Central University of Technology, Free State

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF SUPPORT GIVEN BY SUBJECT EDUCATION SPECIALISTS: A CASE STUDY OF THREE SELECTED HIGH SCHOOLS IN THE MALUTI EDUCATION DISTRICT

BY

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<u>Declaration</u>

I, Magumela Moses Mteteleli, sincerely and solemnly declare that the contents of this dissertation is the result of my own investigation and research through the professional guidance of the recognized supervisor whose name appears on the front page and that it has not been submitted in part or full for any other degree or to any other university.

13 January 2017

Researcher's Signature

Date

I

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ABSTRACT

The issue of support given by Subject Education Specialists (SES's) to subject teachers in the High schools of Maluti Education District has continued to be a subject of debates in the last five years. The purpose of this study was to investigate the perceptions of subject teachers on the support given by Subject Education Specialists in the High schools of Maluti Education district. Again, the study sought to understand and explain the gap between policy on teacher support and its implementation in the High schools of Maluti Education district wherein Subject Education Specialists seemed to be grappling with the implementation process thereof. This action was prompted by the researcher's observation and the documentary analysis on poor learner academic performance. A qualitative research approach was undertaken to develop a better understanding of the research problem under investigation. The case study design of three selected High schools was deemed appropriate for the study. Purposive sampling was used to gather data from three High schools selected on the basis of their Grade 12 results in the last three years. This meant that the best performing, average performing and the lowest performing schools in the Grade 12 results in the last three years were selected for the study. Structured and semi-structured interviews were used to collect data and the pilot system was used to ensure reliability and validity of data collected. Content analysis followed by the development of themes was used to analyse the data. The findings of this study revealed that the SES's support given to subject teachers was minimal and the majority of them lacked content knowledge and pedagogical skills to enhance subject teachers to improve learner academic performance. Based on the findings of the study, some recommendations were made, inter alia, the provision of relevant support such as the computers equipped with relevant content knowledge and pedagogical software skills, provision of teaching and learning resources, on-the job training and bursaries to improve their skills in institutions of Higher Learning.

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SCHOOL	METHOD	SAMPLE
A	Unstructured Interviews Structured Interviews	5 7
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C	Unstructured Interviews Structured Interviews Pilot	1 9 3

PROFILING OF TEACHERS

ROLES	NUMBER
Principals	3
Deputy Principals	1
Heads of Departments	7
Teachers	31
POST LEVELS	**NUMBER**
4	3
3	1
2	7
1	31
WORK EXPERIENCE	**NUMBER**
1-5 Years	9
6-10 Years	6
11-20 Years	13
21 years and over	14
GENDER	**NUMBER**
Males	20
Females	22
AGE	**NUMBER**
23-30 Years	6
31-35 Years	5
36-40 Years	9
41 Years and over	22

LIST OF ACRONYMS

CASS – Continuous Assessment

DBE – Department of Basic Education

IQMS – Integrated Quality Management System

NEEDU – National Education and Evaluation Development Unit

OSD – Occupation Specific Dispensation

PAM – Personnel Administration Measure

SACMEQ – Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality

SASA – South African Schools Act

SDL – Self-Directed Learning

SES – Subject Education Specialist

SMT – School Management Team

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CHAPTER 1

1.1. INTRODUCTION

Maluti Education district High schools have always been doing well in the Grade 12 examinations up to the late 90's. As a result of its academic excellence, its High schools used to draw learners from the cities in spite of the fact that the Education district is mostly rural in nature. Maluti High schools became centers of academic excellence with almost all the High schools attracting teachers from the African States, India, Sri Lanka, Germany and a few from United States. The standard of both teaching and learning in the High schools was high and learner academic performance was credible. However, that excellent learner academic performance started tumbling down in the last 10 years with the result that currently, many High schools in the Maluti Education district are struggling to attain the national benchmark of 70%. While there might have been this general decline in performance, a few schools, in particular former Model C schools are still showing the Grade 12 achievements of yester years.

There are many reasons construed to have contributed to this problem and these are, for example, poor support by the Subject Education Specialists (SES′s), lack of resources such as libraries, laboratories and lack of accountability on the part of the subject teachers and poor discipline on the part of the learners. There has been a number of researches conducted before, for example, the research conducted by Legotho, Maaga and Sebego (2002) and by Dilotsotlhe, Smit and Vreken (2001) but very few of these have focused exclusively on the quality of support by the SES′s hence the focus of this study. For the purpose of this study, only the support given by SES′s to subject teachers to improve learner academic performance was explored. The background to this problem provided an array of information as to why the problem has aggravated.

1.2 THE BACKGROUND OF THE PROBLEM.

The problem of poor learner academic performance in many South African schools especially those in previously disadvantaged communities is a subject of public debates and it requires immediate solutions. According to Nuku (2012), the Department of Basic Education (DBE) needs to change its organizational culture when its current culture breeds underperformance. Since the advent of Education districts created by the Eastern Cape Department of Education in 2001, the importance of learner academic performance took a center stage. Every year, the majority of High schools under Maluti Education district perform below the national benchmark of 70% with very few of them showing glimpses of brilliance. The department has invested a lot of resources both human and material to these schools in order to enhance teaching and learning. In terms of Chapter 2 Section 29 1(a) and (b)of the Constitution Republic of South Africa promulgated in 1996, everyone has a right to learn and it is the responsibility of the department to make education accessible to citizens.

According to the Occupation Specific Dispensation (2007), Subject Education Specialists are specialists employed to provide and sustain professional development and support to serving subject teachers. Furthermore, in terms of the Guidelines on the Organization, Roles, and Responsibilities of Education Districts promulgated by the Department of Basic Education (2011), Subject Education Specialists are subject specialists charged with the responsibility to provide an environment that creates and fosters a commitment and confidence among subject teachers thus providing professional leadership among teachers in all the schools. The rationale behind their introduction in South Africa was to provide professional guidance to subject teachers in terms of content knowledge, methodology and the pedagogical skills. They must also disseminate information on the application of good practices to teaching and learning with a view to develop the capacity of the teachers to enhance learner academic performance (Govender, 2005).

It was against this background that Subject Education Specialists were appointed to give subject teachers in various disciplines content knowledge and pedagogical skills to improve the performance of subject teachers in order to enhance learner academic performance. However, the

continuous decline in Grade12 results has left educationists with a plethora of questions about the impact of SES in improving the performance of subject teachers. That has prompted the researcher to investigate the problem. The problem here is whether the SES′s are providing effective professional support and guidance to subject teachers in order for them to enhance learner achievement as informed by the rationale for their employment. In this study the concept of 'support' is used to define the assistance given by SES′s as subject specialists to improve the teachers′ teaching methods and strategies. The support given by SES′s to subject teachers to enhance learner achievement remains critical in this study .It was against that background that the researcher decided to probe into the problem and the study used the teachers in order to investigate what is happening in the classroom. (Pajares, 1992; Fang, 2006; Thompson, 1996) argue that 'teachers′ beliefs and teacher candidates should be a focus of educational research and can inform educational practice in ways that prevailing research agendas have not and cannot′.   This meant that the teachers′ beliefs should be used to broaden our understanding of what is happening in the classroom and enhance educational reforms. It must be borne in mind that the story of pursuing any intervention program that is intended to improve what happens in the classroom should use teachers′ beliefs as the framework for decision making and action (Hancock & Gallard, 2004). This study also followed this practice so that the data must be informed by the teachers′ personal experiences and their perceptions. This meant that the teachers′ experiences and their perceptions were very crucial in the pursuit of this study and its goals. The research sought to explore the teachers' perceptions of support given by SESs in the High schools of Maluti Education district in order to improve subject teachers′ performance in the classroom. This study was guided by the following research questions:

- Do subject teachers perceive the support given by SES′s to them as effective?
- Do subject teachers perceive SES′s as having the necessary capacity to improve teachers′ performance?
- How is the level of work relations between subject teachers and SES′s perceived by subject teachers?

The issue of SES′s support to subject teachers is manifested in various ways by different countries. For example, in Malawi, teacher development and support is used to address issues of

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strengthening capacity of the Ministry of Education Science and Technology to implement, monitor and manage teacher education and professional development that directly impact on enhanced early grade literacy and numeracy attainment, enhanced teacher performance, strengthen HIV/AIDS education and enhanced quality of teaching and learning materials. (Randolf & Harvey, 2011). This meant that systems of support are strengthened by way of supporting teachers in their schools. Such systems include, inter alia, the classroom visits by education official experts, providing resources to enhance the implementation of policy in schools. In the United States of America, teacher classroom support was designed to deal with the growing cultural and linguistic diversity increased by growing English Language learners (Elfers et al, 2009). In terms of this goal, schools, districts and the state were expected to form systems of support aimed at improving the self-efficacy and confidence of serving teachers. Teachers were provided with skills and knowledge to deal with linguistic diversity where focus was placed on implementation and outcomes. In Australia, teacher support is based on strong implementation delivered by experts and teachers are encouraged to develop habits of critical enquiry to determine relevance and impact of support on learner achievement. (McLaughlin & Oberman, 1996). In terms of this policy, teachers are expected to engage in collaborative reflections among themselves and engaging their mentors in areas of finding solutions to problems emanating from their classroom practice. In South Africa, teacher development and support is placed in the hands of Subject Education Specialists (SES's). These are officials employed by the Department of Basic Education to provide subject teachers with professional guidance and information on the application of best practices to teaching and learning (Govender, 2005). In terms of this policy, SES's are expected to collaborate with other professional bodies such as researchers, subject associations etc. to provide support to serving teachers in order to enhance learner achievement. They are expected to improve teachers' content knowledge and pedagogical skills in order to improve teachers' classroom instructions. They are also expected to conduct class visits and diagnostic tests to determine the impact of teachers' classroom instructions. (Occupation Specific Dispensation, 2007). On the contrary and at Maluti Education district in particular, the current approach to development and support is ineffective. It is mainly characterized by ineffective workshops as the only mode of development and support for teachers. Teacher development and support which is driven by workshop-style model does not have an impact on teacher practice and learner achievement (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009). SES's do not conduct class visits nor mentoring and coaching of subject teachers in

their different school contexts. There are no research programs nor peer observations and other means of supporting subject teachers to grow and develop. Instead, there are 1-5 days workshops which fail to have meaningful impacts on teacher practice and learner achievement. Consequently, teacher development and support becomes ineffective and learner achievement becomes hard to come. Grade 12 results continue to be poor. Annual National Assessment tests continue to show that learners in lower Grades fail to achieve credible marks in Literacy and Numeracy. Effective development and support of serving teachers involves confronting the challenges of developing an effective implementation strategy which will take full cognizance of all areas of support such as workshops, researches, class visits, peer observation, coaching and mentoring of teachers. It was against that background that the researcher decided to investigate teachers′ perceptions of support given by SES′s. This study argues that the SES′s main responsibility is to ensure that its mandate of providing support to schools is adhered to. This mandate involves managing quality teaching and learning in schools (Mavuso, 2013). Quality teaching and learning in schools is achieved through effective planning, training and effective support of subject teachers to deal with classroom practice. The questions guiding this study are: Do teachers perceive the support given by SES′s as effective? Do teachers perceive SES′s as having the capacity to improve teachers′ performance? How are the relations between SES′s and the teachers? These questions are crucial to this study in terms of finding solutions to the problem. These questions also inform the data collection stage which will come in Chapter 3 of the study.

1.3.   IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY.

The significance of this study was crucial to the Eastern Cape Department of Education especially Maluti Education district′s management and policy-makers in terms of providing them with alternatives to consider when dealing with learner academic performance improvement. Like any other Education district in the Eastern Cape, Maluti Education district is currently under a lot of pressure to find solutions to poor learner academic performance. The problem of poor learner academic performance and how teachers are developed and supported is a subject of public debates and it requires immediate solutions. According to Nuku (2012), the department needs to change its organizational culture when its current culture breeds underperformance. This assertion

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demonstrates the seriousness of the problem and how critical the problem was in the Eastern Cape Department of Education especially in the High schools of Maluti Education District. I consider it imperative to mention that after having explored a broad range of factors contributing to how teachers are supported and why learners perform poorly, I will submit my findings of the study to senior management of Maluti Education District for their considerations.

Secondly, the exploration of perceptions of subject teachers provided valuable information for the researcher and the District Management Team to reshape the strategies for helping teachers to improve learner academic performance. The findings of the study would also benefit Subject Education Specialists (SESs) in the Maluti Education district by developing relevant approaches to empower subject teachers. Eventually the academic performance of learners might also be improved by equipping subject teachers with both content knowledge and methodological approaches to be used to generate ongoing enthusiasm of learners in academic activities. It was hoped therefore that the findings of the study would also provide some innovations which would be key to influencing positive behaviors of subject teachers in order to rekindle the enthusiasm of the learners in the Maluti Education district. The problem facing Maluti Education district is presented below in the form of a statement that encapsulates the gravity of the problem.

1.4 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The role of SES′s is to provide effective support to subject teachers on subject content knowledge, pedagogical skills, knowledge of policies, ongoing professional development of subject teachers and to build solid work relations with the teachers (Govender, 2005). Since the introduction of SES′s by the Department of Basic Education in the last ten years to support subject teachers in schools, the majority of High schools in the Maluti Education district have performed below the national benchmark of 70% in Grade 12 results. This study was therefore intended to probe into the reasons that caused the drop in the quality of Grade 12 results and other lower grades and how the support of the teachers was anchored. This study used the perceptions of subject teachers to investigate if the support given by SES′s in the three selected High schools in the Maluti Education

district was indeed effective, efficient and was able to build the capacity of subject teachers in the teaching profession

1.5.　PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This study sought to find out whether the SES's have the capacity to provide subject teachers with the curriculum content knowledge and methodologies to be used to enhance learner academic performance in the High schools of Maluti Education district. In addition to exploring the support given by SES's to subject teachers, the study also sought to determine the perceptions of subject teachers on the support given by SES's to improve the capacity of subject teachers to enhance learner academic performance.

1.6.　OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To determine the perceptions of subject teachers on the effectiveness of the support given by SESs to subject teachers.

- To identify the support given by SESs on the curriculum content knowledge of subject teachers.

- To determine the teacher perceptions on the contribution of SESs in improving the capacity of subject teachers to enhance learner academic performance.

1.6. MAIN RESEARCH QUESTION

- What are the perceptions of subject teachers on the support given by Subject Education Specialist (SES) in the High schools of the Maluti Education district?

1.7.1. SUBSIDIARY RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- Do subject teachers perceive the support given by SES's to them as effective?

- Do subject teachers perceive SES's as having the necessary capacity to improve teachers′ performance?

- How is the level of work relations between subject teachers and SES′s perceived by subject teachers?

1.8. RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY.

The researcher is currently serving as a Circuit Manager in the Maluti Education district and has occupied this position for more than ten years now. In his experience as a Circuit Manager, he observed with great concern the gradual plummeting of learner academic performance in the High schools especially those in the deep rural areas. The same High schools which have become serial underperformers were the pride of Maluti Education district. Studies conducted by Mandrazo and Hounshell (1987) in Dilotsohle, Smit and Vreken (2001) demonstrated that there were several perceived roles of SES's such as instruction, curriculum, staff development, management and assessment in South Africa. They argued that SES's have no clear job description that underpins their role definition. They further argued that SES's in South Africa lack content knowledge to capacitate subject teachers in various disciplines.

On the contrary, Govender (2005) argues that the SES's responsibilities include, inter alia, the support of subject teachers on the subject content, sound knowledge of policies, various approaches to enhance teaching and learning ability to plan at both macro and micro levels and provide ongoing support to subject teachers to enhance learner academic performance. This study was intended to determine the impact and the effectiveness of the support given by SES's to subject teachers to enable subject teachers to improve learner academic performance in the High schools of Maluti Education district. Furthermore, the study was also intended to probe whether SES's were able to build strong, professional and solid relationships with subject teachers in their quest to improve learner academic performance.

1.9. DEFINITION OF TERMS

1.9.1. Subject Education Specialists: For the purpose of this study and as described by the Eastern Cape Provincial Guidelines on the roles of curriculum personnel (Govender, 2005) SES's are described as specialists whose task is to provide support to subject teachers on content knowledge, pedagogical skills, knowledge of policies, ability to plan both at macro and micro levels and provide ongoing professional support to improve subject teachers' performance.

1.9.2. Learner: This study used the definition of a learner as any person receiving education or obliged to receive education in terms of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (SASA).

1.9.3. Learner academic performance: This study described learner academic performance as a credible amount of work achieved by learner in various subjects after being assessed.

1.9.4. Perceptions: This study used the description by Papalia and Olds (1988) who described perceptions as the way in which the brain interprets sensations to make them meaningful.

1.9. **Support.** This is the advice given to subject teachers by their SES's and it also entails other characteristics such as individual tutoring, demonstration lessons, in-service training programs and organization of peer learning that are planned and implemented by local district officials (de Grauwe and Carron, 2007).

