it is member checking. As indicated by Ary, Jacobs and Walker (2014), credibility will establish alignment of the study's context, chosen subjects, and research design. Before the actual interview, each participant was informed of the purpose and procedures of the research. Participants were given their copy of the transcript to check for veracity, a process known as member checking, according to Creswell (2013). When collecting data, the researcher spent a lot of time

with the participants, observing and getting in touch with them. The researcher was able to cross-validate replies from findings by using numerous ways of data gathering through various instruments.

3.8.3. Dependability

Dependability is described by Kotjens and Moser (2018) as well as the consistency of results across time. The researcher ensured dependability by using an audit trail. Dependability is further defined by Loh (2013) as reliability testing the process of enquiry on how data was collected and kept. To avoid errors during information extraction, the researcher checked transcripts and ensured that the information was recorded. The researcher reviewed the results of the interviews with the observations and documentation from the classroom to see if they all come up with similar conclusions. In this research study, the researcher discussed the identified topics with participants to ensure authenticity while eliminating any bias that may arise in the study. When gathering information regarding teachers' PCK, a lesson plan analysis was employed as proof. The researcher recorded the information to report authentic information. Results from interviews were compared with documents and observation was done in the classroom.

3.8.4. Confirmability

Confirmability is when the research study confirms a particular theory. Using multiple data collection methods can increase confirmability Ary, Jacobs & Walker (2002). The researcher used various techniques to increase the confirmability of the results. According to Korstjens and Moser (2018), confirmability refers to the degree to which the research study's conclusions can be verified by other researchers. Through the audit, the researcher allowed the reader to be able to confirm and accept the findings. Above that, the researcher used different data approaches such as classroom observations, interviews that are semi-structured and document analysis Merriam (1998). To ensure the trustworthiness of the research, the researcher used triangulation to establish validity. Triangulation, according to Korstjens and Moser (2018), tries to improve the qualitative research process by combining several methodologies. As a result, findings were supplemented with a variety of data sources

in order to create a more argumentative understanding of themes. Furthermore, Creswell (2014) emphasises that triangulation validates the findings of the study.

3.8.5. Transferability

Stone (2012) describes transferability as research results that can apply to other settings from one conclusion. It is when the results of the study are taken to another situation and derived to similar results. The researcher ensured transferability by providing a thorough explanation of the enquiry and by purposively selecting participants. It provided a thick description. Thick description, according to Loh (2013), enables judgements on how well the setting of the research fits other contexts. The researcher elucidated from the context of data gathering through the creation of the final report, the entire research process. Furthermore, the researcher did purposive sampling by selecting individuals and institutions to answer a research study question.

3.9. Significance of the study

The study will be useful to senior phase level teachers, particularly Social Sciences teachers, as it can make them aware of effective ways to teach and learn Social Sciences as a subject. The work will be of special use to field researchers. It will help other school stakeholders recognise the underlying reasons for poor performance and work on solutions. Regoniel (2015) points out that the significance of the study indicates how the study will contribute and who will be its beneficiaries. Furthermore, the study might add value to the field of education and related areas of study and reflect on Social Sciences' pedagogical content knowledge and its implications for learners' performance. The research study is expected to produce suggestions on effective Social Sciences instruction and learning. The current study is significant because its findings, interpretations and recommendations will add to the body of knowledge about what else can be done to assist other researchers and the Department of Education to address Social Sciences teachers' pedagogical content knowledge and its implications for learners' performance during the teaching and learning situation.

3.10. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

According to Creswell (2014), in today's research, ethical considerations are crucial. Ethical research weighs the possible benefits of research against the risk of damage to participants Roberts (2015). Before conducting the study, the researcher applied to the University of Limpopo's Research Ethics Committee for legal clearance (Clearance certificate attached as appendix A).

Furthermore, the researcher applied for authorization from the Department of Education (attached is the circuit office approval letter in Appendix B). This included principals and teachers from seven schools. Principals of schools were contacted telephonically and appointments were secured with them. Approval letters were granted before the commencement of the research study. Teachers and principals signed ethical forms. The data is kept strictly on the private laptop of the researcher, which uses a personal password.

Letters to the sampled Social Sciences teachers were released, requesting their permission to be interviewed. Participants were engaged in their right to decide whether or not to continue with the interviews. The right to privacy was also recognised and explained the reasons for the study. Issues of privacy and confidentiality of participants were protected as part of ethical procedures. Pseudonyms for participants were used to ensure anonymity and to protect participants' identities. Participant's personal information was treated very carefully and respondents were to remain anonymous Baez (2002). Anonymity was established on names of schools to avoid any assumptions that included the use of numbers and alphabets of schools and teachers (AT1), school (BT2), school (CT3) et cetera. Physical and psychological health would be assured McDemid (2014).

3.11. SUMMARY OF CHAPTER

In this chapter, the research paradigm, research approach, research design, data collection instruments, data analysis and quality assurance matters were discussed. In concluding the chapter, ethical matters and trustworthiness were discussed. The

researcher also elaborated on the steps of gaining permission to conduct this research study. The data collected is presented in chapter four.

CHAPTER 4

4. DISCUSSION: DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1. INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter described the research design and methodology of the study. This chapter reports on the findings about the Social Sciences teachers' pedagogical content knowledge and its implications for learners' performance through classroom observations of the seven schools. The purpose of the chapter is to present both the findings and analysis of data collected. The chapter, furthermore explains how the data was collected, how themes were identified and codes were assigned. The chapter firstly starts off by explaining the context of the study and gives biographic description of the selected schools and the participants from each school. The method of gathering the information is then discussed and the findings are presented in accordance with the categories and themes that emerged.

4.2. THE CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

This case study focused on eight teachers from seven schools who were teaching Social Sciences. The teachers contributed significantly by sharing their experiences and challenges in the teaching of Social Sciences. This study reflected on their pedagogical content knowledge and its implications for learners' performance.

4.2.1. Findings from the case study

In this study, the researcher reflected on Social Sciences teachers' context knowledge and its implications for learners' performance. To avoid confusing the readers, the outcomes of a case study must be based on specific information gained from the data collected. Data was gathered through semi-structured interviews, observations and document analysis. This is supported by Barber (2012), Yin (2000), stake (1995) and Mirriam (1998), who argue that researchers in qualitative studies should collect data from multiple sources.

The data collected was arranged in a text format and in a clear and understandable way. Recorded audio tape data was transcribed. The data was supplied with codes to make them easily accessible. Interviews were condensed and transcribed in print format. The findings reflected Social Sciences teachers' pedagogical content knowledge and its implications for learners' performance. Different codes instead of teachers' and schools' real names were used.

4.2.2. Biographical information

The researcher obtained biographical data from different sources with regard to participants' personal information such as teaching experience, qualifications, gender, subjects and grade levels that they instruct. All of this information is presented in table form in section 4.4, followed by a discussion. The biographical information of the selected schools is discussed in section 4.3.

4.3. Biographical information about schools

For ethical reasons, codes instead of schools' names were used for sampled schools. The research study was done at seven different schools in Steve Tshwete 2 Circuit, Nkangala region in Mpumalanga. These schools are referred to as schools A, B, C, D, E, F and G. A brief description of each school is provided to follow the setting in which the study was conducted.

School A is an urban school situated in town with good infrastructure, double-storey classrooms, an administration block and enough space for each administrative employee. Each and every departmental head has his/her own office, and other staff members occupy the staffroom. The schoolyard is well looked after because the school affords extra general workers. The school is fee-paying and is classified as quintile 4 with 508 learners. The school experiences average performance of learners. Pedagogical content knowledge of teachers has a direct effect on learners as the teacher was not trained in both discipline of Social Sciences. Subject specialization when allocating subject to teachers was not effectively taken into considerations.

School B is also situated within the suburban residential area 30km from school 1. The school has an administrative block with sufficient office space. The Block of

offices has the principal's office, the office of the financial officer, the clerk's office, the staffroom, double-storey classrooms and a hall with all the facilities. The yard is well looked after with well-built sports facilities. The school is surrounded by mines and power stations. This school is graded as quintile 3; which means it is a fee-paying school with 300 learners. Teachers of Social Sciences have specialised in one discipline, either Geography or History. This is affecting the learner performance.

School C is situated in the middle of the township along the main road. The school has an administration block with the office of the principal, deputy principal, clerk's office, storeroom and staffroom. Other blocks of classes are built with prefabs that also include bricks and mortar classrooms. The yard is not big enough. There are no sports facilities. The yard is well kept with trees that are well managed. It is classified as quintile 1, a no-fee paying school with an enrolment of 1272 learners. The teacher did not specialise in the other discipline of Social Sciences. This has a direct negative effect on the performance of learners.