1.10 SCOPE AND DELINEATION OF THE STUDY

This study focused on the perceptions of subject teachers on the support given by Subject Education Specialists in order to make them enhance learner academic performance in the High schools of Maluti Education district. It was also limited to the geographical area of Maluti Education district and its High schools. The recommendations of the study were generalized only to Maluti Education district and its High schools.

1.11 OUTLINE OF THE REMAINDER OF THE STUDY

Chapter 1 - This was an introductory chapter which gave the background of the study by identifying the gap in the literature on the support of Subject Education Specialists to subject teachers in order to improve subject teachers' performance. This chapter also outlined the research questions, the statement of the problem, rationale and purpose of the study.

Chapter 2 - This chapter dealt with a detailed discussion of the literature reviewed. Concepts emerging from the reviewed literature were discussed in details and the theoretical framework upon which the study is based was discussed.

Chapter 3 - This was a detailed account of the research methodology and design which were used in the study.

Chapter 4 - In this chapter the data collected in the field were analyzed and discussed.

Chapter 5 - In this chapter the researcher summarized the research findings and came up with recommendations for the future research.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the researcher reviews the literature which he has surveyed about Subject Education Specialists (SES′s). It is also divided into the historical background of SES′s, the conceptual framework, the role functions of SES′s and the theoretical framework. The historical background outlines the brief history of teacher development and support and the rationale for the establishment of SES′s in South Africa.

The second part of this section deals with the conceptual framework and the role functions of SES′s. The literature review of this section forms part of the already existing knowledge on teacher support. Much as the idea of SES′s has evolved, there is little in terms of literature that the researcher has reviewed that relates to the support that SES′s give to subject teachers to improve classroom practice. Thirdly the theoretical framework which serves as the lenses in the investigation of support given by SES′s to subject teachers.

2.2 THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF SES′s

The concept of SES′s is relatively new in South Africa and it came into existence after the 1994 democratic elections. Prior to the democratic elections, school supervision and monitoring was driven by Subject Advisors whose mandate was to ensure that the curriculum was implemented. Subject Advisors were also expected to give assistance and guidance to serving subject teachers. In the same breadth, subject teachers were also expected to enhance learner academic performance. Before the advent of a new democratic dispensation, the political situation in South Africa was stratified into political entities such as the Bantustans. Each Bantustans had its own Ministry of Education which had its own mandate which was informed by its political landscape. Even Subject Advisory services used to be stratified in terms of the political dispensation. There was no uniformity in terms of the roles and the operations of the subject advisors. Each Bantustan had its own ways of running the Subject Advisory services which was mainly influenced by the political

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landscape of the time. The overriding function of Subject Advisors was to provide support to schools and also provide both administrative and professional guidance to schools

One of the most fundamental things about the Subject advisors of that time was their approach to their function of support to schools. Their approach was based more on the principle of inspection of teachers than to develop and support them. That scenario was driven by the assumptions that teachers were knowledgeable and skilful. Another very important feature of the assumptions of the time was that teachers' qualifications were of a generalist nature hence multi-grading in the primary schools. However, after 1984 and in particular in the Transkei, the first bunch of teachers with qualifications of a specialist nature emerged. Subject Advisors of that time still used the inspection approach to assess teachers' performance and to provide assistance in terms of curriculum delivery. Inspection was a traditional system of education where authorities monitored and managed quality in education by way of focusing only on the operation of the school and the performance of teachers (Dilotsohle, Smit, & Vreken, 2001; de Grauwe & Carron, 2007; Mavuso, 2013) That approach was not popular with the teachers and teachers regarded it as undemocratic and not developmental in its approach to teacher support. Subject advisors of that time focused on how teachers taught and how teachers handled their documents and planning activities.

When the new dispensation was formed in 1996, one of its main mandates was to set up one education system in South Africa, redress and democratize it. It was against that background that the new dispensation had to reform not only the structures but even the manner in which teacher support was structured and implemented. The new innovations resulted in the formation of SES's which was a paradigm shift from the traditional approach to teacher support (OSD, 2007). In fact, this study argues that the concept of 'Subject Advisors' was more functional and more biased towards the functions of Subject Advisors than their titles. The new title of 'SES's' had to emerge and the job sought to employ specialists in the delivery of the curriculum and support to schools. Some writers refer to SES's as Curriculum Specialists. In terms of this notion, curriculum specialists lead teachers to agree on standards, follow the adopted curriculum, use the same syllabi, develop shared assessments and above all, provide a specialist function to the teachers to manage the subject content and pedagogical skills. Harrison & Killion (2007) argue that curriculum specialists understand the curriculum standards, link the various components of the curriculum together, and understand how the curriculum is used in planning the instruction and how to ensure

consistent curriculum implementation throughout the school. The research question guiding this study is whether the SES′s in Maluti education district are perceived by the teachers to be effective enough to provide professional guidance to serving subject teachers. It is also probing into whether SES′s have the capacity to provide professional guidance to the teachers to enhance learner achievement. This study seeks to provide answers to its research questions stated above. It must be borne in mind that SES′s in Maluti education district were employed on the basis of their specialist knowledge in their areas of operation. The question is: are SES′s effective in their support functions to schools? Do SES′s have the capacity to do their job effectively?

2.3 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

In this section, an overview of the conceptual framework that underpins the historical background to the concept of Subject Education Specialists, the thinking behind their appointments, what role they were expected to play, was this role articulated in policy documents and how were they appointed to provide their service, is presented. This section also presented the role functions of SES′s.

2.3.1. DEFINITION OF THE CONCEPT OF SUBJECT EDUCATION SPECIALISTS

Different countries where the concept of subject specialism is applied have different meanings and definitions for Subject Education Specialists. For example, in Australia they define the concept of SES′s as 'specialists employed over and above the work of the primary school teachers who are commonly generalists in nature' (Ardzejewska, 2010). Primary school education system in Australia is delivered by generalist teachers however, there is a wave of change suggesting that primary schools must introduce specialist teachers. For example, the new change suggests that Physical education in primary schools in Australia be delivered by specialists (Angus, Olney & Ainley, 2010). In the UK, SES′s are defined as specialists employed by the education system in order to improve the teaching of Sciences in schools. The UK education system introduced subject specialism in order to balance the economy and the technological advancements brought by both the national and global issues which demanded more scientists and engineers (Association of Science Education, 2011) In the South African context, SES′s are subject specialists employed by

the Department of Basic Education to provide and sustain professional development and support to serving subject teachers across all levels of schooling (Occupation Specific Dispensation, 2007). According to the Guidelines on the Organization, Roles and Responsibilities of Education Districts (2011), SES′s are subject specialists with profound knowledge and experience appointed by the Department of Basic Education to create an environment that fosters commitment and confidence among subject teachers thus providing professional leadership among subject teachers in all the schools. Govender (2005), defines SES′s as subject specialists whose task is to provide support to subject teachers on content knowledge, pedagogical skills, and knowledge of policies, ability to plan both at macro and micro levels and provide ongoing professional support to improve subject teachers′ performance.

2.3.2 RATIONALE FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF SUBJECT EDUCATION SPECIALISTS.

The main reason for the appointment of SES′s in the Department of Basic Education is to provide ongoing professional development and support to serving subject teachers. In its quest to improve the quality of teaching and learning in schools, the department created this structure to ensure that the quality of serving subject teachers at all levels of schooling is closely monitored and improved. In terms of the OSD (2007), SES′s are also charged with the responsibility to improve the capacity of serving subject teachers to implement the principles and values of the applicable policy frameworks and plans. SES′s also analyze the performance of the subjects in schools thus providing research findings and performance gaps in order to provide ongoing support and opportunities for growth and development for subject teachers. One of the main reasons for the appointment of SES′s in the department is to promote the National campaigns on the Culture of Teaching and Learning Services (COLTS) in schools. It is against this background that the Department of Basic Education deemed it fit to appoint SES′s to implement all these role functions aimed at improving its service to its citizens. It is also very important to note that the department expected the SES′s to report back to it through monthly, quarterly and annual reports and other interactions with the department.

The department expects SES′s to work collaboratively with other structures such as the subject associations and researchers to gather data that would help evaluate itself if it is fulfilling its mandate. The question is whether SES′s have the capacity to fulfil these role functions in accordance with policy.

2.3.3 POLICY FRAMEWORK ON THE APPOINTMENT OF SUBJECT EDUCATION SPECIALISTS

The appointment of SES′s is firmly rooted in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Chapter 2 section 29 1(a) and (b) which states that everyone has the right to learn and that it is the responsibility of the state to make it accessible to all its citizens. The DBE is the driver of this mandate through its structures which include the appointment of SES′s to provide support to subject teachers in schools. The South African Schools Act No.84 of 1996 regulates the National Curriculum and all its structures including the appointment of SES′s to deliver the policy and provide support to teachers. The OSD (2007) makes provision for the appointment of SES′s to act as mentors to serving subject teachers in order to improve curriculum delivery in schools. The Guidelines on the Organization, Roles and Responsibilities of Education districts (2011) also makes provision for the appointment of SES′s to support subject teachers. The Eastern Cape Provincial Curriculum Guidelines for office-based personnel (2005) spell out the roles and responsibilities of curriculum personnel which include the role functions of SES′s in the DBE.

2.3.4 EXPECTED QUALIFICATIONS FOR SES′S

The expected qualifications for SES′s to be in the service of the DBE are that a person must have a degree in his/her area of specialization, must have trained as a teacher, must have eight years of teaching experience and be registered with the South African Council for Educators. These are the minimum qualifications as informed by OSD (2007) and the Personnel Administration Measures document (PAM) (Education Labor Relations Council, 2003)

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2.3.5 EXPECTED ROLE FUNCTIONS FOR SES'S

The Eastern Cape Provincial Curriculum Guidelines for office-based personnel (2005) make provision for different role functions expected to be carried out by SES's in the implementation of its mandate. The following are the expected role functions for SES's:

2.3.5.1 Professional collaboration with the teachers and professional bodies

One of the key roles of Subject Education Specialists is to provide professional guidance to the teachers and professional bodies in order to sustain good practices intended to provide effective support to serving teachers. Professional bodies include, inter alia, subject committees, subjects associations, school management teams (SMT's), coaches and interventionists. According to the Institute for Strategic Leadership and Learning (2013), SES's are responsible for building a community of practice through leadership, shared responsibility and professional collaboration with structures for collective responsibility for the ongoing evaluation and improvement of instruction. Fox (2010) uses the concept of "belonging" to describe the SES's professional collaboration with structures for collective responsibility for ongoing evaluation and improvement of instruction.

In concurrence with the notion expressed by Fox (2010), Wenger (1998) uses the 'communities of practice' to express belonging to groups or individuals who hold a shared identity through working towards a common goal or activity. Furthermore, the concept of professional collaboration also involves the provision of data for ongoing support, evaluation and improvement of instruction for subject teachers. Professional collaboration of SES's with other professional bodies also involves the analysis of research results, training needs for teachers, development of training manuals and how development, support and performance of teachers is implemented. It is clear that this partnership among various members from different backgrounds needs to be rooted in ethos of commitment, respect, friendship and honesty. It is therefore imperative that SES's operating within

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the framework of professional collaboration with structures need to be able to build strong relationships.

2.3.5.2 Building professional relationships

According to Maxwell (2013), leaders who adopt a relational approach to their leadership style will never walk alone. By implication, this means that leadership is a journey and no one undertakes it alone. SES′s lead the curriculum unit and are responsible for instructional support in schools. It is therefore imperative that they depend constantly on other support structures to move towards the realization of their vision. This means that they cannot succeed in their endeavors without the support of others. SES′s should connect with other structures for collective responsibility to provide guidance to the subject teachers. Also, SES′s should build solid relationships with the teachers to create a sense of harmony and a feeling of belonging. Strong relationships with the subject teachers build respect.

Solid relationships begin with respect and the desire to place value on other people. This means that a consistent show of respect to other people even before they respect you as a leader ensures mutual respect. If SES′s make their teachers feel respected by appreciating their contributions, teachers will surely feel respected and their confidence will be boosted and their productivity will increase. This does not mean that their behaviors or output will always be respected. A leader with character will always be quick to condemn behaviors that are not in line with productivity.

According to Dilotsohle, Smith and Vreken (2001), SES′s should have the ability to form relationships with adults. Teachers are adults and they should be treated as such. Respect is a solid foundation for good relationships however; it needs to be coupled with shared experiences over time. Teachers therefore serve as an integral part of the work of SES′s and the experiences shared together become a good recipe for success. At the same time the experiences shared together lay a firm foundation for mutual respect and trust. Respect and trust from both sides are essential for good relationships. Without trust, a relationship cannot be sustainable. SES′s need to understand the need for trust, respect and share successes and challenges with the teachers. In the same breadth, teachers are expected to reciprocate the amount of love and trust extended to them by

SES′s in order to create a sense of belonging across the spectrum. Building solid relationships by SES′s is one variable that this study was attempting to find answers to.

This study was probing into the ability of SES′s to build solid relationship which would unearth subject teachers′ potential. It is this kind of mutual and solid relationship that breeds success and commitment. There is no doubt that a program such as coaching and mentoring become sustainable if the mentor and the mentee have a solid relationship. Once again, the capacity of SES′s to build relationships that breed commitment was a variable that informed the data collection procedures which were dealt with in Chapter 3 of this study.

2.3.5.3 Coaching and mentoring

Coaching and mentoring are processes which enable the individual and the corporate employees to achieve their full potential. Both coaching and mentoring share similarities in that they provide services that enable the clients to achieve success in one more areas of their life or work. According to Parsloe (1999:8), coaching is ′a process that enables learning and development to occur and thus performance to improve.′ In order to be a successful coach, a person requires a sound knowledge and understanding of processes involved and a variety of styles, skills and techniques intended to enable learning and development to take place thus improving performance in a client. On the contrary, Clutterbuck and Magginson (1999:3) say′ mentoring is off-line help by one person to another in making significant transitions in knowledge, work or thinking.′ Implicit in the two definitions is the fact that coaching involves learning and development whilst mentoring involves the transitions in knowledge, ability and thinking.

In the context of this study, SES′s are expected to provide opportunities for teachers to learn, develop and grow. This process of providing teachers with opportunities to grow and develop in terms of content knowledge and subject pedagogical skills, is informed by the needs analysis of

teachers, exposure to various techniques employed to make classroom instruction effective, teachers' assessment reports and the quest to improve classroom instruction. SES's need to provide ongoing support that is relevant to the teachers. Depending on the individual or group support of the teachers, SES's are expected to provide ongoing support either as coaches or mentors. It is also imperative for SES's to develop their support on basis of the individuals' or groups' needs. For example, young and inexperienced teachers need to have their support tailored on basis of their needs. At the same time, SES's also need to act as coaches or mentors throughout the young teachers' journey to professional development and growth.

According to Hobson, Ashby, Malderez and Tomlinson (2009), the benefits of mentoring include, inter alia, improved subject knowledge, commitment to professional development, enjoyable and accessible lessons for pupils, enhanced pupil understanding and learning and enhanced career progression. The question was whether SES's have the capacity to achieve that? That was the area that the study was attempting to find answers to. It was also the area that informed the data collection procedures dealt with in Chapter 3 of this study. From the notion expressed above, it was clear that the role of SES's as coaches and mentors in the professional guidance of teachers cannot be overemphasized. Also, being a mentor takes a great deal of time and expertise in order to contribute towards the development of a new professional. It was in the context of that notion that SES's needed to be empowered with skills, ethos and knowledge to act as curriculum and instructional specialists.

2.3.5.4 The role of SES's as curriculum and instructional specialists

According to Harrison and Killion (2007),SES's act as both curriculum and instructional specialists in that they support teachers to implement effective teaching strategies and understand

the subject content standards and how they link together to ensure consistent curriculum implementation throughout a school. As curriculum specialists, SES′s use the curriculum to plan the classroom instructions, curriculum implementation and how assessment is to be implemented. SES′s assist teachers on how to agree on standards, how to follow the adopted curriculum, use of pace-setters and how to develop shared assessment strategies. One of the significances of SES′s as curriculum specialists is to build teachers self-efficacy such that teachers are able to believe in their abilities to deal with teaching and learning problems by reflecting on the practice and growing together as teams. Also, SES′s are responsible for providing guidance to the teachers on assessment including continuous assessment (CASS) and other appropriate learner assessment strategies.

According to Govender (2005:7), one of the responsibilities of SES′s as instructional specialists is to ′support teachers by visiting schools for targeted activities at regular intervals′. The implication here is that SES′s should provide ongoing on-site support to teachers as informed by their targets. On-site support includes, inter alia, conducting class visits for individual teachers or presenting to a group of teachers in a particular school based on the targets that the SES′s want to achieve. As instructional specialists, SES′s help teachers implement effective teaching strategies. Instructional specialists study research-based classroom strategies, explore which instructional methodologies are appropriate for the school and share the findings with colleagues. As a result of this exercise, teachers are able to reflect on their performance and analyze the findings in order to choose the most appropriate instructional methodology they should employ to improve their classroom instructions. In order to improve the self-efficacy of teachers, SES′s need to provide guidance to the teachers as to how should they improve as classroom practitioners. SES′s should encourage teachers to be life-long learners in order to keep abreast with the new developments in their profession.