School D is adjacent to school 3 in the same township. It is built with bricks and mortar. Buildings are scattered all over the yard, leaving the school with no space for sports facilities. The school has a small hall which is also used as a classroom. The administrative block has the principal's office, clerk's office and a few offices used by the school management teams with no staffroom. Teachers use the under-resourced library and the computer centre as staffrooms. It is a no-fee school with 1039 learners and is categorised as quintile 3. There is one principal, two deputy principals, departmental heads and teachers. The challenge is with subject allocations because of not considering specialisation of teachers. There is no equal balance between History and Geography.

School E is situated 3km away from schools 2 and 3. The school has blocks of classrooms, a library and an administration block with the principal's office, clerk's office, small staffroom, deputy principal's office and departmental heads' offices. It is well-built with bricks and mortar, has a library and a hall, and is paved outside the yard. The school has soccer and netball facilities, a security house at the

entrance and a fence around the yard. The school is categorised as quintile 3 with 815 learner enrolment and a no-fee paying school.

School F is situated 1km away from school 5 along the main road as school 3. It is fenced with palisades, and lockable gates and built with bricks. There is no space for sports facilities and is well paved with trees that are well taken care of in the yard. It has an administration block with the principal's and deputy principal's offices, a clerk's office, a strong room, a sick room used as the Departmental head's office, a book storeroom used as another Departmental head's office and a staffroom. The school is a quintile 3 no-fee school with 878 learner enrolment.

School G is an old school in the township situated 2km away from school 6, built with bricks, well fenced with palisade and lockable gates. The school has high enrolment with 1300 learners. There is an administration block with the principal's office, small offices used by the two deputy principals, a clerk's office and a staffroom. The schoolyard is paved only in front of the classrooms. It is a no-fee paying school, and ranked as quintile 3.

4.4. BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION OF PARTICIPANTS

Table 4.1. Participants' profile

School	Participants' code	Gender	Work profile
SA	T1	Male	2 years of teaching experience in Social Sciences. Teaching Grade 9. Re-employed teacher after he resigned from the Department of Education.
SB	T2	Female	PGCE specialising in Social Sciences and EMS Grade 7, with 2 years' experience in Social Sciences.
SC	T3	Male	BED qualifications, 10 years of teaching experience in Social Sciences. Teaching SS in Grade 7.

SD	T4	Female	A new teacher in the field of education with 2 years of teaching experience and a temporary teacher. Specialised in geography BED (geography).
SE	T5	Male	15 years of teaching experience with STD qualification, specialising in English and history. Teaching Gr.8 classes.
	T.6	Male	12 years of teaching experience as Social Sciences teacher. BA and UED qualifications and teaching Grade 9.
SF	T.7	Female	BED qualifications with 10 years' experience teaching Grade 7 and 8
SG	T.8	Male	BED qualification with 15 years of experience teaching

4.5. DISCUSSIONS OF FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS

The researcher did class observations during this process. Teachers talk to learners whilst teaching them and simply pass on information while learners only have to listen to the teachers. That was merely transferring knowledge. This means that there is a lack of co-ordination between teachers and learners. It is impossible to gain other perspectives from learners.

Semi-structured interviews, observations and document analysis were used to collect the data. Barber (2012), Yin (2000), Stake (1995) and Merriam (1998) are in agreement that researchers in qualitative studies should collect data from multiple sources.

4.5.1. Classroom Observation

According to Patton (2015), observation takes the researcher into the observed setting. The researcher made use of field notes taken during the teaching and learning sessions in the classroom and drew on findings. Observations were done in the

classrooms where Social Sciences teachers were teaching in the eight selected schools. Classroom observations were done on the following aspects: learning and teaching materials used, integration with other subjects, assessments, homework and seating arrangements. The observation of these aspects was done in order to determine whether these may contribute to or influence learner performance. The findings were drawn from the observation that was carried out. The processes that took place in the classroom were observed. Attention was primarily paid to teachers' pedagogical content understanding and its implications for learners' achievement. The researcher also observed teachers to find out if they were following their lesson plans while they were teaching.

4.5.2. Classroom management

The observation was also done on classroom management to determine whether this might impact learners' performance. The researcher discovered that in all eight schools, learners' seating arrangements were a teacher-centred approach. Learners sat a distance from each other and not in groups to enable discussions and sharing of information. It was indicated that this seating arrangement was due to the Covid-19 pandemic to observe social distance as per health protocols. During teaching and learning, teachers could not move around among learners but only in front of the classroom. In School A, Teacher 1's learners' seating arrangement still followed the traditional arrangement. Learners sat one per desk at one metre distance as per COVID-19 protocols. Learners attended classes on alternative days: boys and girls attended on different days. On the day of observation, it was the girls' day of attendance. Desks were arranged in such a way that there was enough space in-between, which allowed teacher movement, but Teacher 1 could not move around to attend to learners individually due to COVID-19 protocols. An observation by the researcher indicated that Teacher 1 did not walk around the classroom but stood in front all the time. Learners in School A rotated classes by going to the teacher's classroom. In School A, learners used textbooks, and every learner had one. The teacher did not specialise in any of the Social Sciences aspects but economics as a subject. Time and again, Teacher 1 had to refer to the textbook during lesson presentations. The teacher had no formal training in either of the two Social Sciences' discipline i.e. Geography or History.

With Teacher 2 in School B, the seating arrangement was similar to the previous school, a traditional seating which is teacher-centred. All learners had textbooks in front of them. The teacher had two years of experience teaching Social Sciences. She specialised in Geography. The performance in Social Sciences in School B was average. The school followed a rotational system due to the COVID-19 pandemic. All learners had textbooks in front of them. Learners were given homework but the performance was not good. The teacher held a BED degree qualification and specialised in one discipline i.e. Geography and was not trained on History. The teacher seemed to struggle to teach History as it was not his major subject.

With School C, Teacher 3, the seating arrangement was done as in School 1 and School 2. Learners attended in separate groups and on alternative days due to COVID-19 protocols. The difference in School 3 was that boys and girls were combined. Due to the high number of enrolment, learners were sometimes requested to attend on weekends. The researcher observed that learning and teaching materials were insufficient, and not all learners had textbooks to refer to. Teacher 2 specialised in Geography and not History. The observation by the researcher was that the teacher used his home language most of the time and less of the language of learning and teaching (LOLT) i.e., English. Assessments were planned using English and not their home language i.e. isiZulu. It was a challenge to strike a balance between the two disciplines (Geography and History) as History discipline was not his major subject. Homework was given to learners.

Teacher 4 in School D was new in the education system with two years of experience teaching Social Sciences, and specialised in Geography. The researcher observed that Teacher 4 was biased towards her subject of specialisation and not in History, which was not her subject of specialisation. History discipline was also compromised. The teacher struggled to strike a balance between History and Geography. Due to Covid-19, the seating arrangement was similar in the other schools, a traditional way of seating. The school implemented a rotational system. Due to space shortage and a large group of learners, the work programme was not properly covered. Resources such as textbooks were insufficient, i.e. not all learners had textbooks. Performance in Social Sciences was poor.

With Teacher 5 in School E, the seating arrangement was similar to the previous schools visited by the researcher. Learners were sitting facing the chalkboard. They sat a distance from each other. The researcher discovered that Teacher 5 in this school concentrated much on one section of Social Sciences i.e., History as a specialisation. Learning materials were also a challenge in this school; not all learners had textbooks. The school also followed a rotational system due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The teacher still used the narrative method of teaching, which is teacher-centred. Geography as Social Sciences discipline was compromised as the teacher specialised in History.

The next participant to be observed was teacher 6 in School E. Learners were seated traditionally, individually. Teacher 6, like teacher 5, specialised in History as one of the components of Social Sciences. Teacher 6 also used a lot of narrative methods that are teacher-centred, and learners were not active participants in the lesson. The lesson was teacher-centred as most of the time the teacher did the talking. The teacher could not strike a balance between Geography and History. Training in History was only received during a one-day workshop organised by the Department of Education. Communication among learners was limited.

Teacher 7 in School F was the next participant. In this school, like all other schools, learners use a traditional way of sitting, that is, one learner per desk. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the school was following a rotational system. Due to the high enrolment in this particular grade 8, learners were separated into two groups. Each group had a few days to attend lessons in a week. Teacher 7 specialised in Geography as a component of Social Sciences. History as a component was therefore not his specialisation.

With respect to Teacher 8 in School G, the classroom arrangement was the same as experienced in the previous schools. Learners sat individually at their desks facing the chalkboard. Teacher 8 specialised in History as a component of Social Sciences. The teacher used the narrative method and a textbook when teaching. During the lesson, the teacher did most of the talking and learners passively listened. Resources such as textbooks were insufficient. The teacher used code-switching most of the time using

the mother tongue, which is not the language of learning and teaching. Learners were not given an opportunity to discuss as groups and were not given group work. According to Awases (2015), learners should work in groups, in pairs, individually or as a whole class. Learners will be demotivated if the task is not relevant either to the group or pairs. Most of the schools visited by the researcher did not promote collaborative work, in this instance, group work.

The researchers' findings were that settings in most classrooms are in such a way that they are teacher-centred because learners sat in rows. This does not allow group work where learners can share ideas. Looking at the sizes of classrooms, most of the teachers agreed that only during this period that individual learner teaching can be possible because in this COVID-19 period, the number of learners per class has been reduced to half of the total number of learners. But in a normal situation, these classes are overcrowded. Teachers complained about overcrowded classrooms that resulted in poor teaching and made it impossible to plan group learning, hence they are forced to employ traditional ways of teaching. The finding also indicated that in most of the schools during this COVID-19 period, teachers have an opportunity to reach learners individually but due to health protocols, this is not possible. Chances are that learners with learning difficulties might not benefit if the teacher cannot explain something to the individual learner to explain the content of the subject.

4.5.3. Teaching and learning methods

The observation by the investigator was that most of the teachers implemented Freire's teaching model. The teacher does all the talking, while learners have to listen passively to them. This shows that there is no two-way communication between teachers and learners to acknowledge learners' input. During the observation of Teacher 3 in School C and Teacher 8 in School G, a lesson presentation was done in Grade 7. It was a Geography lesson, and the topic was "Floods". The topic was written on the chalkboard and the teacher was teaching using his home language i.e. isiZulu most of the time. Learners were going to be assessed in English but taught in their home language. Unfortunately, the teacher did not explain the lesson in the language of learning and teaching. He was talking a lot without allowing learners' views and understanding. The teacher provided all the information using a language that was not

the language of learning and teaching. Learners' prior knowledge of the subject matter was not considered. He did not give learners an opportunity to interact with him. He did not even explain or translate terms used in the home language to their language of learning and teaching. After a long narrative subject, learners were given an activity to complete as classwork, but time was limited. They were instructed to complete it at home. With Teacher 8 in School G, learners were not given any activity after the lesson.

With Teacher 1 in School A and Teacher 2 in School B in terms of resources, both schools are almost similar. They had enough resources but their teaching mostly relied on textbooks. Teacher 1 presented a lesson in History with the topic 'World War II' in Grade 9. Although the teacher did not specialise in any discipline of Social Sciences, he enjoyed narrating that History lesson. But there were not enough resources such as maps displayed in the classroom. Learners showed interest in the lesson because the interaction was good. They raised inputs and questions during the lesson presentation.

The majority of teachers used the narrative method while learners listened passively. Learners were not recognised during learning and teaching. To the learners, this kind of approach is demotivating and has a negative impact on learning. During the researcher's observation, most of the learners looked bored. Teachers are always advised to recognise learners as active rather than passive participants during learning and teaching (Dube, 2012). Learners like to explore and express ideas in new situations because, in a learner-centred methodology, they are expected to be actively involved during the lesson.

The lesson by Teacher 4 was very interesting. It was a young teacher who was enthusiastic about the lesson. It was a history lesson on the topic "The nuclear age and the cold war". The lesson started with questions and answers, probing prior knowledge from learners. The teacher was fully prepared for her lesson and displayed pictures relevant to the topic. Learners showed interest in the lesson. The observation by the researcher showed that she took a slightly different approach. In other words, she was slightly different from the rest of the other teachers already discussed. She started her lesson through the question and answer method, probing learners about

the previous lesson discussed. This was followed by the introduction of the new topic and subject matter. Learners started to open up during the discussion and were allowed to provide their inputs and views on the topic.

With Teachers 5 and 6 in School E, both teachers followed the same old narrative method. Learners were not given opportunities to voice their inputs. The seating arrangements were also traditional. Both teachers were doing more of the talking and learners were listening passively. Students were given a chance to write class activities at the end of the lesson but could not complete them in class. According to Park and Chen (2012), teaching entails more than simply mastering the subject and passing it on to others.

In all the lessons observed by the researcher, learners were not afforded an opportunity to express themselves, as they would do in group work. All the activities given to learners were done individually. There were no group activities provided. In Teachers 3, 5 and 6, learners were given class activities but could not complete them in class and had to take them along as homework, which was not planned for. Homework is normally given to consolidate what is taught in class. Learners in almost all the schools were not always involved in their learning except with a little effort by Teacher 4. It raised concerns about teachers' pedagogical content knowledge and its implications for learners' performance. It was not clear how teachers ensure that learners comprehend the material of the subject. Review of the previous lesson was not made, except for Teacher 4 in School D.

4.5.4. Qualifications of teachers

The researcher observed that the teachers were not qualified in both Social Sciences disciplines. It is either a teacher would be qualified in History or Geography, but teachers are expected to teach both equally. The majority of teachers are qualified in History. Only Teacher 3, Teacher 4 and Teacher 7 had qualifications in Geography. This influences teaching and learning negatively. The teachers were always biased towards one of the disciplines. This might have a direct negative impact on learners' performance in the Social Sciences subject. The observation by the researcher was that learners performed better in the discipline in which the teacher specialised at the

expense of the other. Teacher 1 in School A does not have qualifications in either History or Geography; he specialised in economic streams. Teacher 5, Teacher 6 and Teacher 8 specialised in History discipline, and Teacher 3, Teacher 4 and Teacher 7 in Geography. The observation by the researcher was that there is no balance to consolidate understanding of both disciplines of Social Sciences. There is a solid reason to expect that a teacher's PCK will have a big impact on students' achievement and motivation (Ball, 1991).

4.5.5. Teaching and learning materials

The researcher discovered that Teachers 1 to 8 were still using chalkboards and textbooks as their primary teaching tools. Chalkboards are used to write summaries, including notes given by teachers. Learners just copied from the chalkboards into their activity books. They were not given an opportunity to read on their own from the textbooks. There were no additional materials provided except for Teacher 4 in School D, who had some charts prepared for the lesson. In most classes, there were no teaching media displayed on the notice boards, except in School A by Teacher 1 and School B by Teacher 2. These are former model C schools, which are well-resourced with charts that are displayed on the notice boards.

Teacher 5, Teacher 6 and Teacher 8 did not use any additional materials except textbooks and chalkboards. Learners were only instructed to write activities copied from the chalkboards with no additional materials.

4.6. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

During the observation processes, the researcher discovered that most teachers present their lessons using the teacher-centred approach. The inadequate training of teachers about Social Sciences disciplines might impact learners' performance, including the pedagogical content understanding of teachers that are teaching Social Sciences with two disciplines i.e., Geography and History. Teachers mostly put more emphasis on the subject of their specialization and therefore, there is no balance on both disciplines. Most of the classrooms were planned in a teacher-centred manner. Learners are discouraged to work as a group. The COVID-19 pandemic has further

worsened the situation because it reduced teacher contact time with learners. Lack of resources might also have a negative learner performance. Seating arrangements in all these schools were a serious challenge to teachers as they cannot work as groups. They cannot have direct contact with learners.

CHAPTER 5

5. FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

5.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter elaborates on the findings of the study, conclusions and reflections on Social Sciences teachers' pedagogical content understanding and its implications for learner performance. It further reflects on the limitations, implications of the study and recommendations for further research.

5.2. FINDINGS

This research study aimed to reflect on Social Sciences teachers' pedagogical content understanding and its implications for learner performance in Mpumalanga Province, South Africa. The study was inspired by the researcher's expertise as a Social Sciences teacher, as well as an examination of students' Social Sciences performance during the previous five years. The researcher attempted to reflect on Social Sciences teachers' pedagogical content knowledge and its implications for learners' performance. This includes plans used by teachers of Social Sciences in teaching the subject and their perceptions about the subjects they covered in their lessons.