2.3.5.5 The role of SES′s as Learning Facilitators.

The most important responsibility of SES′s is to facilitate life-long learning by the teachers. The facilitation of professional learning opportunities among staff members is one of the integral roles of SES′s in their quest to provide professional guidance to the teachers. This process starts by

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analyzing the training needs of the teachers thus noting the performance gaps reflected in the teacher's Integrated Quality Management and Support (IQMS) records. The IQMS reports are very important to SES's because they provide them with baseline about the information on the training and development needs of the teachers. If, for example, the training and development needs of the teachers require long periods of training, SES's may recommend that such teachers be given long leaves so that such teachers may be registered with the university or college in order to improve their classroom instructions. However, if the training needs require a short period of training, an on-the-job training may be recommended.

According to Harrison and Killion (2007), when teachers learn with and from one another, they focus on what most directly improves student learning. The implication here is that the teachers' professional learning becomes even more relevant when it focuses on the teachers' classroom work in order to fill the gaps in students' learning. It is therefore imperative for SES's to determine the nature of support the teachers need so that such support may be relevant in terms of addressing the performance gaps for the teachers in question. Another very important thing that facilitates learning and support among teachers is to analyze research findings and recommendations with SES's in order to interpret findings thus adopting common approaches to solutions. Teachers learn better when they learn from one another and from their peers. In order to act as catalysts for change SES's needed to consistently create opportunities for the teachers to develop and grow within the profession.

2.3.5.6 The role of SES's as catalysts for change

According to Larner (2004: 32), SES's are catalysts for change and visionaries who are 'never content with the status quo but rather always looking for a better way' thus creating opportunities for teachers to improve continually. SES's who adopt a catalyst role embark on a 'Total Quality Management' approach which is a philosophy that is based on the principles of continuous

improvement for both the organization and its employees. According to Bell et al (1994), total quality management (TQM) is about satisfying customer requirements and expectations. SES's are expected to improve the performance of teachers in the classroom instructions and their professional development. For schools to change for the better, teachers need to play a pivotal role in terms of improving their classroom instructions thus improving learner performance. It is evident that at the center of improved teacher's performance there are committed SES's driving the change. This means that, if SES's provide leadership and the strategies to enhance the performance of the teachers the organizations or schools will improve continually.

SES's who embark on a principle of continuous improvement have a strong commitment to continuous improvement. In such an environment, SES's continue to reflect on the performance of both their teachers and their students in order to address performance gaps. They also encourage teachers to perform maximally. This means that even if teachers and their students perform maximally, SES's should have an obligation to ensure that teachers and their students are not content with their performance but rather are motivated to always look for better ways to improve their performances. In that way, the schools will be in a position to achieve effective and sustainable change that enshrines the principle of continuous improvement.

2.3.6 CONCLUSION

Effective and sustainable classroom instructions in schools take place as a result of committed and ever learning teachers and motivated students. However, the multiple roles of SES's in supporting and influencing the work of the teachers and students is key to continuous improvement and visible change.

2.4 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Theoretical framework forms the underlying structure which can be compared to the construction of a new building where there is a foundation upon which the structure is built. On basis of the idea mentioned above, it is clear that no one theoretical perspective can be enough to gain insight

and understanding of the perceptions of subject teachers on the support given by the Subject Education Specialists. To vindicate this assertion, the researcher strengthened this research project on Knowles' (1980) andragogy and Vygotsky's (1978) constructivist model as the perspective through which to understand the perceptions of subject teachers on the support given by Subject Education Specialists.

2.4.1 THEORY: ANDRAGOGY

In order to draw clear lines of distinction between the way adults and children learn, studies conducted by Knowles(1980) introduced the concept of 'andragogy' as the art and science of helping adults learn thus contrasting it with 'pedagogy', the art and science of teaching children. To portray this idea, Knowles (1980) developed the adult learning theory which mainly focuses on the way in which adults best learn. According to this theory, adults learn best when they talk about their life experiences and when such life experiences are related to the learning process. Knowles' theories focus more on the adult learner who is independent and has seen the need to understand how something new will benefit him and how something new fits into the existing knowledge and reinforces the autonomy to learn in a way that benefits them (Taylor, 2005).

The andragogical model states that there are five assumptions to be considered and addressed in formal adult learning. These are:-

- Letting learners know why something is important to learn.
- Showing learners how to direct themselves through information.
- Relating the topic to the learner's experiences.
- People will not learn until they are ready and motivated to learn.
- Motivation helps them overcome inhibitions, behaviors and beliefs about learning.

According to Knowles (1980), adult learners are internally motivated and self-directed. This means that adult learners resist learning when they feel that the ideas, information or actions are imposed on them. In concurrence with the above mentioned sentiments, Fidishun (2000) states that the role

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of adult learning facilitators is to ensure that adult learning is designed such that it ensures a movement towards a self-directed and responsible learning and that the learner must be motivated to learn. In the context of this study, Subject Education Specialists need to take full cognisance of the fact that teachers are adult learners and any support given to them by SES's need to be aimed at moving them towards a self-directed and responsible learning. Key to the teachers' self-directed and responsible learning is the development of a rapport between SES's and teachers. In terms of the idea mentioned above, SES's need to optimize their approachability thus encouraging teachers to ask questions and explore concepts presented to them.

SES's providing support to the teachers need to provide teachers with an opportunity to use their existing knowledge and experience gained from life experiences thus applying it to their new learning experience .According to Fidishun (2000), adult learners have gained experience from life experiences and can use their existing foundation of knowledge when solving problems and in reasoning processes. In the context of this study, the above mentioned thought suggests that teachers come to any support program given to them by SES's with a firm foundation of knowledge either personally at work or in study related experiences. This means that SES's need to provide teachers with reflective learning experiences and guide them to move towards the understanding of new information given to them. According to Kearsley (2010), adult learners learn more effectively when learning is problem-centered rather than content-orientated.

In the context of this study, SES's need to be acquainted with the skills of enhancing the learning of subject teachers as adult learners whereby learning techniques such as case studies, projects, group brainstorming, peer to peer discussions and mind maps are embraced. In all the instances mentioned above, adult learners need to be given some degree of ownership and allow them to invest their previous experiences in the learning process and self-direct learning such that it meets their various needs. According to Brookfield (1990), adult learners come to learning as volunteers and they have the power to engage or withdraw from the proceedings at any stage depending on how they perceive the fulfillment of their expectations. Brookfield (1990), says that the greatest

challenge lies in arranging them for a lesson process where one adult learner may feel uncomfortable to be part of a particular group due to cultural differences. This action may spark a feeling of resentment and such a learner is likely to display a feeling of disrespect to the facilitator of learning. However, this may not mean that criticism and suggestions should be avoided in discussions but that a feeling of self-worth should be considered at all times. This then implies that embarrassing an adult learner publicly and displaying disrespect is likely to make withdrawal certain.

Mezirow (2000), states that adult learners need to be subjects of their own learning through what he calls, 'Self-Directed Learning.'' Self-Directed Learning is a process whereby individuals take the initiative without the help of others in planning, carrying out and evaluating their experiences' (Knowles 1980:74). In his Transformative Theory on adult learning, Mezirow (2000:198) describes Self-Directed Learning (SDL) as 'a process in which individuals take the initiative without the help of others in planning, carrying out and evaluating their own learning experiences'. The key factor in the roles and responsibilities of SES's is to guide teachers to be able to enhance learner academic performance. In terms of this theory; the central responsibility of the SES's is to enhance Transformative Learning. Transformative Learning is described as learning that changes the way individuals think about themselves and their world and that involves a shift of consciousness (Mezirow, 2000). In essence, Transformative Learning promotes self-directed learning in an adult learner who takes responsibility of his own learning and makes informed decisions. It is clear that SDL can be difficult for adult learners who lack confidence, independence and internal motivation.

The concept of andragogy also involves the constructivist theory of education as reflected in Knowles' work. Knowles' (1984) main focus on self-direction, problem-centered learning and learner experiences are consistent with constructivism. Constructivism postulates learning as an active process during which a learner develops new ideas based on what the learner has already achieved. In terms of the constructivist theory, the role of the facilitator is to motivate learners to discover principles of knowledge on their own and then help them to translate information acquired on their own into content that learners can understand and apply in acquiring new or additional

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knowledge. Brunner (1966) stresses that curricula are structured to enable the learner to build on the past experiences thus identifying the knowledge gaps. Carl Rodgers (1967) refers to this kind of learning as experiential learning i.e learning based on self-directedness, experience and problem centeredness.

In terms of this study, the role of SES′s is to motivate subject teachers to rediscover new information on their own thus helping them to identify knowledge gaps and applying acquired knowledge to gain more knowledge. In terms of this theory, subject teachers will be able to use the past experiences in order to acquire new knowledge. By implication, this means that SES′s are central in helping channel subject teachers′ research abilities to gain new knowledge using past experiences. SES′s should strive to create an environment for subject teachers to acquire content knowledge using past experiences. The constructivist theory purports subject teachers as adult learners and therefore self −directed and come to any developmental program with a wealth of experiences that become valuable in guiding them to acquire new knowledge. SES′s support and guidance is therefore crucial to subject teachers′ quest for finding solutions to their instructional experiences.

Knowles (1984) andragogical assumptions also impact on Maslow′s hierarchy of needs by stating that adults are best motivated to succeed in their educational goals when they are appreciated and recognized for their contributions to the class. In terms of Blondy (2007), Maslow′s hierarchy of needs consist of five levels of human needs. They start with physiological needs and progress to safety needs, the need for love and belonging, the need for self-esteem and the need for self-actualization. The basic principle of Maslow′s hierarchy of needs is that human beings accomplish and fulfill the lower levels of the hierarchy thus gradually moving to the self-actualization levels. In the same breadth, Knowles (1984) maintains that when adult learners grow and mature, they become self-directed and wiser due to their past experiences. In terms of this study, subject teachers are adult learners and are self-directed. Developmental programs given to them must be learner-centered and must be designed such that they are able to make subject teachers unleash

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their full potential. This calls for a need to analyze the training needs of the subject teachers before any developmental program could be given. The content knowledge of SES's and their pedagogical skills are very crucial in terms guiding subject teachers to unleash their full potential otherwise subject teachers will not be effective in delivering instructional programs. The biggest question is whether SES's in the district have the content knowledge by which to guide subject teachers to unleash their full potential? This is the area that this study is attempting to find answers to.

The issue of the content knowledge and the effectiveness of the SES's in developing the knowledge base of subject teachers is crucial in this study in terms of informing the data collection procedures to be dealt with in Chapter 3. Maslow's hierarchy of needs reveal that human beings need to fulfill the need for love and belonging. The development of a rapport between SES's and subject teachers as reflected in Maslow's need for love and belonging is also very crucial to boost the self-esteem of subject teachers. The question is whether SES's are able to build a rapport that is strong enough to build self-esteem in subject teachers in the High schools of the district? This is the area that this study is also attempting to find answers to. Once again the issue of positive relationships and the need to belong informs the data collection procedures to be dealt with in Chapter 3.

Another very important dimension of the constructivist model which caught the attention of the researcher in the concept of andragogical assumptions was the studies conducted by Vygotsky (1978).The researcher positioned this study within the constructivist model as propounded by Vygotsky because the researcher considered constructivism to be the foundation from which to explore the perceptions of the teachers on the support given by SES's. Studies conducted by Vygotsky (1978) were intended to uncover the relationships between learning capabilities and developmental processes through the theory of constructivism. Because of the emphasis of this study which is on the perceptions of the teachers on the support given by SES's, subject teachers are viewed as adult learners and any support given to them by SES's should adopt a learner-centered approach to learning. This then means that support given by SES's to the subject teachers has to take place from the subject teachers' point of view.

Vygotsky (1978) developed a concept of Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), a concept that arose from his belief that in order for one to learn, a challenge is needed which will maximize ones intellectual development. According to Kozulin, Gindis, Ageyev and Miller(2003:2), ZPD refers to the 'distance between the actual development level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers'. This means that if learners are motivated to learn, they need to be challenged within close proximity to yet slightly above their current level of development. When a learner succeeds in achieving a challenging task, a learner gains confidence to do a more complex task.

Wood and Middleton (1974) maintain that learning is a journey from the actual level of development to the level of potential development through problem solving under adult guidance or more knowledgeable peers. They further maintain that the support of the learners through general encouragements, specific instructions and direct demonstrations are very crucial in motivating the learners to learn. They believe that the process of making the task simple, demonstrating the task and maintaining the learner's interest in the task are key to the learner's development from the actual level of development to the level of potential development. This consistent support of the learners to grow and develop under the guidance of adults or more capable peers is linked to Vygotsky's (1978) ZPD and scaffolding. It is clear that a learner working within the ZPD requires a great deal of guided participation under the guidance of adults or more knowledgeable peers. Vygotsky (1978) terms the learning of the learner under guidance of a competent and committed adult 'scaffolding'. A scaffold is normally a temporary structure that is erected around a building to support the building process until it is complete. It is gradually removed when it ceases to be needed.

By implication, teachers need a great deal of guided participation under committed and competent SES's who provide the scaffolding role in assisting and guiding them to attain the content

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knowledge and subject pedagogies. According to this notion, subject teachers need consistent guidance by SES's to move from the ZPD to the next level of becoming capable and independent masters of their subject areas. Once a teacher is able to master his or her subject area, the input of the SES will gradually be reduced and such a teacher will work independently to complete his or her work. According to Evans, Hawksley, Holland and Caillau (2008:11)'once a teacher is seen to have reached their full personal and professional development, the mentorship role of the SES's is reduced and such a teacher is allowed to work independently'. By implication, this means that once the teacher is understood to have attained both the content knowledge and the subject pedagogies, the input of the SES will be reduced thus allowing the teacher to work independently. Content knowledge and subject pedagogies serve as vehicles by which to make subject teachers grow and mature. This aspect informs the data collection procedures to be dealt with in Chapter 3.

2.4.2 Criticisms of Andragogy.

The concept of andragogy and its assumptions on adult learning provided adult education with a firm foundation and a brand new name by which to understand adult education in a broader context. Andragogy is strongly recognized for its guiding practices of adult education. However, over the last decade, it has come under heavy criticism from various scholars. The general criticism of the concept of andragogy is that it lacks the fundamental characteristics of a science due to its limited empirical evidence produced (Merriam, Caffarella & Baumgarter, 2007).

In critiquing andragogy, scholars such as Pratt (1993) and Rachal (1994) assert that andragogy lacks the fundamental characteristics of a science because it cannot be measured. There is general consensus among critics that the philosophical foundation of andragogy presents valuable information by which to understand adult learning in context. Its anecdotal evidence outweighs its experimental evidence (Rachal, 1994). According to Rachal (2002: 211), 'the elasticity in the meaning of andragogy and the variability of interpretations and its empirical evidence, have tended to be inconclusive, contradictory and few'. By implication this means that even long after a number of scholars have criticized the usefulness and application of andragogy, there has been no experimental evidence endorsing it as a science. A conundrum facing most critics is whether

andragogy leads to researchable questions that will advance knowledge in adult education? It is clear that andragogical assumptions merely represent an ideal starting point for educators and facilitators of adult education to use in their instructional approaches.

The usefulness and the application of andragogical assumptions became a subject of debates among different scholars. This emanated from the fact that its science became inconclusive. That was largely due to its elasticity of meanings and its variability of interpretations. According to Merriam (2001), there are four obstacles that affect its ability to be tested in order to produce empirical evidence. The first obstacle is whether andragogy is the theory of adult learning or not. Davenport and Davenport (1985: 157) classified andragogy as a 'theory of adult education, theory of adult learning or method of adult education or perhaps just assumptions which describe what an adult learner should look like'. The second obstacle is that it lacks clear procedures to be followed when measuring it such that even Knowles indicated that its means for evaluation is collaboratively predetermined by the learner and the facilitator (Rachal, 2002). The third obstacle is that Knowles rejects the use of tests and grades as measuring tools and that creates a problem to justify andragogy's legitimacy.

The fourth obstacle relates to the way in which Knowles presents the characteristics 'adults'. Knowles presents adults as independent and self-directed learners. Merriam (2001) argues that some adults are dependent on the teacher for structure hence the criticism of andragogical assumptions and its lack of empirical evidence. Whilst it is true that the usefulness and the application of andragogical assumptions were criticized by different scholars for its lack of empirical evidence, my position is that they were developed as a result of experiences, observations and had a great influence on the development of the theory of adult education. Andragogical assumptions have provided a firm foundation upon which to understand the theory of adult education. Andragogical assumptions should therefore be used by facilitators of adult education because they serve as a guide by which to understand the realities of adult learners.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents an account of the method used in this study. It also discusses the philosophical orientation within which this research is anchored. This is followed by the design used, the data collection strategies and how the research ensured the issues of reliability and data trustworthiness. This study concludes by presenting the ethical considerations guiding this research.

3.2 RESEARCH ORIENTATION

According to Welman, Kruger & Mtchell (2011: 2), 'research is a process that involves obtaining scientific knowledge by means of various methods and procedures. Leedy and Ormrod (2005: 2) refer to research as 'a systematic process of collecting, analyzing and interpreting data in order to increase our understanding of the phenomenon about which we are interested or concerned.' The implication here is that we conduct research in order to enhance our understanding of a phenomenon so that we are able to communicate what we have discovered to the broader scientific community. This section discusses the ontological and the epistemological issues this study will be laying emphasis on. Both ontology and epistemology are branches of philosophy that all researchers adopt.

3.2.1 ONTOLOGICAL ISSUES

According to Grix (2004: 5), ontology is a philosophy that relates to the nature of social reality, claims about what exists, what it looks like, what units make it up and how the units interact with each other'. It focuses on the questions such as what we believe about the nature of reality and raises the arguments relating the possibility of singular, verifiable reality and truth as opposed to the inevitability of socially constructed multiple realities (Patton, 2002). It is concerned about what we mean when we say something exists (Mack, 2010). In a nutshell, it is a philosophy that studies reality.

Antwi and Hamza (2015) aver that ontology and epistemology are studies that relate to the research paradigms. In simple terms, they guide the selection of a research methodology upon which research is anchored. Researchers in this paradigm assume that reality is objective and is measurable. In other words, at ontological level, positivists hold a view that knowledge is objective and quantifiable (Antwi & Hamza, 2015). By implication this means that the researchers in this paradigm develop scientific methods, systematize knowledge generation process and with the help of quantification ensures precision of results attained. This view describes society as being driven by principles which are proven by scientific means. It also focuses on the social construction of people's ideas and concepts. On the other hand, realist ontology hold a view that the world is objective and real. Ontology therefore helps researchers to adopt an objective approach to reality.

3.2.2 EPISTEMOLOGICAL ISSUES

Epistemology is the branch of philosophy that is concerned with the look of nature of knowledge and truth (Mack, 2010). Epistemology relates to what we mean when we say we know something. It is concerned with questions such as how we know, what we know and how that knowledge is produced. This paradigm is based on the view that knowledge is real, acquirable and is based on control and the manipulation of reality (Mack, 2010). Quantitative researchers working on this paradigm develop and test the hypothesis and measure how the variables interact, dictate the events and finally arrive at the outcomes. Therefore, multivariate analysis and statistical techniques are employed to arrive at the outcomes of the research. On the other hand, qualitative researchers are concerned with the understanding of reality from subjective experiences of individuals. They use methodologies such as interviews, observations and the relationships between the researcher and his subjects. Researchers in qualitative approaches use inductive approaches and on the other hand quantitative approaches use deductive approaches in order to obtain knowledge and understanding.

3.3 RESEARCH PARADIGM: INTERPRETIVISM

Creswell (2012) refers to research paradigm as an interpretation that is not better or more accurate but simply bringing the teacher's own perspectives to the researcher's interpretation. The concept of interpretivism evolved from the study of hermeneutics which is basically the study of theory and practice of interpretation (Maree, 2011). This study falls within the parameters of the interpretive paradigm because it sought to explore the teacher's perceptions of support given by

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the SES's in the High schools of Maluti Education District. The responses that teachers gave served as a source of meaning to their roles as teachers. Researchers using an interpretative paradigm place a lot of emphasis on understanding the world through experiences than testing the laws governing human behavior. In order to get rich data about the phenomenon under investigation, the researcher used interviews wherein participants were free to articulate their own perspectives in context. This study argues that the correct approach to understanding what is happening inside the classroom starts with the teachers' beliefs, opinions and perceptions. Teachers' perceptions were very crucial to the researcher's quest in finding solutions to the problem under investigation. It is against this background that personal experiences and perceptions of teachers about the problem under investigation were used.

The interpretive paradigm is underpinned by observation, interpretation and makes meaning out of drawing inferences by judging the match between the information and abstract theories (Antwi & Hamza, 2015). Therefore the interviews were used as a data collection strategy to position the study within the parameters of the interpretive paradigm which uses the experiences of human beings in their contexts. The interpretive paradigm involves the understanding of the lived experiences of people in a particular context or historical setting (de Vos et al, 2011) Interpretivism is therefore about the view that advocates the fact that it is necessary for the researcher to understand human's roles as social actors and the meaning human beings give to these roles. This study was based on the meaning and understanding of the teachers about the support given by SES's and this phenomenon was based on their views in their social context. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) refer to the interpretivism paradigm as a research strategy whereby the theme is developed after the collection and the examination of data. After the examination of data, the researcher was able to come up with themes. According to Cohen et al (2011), qualitative researchers examine and interpret data thus systematically analyze it to build themes or patterns. This means that researchers made sense of data in terms participants' definitions of the situation thus noting patterns, themes, categories and regularities (Cohen et al, 2011). Researchers working within the interpretive paradigm are naturalistic (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). They use their participants in real-world situations and observe them as they unfold without manipulating them. Researchers in this paradigm rely on the use of qualitative methods which rely on relationship between the researcher and the group being studied. Researchers build partnerships with

participants in an attempt to get rich data within the context of the phenomenon being studied. Qualitative methodologies are inductive and have a high validity and less generalizability but concerned with studying a research problem in its unique context (Neuman, 2003)

3.4 RESEARCH APPROACH: QUALITATIVE

This study used qualitative approach because the researcher wanted to have an in-depth exploration of the teachers′ perceptions of support given by SES′s to subject teachers in the High schools of Maluti Education district. Maree (2011) describes qualitative research as the research that attempts to gather rich descriptive data about a particular phenomenon or context with a view to develop an understanding of what is being studied. It therefore focuses on how the individuals or groups view the world and how they develop the meaning from the perspective of their experiences. Welman, Kruger and Mitchell (2011) describe qualitative research as the description of phenomena from their experience of the phenomena. The researcher used the qualitative research because this study was about exploring the perceptions of the teachers on the support given by SES′s in the High schools of Maluti Education district. According to Strauss and Corbin (1998:11), ″qualitative methods can be used to obtain intricate details about phenomena such as feelings, thought processes and emotions that are difficult to extract or learn about through more conventional methods.″ Qualitative research was used in this study so that data based on words from a small group of individual participant′s views could be obtained (Creswell, 2012). Hence, Leedy and Ormrod (2005) claim that qualitative approach is concerned with the understanding of human beings through their description of experiences as lived and defined by the actors themselves. Furthermore, Leedy and Ormrod (2005) base qualitative research on the premise that human beings are complex and dynamic. Si nce qualitative research plays an important role in providing the meaning of the lived experiences, the researcher probed a reflective account of the teacher′s perceptions of support given by Subject Specialists in the high schools of Maluti Education District.

Babbie and Mouton (2004) say that the qualitative approach focuses at the narrative and descriptive nature of situations, relationship or people dealing with the description of human beliefs, attitudes, thoughts, perceptions and emotions. Since the qualitative data collection methods

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are flexible and unstructured, Strauss (2005) claims that data is captured verbatim and it involves a considerable use of inductive reasoning. By implication this means that qualitative studies make specific observations and then draw inferences about the larger population from the sample. According to Leedy and Ormrod (2005), qualitative research findings are presented in words, narratives and in literary style. Babbie and Mouton (2004) assert that the qualitative approach is a valuable means of obtaining the insight through the establishment of a comprehensive understanding of the topic.

It is for this reasoning that the qualitative approach was used in this study to have an in-depth exploration of the teachers' perceptions of support given by Subject Education Specialists in the High schools of Maluti Education District. Mouton (2005) describes the qualitative research approach as the approach whereby research takes place at the point when insiders or participants give their views or perspectives on a social action. In this study, for example, teachers give account of their perceptions of support gives by Subject Education Specialists in the high schools Maluti Education District. The goal of research is defined as describing and understanding (Verstehen) rather than the explanation and prediction of human behavior (Mouton, 2005) It was therefore, through structured interviews that the researcher was able to understand the participant's experiences and in terms this study, the perspectives of teacher support given by SES's in the High schools. One of the features of a qualitative inquiry is that it is naturalistic in nature (Maharaj, 2005).

The limitations of the qualitative approach are: "It lacks relevance for everyday life in that it is not sufficiently dedicated to exactly describing the details of a case in its concrete circumstances." (Flick, 2006:12) In responding to this challenge or setback, the researcher observed the performance of subject teachers in the grade 12 results over the years and it was clear that something was wrong within the system.

Qualitative research is based on a system of a subjective meaning which is a narration of one's experiences (Welman, Kruger and Mitchell, 2001). The qualitative approach is further criticized for being unable to establish the extent of a problem but only gives the description of the problem (Kumar, 2005). In trying to counteract this setback, the researcher analyzed the performance of teachers in the grade 12 results and how support could be used to change things around. Qualitative research is criticized for being contemplated at early or at the exploratory stages of the study (Silverman, 2000). The researcher used the observation of the problem to be investigated and the documentary analysis as means to try and estimate the extent of the problem in the High schools of Maluti Education District. The researcher's observation was strengthened by the fact that he is a Circuit Manager and therefore participates in the discussions seeking to find a solution to learner performance improvement in the district.

3.5 RESEARCH DESIGN: CASE STUDY

Creswell (2012) defines a case study as research in which the researcher explores in-depth a programme, an event, an activity, a process or one or more individuals. A case may be either simple/complex, it may be about an individual, a group of individuals, a situation, condition or system (Punch, 2003, Punch, 2006; Leedy and Omrod, 2005 and Denzil and Lincoln, 2011b) Experienced qualitative researchers have identified case study research as a stand-alone qualitative approach (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011b). Case study research has a level of flexibility that is not readily offered by other qualitative approaches such as grounded theory or phenomenology. Yin (1984: 23) defines the case study research method as an "empirical inquiry which investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident and in which multiple sources of evidence are used". Bromley (1990: 302) defines the case study as a "systematic inquiry into an event or a set of related events which aims to describe and explain the phenomenon of interest." On the other hand, Welman and Kruger (1999: 190) define the case study method as a method that seeks to study a limited number of units of analysis such as an individual, a group or an institution intensively. From the definitions presented here, it is clear that case studies are basically intensive investigations of the factors that contribute to the characteristics of the case under investigation

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Merits

The case study method supports both theory building (Yin, 2009) and theory testing (Eisenhardt, 1989). The case study method's support for theory building is particularly useful in areas where existing theoretical and conceptual frameworks are inadequate (Chetty, 1996). Usually no hypothesis is formulated but "general ideas" or "expectations" can act as a guide to the empirical research (Mouton, 2001: 150). The insights arising from case-based theory building research can be used as hypotheses or propositions in further research. Case study research therefore plays an important role in advancing a field's body of knowledge (Merriam, 2009).

Demerits

Case study is one of the most frequently used qualitative research methodologies. However, it still does not have a legitimate status as a social science research strategy because it does not have well-defined and well-structured protocols (Yin, 2002). Emerging researchers who plan to utilize case study usually become confused "as to what a case study is and how it can be differentiated from other types of qualitative research" (Merriam, 1998). Research methodologists do not have a consensus on the design and implementation of case study, which makes it a contested terrain and hampers its full evolution.

Justification

The researcher selected case study for the following reasons. First, Yin, Merriam and Stake are the three seminal authors who provide procedures to follow when conducting case study research (Creswell, Hanson, Plano, & Morales, 2007) which aid educational researchers to construct a roadmap in their utilization of case study. They are seen as three foundational methodologists in the area of case study research whose methodological suggestions largely impact educational researchers' decisions concerning case study design. Second, previous work on case study detailed the design (Baxter & Jack, 2008), introduction (Tellis, 1997a), and application of case study methodology (Tellis, 1997b) for broader audience of novice qualitative researchers.

Rationale

This study employed a case study because it has a level of flexibility that is not readily offered by other qualitative approaches such as grounded theory or phenomology. Second, the study sought to have an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon/situation under investigation. In a nutshell study followed a case study design of 3 selected High schools in the Maluti Education district whereby the researcher explored the teachers' perceptions of support given by Subject Education Specialists (SES's) in the High schools selected. In exploring the teacher's perceptions of support given by SES's, the researcher hoped to have a deeper understanding of the teacher's perceptions of support given by SES's in the 3 selected High schools of Maluti Education District. The study therefore opted for a case study in order to get rich experiences of teachers in their own contexts. The teachers were used as participants in the investigation with a view to provide firsthand information about the subject of investigation. A case study was used because the researcher hoped to get first-hand information from teachers who were teaching at the High school where accurate information was sought. Therefore the issue of teachers live experiences and contexts was crucial to this study hence using teachers as a case under investigation. The focus of the study was to get teachers who had an experience of teaching in a High school as a qualification to participate in the study. Huberman and Miles (2002) noted that a case study focuses on understanding the dynamics that prevail within one entity. The researcher hoped that the data he got from the outcome of the study would broaden the scope and knowledge of managers in the field of teacher support and its complexities in the Maluti Education District.

. The researcher hoped that the data he got from the sample would be generalized to other situations similar in the High schools of the district. That meant that a case study was necessary because its context-based knowledge can serve as the basis for broader knowledge in the field of teacher support and its complexity in the Maluti district. Furthermore, and as stated by May (2002) the researcher selected the sample expecting that it would be a representative of teachers in the High schools of the district.

The limitation of the case study is that the researcher cannot be sure of the generalizability of its findings to other situations more especially if one case is involved (Leedy and Ormrod, 2005). In

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responding to the limitation, the researcher selected three High schools on the basis of their performance in Grade 12 results in the last three years. That meant that the top, the average and the lowest performing schools were selected. In each school selected, a continuum of respondents ranging from teachers (post level one) head of departments (post level two) deputy principals and principals (post level three and four) were interviewed.

3.5.1 CASE DESCRIPTION

Case study schools (context)

School A: School A is a co-educational urban school offering academic, general and commercial subjects and is attended by Black, Coloured and Indian learners. The school is a former model C school and is situated in rural town of Matatiele. The school is highly resourced and advantaged when compared to most rural High schools in the district. It has got electricity, water and amenities such as a swimming pool, well maintained school grounds, high fence and lockable gates. It has got enough number of classrooms and each classroom accommodates an average of 35 learners. The passing mark has been in the average of 100% in the last three years. The buildings are in a good condition. The school is in quintile four (4) which means that it is a fee-paying school where each learner from Gr 1-12 is currently paying R1000-00 a month over 11 months plus government subsidy. The school is made up of 542 learners, 20 teaching staff members employed by the government and six staff members by the School Governing body and are all heterogeneous and the language of teaching is both English and Afrikaans.

School B: School B is a co-educational rural school offering academic, general and commercial subjects and is attended by Black learners. The school is disadvantaged and is under-resourced. Electricity and water are inconsistent and is supplied by the municipality. The school is made up of classrooms which show that they are rarely renovated largely due to the fact that the school is lacking financial muscle. Classroom accommodation is not enough and some classes accommodate as many as 80 learners in one class. The passing mark has been in the average of 60% in the last three years and the language of instruction is English. Parents around this school

are mostly unemployed and the school receives government subsidy which is not enough for the School Governing body to engage in big construction or renovation projects. The school is made up of 669 learners who are all Black but speak mostly isiXhosa and seSotho. Members of the teaching staff are mostly Black. The school is in quintile one (1) which means that the school is placed around a community which is unemployed.

School C: School C is a co-educational deep rural school offering academic, commercial and technical subjects and is attended by Blacks. As a school in the deep rural areas, it is under-resourced, disadvantaged and lack amenities such as well-maintained school grounds, fence and there are no libraries and laboratories. No workshops for practical subjects such as Woodwork, Carpentry and Metalwork which are offered by the school. Instead there is an improvised workshop built by the community. Classroom accommodation is relatively adequate and the school is currently populated by 446 learners who are all Black and they speak IsiXhosa and seSotho. The language of instruction is English. The passing mark has been in the average of 20% in the last three years. The school does not have a full complement of the staff provided to the school largely due to the fact that the school is in deep rural arrears and does not attract good teachers. There is a total of 11 teachers yet the Staff provisioning norm is saying 14 teachers. The school is in quintile one (1) and parents around the school are unemployed and the school relies mostly on the subsidy provided by the department which is not enough to fulfil the needs of the school

3.6 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

In the spirit of qualitative research, this study made use of multiple data collection methods such as the pilot stage, the structured and semi- structured interviews, document analysis and observation. The advantages and disadvantages of each method used and their relevance to the study are presented as follows:

3.6.1   Piloting Stage.

This was a phase whereby a researcher developed a measurement instrument in order to investigate the possibilities of undertaking a particular research study. It was a useful phase by which to ″test it out″ before administering the instrument to the sample. (Welman, Kruger and Mitchell, 2011) The reason for selecting this method was to test the measurement instrument thus noting if it would be creating discomfort in wording and understanding. This phase was exploratory and it involved

administering the instrument to a small number of subjects from the same population which was intended for the study. The main purpose of this exercise was to detect possible flaws in the instrument procedures, to detect unambiguously the aspects of the measurement instrument and to present the researcher with opportunity to note areas of discomfort in the content or wording of the instrument (Welman, Kruger and Mitchell, 2011). Another reason was to orientate the researcher about the project the researcher had in mind (de Vos et al, 2011)

The researcher first wrote a letter to the school whereby piloting was to be done. The researcher then approached his intended participants in the study based on the consent given by the principal. Consent was given and then the researcher arranged a date and time as reflected in the negotiations with the principal and participants. The findings of the pilot stage were very important to the researcher in terms of giving him the information about the measuring instrument and whether it would yield the desired results.