The first finding in terms of classroom management was that all seven schools still follow the traditional method of learner seating arrangement, that is, the teacher-centred approach. This seating arrangement does not facilitate learners' discussion and the sharing of information. Due to COVID-19, teachers' movement is limited in the classroom. All schools were following a rotational system due to the pandemic. This further creates more gaps in learning and teaching. Learners sit at a distance from each other with no possibility for discussion due to social distancing that has to be observed.

The second observation relates to teaching and learning methods used by teachers in the classroom during their lesson presentations. The observation by the researcher

was that from the seven schools, only one school i.e. school D fully engaged learners in the lesson. They were actively involved in the lesson. The other six schools were following the traditional way of lesson presentation. Teachers were doing most of the talking whilst learners listened passively. Teacher 3 in school C and teacher 8 in school G presented their lessons using their home language most of the time, whilst learners were going to be assessed in English. Based on the findings from Chapter 4, only one participating teacher displayed the learner-centred teaching approach as required in the CAPS document. Learners were not allowed to involve in groups or as pairs. Teachers displayed a lack of comprehension of the use of the learner-centred approach. Observing teachers struggling to implement the learner-centred approach might have an implication on learners' performance. Learners might perform poorly in the subject.

Further findings on qualifications of teachers that teach Social Sciences were that the seven participating teachers have qualifications in one of the two disciplines of Social Sciences: Geography or History. Only one participating teacher had no qualification in either History or Geography. None of the participants qualified in both Social Sciences disciplines. The findings were that teachers do attend one-day training in workshops. There is no balance in terms of manpower to teach both Social Sciences disciplines. The lack of subject knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge and teaching skills may contribute to learners' performance. The researcher suggests that more teachers should be properly trained in these Social Sciences disciplines. At least one teacher should be hired per each Social Sciences discipline. They need further training, workshops and support. If teachers are properly trained in their specialisation, it will equip them with skills for the effective implementation of the Social Sciences curriculum.

All participating teachers raised an issue about the shortage of learning and teaching materials. During the classroom observation, the researcher noted that most of the learners do not have Social Sciences textbooks in front of them. Most of these teachers confirmed that schools do not have enough textbooks and learners cannot share books under the COVID-19 pandemic situation. The reality is that learners can understand any learning content if they can see it in front of them. This may lead to underperformance in the subject. Insufficient learning and teaching material might

result in learners underperforming. The insufficient use of textbooks in these schools may adversely affect teaching and learning. Some of the teachers cited that the textbooks used are not relevant to the annual teaching plan (ATP). The researcher recommends that the Department of Education in South Africa should provide relevant and enough learning and teaching materials for Social Sciences. This should include maps, atlases and textbooks. The Department should ensure that any publishing companies must liaise with them before printing learning and teaching materials.

The majority of schools visited by the researcher are from disadvantaged communities in the local township. Most of them do not have functioning libraries. Schools E, F and G have libraries, but they are not being utilised due to poor learning and teaching materials and other reading materials that support learners and teachers. Being former model C schools, schools A and B do have libraries with enough resources, but they are not fully utilised because learning and teaching materials in Social Sciences are not catered for. It is a necessity to provide schools with basic minimum resources to improve learning and teaching in Social Sciences.

5.3. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations relate to Social Sciences teachers' pedagogical content understanding and its implications for learners' performance.

The Department of Education should provide appropriate training to Social Sciences teachers in both subject disciplines. This study revealed that all participating teachers of Social Sciences were untrained in both disciplines. The education officials appointed teachers to teach both disciplines in Social Sciences in which they did not specialise. A recommendation by the researcher to the Education Department is that they should appoint well-trained teachers in their specialisation. Participants also acknowledged the fact that they were not been trained in one of the Social Sciences disciplines, but had no choice but to teach it.

A recommendation by the researcher to the Education Department is that teachers should be trained and workshopped in both of the Social Sciences disciplines to implement the Social Sciences curriculum effectively. Teachers should be encouraged

to share subject knowledge and skills, link knowledge with practice and focus on content and teaching methodology. Furthermore, they should sustain the practice of learning and understanding learners and share new subject content knowledge. Teachers should explore new curriculum requirements. Teachers with inadequate training in Social Sciences are unlikely to expect learners to acquire a high standard of content understanding and skills from teachers.

In terms of the use of development programmes, teachers may be empowered through workshops to effectively administer the curriculum of the subject they are teaching. This might assist them to implement the curriculum more effectively to the benefit of learners. Knowledge and strategy sharing platforms should be arranged among teachers in order to improve the performance of learners. The Department of Education should ensure improvement in content exposure, poor curriculum coverage and insufficient use of textbooks.

5.4. CONCLUSION

This study reflected on Social Sciences teachers' pedagogical content understanding and its implications for learners' performance: A case of schools in Mpumalanga Province, South Africa. The study has achieved its aims of reflecting on possible factors and their implications for learners' performance based on teachers' content knowledge.

The study has the potential to benefit Social Sciences teachers by providing them with a distinct perspective that will help them identify barriers to Social Sciences teaching and learning. It may also bring about new perspectives on difficulties that may block Social Sciences learning and teaching that the Department of Education was unaware of. Schools should provide sufficient learning and teaching materials in Social Sciences. Teachers should create learner-centred environments.

5.5. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

There was limited time to conduct the study because of the prescribed period to complete the course. The research study was conducted in one circuit and does not cover the whole of South Africa.

The limitation of this study was that it was conducted only in the senior phase level, grades 7-9 in the seven selected schools of Steve Tshwete 2 Circuit of Nkangala Region, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa. The findings of the study are not applicable to everyone. At the very least, more than one lesson presentation in each school would have been desirable. Due to time constraints, only seven schools were observed.

5.6. POSSIBILITIES FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

In terms of the findings of the research, it has been noted that good knowledge of the subject matter can be fruitful in teaching, especially the teaching approach that instructors use. Further researchers can contribute by narrowing the knowledge gap between teacher training and their knowledge base.

REFERENCES

- Abel, S.K. (2007). *Research on science teachers' knowledge*.
- Adekunle, M.O. (2001). *Methods and resources in teaching social sciences*.
- Anderson, C. (2010). Presenting and evaluating qualitative research. *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education*.
- Anney, V.N. (2014). Ensuring the quality of the findings of qualitative research: Looking at trustworthiness criteria. *Journal of Emerging Trends in Education and Policy Studies*. (JETERAPS), 5(2):272-281.
- Aremu, O.A. (2000). *Academic performance factor inventory*. Ibadan: Stirling-Horden Publishers.
- Ary, D. & Jacobs, L.C. (2002). *Introduction to research in education*. (6th Ed.). Belmont, C.A.: Wadswart.
- Baez, B. (2002). Confidentiality in qualitative research: reflections on secrets, power and agency. *Qual Res*: 2:35-58.
- Barber, J. (2012). Integration of learning: A grounded theory analysis of college students learning. *American Educational Research Journal*, 49 (3): 590-617.
- Bakker, A. (2018) Discovery learning: Zombie, phoenix, or elephant? *Instructional Science*, 46(1):169-183.
- Ball, D.L., Hill, H.C. & Bass, H. (2005). *Knowing mathematics for teaching: who knows mathematics well enough to teach third grade and how can we decide?* American Educator.
- Ball, D.L., Thames, M.H., & Phelps, G. (2008). Content knowledge for teaching: What makes it special? *Journal of Teacher Education*, 59, 389-407.
- Ball, D.L. (1991). Research on teaching mathematics making subject matter knowledge part of the equation. In J. Brophy (Ed.) *Advances in research on teaching: vol.2 Teachers' knowledge of the subject matter as it relates to their teaching practice* (pp.1-48). Greenwich, CT: JA1 Press Inc.
- Baumert, J., Kunter, M., Blum, W., Brunner, M., Voss, T., Jordan, A., Tsai, Y. M. (2010) Teachers' mathematical knowledge, cognitive activation in the classroom and student progress. *American Educational Research Journal*, 47, 133-180.

Baxter, J. & Eyles, J. (1997). Evaluating qualitative research in social geography: Establishing rigour in interview analysis. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 22(4): 505-525.

Birdsall, S. (2015). Analysing teachers' translation of sustainability using a PCK framework. *Environmental Education Research*, 21(5): 753-776.

Bitsch, V. (2005). Qualitative research: A grounded theory example and evaluation criteria. *Journal of Agribusiness*, 23(1): 75-91.

Blomeke, S., Buchholtz, N., Suhl, U., & Kaiser, G. (2014). Resolving the chicken-or-egg causality dilemma: The longitudinal interplay of teacher knowledge and teacher beliefs. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 37, 130-139.