3.6.2   Structured Interviews

The researcher used the structured interviews to collect data from respondents operating as post level teachers. These were basically the teachers operating in the first level of entry into the teaching profession. The researcher wanted the participants to respond to a set of questions which would not give them freedom to make modifications. The advantage of using structured questions that they are not time consuming. The researcher had to follow a schedule of visiting respondents in order to get information. The researcher probed respondents reasoning because he wanted them to respond to a standard set of questions without giving any clarifications (Leedy and Ormrod, 2005). Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) assert that in structured interviews, the content and procedures for the interview are organized in advance. That meant that the sequence and the wording of questions were predetermined and the researcher did not have the freedom to make modifications. Structured interviews were mainly used to collect data from post level one teachers only.

According to Maree (2011: 87),″ an interview is a two-way conversation in which the interviewer asks the participant questions to collect data and to learn about beliefs, ideas, views, opinions and behaviors of the participant. In concurrence with the ideas expressed by Maree (2011), Kumar (2005) says an interview is any formal person-to-person interaction between two or more people

with a specific purpose or objective in mind on a specified date and time. Implicit in the ideas of the two scholars mentioned above, is the fact that an interview involves a two way interaction with a view to learn about the participants beliefs, views, opinions and behaviors. Creswell (2012) asserts that an interview occurs when the researcher asks one or more participants general, open-ended questions and records their answers.

3.6.3   Semi Structured Interviews

After the administration of the structured interviews by the researcher, he then proceeded to administer the semi-structured interviews among heads of departments, deputy principals and principals. Semi structured interviews were neither fixed nor free yet they were used as flexible research tools. Semi structured interviews also followed a set of predetermined questions but they allowed for probing and clarification of answers (Maree, 2011). In following the semi structured interviews, the researcher expected the respondents to expatiate as much as they could on certain points. That also presented the researcher with a chance to probe into the respondents′ reasoning and to ask clarity seeking questions (Bless and Smith, 2000). The advantage of using semi-structured interviews was that they presented the researcher with the opportunity to make follow-up questions in order to get rich data from the respondents.

3.6.4   Document Analysis

According to Ritchie and Lewis (2003: 35)″ documentary analysis involves the study of documents, either to understand their substantive content or to illuminate deeper meanings which may be revealed by their style and coverage.″ That meant that it was a situation whereby the researcher read and analyzed the important documents such as the minutes of meetings, circulars, memoranda, examination results, diagnostic reports and examiners reports. The analysis of documents was done with a view to understand the participant′s actions and the meaning they attached to their actions or events (Mouton, 2005). In this study, the researcher used the document analysis method of data gathering in order to understand the extent of the phenomenon under investigation (Maree, 2011).

3.6.5 Observation

According to Maree (2011: 83), "Observation is the systematic process of recording the behavioral patterns of participants, objects and occurrences without necessarily questioning or communicating with them." It is a method of gathering data which enables the researcher to gain more insight and understanding of the phenomenon which is being investigated. Observation is the method of gathering data that relies on the researcher's ability to gather data through watching the behavior of a person or a group of people or an event in a certain place for a specified period of time (O'Leary, 2004).

This study used the non-participatory observation and the researcher developed an observation guide that guided him during the observation stage of data gathering. That meant that the researcher participated but remained an outside observer in the unfolding of events in the field. The researcher is the Circuit Manager and often participates in the staff meetings as an outside observer where meetings on the analysis of results are held.

3.6.6 DIAGRAMMATICAL REPRESENTATION OF SCHOOLS, METHODS AND SAMPLES USED.

SCHOOL	METHOD	SAMPLE
A	**Unstructured Interviews** **Structured Interviews**	5 7
B	**Unstructured Interviews** **Structured Interviews** **Observation**	5 9 3
C	**Unstructured Interviews** **Structured Interviews** **Pilot**	1 9 3

4.2. PROFILING OF TEACHERS

ROLES	NUMBER
Principals	3
Deputy Principals	1
Heads of Departments	7
Teachers	31
POST LEVELS	NUMBER
4	3
3	1
2	7
1	31
WORK EXPERIENCE	NUMBER
1-5 Years	9
6-10 Years	6
11-20 Years	13
21 years and over	14
GENDER	NUMBER
Males	20
Females	22
AGE	NUMBER
23-30 Years	6
31-35 Years	5
36-40 Years	9
41 Years and over	22

Table 4.2 shows the profiling of teachers interviewed as informed by their roles in the research sites coded A, B and C in the study. There were three (3) principals and each principal represented each research site. There was only one (1) deputy principal representing the research site coded as A. Research site B in the study did not have the deputy principal at the time of conducting this

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study yet it was provided for in the Post Provisioning norm (PPN) (Government Gazette, 2002.) The research site C did not have the deputy as per the PPN.

Another group of teachers interviewed represents the Heads of Department and they consisted of seven (7) members for all the three research sites. Both the principals, deputies and heads of department represented the School Management Team of all research sites. It must be borne in mind that the numbers of heads of department in each school are informed by the size of the school. Moreover the size of the school is informed by the number of learners the school have in an academic year. Another group of teachers interviewed consisted of thirty one (31) members and those were not in the school management team. They consisted largely of post level 1 teachers which was the first level of entry into the profession but differed in their experiences in the profession.

Teachers interviewed also consisted of different post levels or their order of seniority in their schools (Personnel Administrative Measures (PAM) document 2003). There were three (3) principals who were all in post level 4, one (1) deputy principal in post level 3, seven (7) heads of department in post level 2 and thirty one (31) teachers in post level 1. Post levels 4, 3 and 2 respectively are charged with responsibility to provide management and leadership in all the research sites. Post level 1 teachers are mainly class teachers and they differ in terms of their experiences. Of the forty two teachers interviewed, nine (9) teachers had their experiences ranging from 1-5 years, six (6) teachers had their experiences ranging from 6-10 years, thirteen (13) ranging from 11-20 years and fourteen (14) ranging from 21 years and over.

Teachers interviewed in the research sites A, B and C also consisted of twenty (20) males and twenty two (22) females. They also fell into different age groups. Six (6) of them were 23-30 years, five (5) between 31-35 years, nine (9) between 36-40 years and twenty two (22) between 41 years and over

3.7. POPULATION AND SAMPLE

In the context of this study, all 52 teachers from the 3 selected High schools of Maluti Education district served as the population of the study. The population is the large group of people in a research site. It is also a set of elements having similar characteristics to which a researcher may generalize his results (Maree, 2007). Welman, Kruger and Mitchell (2005:52) refer to population as "the study object and it consists of individuals, groups, organizations, human products and events or conditions to which they are exposed". In a nutshell, this means that a research problem exists in a specific population and it encompasses various units of analysis about which the researcher has to make conclusions.

3.7.1   Sample

The researcher used only 42 teachers from the 3 selected High schools as a sample for the study. The other 10 teachers were eliminated because they were not available due to the fact that they had gone for marking of the Gr 12 examinations. The 3 High schools were selected on the basis of their performance in the last 3 years. That means that teachers from the top, medium and the lowest performing school in the last 3 years were used as representatives of the population. The sample was drawn from the principals, the deputy principals, the heads of department and the teachers. This means that the sample was drawn from the post level 4, post level 3, post level 2 and post level 1 teachers from the 3 selected High schools in the district. There are two major classes to which sampling strategies belong. These are the probability and the non-probability sampling methods. According to Maree (2007), probability methods are based on the principle of the probability theory whilst the non-probability methods are frequently used for reasons of convenience and economy. The critical issue in the non-probability methods is that the sample should be a full representative of the population for a researcher to make reliable and credible generalization of results. It is in the context of that framework that the researcher used the non-probability method with biasness towards the purposive method to plan this study.

3.7.2 SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

This study used the purposive sampling technique because the researcher wanted to have a detailed interpretation and understanding of the teachers' perceptions of support given by SES's in the 3 selected High schools of Maluti Education district. Also, the purposive sampling technique was used because it was a technique that was intended to provide the researcher with in-depth information about the subject of investigation yet at the same time intended to represent the total population in a case study. Subject teachers were therefore very crucial for the pursuit of the objectives of this study. The researcher used this sampling technique because he was interested in getting an inexpensive quick approximation of truth (Maree, 2011) about the subject of enquiry. According to Maree (2011: 79), "sampling refers to the process used to select a portion of the population for study". This means that it is about deciding about the site and the respondents from which the data will be collected (Punch, 2006). Flick (2002) noted that sampling is about making a decision on which persons to focus on when a researcher makes an enquiry. Samples are chosen because researchers want to have findings in a particular time and apply the findings when generalizing.

3.7.3 Negotiation of Entry

de Vos, Strydom, Fouche' and Delport (2011) maintain that the successful execution of the design and data gathering strategy is determined by the accessibility of the setting and the ability of the researcher to build up and maintain relationships and agreements. Negotiation of entry occurs when the researcher seeks permission to conduct a research in a particular community, school or organization. This means that the researcher should first introduce himself to the community or school where the research will be conducted. In this study, the researcher sought permission from the District Director first and then the principals of the research sites. It was not going to be possible for the researcher to get into the field without negotiating entry into the schools which were sampled.

The researcher wrote letters to the District Director and the principals of the 3 High schools thus requesting them to grant him permission to conduct research in the sites. Attached to the letters, was a letter from the Central University of Technology, Free State introducing the researcher as a student in that institution? After introducing himself to the District Director who in turn granted him with permission to conduct research, the researcher further sought permission from the Circuit Managers whose schools were targeted for investigation. From there the researcher made appointments with individual respondents and each respondent was expected to sign a letter of consent.

3.7.4. Site of the Research

Maluti Education district acted as a site of the research. It is one of the 23 Education districts of the Eastern Cape Department of Education. It is made up of 27 High schools. Of the 27 High schools, 3 of them are private schools and 24 are public schools. Various High schools in the Maluti Education district are stratified into different quintiles which are, in essence, the indication of the poverty levels within which the school exists. Schools are therefore not funded the same way. More funding is given to those in quintile one and two respectively. There are 11 High schools in quintile one, 9 in quintile two, 3 in quintile three and 1 in quintile four which is a fee-paying school.

The remaining 3 are private schools. Quintiles one, two and three are no-fee schools hence the funding is more. High schools were targeted largely due to the fact that grade 12 classes serve as the yardstick by which to measure the performance of High schools in the district.

3.7.5. Ethical Considerations

Various professions have various principles that govern the way professionals in each profession have to behave. Research, like any other profession has its own principles. Kruger (2005) asserted that ethics are the accepted principles of the code of conduct for a particular profession to

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accommodate the ever changing ethos, values, needs and expectations of that particular profession. Ethical issues involve looking into the implication of focusing on human beings in the research (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). The main responsibility of the researcher was to take full cognisance of the principles of honesty, integrity, respect and the sensitivity of the respondents of the research (Punch, 2006). Research should also take into account certain unacceptable principles such as causing harm to respondents, breaching the confidentiality of the research, using information improperly and being biased (Kumar, 2005). The researcher took full cognizance of all unacceptable principles and strengthened his ethical conduct by signing an affidavit which was a sworn declaration for him to abide by research ethical considerations. In this study the following ethical issues were considered:

3.7.6   Collecting Information

The main ethical issue for the success of the research is that participants should view it as an attempt to improve value the research conducted in their community (Kumar, 2005). This aspect of the research is very important in terms of convincing the respondents whether the research should seek the information from the respondents. It is imperative therefore for the researcher to explain clearly to the respondents the significance of the study otherwise respondents are likely to regard it as a waste of time. In this research the researcher was bound to explain to the respondents that the research was intended to improve conditions under which they operate.

3.7.7   Confidentiality and Anonymity

Confidentiality involves the way in which the information is safeguarded and the identity of people and the institutions involved are protected (Punch, 2006). According to Kumar (2005, 2014), "sharing information with others for purposes other than research is unethical." By implication this means that the researcher would be unethical if he shares the information he collected for reasons other than the pursuit of his own research objectives. In this research the respondents were assured that their names and that of their institutions would not be disclosed. They were also assured that their confidentiality and anonymity would be guaranteed and that the disclosure of their

information would not endanger their lives, jobs and security in general. All in all, the researcher assured participants that they would not be exposed to undue physical or psychological harm, stress, risk and discomfort for participating in the study.

According to Leedy and Ormrod (2005, 101) ″any participation in a study should be strictly voluntary.″ By implication this meant that participation in the study was strictly a matter of participant′s choices. However, that matter was based on how the researcher managed to give information to the participants with regards to the significance of the study in the lives of the participants. In this study, the researcher started the process by signing the affidavit which was, in essence, a sworn declaration to be ethical and be committed to all the principles of ethical researches. The principles included, inter alia, getting informed consent, from the participants, the institutions and officials of the district. They would all be expected to express their support for the study and to sign the informed consent form. Participants were not coerced into participating and completing the interview session. (Cohen, Manion and Marrison, 2011) Participants had the right to complete certain aspects of the interviews session. Participants were assured that once the research report was accepted by the university, cassettes of the audiotapes used would be destroyed.

3.7.8 DATA ANALYSIS

Qualitative analysis of data is by and large guided by the interpretative paradigm and it is aimed at examining the meaningful and symbolic content of qualitative data (Maree, 2011). This involves establishing how participants make meaning of a phenomenon using their experiences, feelings, values and understanding in order to approximate the meaning of the phenomenon itself. This is mainly achieved through the use of inductive analyses of qualitative data in order to search for a deeper meaning and inherent themes. The researcher here started by organizing the data thus breaking it down to smaller units in the form of sentences and thoughts. This process was done over and over in order to arrive at the possible interpretations. The researcher further analyzed the qualitative data until he got to a point where he made a sense of patterns or data meaning that emerged. As advocated by Punch (2003), the researcher went back to think about the centrality of

the research questions. At this stage the researcher summarized the variables which were in line with the concept of the capacity of SES's, their content knowledge and pedagogical skills. This stage involves the organization of data from which to draw conclusions. In order to achieve the issue of collecting data which the researcher would from time to time be referring to, the researcher recorded the responses of participants using a tape-recorder. The responses of participants were recorded in English and as a result there were no interpreters. That meant that the researcher used the English language as a vehicle by which to collect data. The use of English as a language of communicating participants' thoughts, in my view, eliminated problems of interpretations and sometimes getting data which was invalid. The management of data for purposes of interpreting and processing it, presented the researcher with the opportunity to use it over and over again in order to get themes which would match the concept of the capacity of SES's, their content knowledge and pedagogical skills. The analysis of qualitative data was based on the principle of predicted theoretical or conceptual explanations. The researcher used the pattern-matching as an analytical procedure, a process which essentially involves predicting patterns of outcomes based on theoretical or conceptual explanations in order to explain the findings of the study. According to Creswell (2012), qualitative researches use the inductive strategy where the researcher collects the data and then explore it to see which themes or issues to follow up or concentrate on. This meant that the researcher established a conceptual or analytical framework, thus utilizing the theory and then tested it in order to explain the findings. The pattern of the data was matched against the predicted theoretical propositions. This process involved the identification of patterns, themes and establishing inter-relationships. This process was done step by step to ensure the adequacy of the findings (Creswell, 2012). The findings were interpreted on basis of the emerging themes, patterns and inter-relationships.

3.7.9 DATA TRUSTWORTHINESS

The reliability and trustworthiness in this study was achieved by piloting and having follow-up interview questions which, to a large extent, sought explanations on some responses in the semi-structured interviews. In addition to the interview questions, this study used various instruments such as observations and document analysis to measure the validity and the reliability of the

concept under investigation. In the spirit of the qualitative research, this study also adopted and used such multiple data collection procedures to ensure data trustworthiness.

The credibility and the trustworthiness of data in qualitative research are judged against its validity, reliability, generalizability and objectivity (Maree, 2007). Qualitative researchers use validity and reliability to test the credibility and the trustworthiness of data in a research project. According to Babbie (2007: 146), "validity refers to the extent to which an empirical measure adequately reflects the real meaning of the concept under consideration." By implication, this means that validity embraces the accuracy, genuineness and authenticity of the meaning of the concept under investigation. Also, the validity of the measurement instrument refers to the extent to which the instrument measures what it is supposed to measure (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). Therefore the concept of validity lays more emphasis on two aspects, the accuracy of the instrument and the accuracy of the concept being measured. On the contrary, reliability refers to the consistency, dependability and trustworthiness of results when the instrument yields the same results more than once (de Vos et al, 2011).

3.7.10 LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

One of the greatest challenges facing the researcher was to make a choice of the research approach that would suit the study. After a careful analysis of approaches, the researcher finally settled for the qualitative study which requires relatively small samples. The researcher wanted to conduct an in-depth study of the perceptions of teachers on the support given by SES's in 3 selected High schools of the district. Because of time constraints and the ever tight work schedule of the researcher, the researcher was therefore bound to use a small sample but having all the units of investigation. The researcher might not have addressed the sample meant for this study in its entirety, hence its generalization is confined to the geographical area of Maluti Education district.

Due to the fact that the researcher is a novice, the researcher's ability to analyze and to search for deeper meanings from the responses of the respondents might have been compromised. Another limitation for the study was that the researcher is a full-time Circuit Manager and is always pressed by his service delivery obligations. As a result of that, time would not be adequate for him to

spread the study to a wider or bigger sample. Again, that might have compromised the generalization of the study hence it was confined to 3 selected High schools in the geographical area of Maluti Education district. Despite the limitations of the study, the respondents′ voices were expected to be revealed through the study and they provided insight to the researcher on how teachers perceived support given to them by SES′s in the High schools of Maluti Education district.

3.7.11 CONCLUSION

The research methods and design which were employed in this study were effectivein that they provided answers to the research questions which were asked in chapter one. The research study enabled the researcher to gather relevant information relating to the title of the study. The use of different data collection methods employed also helped the researcher to have insight on the perceptions of subject teachers on the support given by SES′s in the 3 selected High schools of Maluti Education district.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1. INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter was to present, analyze, discuss the findings and match them with both the conceptual and the theoretical framework presented in chapter two. The data were generated through structured interviews, semi-structured interviews, documentary analysis and non-participatory observation. The schools which served as research sites were coded as school A, school B and school C. In presenting the findings of the researcher from the responses of the respondents, this chapter was structured as follows:-

4.2. ANALYSIS OF DATA FROM STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

This section of the study sought to investigate the perceptions of post level 1 teachers to the support given by the SES in order to improve their academic performance or classroom instructions. By virtue of being post level 1 teachers, those were teachers who were on the first level of entry into the teaching profession and consisted of 31 members.

QUESTION 1:
Rate SES's support to you as a subject teacher in terms of the following:

Table 1

Very good	Nil
Good	6
Poor	23
Very poor	2

RESPONSES

The responses showed that out of 31 teachers interviewed to rate SES's support to subject teachers, only 6 teachers responded by saying that it was good. 23 of them responded by indicating that it was poor and the remaining 2 said it was very poor. The inference made by the researcher on this matter was that the support given by SES's to subject teachers was generally poor. It could also be argued that teachers expected more in terms of enabling them to improve their instructional efficiency. To justify that assertion, Govender (2005) states that, the rationale behind the formation of SES's was to support the teachers to improve their knowledge and understanding of their subjects.

QUESTION 2:

How often do you get support for your subject by SES's at your school?

Table 2

Once a quarter	19
Once a month	12
Once a week	Nil
Once a fortnight	Nil

RESONSES:

The responses indicated that 19 of the subject teachers interviewed stated that their support by the SES's often comes once a quarter. Another group consisting of 12 subject teachers responded by saying that support by SES's comes once a month. The inference made out of the responses was that more teachers got support once a quarter and few of them received it once a month. Govender (2005) indicates that SES's need to provide support regularly and as informed by the training needs of teachers. The standard norm for every SES to visit subject teachers at their schools for on-site support is once a month (Govender, 2005). That assertion revealed that support was not given regularly and as informed by policy.

QUESTION 3:

Rate SES's quality of support for your subject on the following:

Table 3

Very high	Nil
High	8
Minimal	17
Below expectations	6

RESPONSES:

Responses indicated that 17 subject teachers responded by saying that the quality of support given by SES's was minimal. On the other hand, 8 of them indicated that the support was of high quality and the remaining 6 of them indicated that support was below their expectations. The inferences made by the researcher out of the responses were that more teachers regarded SES's support as being minimal and below expectations respectively. By implication that meant that the support given to them was unable to assist them to deal efficiently with instructional demands of their subjects. Further inference made by the researcher was that there were subjects which were few subjects which were taken care of in terms of support by SES's but generally support was minimal and below expectations.

QUESTION 4:

Rate SES's level of content knowledge on the following:

Table 4

Very high	Nil
High	9
Low	18
Very low	4

RESPONSES:

Responses showed that 18 subject teachers responded by stating that the content knowledge of their SES's was low and did not make them effective in their quest to improve their performance. On the other hand, 9 subject teachers expressed that the content knowledge of their SES's was high and only 4 stated that it was very low. Once again, the disparities in responses enabled the researcher to make inferences that many respondents generally perceived SES's content knowledge as being low and was unable to make them succeed in their efforts to deal efficiently with the challenges of the classroom practice. Dilotsohle, Smit and Vreken (2001) state that SES's should be having deep understanding and profound content knowledge which includes the knowledge of current developments in the subject, experience in teaching the subject and the ability to work with adults. The inferences made by the researcher were that many subject teachers perceived the content knowledge of SES's as being generally low and very low in some subjects. Further inferences made the researcher were that there were few SES's who were perceived to be having high content knowledge.

QUESTION 5:

Does the content knowledge of your SES's make you confident in the teaching of the subject? Use the scale below:

Table 5

Yes	7
No	24

RESPONSES:

Responses showed that 24 subject teachers responded by stating that SES's content knowledge was unable to make them confident in the teaching of their subjects. The implication here was that they did not have confidence in the teaching of their subjects and had not grown and developed to the level of being experts in their subjects even though they had been teaching the subjects for a number of years. On the other hand, 7 subject teachers responded by stating that their SES's were quite influential in their ability to teach their subjects. The inferences drawn by the researcher were that many teachers interviewed perceived SES's to be having no impact in their instructional efficiencies. To concur with that notion, Legotlo, Maaga and Sebego (2002) argue that poor

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organizational culture leads to poor and minimal impact of the work of SES's. They further argued that SES's were expected to be highly organized and demonstrate profound knowledge of their areas of specialization. They cited that profound knowledge of their subjects inspires confidence among subject teachers.

QUESTION 6:

Do you agree that SES's have the capacity to improve your level of teaching in your school? Use the following scale.

Table 6

Yes	9
No	22

RESPONSES:

Responses showed that 22 subject teachers interviewed responded by saying "No" and did not agree with the assertion that SES's have the capacity to improve their levels of teaching in their schools. The implication here was that SES's did not inspire confidence amongst them. On the contrary, 9 subject teachers responded by saying "Yes" and by implication that meant that they agreed that SES's had the capacity to improve their levels of teaching in their schools. Once again, the disparities in responses made by the researcher showed inferences that many SES's in the district were perceived to be lacking the capacity to improve teaching and learning in the schools.

QUESTION 7: Do SES's and their subject teachers have solid work relations at your school?

Table 7

Yes	24
No	7

RESPONSES:

Responses indicated that 24 subject teachers interviewed responded by agreeing that solid relations benefitted both SES's and subject teachers alike. The implication here was that they agreed that SES's and subject teachers work more effectively in an environment characterized by trust and a positive atmosphere. On the contrary, 7 subject teachers negated that SES's should have solid relations with the teachers. From the responses of the teachers interviewed, the researcher made inferences that many SES's were able to build solid work relations with the teachers. To justify this assertion, Fox (2010) uses the concept of "belonging" to describe the SES's professional collaboration with structures for collective responsibility for ongoing evaluation and improvement of instruction. The inference that the researcher made was that a significant number of SES's were perceived to be co-operating and collaborating with the teachers hence a general feeling of belonging amongst subject teachers.

4.3. ANALYSIS OF DATA FROM UNSTRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS.

This section of the study sought to investigate the perceptions of School Management Teams (SMT's) in relation to the support given by SES's in order to improve subject teachers' performance. That group of 11 teachers consisted of teachers ranging from heads of department to deputy principals and principals. By virtue of being members of the SMT's, it meant that they are charged with the responsibility to manage the curriculum or act as instructional leaders in the 3 selected high schools of the district.

QUESTION 1

Do you agree with the statement that SES's should have planning skills, assessment skills, teaching and learning skills and management and leadership skills? Support your answer.

Table 1

Yes	11
No	Nil

RESPONSES:

Responses from the SMT members indicated that there was a general feeling amongst members that SES's should have those attributes in order to support subject teachers effectively. All 11 respondents acting as SMT members agreed that SES's should reflect those attributes. They argued that SES's should have good planning skills, research skills, communication skills, deep understanding of the content, assessment skills and management and leadership skills in order to be effective in their support to schools. The researcher made inferences that the majority of respondents agreed that SES's should have those attributes however they cited that in terms of practice many SES's in the district did not reflect those skills. The implication here was that many SES's in the district lacked the skills mentioned above. In his description of attributes of SES's, Govender (2005) states that SES's should have the skills mentioned above which also include approachability and the ability to conduct class visits.

QUESTION 2:

Do you agree with the statement that your SES's have the content knowledge to support subject teachers effectively? Support your answer.

Table 2

Strongly agree	Nil
Agree	4
Disagree	Nil
Strongly disagree	7

RESPONSES:

Responses indicated that out of 11 members of the SMT's interviewed, 7 respondents indicated that they strongly disagreed with the statement. They cited that SES's did not have the content knowledge by which to support teachers to build their knowledge base of their subjects. The further argued that SES's lacked the pedagogical skills by which to make them experts in their areas of specialization. On the contrary, only 4 of the teachers interviewed agreed that SES's had content knowledge to support their subject teachers to perform their duties effectively. The researcher made inferences that some SES's in the district were able to inspire their subject teachers however, many SES's were perceived as being ineffective in their areas of operation. That meant that many members of the SMT's perceived SES's as officials who did not have content knowledge to guide subject teachers in their journey to being professional experts in their subjects.

QUESTION 3:

In your opinion, do you think that SES's have deep understanding of the various teaching and learning methods to support subject teachers? Support your answer.

Table 3

Yes	3
No	8

RESPONSES:

Responses indicated that 8 out of 11 SMT members interviewed, perceived SES's not to be having broad knowledge of teaching and learning methods to support subject teachers to develop their pedagogical skills. On the contrary, only 3 members of the SMT's interviewed supported the idea that SES's have the broad knowledge of teaching and learning methods to support subject teachers to develop in their classroom practice. The inference the researcher made was that the majority of subject teachers interviewed perceived SES's as being lacking the broad understanding by which to support and guide subject teachers to improve their academic performance.

QUESTION 4:

Do you think that SES's have the capacity to support subject teachers to succeed in their classroom practice? Support your answer.

Table 4

Yes	3
No	8

RESPONSES:

Responses showed that 8 SMT members interviewed perceived SES's as lacking the capacity to develop and support subject teachers to succeed in their classroom practice. On the contrary, 3 SMT members interviewed perceived SES's as having the support subject teachers need to succeed in their classroom practice. The inferences made by the researcher were that a significant number of SMT members did not perceive SES's as having the capacity to make subject teachers succeed in their classroom practice. Whilst many SMT members indicated that SES's lacked the capacity to support subject teachers, there were also few SMT members who indicated that SES's were capable to support teachers to succeed in their classroom practice. Once again, the disparities in opinions demonstrated that not all SES's were perceived to be lacking in their capacity to support subject teachers in their classroom practice.

QUESTION 5:

Rate the quality of support of the SES's to subject teachers using the following scale. Support your answer.

Table 5

Very high	Nil
High	3
Low	7
Very low	1

RESPONSES:

Responses to this question showed that 3 members of the SMT interviewed perceived the SES's as being able to provide high quality support to subject teachers. They argued that their SES's provided them with opportunities to understand and implement the curriculum strategies to enhance learner academic performance. On the contrary, 7 members of the SMT interviewed perceived SES's as having low quality of support and 1 very low quality of support which did not, in some areas of the curriculum coverage, assist them to improve their classroom practice. The inferences that the researcher made were that the majority of subject teachers in the selected high schools and in particular those acting as members of the SMT perceived SES's as having poor quality of support to subject teachers in schools.

QUESTION 6:

Do you agree that SES's have the ability to support subject teachers in their classroom practice? Support your answer.

Table 6

Strongly agree	Nil
Agree	3
Disagree	Nil
Strongly disagree	8

RESPONSES:

Responses showed that 3 of the members of the SMT interviewed perceived SES's as having an ability to support subject teachers in their classroom practice. On the other hand, 8 members of the SMT interviewed indicated that SES's did not have the ability to support subject teachers to improve in their classroom practice. They argued that their work as subject teachers were not made simple because their SES's were not supportive in terms of their classroom practice. It was clear that there were few SES's who were capable of doing their work in terms of supporting subject teachers in their classroom practice however, many members of the SMT interviewed perceived

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SES's as being lacking in their ability to support subject teachers to improve in their classroom practice.

QUESTION 7:

Do you think SES's have the relevant work relations to be able to support subject teachers in their work? Support your answer.

Table 7

Yes	9
No	2

RESPONSES:

Responses to this question showed that 9 of the members of the SMT interviewed perceived SES's as having the work relations by which to support subject teachers in their classroom practice. On the other hand, 2 SMT members interviewed perceived SES's as having the work relations but they argued that their work relations did not assist them because that did not translate into making them experts in their subjects. The inferences that the researcher made were that the majority of the members of the SMT were comfortable with the work relations of their SES's however, few of the members wanted to see work relations translating into making them experts in their classroom practice. That meant that a few members wanted to see work relations that would benefit them in their ability to improve their academic performance.

4.4 ANALYSIS OF DATA FROM DOCUMENTS

The first step was to read all the documents and transcribed the data into themes as informed by the research questions. The documents which served as tools for the document analysis were circulars dealing with the support of teachers, memoranda, diagnostic analysis reports and examiners' reports. The advantage of these documents was that they provided not only how learners should have approached the questions but also provided frameworks for supporting teachers as well. (Department of Basic Education, 2015 and Annual National Assessment, 2016). It was also very important for the researcher to understand how these documents have dealt with

the issue of support and how learners have demonstrated their competence which also depicted the level of support by the teachers.

Maree (2011) contends that all documents used for data gathering represent the types of written communication and that may provide light to the subject of investigation. The researcher used these documents thus recording them and stratifying them in terms of patterns using the inductive reasoning. In order to avoid misrepresentation of authors' ideas, the researcher focused only on those documents that related to the subject of enquiry. Furthermore, the researcher also compared the data collected form the interviews and data from the documents. Data from the two sources showed great similarities in terms of providing areas of support to be emphasized in supporting the teachers.

4.5 ANALYSIS OF DATA FROM THE NON-PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION

The researcher attended the staff meeting at the research site demarcated as 'B' where the framework for improving the school performance was discussed. The researcher acted as non-participant observer but kept on recording the points on areas of discussion for improvement. The researcher in a qualitative study uses observation to gain deeper insight and understanding of the phenomenon being observed (Maree, 2011). In order to avoid subjectivity, the researcher focused only on those pieces of information that related to the subject of enquiry. The data collected was recorded and stratified into patterns that tended to answer the research questions. The researcher remained as a non-participant observer but recorded data that tended to answer the research questions.

4.6   PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

The following responses were elicited from the various participants from the three schools who comprised school principals, deputy principals, heads of department and teachers who were all interviewed in the three researched schools.

4.6.1 Poor monitoring and support of the subject teachers' classroom practice

The responses elicited from the majority of respondents indicated that SES's were not closely monitoring the work of subject teachers. They perceived them to be going to schools when they have to deliver something. Majority of respondents perceived SES's not to be focusing on their roles as instructional specialists whose main responsibility is to improve subject teachers' instructional operations efficiency. Furthermore, many respondents perceived SES's to be visiting schools after a long time and they did not have regular pedagogical support advices. Lugaz and De Grauwe (2010) refer to 'pedagogical support advice' as a platform whereby SES's from the local education office visit schools in order to give pedagogical advices to subject teachers on a regular basis. Respondent 22 had this to say:

'*Their monitoring and support of teaching and learning is fragmented and uncoordinated*'

Many respondents perceived SES's support as being minimal, inadequate, fragmented and uncoordinated. Many respondents from the unstructured interviews perceived SES's support as lacking coordination. They argued that many SES's approaches are based on a reactive diagnosis and this approach is guided by a quest to find shortfalls from the work of the subject teachers. It is clear from this approach that many SES's view of support as being based on finding shortfalls as opposed to providing assistance as informed by the subject teachers' areas of difficulties. Respondents further argued that SES's approach to teacher support is guided to a large extent by the amount of work covered in terms of the work schedules. This notion confirms the fact that many SES's lack effective monitoring and support skills. Coaching and mentoring of teachers' work is very essential for their personal development and growth. In this type of environment, as depicted above, teachers are able to develop skills which make them productive in their classroom practice. Coaching and mentoring can be confined to a particular school or a group of schools depending on the demand for such a program. Mentoring can be a very important program especially for inexperienced teachers to get the experience required for them to master the classroom practice. This study argues that the development of such a program provides teachers with an opportunity to learn' the tricks of the trade'. Flaherty (1999) refers to coaching as 'Evoking Excellence in Others'. Chapter 2 of this study argued that the work of SES's is to provide

professional guidance to subject teachers with a view to evoke excellence in them. However, many SES's in the Maluti Education district are perceived to be lacking coaching and mentoring skills.