Blum, L. (2012). *High schools, race and America's future: What students can teach us about morality, diversity and community?* Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.

Bowen, G.A. (2009). Supporting a grounded theory with an audit trail: An illustration. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 12(4): 305-316.

Boote, D.N. & Beile, P. (2005). Scholars before researchers on the century of dissertation literature review in preparation. *Educational Research*, 34(6): 3-15.

Braun, V., Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3, 77-101.

Brophy, J., & Alleman, J. (1991). *Social studies instruction should be driven by major social education goals*. East Lansing: The Institute for Research on Teaching College of education.

Bryman, A. (2007). Barriers to integrating qualitative and quantitative research. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, 1(1): 8-22.

Brown, K.D. (2011). Breaking the cycle of Sisyphus: Social education and the acquisition of critical socio-cultural knowledge about race and racism in the United States. *The Social Studies*, 102(6): 249-255.

Burgess, R.G. (1989). *The ethics of educational research*. London: Routledge Falmer.

- Bush, T. (2002). *Research methods in education and management*. London: Sage.
- Chandler, P. (Ed.). (2015). *Doing race in social studies: Critical perspectives*. Charlotte: Information age publishing.
- Chandler, P., & Branscombe, A. (2015). White social studies: Protecting the white racial code. In P. Chandler (Ed.), *Doing race in social studies: Critical perspectives*, 61-87. Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing.
- Chandler, P., & McKnight, D. (2011). Race and social studies. In W. Russell (Ed.) *Contemporary social studies: An essential reader*, 215-242. Greenwich: Information Age Publishing.
- Chandler, P.T. & Hawley, T.S. (2017). *Race lessons using inquiry to teach about race in social studies*. Charlotte NC: USA: Information Age Publishing.
- Clausen, S.W. (2016). Danish geography teachers' pedagogical content knowledge in a changing schooling context. *Nordidactica – Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences Education* (1) 1-22.
- Cohen, H., Manion, L. & Morrison, K. (2007). *Research methods in education*. London: Routledge.
- Corbin, J., & Strauss, A. (2008). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Creswell, J.D. & Creswell, J.W. (2018). *Research design: qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approach*.
- Creswell, J.W. (2007). *Educational research: Planning, conducting and evaluating qualitative and quantitative research*. Boston, MA: Pearson.
- Creswell, J.W. & Plano Clark, V. (2007). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Creswell, J.W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approach*. 4th ed. California: Thousand Oaks.
- Creswell, J.W. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*. (3rd Ed.). SAGE Publications: Thousand Oaks, CA.
- Darling-Hammond, L., Hyler, M.E. & Gardener, M. (2017). *Effective teacher professional development*. Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute.

Demoiny, S.B. (2017). *Social Studies teacher educators who do race work: A racial-pedagogical-content knowledge analysis, curriculum and teaching*. Alabama: USA. Auburn University.

De Miranda, M. (2008). Pedagogical content knowledge and technology teacher education: Issues for thought. *Journal of the Japanese Society of Technology Education*, 50(1): 17-26.

Depaepe, F., Torbeyns, J., Vermeersch, N., Janssens R., Keltchtermans, G., Van Dooren, W. (2015). Teachers' content and pedagogical content knowledge on rational numbers: A comparison of prospective elementary and lower secondary school teachers. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 47, 82-92.

Depaepe, F., Verschaffel, L & Kekhtermans, G. (2013) Pedagogical content knowledge: A systematic review of the way in which the concept has pervaded mathematics educational research. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 34, 12-25.

Department of Education. (2002). *Revised National Curriculum Statement: Social Sciences*. Pretoria: Government Printer.

Department of Education. (2011). *National curriculum statement. Curriculum and assessment policy statement. Social Sciences*. Pretoria: Government printers.

Dunn, J., Niens, U. & McMillan, D. (2014). 'Ços he's my favourite character!' A children's rights approach to the use of popular culture in teaching literacy. *Literacy*, 48(1): 23-31.

Erlandson, D., Harris, E., Li, Skipper, B.L. & Allen, S.D. (1993). *Doing naturalistic inquiry: a guide to methods*. London: SAGE

Esser, F. & Hanitzsch, T. (Eds.). (2012). *Handbook of comparative communication research*. London: Routledge.

Esser, F. (2017). *Comparative research methods*. Switzerland: The Netherlands.

Evens, M., Elen, J., & Depaepe, F. (2015). Developing pedagogical content knowledge. Lessons learned from intervention studies. *Educational Research International*, Article ID 790417, 23

Flick, U. (2009). *An introduction to qualitative research*. London: Sage.

- Flick, U. (2014). *An introduction to qualitative research* (5th Ed.) New York. NY: Continuum.
- Flick, U. (2014). *An introduction to qualitative research*. London: SAGE.
- Gay, L.R., Mills, G.E. & Airation, P. (2006). *Educational research: competencies for analysis and application*. New York: Pearson Prentice Hall.
- Gess-Newsome, J. (2015). A model of teacher professional knowledge and skill including PCK. In A. Berry, P. Friderichsen, & J. Loughran (Eds), *Re-examining pedagogical content knowledge in science education*. New York, NY: Taylor & Francis.
- Grossman, P.L. (1990). *The making of a teacher: Teacher knowledge and teacher education*. New York: Teachers College Press Teachers College Columbia University.
- Grossman, P.L., Schoenfeld, A. And Lee, C. (2005). Teaching subject matter. In Darling-Hammond, L. And Bransford, J. (Eds), *Preparing teachers for a changing world: what teachers should learn and be able to do*. San Franscisco: Jossey-Bass: 201-231.
- Guba, E.G. (1981). Criteria for assessing the trustworthiness of naturalistic inquiries. *Educational Communication and Technology Journal*, 29(1981): 75-91.
- Greene, J.C. (2008). Is mixed methods social inquiry a distinctive methodology? *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, 2(1): 7-22.
- Haider, Z., Munir, F., Khan, H. & Ahmed, A. (2013). Factors contributing to the student's academic performance: A case study of Islamia university sub-campus. *American Journal of Educational Research*, 1: 283-289.
- Halcomb, E. (2006). Is verbatim transcription of interview data always necessary? *Applied Nursing Research*, 19(1):38-42.
- Hill, H., Ball, D.L., & Schilling, S.G. (2008). Unpacking pedagogical content knowledge: conceptualizing and measuring teachers' topic- specific knowledge of students. *Journal for Research in Mathematics Education*, 39(4): 372-400.
- Hobbs, B.P., Chen, N., Lee, J.J. (2018). Controlled multi-arm platform design using predictive probability. *Statistical Methods in Medical Research*, 27 (1): 65-78.
- Holloway, I., & Wheeler, S. (2002). *Qualitative research in nursing* (2ed). Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Howell, E., Hunt-Barron, S., Kaminski, R. & Sanders, R. & Sanders, R. (2018). Teaching argumentative writing to teachers and students: Effects of professional development. *Professional Development in Education*, 44(2): 169-189.

Iserbyt, P., Ward, P., & Li, W. (2017). Effects of improved content knowledge on pedagogical content knowledge and student performance in physical education. *Physical Education and Sport Pedagogy*, 22, 71-88.

Jotia, L. & Matlala, J. 2011. Use of instructional material in Social Studies: Impact on students' performance in primary school learning examinations in Botswana. *European Journal of Educational Studies*, 3 (1): 1946-6331.

Judd, C.M., McClelland, G.H. (1989). *Data analysis: A model comparison approach*. San Diego, CA: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich.

King, L.J. (2014). Learning other people's history: Pre-service teachers' developing African American historical knowledge. *Teaching Education*, 25(4): 427-456.

King, L.J., Chandler, P.T. (2016). *Rethinking social studies teacher education in the twenty first century*. Switzerland: Springer International.

Kivunja, C., Kuyini, A.B. (2017). Understanding and applying research paradigms in an educational context. *International Journal: Sci-edupress*, 6(5).

Kleickmann, T., Richter, D., Kunter, M., Elsner, J., Besser, M., Krauss, S., Baumert, J. (2015). Content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge in Taiwanese and German mathematics teachers. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 46, 115-126.

Korstjens, I., & Moser, A. (2018). Practical guidance to qualitative research. Part 4: Trustworthiness and publishing, *European Journal of General Practice*, 24:1:120-124.

Korstjens, I. & Moser, A. (2018). Practical guidance to qualitative research. Part 3: Sampling, data collection and analysis: *European Journal of General Practice*, 24(1): 9-18.

Kothari, C.R. (2004). *Research methodology: methods and techniques* (2ndEd.) New Delhi: New Age International Limited.