Furthermore, respondents argued that SES's monitoring and support skills were minimal and others regarded it as being below expectations. This meant that subject teachers viewed SES's monitoring and support levels of competence as being below what they expected. They argued that they expected SES's to be curriculum specialists whose approach was driven by the quest to guide and improve serving teachers in order to be excellent in their classroom practice. However, it was evident that SES's in the district generally lack in the broad understanding of their roles as curriculum specialists and as mentors and coaches of subject teachers. In all the researched schools, participants showed that monitoring and support for the teachers is an integral part of their growth and development. They argued that the ultimate aim of every teacher is to attain a high level of competence in one's area of operation. However, this dream seems hard to find if there is no clearly defined and well implemented plan to monitor and support schools in their contexts.

4.6.2 Poor and ineffective support given to subject teachers

The findings of this study indicated that the majority of respondents perceived SES's as being ineffective to provide adequate support to subject teachers in order for subject teachers to enhance learner academic performance. Majority of respondents argued that majority of SES's lacked the content knowledge and the pedagogical skills necessary to inspire the subject teachers' confidence to improve their instructional operations efficiency. Many respondents interviewed argued that SES's support was poor and ineffective. They cited the fact that their support was based on the principle of 'one size fits all'. This meant that their support was mainly based on ineffective workshop model which many respondents viewed as being poorly organized and ineffective. They argued that the approach did not address their instructional efficiencies. The main reason for the introduction of SES's in South Africa was to provide cadres that would give guidance to subject teachers so that subject teachers could, in turn, provide a fertile ground for learners to improve their academic performance. It was also noted from the data that respondents were not happy with the quality of support they received from the SES's. Data from both the structured and the unstructured interviews show that subject teachers did not perceive SES's as being able to provide effective guidance thus addressing their instructional efficiencies. Data from both set of interviews

did not show what Mavuso (2013) describes as the close- to-school model. In terms of this model SES's should pay more attention to different school environments and contexts where support is adapted to the characteristics of the schools. Teacher support may be achieved by allowing the teacher or a group of teachers to work alone but collaborating with others in terms of focusing on student learning, assessing progress, and joint planning for purposes of integration. Data from the unstructured interviews also revealed that support is often not planned properly and adequately. Data also revealed that support programs are often not linked to what was presented in the last level of support. This means that SES's approach to teacher development and support is often not informed by what transpired from the baseline to the next level of support. Bottoms, Gene & Betty (2009) argue that effective planning driven by valid data is crucial in terms of empowering and supporting teachers to improve their classroom instructions. This study also argues that follow-up visits to schools by SES's to check if the subject teacher is on track with progress and policy cannot be overemphasized.

4.6.3   SES's lack of capacity to provide efficient support to subject teachers

The findings of this study indicated that the majority of respondents perceived SES's support as lacking and minimal thus lacking capacity to build cadres of the teaching profession who are confident enough to address the content gaps of subject teachers as reflected in their classroom practice. Research has shown that teachers generally in South Africa lack content knowledge (Taylor, 2008). In the same breadth, respondents in the study argued that their SES's lacked content knowledge and confidence to develop subject teachers into knowledgeable cadres of the teaching profession. Therefore, the quality of subject teachers would undoubtedly be poor under such circumstances. Lack of capacity to lead and provide guidance to serving teachers remains a critical aspect of support to serving teachers. Data from the interviews show that SES's lack capacity to give guidance to the teachers. The respondents argued that SES's lack content knowledge and pedagogical skills to provide teachers with knowledge that will contribute to developing them as confident cadres of the teaching profession. The irony here is that an official who also lacks in the key skill such as the content knowledge and the pedagogical skills must lead a teacher who relies on the official for development and support. SES's cannot be effective in their mission if they are not efficient themselves. This gap in content and pedagogical skills has serious repercussions on

the performance of both the teacher and the learner. One of the main things revealed by data was that even though the majority of respondents were negative about the capacity of SES's, very few of them indicated that they were comfortable with their SES's. This disparity in perceptions indicated that there are those SES's who are capable in their job but these constitute a small number to make a huge impact.

4.6.4 Commendable levels of work relations between SES's and subject teachers

The findings of this study indicated that the majority of respondents perceived SES's as being approachable, friendly and trying hard to build harmonious relations with the subject teachers. They argued that strong relations, trust, honesty and co-operation are attributes of leaders whose responsibility is to lead teams. Data from both the unstructured and structured interviews showed that respondents confirmed that SES's are approachable. There were very few respondents who cited that good relations with the SES's would be more meaningful if that would suit their wishes to be excellent in their classrooms. This meant that, to some respondents, approachability and friendly relations did not mean anything if that would not support their career prospects.

4.6.5 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Having presented the views of the participants with regards to their perceptions of support given by SES's in the high schools of Maluti Education district, this section extracts and discusses the findings of this study using the thematic analysis. The following themes were identified:

- The impact of support given by SES's to subject teachers
- The capacity of SES's to support subject teachers
- The level of work relations between SES's and subject teachers
- The roles of SES's in improving their support to subject teachers

4.6.5.1 The impact of support given by SES′S to subject teachers

To depict this theme in its own perspective, the researcher drew some of the conclusions and stories told by respondents in response to the question that wanted to know whether SES′s were having an impact in supporting subject teachers or not. Respondent No. 14 said:

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"Their impact is quite minimal and is characterized mainly by poor planning and poor organization."

Also participant No. 26 responded to the question by saying:

> *"No impact at all, even though, there are two SES's that know their story and unfortunately I am not at liberty to mention them. Most of them are glorified delivery agents. One has an impact if one knows his/her story, does his/her planning, organize his/her support to suit specific needs, develops, monitors and supports the subject teachers to achieve the best in their subjects."*

One of the objectives of this study reflected in Chapter 1 was to investigate the perceptions of subject teachers on the impact of support given by SES's in the high schools of Maluti Education District. From the perceptions shared by the majority of respondents, it was evident that many SES's in the district were not making an impact in their support to subject teachers. In critiquing the responses made by respondents 14 and 26, the researcher was tempted to conclude that SES's impact was quite minimal. Poor planning, poor organization and poor monitoring and support of the subject teachers featured prominently in the interview sessions. Furthermore, evidence given by respondents was that SES's support programs such as the workshops and seminars were based on the principle of "one size fits all." That meant that their workshops were too generic and were never made to suit individual needs of subject teachers in their own contexts. In terms of assertion, the issue of providing tailor made support to subject teachers in their own contexts and as informed by their individual training needs. In terms of the Guidelines for Subject Advisors (2011), SES's should visit the classrooms during teaching time and assess the quality of classroom interaction. Classroom support should then translate into the areas of development of the teacher whose classroom was visited.

However, SES′s in the Maluti Education District lack this capacity hence their impact was reported to be minimal and ineffective. Legotlo et al (2002) contend that poor organizational structure breeds poor instructional support system. The main reason for the presence of SES′s in any organization or department in particular was to provide professional support to subject teachers in order for them to improve learner academic performance. Roberts (2001) argues that the SES′s role is to work closely with the local schools to ensure that education needs are fulfilled. He also shares the same sentiments shared by Legotlo et al (2002) on the issue of the importance of SES′s at schools. However, if one considers the sentiments shared by respondents in the statement that said, "SES′s in the Maluti District are mostly glorified delivery agents" one is tempted to have a notion that SES′s are perceived to be going to schools when they have to deliver something. SES′s do not focus on their roles as instructional specialists whose main responsibility is to improve the instructional operations efficiency of subject teachers. The implication here is that SES′s cannot be having an impact on the subject teachers′ classroom practice if they are not visible and not working closely with subject teachers to improve teachers′ instructional operations efficiencies.

The National Diagnostic report on learner performance (2012) states that SES′s should take a leading role in terms of convening special workshops with the teachers in order to discuss and mediate the problem areas identified in learner performance. That means that SES′s should create an environment or a platform whereby they meet with the teachers to discuss and mediate not only the problem areas but the intervention strategies to address problem areas in learner academic performance. In terms of this assertion, SES′s should analyze learner performance to establish whether subject teachers are making any impact in terms of developing capable and well groomed learners whose skills and knowledge match the expectations of the department. Close monitoring of the syllabus coverage by subject teachers and the subject specific interventions be conducted with a view to prepare subject teachers to deal with problem areas in learner performance. These innovations need highly organized and focused SES′s committed to improving the professional development of subject teachers.

However, the findings of this study showed that SES′s in the high schools of Maluti Education District were minimal in terms of providing guidance to the subject teachers to enhance learner academic performance. Studies conducted by Bantwini and Diko (2011) in the Eastern Cape showed that even in cases where support was given, it was always inadequate, fragmented and uncoordinated. By implication that meant that it was great challenge to unite it into a cohesive practice. That assertion concurred with the findings of this study wherein it was found that SES′s support to high school subject teachers in Maluti Education District was minimal and was characterized by poor organization and failure to target subject specific areas of improvement. That notion therefore left the subject teachers with no clear guidelines to enhance learner academic performance hence subject teachers regarded SES′s support as minimal and being unable to make a significant impact that would make them deal adequately and efficiently with their classroom practice. It must be borne in mind that this study argues that if SES′s value learner academic performance in schools, drastic changes intended to develop both the teachers and the learners alike cannot be overemphasized. In concurring with this study, Fullan (1992) argues that the main responsibility of SES′s is to establish the conditions for continuous and coordinating all areas of subject teachers′ improvements in their classroom practice. When subject teachers are not given adequate support to improve learner academic performance, subject teachers tend to struggle to live up to the expectations of the public hence they perceive SES′s support as ineffective and does not have an impact in their classroom practice.

4.6.5.2 The capacity of SES′S to support subject teachers

One of the questions that this study was seeking to find answers to was whether SES′s of the high schools in Maluti Education District were having content knowledge by which to guide subject teachers to improve learner academic performance. The findings of this study indicated that SES′s did not have adequate content knowledge by which to assist subject teachers to succeed in their classroom practice. Action plan to 2014, Goal 16 of the Department of Basic Education (2012) acknowledges that the Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality (SACMEQ) and other testing programs have found that subject teachers and learners alike lack content knowledge. Also, the National Education Evaluation and Development Unit (2012) recommends   massive capacitation of teachers in order to improve the content knowledge of

teachers through in-service programs. It is therefore the responsibility of SES's as curriculum specialists to gather data on the teachers' training needs in various subjects' areas and train them in order to close the content gaps in various subject areas.

This study argues that the level of teachers' subject content knowledge is a critical component of the work of SES's in order to make a meaningful impact in the classroom practice. However, the findings of this study revealed that the majority of SES's do not have the content knowledge. They therefore lack the content knowledge and the pedagogical skills to inspire the subject teachers to enhance learner academic performance. Their capacity in terms of subject content knowledge and the pedagogical skills fall short in terms of addressing the subject teachers' professional development in order to meet the subject teachers' immediate and future classroom needs. Professional development involves helping subject teachers to develop confidence to teach their subjects in their different contexts and also dealing with subject teachers' inadequacies in content knowledge and the development of their pedagogical skills (Bantwini, 2012). Bantwini and King-McKenzie (2011) contend that the role of SES's is to provide capacity-building programs to subject teachers in order to improve their confidence and their capacity to enhance learner academic performance.

One of the findings of this study was that the majority of respondents rated SES's support to subject teachers as being very minimal and perceived them as lacking the capacity to build cadres of the teaching profession who are confident enough to address the performance gaps of subject teachers as reflected in their classroom practice. Bantwini and Diko (2011) argue that the level of subject teachers' content knowledge is a critical component of the teaching and learning situation. If not properly addressed, subject teachers may not be able to improve the learners' cognitive levels which should result in improved learner academic performance. It is therefore important that the SES's levels of content knowledge and subject pedagogical skills are kept high by constant improvement of their capacity to deal adequately with challenges of the teachers' classroom practice. It must be borne in mind that this study argues that subject teachers need professional

guidance and that must be done by the SES′s who are confident in terms of subject content knowledge and pedagogical skills. However, the findings of this study showed that majority of SES′s in the high schools of Maluti Education District lack capacity in terms of subject content knowledge and pedagogical skills to enhance subject teachers to improve learner academic performance.

Taylor (2008) argues that one of the shortcomings of South African schooling system that continues to undermine effective teaching and learning are very low levels of teacher subject content knowledge. He argues that this problem stands on the way of quality education. He recommends that the capacity of the subject teachers be massively improved. The irony here is that subject teachers are serving teachers and their SES′s, in terms of this study, lack capacity to enhance subject teachers to improve learner academic performance. The reality here is that the Department of Basic Education needs to recruit capable officials who are curriculum specialists to act as SES′s in order to improve the quality of subject teachers. The findings of this study further justified the fact that the majority of SES′s in the high schools of Maluti Education District lack capacity in terms of content knowledge and pedagogical skills to inspire the subject teachers to improve learner academic performance. To sum this argument up, Senge, Ross, Kleiner and Roberts (2011) argue that unless the organizations like Maluti Education District are able to transform themselves into a learning organization which should take cognisance of the fact that SES′s need to be subjected to massive training program targeted at improving their support for subject teachers, the district would still be plagued by school underperformance. This study argues that the SES′s need to develop subject teachers by updating them on the findings of diagnostic tests and guide subject teachers on the new methods to deliver subject specific programs aimed at improving learner academic performance.

4.6.5.3.   The level of work relations between SES′s and subject teachers

Fox (2010) uses the concept of ″belonging″ to describe the SES′s professional collaboration with structures for collective responsibility for ongoing evaluation and improvement of instruction. In concurrence with this notion, Wenger (1998) uses ″communities of practice″ to express belonging to groups or individuals who hold a shared identity through working towards a common goal or

activity. This study argues that the work of SES′s requires professional collaboration with other structures like subject committees, researchers, phase committees and school managers in order to improve the instructional capabilities of subject teachers. The findings of this study were that majority of SES′s were able to build solid relationships with the subject teachers. It is also very important for SES′s to understand that work relations are built from ethos of commitment, respect, friendship and honesty. It is therefore imperative that SES′s operating within the framework of professional collaboration with other structures need to build commitment based on strong relations. To sum it up, Maxwell (2013) states that leaders who adopt a relational approach to their leadership style will never walk alone. The implication here is that leadership is a journey and no one undertakes it alone. SES′s are curriculum specialists and are responsible for subject teachers′ instructional operations efficiency in schools. The findings of this study indicated that majority of SES′s valued partnership with subject teachers in order to build a sense of harmony, relevance and a feeling of belonging in the teaching profession. Dilotsohle, Smit and Vreken (2001) argue that SES′s should have the ability to form relationships with other structures in the teaching profession. The responsibility of SES′s is to provide professional guidance to subject teachers as their partners. In terms of this notion, programs such as mentoring and coaching become sustainable if the mentor and the mentee have solid work relations. The findings of this study indicated that the majority of respondents both from the subject teachers and their school based instructional managers as being contented with the work relations between them and the SES′s. By implication that means that there was mutual relationship between subject teachers and SES′s. Subject teachers are in terms of the findings of this study, appreciating the contributions made by SES′s hence there is mutual respect and trust. Solid work relations breed success and commitment and are a recipe for productivity.

4.6.5.4. The roles of SES′S in improving support to subject teachers

The findings of this study were that the majority of respondents indicated that there were a number of ways by which SES′s could use to provide effective support to subject teachers.

To capture this notion, respondent 7 said when asked what SES's should do to improve support to subject teachers:

> *"They should induct, mentor and coach subject teachers in their subjects by teaching them to balance content and learner cognitive levels, closely monitor curriculum implementation at school level, design policy compliant measurement and assessment instruments, train subject teachers to apply assessment rubrics optimally in order to scaffold learners' work in essays and assignment."*

One of the questions that this study is attempting to find answers to, was whether SES's were making an impact to the subject teachers regarding their support. Taking into account the perceptions shared by respondent 7, the researcher was tempted to conclude that subject teachers were not happy with the support they got from SES's. The perceptions shared by respondent 7 represented a broader spectrum of innovative mechanisms by which to improve SES's support to subject teachers. It is an inherent duty of SES's to induct new and inexperienced subject teachers, coach and mentor the experienced teachers by providing them with a scaffold to use until they are able to master their responsibility to improve learner academic performance (Vygotsky, 1978).

One of the roles of SES's as curriculum specialists is to provide professional leadership to subject teachers such that subject teachers are able to develop learners' cognitive skills to tackle academic challenges with less difficulties in the classroom. The findings of this study also pointed out that learners are key elements of the teaching and learning situation. It is therefore imperative that their cognitive skills are fully developed as informed by the revised Bloom's taxonomy (Krathwohl, 2001). It is therefore the responsibility of SES's to instill the value of developing cognitive skills to learners when coaching or mentoring subject teachers to master their classroom practice.