Lambert, D. & Biddulph, M. (2015). The dialogue space offer by curriculum-making in the process of learning to teach and the creation of a progressive knowledge-led curriculum. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education* 43(3): 210-224.

- Lane, R. (2015). Experienced geography teachers' PCK of students' ideas and beliefs about learning and teaching. *International Research in Geographical and Environmental Education*. 24(1): 43-57.
- Laursen, S.L., Hassi, M.L. & Hough, S. (2015). Implementation and outcome of inquiry based learning in mathematics content courses for pre-service teachers. *International Journal of Mathematical Education in Science and Technology*, 1-20.
- Lederman (Eds). *Handbook of research on science education* (Mahwah, N.J., Lawrence Erlbaum Associates), 1105-1149.
- Lee, E. & Luft, J. (2008) Experienced Secondary Science teachers' representation of pedagogical content knowledge. *International Journal of Science Education*, 30(10): 1343-1363.
- Leedy, P. & Ormrod, J.E. (2014). *Practical research planning and design*. (10th Ed.) Edinburgh: Pearson Educational Inc.
- Le Grange, L. (2014). *Education research*. BED Hons. Reader. Stellenbosch: SUN Media.
- Loh, J. (2013). Inquiry into issues of trustworthiness and quality in narrative studies: A perspective: *The Qualitative Report*, 18(32): 1-15.
- Lutzer, D.J., Rodi, S.B., Kirkman, E.E., & Maxwell, J.W. (2007). *Statistical abstract of undergraduate programs in mathematical science in the United States*. Washington, DC: American Mathematics Society.
- Maarman, G.J. & Mbawuli, K.L. (2017). A review of challenges in South African education and possible ways to improve educational outcomes as suggested by decades of research. *Africa Education Review*. 14 3-4: 263-289.
- Magano, L. (2009). How natural Sciences teachers plan and enact their lessons in outcomes based education, dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment at the degree of the master's in education, university of Pretoria.
- Marree, K. (2016). Using career counselling to inform educational psychology by addressing work related challenges in an emerging economy and post-colonial context. *South African Journal of Education*: 37(4).

- Martin, J.L., Desmond, M. (2010). Political position and social knowledge: *Sociological Forum*, 25(1).
- Maxwell, J.A. (2013). *Qualitative research design: an interactive approach*. (3rd Ed.). London: SAGE.
- McDemid, F., Peters, K. & Jackson, D. (2014). Conducting qualitative research in the context of pre-existing peer and collegial relationships. *Nurse Res.* 21, 28-33.
- McLeod, S.A. (2009). *Qualitative vs quantitative research*. Retrieved from <http://www.simplypsychology.org/qualitative-quantitative.html>.
- McLeod, S.A. (2014). *The interview research method*. Simply Psychology.
- Merriam, S.B. & Tisdell, E.J. (2015). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation*. John Wesley & Sons: SAGE.
- McLeod, S.A. (2009). *Qualitative vs quantitative research*. Retrieved from <http://www.simplypsychology.org/qualitative-quantitative.html>.
- McNee, L.C. & McCabe, S. (2008). *Understanding nursing research: Using research evidence based practice*. Philadelphia, P.A.: Lippincott William & Wilkins.
- Merriam, S.B. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass.
- Merriam, S.B. (2009). *Qualitative research: a guide to design and implementation*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Merriam, S.B. & Tisdell, E.J. (2015). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation*. John Wesley & sons: SAGE.
- Mertens, M.D. (1998). *Research methods in education and psychology: Integrating diversity with quantitative and qualitative approaches*. London: SAGE.
- Morgan, D.L. (2007). Paradigms lost and pragmatism regained: Methodological implications of combining qualitative and quantitative methods. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, 1(1): 48-76.
- Morrow, W. (2007). *Learning to teach in South Africa*. Cape Town: HSRC Press.
- Mutenherwa, F. & Wassennar, D. (2014). *Ethics of social and behavioural research in an African context*.
- Ndimande, B.S. (2013). *From Bantu education to the fight for socially just education, equity and excellence in education*, 46(1): 20-35.
- Neumann, R. (2012). Teaching the great recession. *The Social Studies*, 103(2): 49-56.

- Neuman, W. (2013). *Social research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches*. 8th Ed.
- Nielsen, B. (2011). *A cohort of novice Danish science teachers. Background in science and argumentation about science teaching*. *Mordin*, 7(2): 202-218.
- Nind, M., Kilburn, D., Luff, R. (2015). The teaching and learning of social research methods: developments in pedagogical knowledge. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*. 18(5): 1-7.
- Nind, M., Curtin, A. & Hall, K. (2016). *Research methods for pedagogy*. London: Bloomsbury.
- Nowell, L.S., Norris, J.M., White, D.E. (2017). *Thematic analysis: Striving to meet the trustworthiness criteria*. SAGE journals.
- Oleson, A., Hora, M.T. (2014). *Teaching the way they were taught? Revisiting the sources of teaching knowledge and the role of prior experience in shaping faculty teaching practices*. 68, 29-45.
- Park, S., & Chen, Y.C. (2012). Mapping out the integration of the components of pedagogical content knowledge (PCK): examples from high school biology classrooms. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching*.
- Thorne, S. (2000). *Data analysis in qualitative research, evidence based nursing*. Canada: British Columbia, 3: 68-70.
- Regoniel, P.A. (2015). *Two tips on how to write the significance of the study*. *Simply educate me*. <https://simplyeducate.me/2015/02/09/two-tips-on-how-to-write-the-significance-of-the-study/> accessed 13 April 2020.
- Roberts, L. (2015). *Ethical issues in conducting qualitative research in online communities, and qualitative research in psychology*. 12(3): 314-325.
- Rusznyak, L. (2010). Seeking substance in student teaching. In Shalem, Y. And Pendlebury, S. (Eds), *Retrieving teaching: critical issues in curriculum, pedagogy and learning*. Cape Town, South Africa. 117-129.
- Sandvik, J.M., van Daal, V.H.P. & Ader, H.J. (2014). Emergent literacy: Preschool teachers' beliefs and practices. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*, 14(1): 28-52.

Savin-Baden & Major. (2013). *Qualitative Research: The essential guide to theory and practice*: London: Routledge.

Seale, C.G., Gobo, J., Gubrium, and Silverman, D. (2004). *Qualitative Research Practice*. London: SAGE.

Segall, A. & Garrett, J. (2013). "White teachers talking race", *Teaching education*, vol.24 No.3, pp.265-291.

Shalem, Y. and Slonimsky, L. (2010). The concept of teaching. In Shalem, Y. and Pendlebury, S. (Eds), *Retrieving teaching: critical issues in curriculum, pedagogy and learning*. Juta: Cape Town: 12-23.

Schmidt, S. (2011). Who lives on the other side of that boundary: A model of geographic thinking? *Social Education*, 75(5): 250-255.

Schmidt, W.H., Burroughs, N.A., Cogan, L.S., & Houang, R.T. (2017). The role of subject matter content in teacher preparation: an international perspective for mathematics. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 49(2): 111-131.

Shulman, L. (1986). Those who understand: Knowledge growth in teaching. *Educational Research*, 15(2): 4-14.

Shulman, L.S. (1987) Knowledge and teaching: Foundations of the new reform. *Harvard Educational Review*, 57(1): 1-23.

Simelane, S. (1998). *Teachers' experience of education in public secondary schools in Swaziland*. Unpublished dissertation. Johannesburg: Rand Afrikaans University.

Smith, J.K. & Hodkins. (2008). Relativism criteria and politics, in N.K. Denzil & Y.S. Lincohn (eds.), *Collecting and interpreting qualitative methods* (3rd ed.), 441-434. Thousand Oaks: CA: SAGE Publication.

Stake, R.E. (1995). *The art of case study research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

Stanton, C.R. (2015). Beyond the margins: Evaluating the support for multicultural education within teachers' editions of U.S. history textbooks. *Multicultural Perspectives*, 17 (4): 180-189.

Stone, D. (2012). Transfer and translation of policy. *Policy Studies*, Routledge, 33(6): 1-17.

- Strijdom, H. (1998). Ethical aspects of research in the caring professions. In A.S. De Vos (Ed.). *Research at grass roots: A primer for the caring professions*. Pretoria: van Schaik. 23-36.
- Swam, J. & Spire Z. (2020). The role of informal conversations in generating data and the ethical and methodological issues they raise. *Forum Qualitative*, 21:1-10.
- Terre Blanche, M. & Durrheim, K. (2014). *Research in practice: Applied methods for the social sciences*. Cape Town: University of Cape Town Press. Singapore: SAGE.
- Terre Blanche, M. & Durrheim, K. (2014). *Research in practice: Applied methods for the Social Sciences*. Cape Town: University of Cape Town Press Singapore.
- Thomson, S.B. (2011). Qualitative Research: Validity. *Journal of Administration and Governance*, 6(1): 77-82.
- Tirosh, D., Tsamir, P., Levenson, E. & Tabach, M. (2011). From pre-school teachers' professional development to children's knowledge: comparing sets. *Journal of Mathematics Teacher Educational*, 14, 113-131.
- Tom, A. & Valli, L. (1990). Professional knowledge for teachers, in W. Houston (Ed.) *Handbook of Research on Teacher Education*. New York: Macmillan.
- Van Staden (2016). ESL Readers in Lesotho, Southern Africa. *Per Linguam*, 32(1) pp. 21-40.
- Waseka, E.L. & Simatwa, E.M.W. (2016). Student factors influencing academic performance of students in Secondary education in Kenya. *Educational Research*, 7(3).
- Yin, R.K. (2002). *Case study research: Design and methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- Yin, R.K. (2014). *Qualitative research from start to finish*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.

ANNEXURE: A

Contact: Mashiloane D.M.
Email: dmashiloane16@gmail.com

P.O. Box 868
Hendrina
1095
08 March 2021

The District Director
Nkangala Region
Private Bag x4021
Kwamhlanga
1022

Dear Sir

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH STUDY AT SCHOOLS IN STEVE TSHWETE 2 CIRCUIT

The District Director

I David Mathabi Mashiloane, a Master's Degree student at the University of Limpopo hereby request to be granted permission to conduct my research in four selected schools in your region. The study is to be conducted from 15 March to 30 April 2021. Normal classes will not be interfered with. It is required that Master's degree students should conduct research. I have therefore chosen four schools from your region to conduct my interview with teachers of Social Sciences of those schools. If permission is granted, the response can be emailed to: dmashiloane16@gmail.com

Thanking you in advance

Yours faithfully



David Mathabi Mashiloane

ANNEXURE: A

Contact: Mashiloane D.M.
Email: dmashiloane16@gmail.com

P.O. Box 868
Hendrina
1095
08 March 2021

The Circuit Manager
Steve Tshwete 2 Circuit
Private Bag x1824
Middelburg
1050

Dear Sir

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH STUDY AT SCHOOLS IN STEVE TSHWETE 2 CIRCUIT

The Acting Circuit Manager

I David Mathabi Mashiloane, a Master's Degree student at the University of Limpopo hereby request to be granted permission to conduct my research in four selected schools in your circuit. The study is to be conducted from 15 March to 30 April 2021. Normal classes will not be interfered with. It is required that a Master's degree student should conduct research. I have therefore chosen four schools from your circuit to conduct my interview with teachers of Social Sciences of those schools. If permission is granted, the response can be emailed to: dmashiloane16@gmail.com

Thanking you in advance
Yours faithfully

D.M. Mashiloane

David Mathabi Mashiloane

ANNEXURE: B

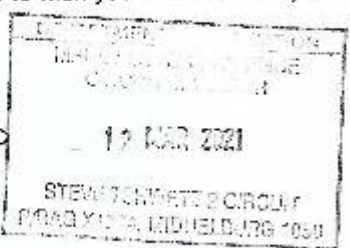
 education DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION MPUMALANGA PROVINCE		Private Bag 9 1004 Middeburg, 1004 Bela Building 3rd Street MIDDEBURG Mpumalanga Province Republic of South Africa
STEVE TSHWETE 2		www.besides100sr.za
<i>Umkhonto We Sizwe Department of Education Mpumalanga Province Department of Education Mpumalanga Province</i>		
Enq: Madonsela J.S. Tel: 013 249 8504		12 March 2021

TO	:	MR D.M. MASHILOANE MAZIYA PRIMARY SCHOOL
FROM	:	THE ACTING CIRCUIT MANAGER STEVE TSHWETE 2 CIRCUIT
SUBJECT	:	REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE STEVE TSHWETE 2 CIRCUIT.

1. Your letter dated 08 March 2021 refers.
2. Permission is hereby granted to conduct a research in our circuit on condition that it doesn't interfere with the teaching and learning process.
3. You are also urged to adhere to Disaster Management Act to ensure that all participants are protected at all times.
4. I want to take this opportunity to wish you all the best in your studies.

Yours faithfully,


(A) CIRCUIT MANAGER
MR M.D. MAKUSE




MPUMALANGA
THE PLACE OF THE FUTURE

ANNEXURE: C

Informed consent form

(Form for a teacher to participate in the research project)

(Must be signed by the teacher research participant who accepts to participate, and be returned with the letter of acceptance of the invitation to participate in the research)

Title of research project: **A reflection on Social Sciences teachers' pedagogical content knowledge and its implications for learner performance.**

I, (full names) hereby voluntarily grant my permission to participate as a Social Science teacher and will be observed as part of data collection in this project as explained to me in the letter of invitation to participate in a research project by The purpose, procedures, objectives, possible health and safety implications have been explained to me and I understand them. I understand my right to choose that I can participate in the project or not and that the information obtained will be handled confidentially. I am aware that the results of the investigation may be used for publication purposes. I am aware that it is within my rights to withdraw from participation in the project at any time I may feel like.

Signed:

Date:.....

Witness:.....

Date:.....

Researcher:.....

Date:.....

ANNEXURE : D

Contact: Mashiloane D.M.
Email: dmashiloane16@gmail.com

P.O. Box 868
Hendrina
1095
15 June 2021

Alex-Benjamin Secondary School
Steve Tshwete 7 Circuit
Kwazamokuhle
1098

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT YOUR SCHOOL

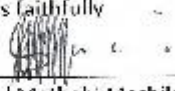
The Principal

I David Mathabi Mashiloane, a student at the University of Limpopo hereby request permission to access your school for at least four days. It is a requirement of Master degree that students should conduct a research. In order for me to complete the project I have chosen your school to conduct my interview with Social Sciences' teachers and also do the classroom observations, this will not even interfere with the teaching and learning process. I will also adhere to Disaster Management Act to ensure that all participants are protected at all times.

If permission is granted, the response can be emailed to : dmashiloane16@gmail.com

Thanking you in advance

Yours faithfully



David Mathabi Mashiloane

ANNEXURE : D

Contact: Mashiloane D.M.
Email: dmashiloane16@gmail.com

P.O. Box 868
Hendrina
1095
27 May 2021

Gekombineerde Skool Hendrina
Steve Tshwete 2 Circuit
Hendrina
1095

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT YOUR SCHOOL

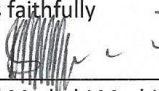
The Principal

I David Mathabi Mashiloane, a student at the University of Limpopo hereby request permission to access your school for at least four days. It is a requirement of Master degree that students should conduct a research. In order for me to complete the project I have chosen your school to conduct my interview with Social Sciences' teachers and also do the classroom observations, this will not even interfere with the teaching and learning process. I will also adhere to Disaster Management Act to ensure that all participants are protected at all times.

If permission is granted, the response can be emailed to : dmashiloane16@gmail.com

Thanking you in advance

Yours faithfully



David Mathabi Mashiloane

ANNEXURE : D

Contact: Mashiloane D.M.
Email: dmashiloane16@gmail.com

P.O. Box 868
Hendrina
1095
22 June 2021

Kwazamokuhle Secondary School
Steve Tshwete 2 Circuit
Kwazamokuhle
1098

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT YOUR SCHOOL

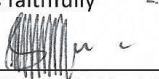
The Principal

I David Mathabi Mashiloane, a student at the University of Limpopo hereby request permission to access your school for at least four days. It is a requirement of Master degree that students should conduct a research. In order for me to complete the project I have chosen your school to conduct my interview with Social Sciences' teachers and also do the classroom observations, this will not even interfere with the teaching and learning process. I will also adhere to Disaster Management Act to ensure that all participants are protected at all times.

If permission is granted, the response can be emailed to : dmashiloane16@gmail.com

Thanking you in advance

Yours faithfully

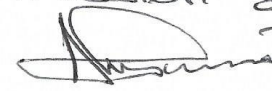


David Mathabi Mashiloane

MPUMALANGA
KWAZAMOKUHLE SECONDARY
SCHOOL
PRIVATE BAG X005, HENDRINA 1095

2021 -06- 22

 TEL/FAX: 013-294 1110
E-mail: tpvicks@gmail.com
Office of the Principal
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

- Permission granted.


ANNEXURE : D

Contact: Mashiloane D.M.
Email: dmashiloane16@gmail.com

P.O. Box 868
Hendrina
1095
14 June 2021

Mphephethe Primary School
Steve tshwete 2 Circuit
Hendrina
1095

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT YOUR SCHOOL

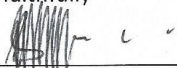
The Principal

I David Mathabi Mashiloane, a student at the University of Limpopo hereby request permission to access your school for at least four days. It is a requirement of Master degree that students should conduct a research. In order for me to complete the project I have chosen your school to conduct my interview with Social Sciences' teachers and also do the classroom observations, this will not even interfere with the teaching and learning process. I will also adhere to Disaster Management Act to ensure that all participants are protected at all times.

If permission is granted, the response can be emailed to : dmashiloane16@gmail.com

Thanking you in advance

Yours faithfully


David Mathabi Mashiloane



ANNEXURE : D

Contact: Mashiloane D.M.
Email: dmashiloane16@gmail.com

P.O. Box 868
Hendrina
1095
27 May 2021

Maziya P. School
Steve Tshwete Circuit 2
kwazamokuhle
1098

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT YOUR SCHOOL

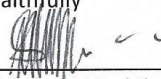
The Principal

I David Mathabi Mashiloane, a student at the University of Limpopo hereby request permission to access your school for at least four days. It is a requirement of Master degree that students should conduct a research. In order for me to complete the project I have chosen your school to conduct my interview with Social Sciences' teachers and also do the classroom observations, this will not even interfere with the teaching and learning process. I will also adhere to Disaster Management Act to ensure that all participants are protected at all times.

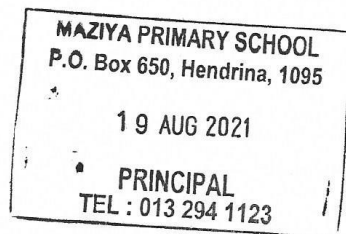
If permission is granted, the response can be emailed to : dmashiloane16@gmail.com

Thanking you in advance

Yours faithfully



David Mathabi Mashiloane



Permission granted


ALEX BENJAMIN SEC SCHOOL

Enquiries: S.F Mokoena
Telefax: 013 2941105/0828518312
E-mail: sakhilefarewellmokoena@ymail.com



P.O BOX 930
HENDRINA
1095

15 JUNE 2021

TO: MR D.M Mashiloane

FROM: The Principal

SUBJECT: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT OUR SCHOOL.

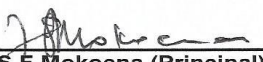
This letter serves to inform you that the permission to conduct research towards your studies at above-mentioned is granted.

I strongly believe that your observations and presence at our school will assist you to achieve your goals and empower you in your career.

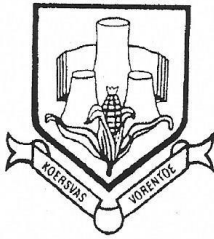
I hope that you will find the environment conducive for teaching and learning.

Thank you.

Yours in Education.


S.F Mokoena (Principal)





Schuinsstraat
Hendrina
1095
Tel: 013-293 0214

Privaatsak X6
Hendrina
1095
Fax: 013-293 0241

GEKOMBINEERDE SKOOL HENDRINA

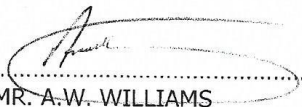
27 May 2021

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

PERMISSION FOR RESEARCH

Herewith I, the undersigned, grant permission to mr. David Mathabi Mashiloane, student number [REDACTED] to conduct research and carry out classroom observations for Social Sciences.

Yours faithfully


.....
MR. A.W. WILLIAMS
PRINCIPAL



LAERSKOOL KRAGVELD

Tel: 013 296 1039
E-pos: kragveld1@gmail.com

Privaatsak X1001
Pullenshope, 1096

19 Augustus 2021

Good morning Sir

RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

It's with great pleasure that Laerskool Kragveld granted permission to Mr DM Mashiloane (student no : [REDACTED]) a student at the University of Limpopo access to our school for research as required to complete his Master's Degree.

During the research he is going to interact with the Social Sciences Educator and also do classroom interaction.

Thank you for choosing our school for your very important research.

Kind regards.

Mrs JME Powell
Principal



University of Limpopo
Department of Linguistics, Translation and Interpreting
School of Languages and Communication Studies
Private Bag x1106, Sovenga, 0727, South Africa
Tel: (015) 268 3707, Fax: (015) 268 2868, email: kubayij@yahoo.com

19 November 2021

Dear Sir/Madam

SUBJECT: EDITING OF DISSERTATION

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled 'A reflection on social sciences teachers' pedagogical content knowledge and its implications for learners' performance: a case of schools in Mpumalanga Province, South Africa' by David Mathabi Mashiloane has been copy-edited, and that unless further tampered with, I am content with the quality of the dissertation in terms of its adherence to editorial principles of consistency, cohesion, clarity of thought and precision.

Kind regards

Prof. SJ Kubayi (DLitt et Phil - Linguistics)

Finding solutions for Africa

ANNEXURE: E

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What are your qualifications as a Social Sciences teacher?

2. For how long have you been a Social Sciences teacher?

3. Do you attend workshops that focus on teacher development? _____

- 3.1. What have you gained from attending such workshops?

4. What are the challenges of teaching and learning you have experienced in Social Sciences?

5. Can you elaborate on the training programme you attended with regard to teaching Social Sciences?

6. Are there any challenges experienced when teaching the subject content section that is not your specialisation? Elaborate.

7. How do you assist learners to learn Social Sciences?

8. How does educational reform contribute to the underperformance of learners?

9. How often do you review the lessons that you have taught? Elaborate.

ANNEXURE: F

OBSERVATION SCHEDULE

NAME OF TEACHER: _____

SUBJECT: _____

SCHOOL: _____

DATE OF OBSERVATION: _____

VENUE: _____

TIME: _____

08:00 – 08:15	Pre-observation discussion
08:15 – 09:15	lesson observation in practice
09:15 – 09:45	Post-observation report
09:45 – 10:15	Consolidation of Post-observation report

ANNEXURE: G

OBSERVATION FORM

NAME OF TEACHER: _____

SCHOOL: _____

GRADE: _____ SUBJECT: _____

DATE OF OBSERVATION: _____

LESSON TOPIC: _____

ITEMS	COMMENTS BY RESEARCHER
Learning and teaching materials used: • Are there enough textbooks? • Are the teaching and learning materials integrated into the lesson? • How are the learning and teaching materials used?	
Integration with other subjects: • Focus is only on Social Sciences or integrated with other subjects. • Lesson starts with prior knowledge relevant to the topic.	
Assessments: • Is the assessment of the lesson done directly or indirectly through classroom performance? • Is the assessment results analysed?	
Homework: • Are learners given homework activities to consolidate what was taught and learned at school? • Is the homework properly controlled?	

Seating arrangements:

- Seating in groups and group work
- Seating in pairs and working as pairs.
- Seating individually and working as individuals.

ANNEXURE: H



University of Limpopo
Department of Research Administration and Development
Private Bag X1106, Sovenga, 0727, South Africa
Tel: (015) 268 3935, Fax: (015) 268 2306, Email:
makoetja.ramusi@ul.ac.za

TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

ETHICS CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

MEETING: 17 February 2021

PROJECT NUMBER: TREC/12/2021: PG

PROJECT:

Title: A reflection on Social Science teachers' pedagogical content knowledge and its implications for learner's performance: A case of schools in Mpumalanga Province, South Africa.

Researcher: DM Mashiloane

Supervisor: Mrs MC Modipane

Co-Supervisor/s: Dr J Sefara

School: Education

Degree: Master of Education in Curriculum Studies

PROF P MASOKO

CHAIRPERSON: TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

The Turfloop Research Ethics Committee (TREC) is registered with the National Health Research Ethics Council, Registration Number: **REC-0310111-031**

Note:

- i) This Ethics Clearance Certificate will be valid for one (1) year, as from the abovementioned date. Application for annual renewal (or annual review) need to be received by TREC one month before lapse of this period.
- ii) Should any departure be contemplated from the research procedure as approved, the researcher(s) must re-submit the protocol to the committee, together with the Application for Amendment form.
- iii) PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER IN ALL ENQUIRIES.

Finding solutions for Africa