The findings of this study indicated that class visits were an integral part of the roles which SES's should uphold in order to support subject teachers in their own schools and as informed by their contexts. Van der Westhuizen (2003) views class visits as a form of evaluation whereby the evaluator gathers information about the quality of subject teachers' lesson presentation and the methodologies thus diagnosing it and making recommendations to improve the subject teachers' classroom practice. The findings of this study also indicated that subject teachers need regular

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class visits to keep abreast with the latest trends in handling their subjects. In terms of this notion, SES's use the opportunity to interact with subject teachers in their classrooms to evaluate their impact on improving learner academic performance.

It is in the classroom situation that SES's are able to determine whether subject teachers are following the latest developments in educational methodology and subject approaches. Document analysis by the researcher showed that the high schools in the Maluti Education District were not stable in terms of their grade 12 results. They showed fluctuations from one year to the next. It is the responsibility of SES's to design a "push and hold" technique to stabilize their performance. The implication here is that SES's need to closely monitor the performance of subject teachers whereby support is given to performing subjects (holding) while extra support is given to underperforming subjects (pushing) in order to improve learner outcomes (Zibi, 2013).

The findings of this study also indicated that SES's must champion the formation of subject committees as a support structure to provide subject teachers with the opportunity to learn from their peers. Mezirow (2002) states that adult learners are self-directed. If subject teachers are given an opportunity to learn from other knowledgeable peers, their learning becomes sustainable. It is therefore the responsibility of SES's to encourage the use of subject committees to consolidate support to subject teachers. Subject teachers are self-directed and their exposure to peer guidance as a support mechanism, may increase subject teachers' scope of understanding and insight.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1.   INTRODUCTION

This chapter seeks to present the summary, conclusion and recommendations from the findings that emerged in chapter 4. The researcher highlighted the findings that were based on the data that were discussed in chapter 4. The researcher has summarized the findings and made recommendations which relate to them. These recommendations relate to subject teachers′ perceptions of support given by SES′s, the effectiveness of support given by SES′s, the capacity of SES′s to give support and their level of work relations to subject teachers in the high schools of Maluti Education District. The researcher has also summarized the findings in relation to the theoretical and conceptual framework raised in chapter 2. In conclusion, the researcher also indicated what he thought were areas for the improvement of practice.

5.2.   SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

This portion of the study seeks to present a brief summary of what was covered in the following chapters:-

Chapter 1 described the background information on the study by identifying the gap in literature on the support given by SES′s to subject teachers in order to enhance subject teachers′ academic performance in the Maluti Education District. It also outlined the research questions, the statement of the problem, the rationale and the purpose of study.

Chapter 2 dealt with the literature review of the study. The researcher was guided by the main and the sub-research questions of the study. The main aim of the literature review was to probe into the effectiveness of support given by SES′s to subject teachers, the capacity of SES′s in supporting subject teachers to enhance learner academic performance

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in the high schools of the Maluti Education District and their levels of work relations with subject teachers.

Chapter 3 described the research design and the methodology used for the study. The research design and the methods of data collection were discussed. The researcher used the structured and the semi-structured interview questions to collect data in three selected high schools chosen on the basis of their grade 12 performance in the last three years. A qualitative approach was also used and reliability and validity were also ensured by first piloting the interviews in order to ensure data trustworthiness.

Chapter 4 covered how data were collected from the research sites using structured and semi-structured interviews. Responses were recorded and analyzed and themes were noted. Conclusions were also drawn.

5.3   SUMMARY OF THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH

The significance of this study was crucial to the management and policy-makers of Maluti Education District in terms of providing them with alternatives to consider when dealing with learner academic performance improvement. The district continued to be under pressure to find solutions to poor learner academic performance. It was within that background that the researcher was obliged to submit the findings of this study to senior management for their considerations.

Secondly, the findings of this study was significant to SES's in the district in terms of providing them with relevant approaches to empower subject teachers in dealing with subject teachers' academic performance. Finally, it was hoped that the findings of this study might also provide some innovations which would be key to influencing positive behaviors of subject teachers in order to rekindle the enthusiasm of the learners in the district.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

There are some useful pointers to practical changes that the Department of Education at Maluti Education District could implement to improve SES′s support to subject teachers in order to enhance learners′ academic performance. Based on the responses given by respondents the researcher recommends the following:

1. The Department of Education should provide bursaries to SES's to further their studies in institutions of Higher Learning and Training especially those whose subjects are doing/performing poorly. Such bursaries should be tenable to SES's who are committed to undergoing further training in their areas of operation. For example, if an SES responsible for Mathematics should get a bursary, such a bursary should only be provided if she/he has registered for Mathematics and its pedagogies. Such SES's should not lose their jobs but be allowed to do on-the-job training.

2. SES's should be provided with enabling resources such as computers equipped with relevant curriculum content knowledge and pedagogical skills′ software. Close monitoring of their work and that of subject teachers should be done regularly and regular reports about the quality of their performance be compiled monthly in order to track their progress and that of subject teachers.

3. SES's should conduct class visits in order to collect data to inform the next level of support or training needs identified in the performances of different subject teachers. The immediate supervisors of SES's must ensure that such training needs are addressed with immediate effect.

4. Workshops, seminars, coaching and mentoring of teachers should be conducted regularly and on-the-job training be tailor-made to suit the training needs identified in the performance of different subject teachers. Such training should be targeted at improving both the content knowledge and the pedagogical skills of subject teachers.

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5. SES's should update subject teachers on the findings of the diagnostic tests and the examiners' reports and guide subject teachers on the new methods to deliver specific subjects.

6. SES's support should provide subject teachers with an opportunity to inspire learners to maximize their performance in subjects such as Mathematics, Languages, Physical Sciences and Accounting. SES's should conduct researches and read research reports on the mechanisms to be explored to improve subject teachers' academic performance in the subject mentioned above.

5.5. CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to investigate the perceptions of subject teachers on the support given by SES's in the high schools of Maluti Education District. This study further sought to answer the questions whether SES's support to subject teachers was effective, whether SES's were having the necessary capacity to enhance subject teachers to improve learner academic performance and how subject teachers perceived SES's level of work relations in the 3 selected high schools of the district.

The analysis of results showed that SES's were poorly monitoring the performance of subject teachers, hence poor learner academic performance. SES's were ineffective in their support to subject teachers because they also lacked content knowledge and the pedagogical skills necessary to provide efficient support to subject teachers. SES's also demonstrated commendable levels of work relations with subject teachers. That meant that both the main research question and its subsidiary questions reflected in Chapter 1, were addressed.

Without doubt the implications of this study will influence both the SES's and the subject teachers in terms of exploring alternatives to dealing with poor learner academic performance. Also, managers in the district will be provided with alternative solutions to explore when supporting subject teachers to enhance learner academic performance.

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Appendix A

SUID -AFRIKAANSE POLISIEDIENS

SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE SERVICE

AFFIDAVIT

I, (Name): MAGUMELA MOSES MTETELELI

SEX : MALE

AGE: 55

OF (address): 5 JAGGER STREET MATATIELE 4730

ID NO: 5909205021089

Hereby declare:

**That this statement is to the best of my belief and correct.**

That it has been made in the knowledge that if tendered as evidence, I will be liable to prosecution if I have willfully stated at any time which I know to be false or which I do not believe to be true.

I, MAGUMELA M.M., solemnly declare that my research will be strictly scientific and will subscribe to the values of a scientific research and that the respondents will never be coerced and will be free to withdraw at any given stage of the research if they so feel.

		Answers
A.	Do you know and understand the contents of the declaration?	Yes
B.	Do you have any objection to take the oath?	No
C.	Do you consider the prescribed oath binding on your conscience?	Yes

....
SIGNATURE OF DECLARANT

I CERTIFY THAT THE DEPONENT HAS ACKNOWLEDGED THAT SHE/HE UNDERSTANDS THE CONTENTS OF THIS DECLARATION WHICH WAS SWORN TO BEFORE ME AND THAT DEPONENT'S SIGNATURE / THUMB PRINT / MARK WAS PLACED THEREON IN MY PRESENCE at MATATIELE ON 14 of August 2015.
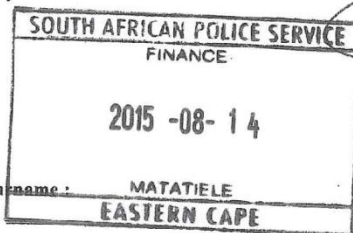
SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE SERVICE
FINANCE
2015 -08- 1 4
MATATIELE
EASTERN CAPE

....
COMMISSIONER OF OATHS

Full first names and surname :

Designation (rank) : Const

Business address: 41 TAYLOR STREET MATATIELE

DATE: 2015- 08 /14

PLACE: MATATIELE 4730

Appendix B

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Re: *Request to allow student to collect data*

Dear Sir/Madam,

This note serves to confirm that the bearer M.M.Magumela : Student number, 213104946: is a bona fide student of the Central University of Technology, Free State. As part of his Masters' studies, the student is required to undertake a research project on a preferred Education topic.

The student is thus soliciting information and permission to gather data from you or your organisation on the topic: TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF SUPPORT GIVEN BY SUBJECT EDUCATION SPECIALISTS; A CASE OF HIGH SCHOOLS IN THE MALUTI EDUCATION DISTRICT.

The information so gathered is purely for academic purposes and the bearer is mandated to handle the data in strict confidence. I will appreciate if the bearer is accorded the requisite assistance. It is through such collaborative effort that our country's education system will be improved.

Please feel free to contact me should you require further information on this subject.

Dr. Mike Mhlolo (PhD) Mathematics Educ (Wits)
Faculty Research Manager & FRC Chairperson
Faculty of Humanities
Tel: +27 51 507 4027 | Cell: +27 82 696 0829 |
E-mail: mmhlolo@cut.ac.za or mikemhlolo@yahoo.com

Central University of Technology, Free State (CUT)
Private Bag X20539, Bloemfontein, 9300, South Africa

APPENDIX C

5 Jagger Street

Matatiele

4730

28 Nov.2014

The Principal

School A

Maluti District

Permission to conduct research study at your school.

This letter seeks to request for a permission to conduct a research study at your school in January 2015. This study relates to teachers' perceptions of support given by Subject Education Specialists in the High schools of Maluti Education district.

This study will involve conducting interviews, observations and document analysis in order to collect data which will be used exclusively for the purpose of the research. You and your teachers will be expected to participate voluntarily in this project and will be further assured that ethical issues will be adhered to at all times.

Your cooperation will be highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully

M. M Magumela (0835306165)

magumela@gmail.com

APPENDIX C

5 Jagger Street

Matatiele

4730

28 Nov.2014

The Principal

School B

Maluti District

Permission to conduct research study at your school.

This letter seeks to request for a permission to conduct a research study at your school in January 2015. This study relates to teachers' perceptions of support given by Subject Education Specialists in the High schools of Maluti Education district.

This study will involve conducting interviews, observations and document analysis in order to collect data which will be used exclusively for the purpose of the research. You and your teachers will be expected to participate voluntarily in this project and will be further assured that ethical issues will be adhered to at all times.

Your cooperation will be highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully

M. M Magumela (0835306165)

magumela@gmail.com

APPENDIX C

5 Jagger Street

Matatiele

4730

28 Nov.2014

The Principal

School C

Maluti District

Permission to conduct research study at your school.

This letter seeks to request for a permission to conduct a research study at your school in January 2015. This study relates to teachers' perceptions of support given by Subject Education Specialists in the High schools of Maluti Education district.

This study will involve conducting interviews, observations and document analysis in order to collect data which will be used exclusively for the purpose of the research. You and your teachers will be expected to participate voluntarily in this project and will be further assured that ethical issues will be adhered to at all times.

Your cooperation will be highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully

M. M Magumela (0835306165)

magumela@gmail.com

P / Bag X 2067

Matatiele

4730

To whom it may concern.

This serves to confirm that our school granted permission to the student M. Magumela to conduct research.

I hope you will find this in order

Yours faithfully

Principal

P O Box 1987

Matatiele

4730

leboeagetsmail@yahoo.com

072 246 6983

26 June 2015

To Whomsoever It May Concern

Sir/Madam

RE: CONDUCTING RESEARCH: MR M MAGUMELA

The undersigned does herewith attest to the fact that MR M MAGUMELA was granted permission to conduct research at our site.

I believe this will adequately serve the purpose for which it is required.

Thanking you,

Yours faithfully

PD LEBOEA

KE HS

DEUS DAT INCREMENTUM

KING EDWARD   **HIGH SCHOOL**
                               HOËRSKOOL

Tel: 039-7373273   P.O. Box / Posbus 91
Fax: 039-7374086   MATATIELE
Eastern Cape   4730
e-mail: kehs@telkomsa.net

4 November 2014

Dear Sir / Madam

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

This letter serves to confirm that Mr M. Magumela has permission to conduct research at King Edward High School to further his personal studies.

Yours faithfully

G.A. Harrison
PRINCIPAL

Appendix E

5 Jagger Street

Matatiele

4730

7 Nov. 2014

THE CIRCUIT MANAGER

CIRCUIT A

MALUTI EDUCATION DISTRICT

Sir

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT AN EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH.

I am doing a Master of Education degree with the CENTRAL UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, FREE STATE whose requirement for the degree is that I must conduct an academic research on a management problem. I have chos a topic which investigates the teachers' perceptions of support given by Subject Education Specialists in the Hig schools of Maluti Education District. This will be a scientific study which will adhere to all ethics of a scientific research. Kindly assist me to fulfil the requirements for the degree.

I thank you in anticipation for a positive response.

Yours faithfully

M. Magumela- Tel: 0835306165.

APPENDIX E

<div align="right">
5 Jagger Street

4730

7 November 2014
</div>

THE CIRCUIT MANAGER

CIRCUIT B

MALUTI EDUCATION DISTRICT

MALUTI

Sir/ Madam

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT AN EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

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M. Magumela- Tel: 0835306165.

Annexure E

5 Jagger Street

Matatiele

4730

7 Nov. 2014

THE CIRCUIT MANAGER

CIRCUIT C

MALUTI EDUCATION DISTRICT

Sir

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT AN EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH.

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Yours faithfully

M. Magumela- Tel: 0835306165

Province of the
EASTERN CAPE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

*Maluti College of Education, 206 Magistrate Street Maluti 4740 Postal Address :P.O. Box 1835
Matatiele 4730. REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA. * E-Mail :O837081928@mtnloaded.co.za.
Cell No. 0724078564 , Tel. No. 039 256 0111 * B.L.Mzimkulu-CES-Management and Governance.*

20 January 2015

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN.

Re: Proposed research

As a sequel to your letter of application to conduct research in this circuit, permission is
hereby being given to you to conduct your study as informed by your research objectives and
your research question.

This office wishes you success in your quest to develop and grow academically.

Yours faithfully

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
MALUTI DISTRICT OFFICE
P/BAG X9003 MATATIELE

2015 -01- 2 5

CES:MANzimkulu; CEC: IDS&G.
B.L.Mzimkulu-CES-MANAGEMENT & GOVERNANCE

Province of the
EASTERN CAPE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

206 Magistrate Street • Maluti • 4740 • Postal Address .Private Bag X 9003• Matatiele • 4730 •   **MALUTI DISTRICT OFFICE**
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA • Tel: +27 (39) 256 0516 Fax: +27 (39) 256 0516• Cell 0722168227 Website: gunkels@telkomsa.net

25 January 2015

To whom it may concern

RE: Proposed research

Permission is hereby granted to Mr. M.M. Magumela to conduct research in this circuit.

My office wishes him success in his research.

Yours faithfully

Mr. K. S. Gunkel
Circuit Manager

DEPT OF EDUCATION
MALUTI DISTRICT OFFICE

2015 -01- 25

CIRCUIT MANAGER
MT CURRIE CIRCUIT

SIGN: ....

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Province of the
EASTERN CAPE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

MALUTI DISTRICT OFFICE

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SOUTH AFRICA • Tel: +27 (39) 256 0516 Fax: +27 (39) 256 0516•

12 JANUARY 2015

Cell 076 510 6166 website: jaftaets@gmail.com

Re = AKNOWLEDGEMENT TO DO RESEARCH.

This serveve to confirm and aknowledge that Mr Magumela M is given permission to conduct research in schools which falls under

Moshesh Circuit. The scope and extent of research will be determined by the incumbent.

I hope this surficesas prove.

Yours faithfully.

E.T. JAFTA (Circuit Manager) Moshesh Circuit.

DEPT OF EDUCATION
MALUTI DISTRICT OFFICE

2015 -01- 1 2

CIRCUIT MANAGER
MOSHESH CIRCUIT

SIGN: ....

5 Jagger Street

Matatiele

 4730

7 November 2014

THE DISTRICT DIRECTOR

MALUTI EDUCATION DISTRICT

MALUTI

Sir

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT AN EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

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I thank you in anticipation for a positive response.

Yours faithfully

M. Magumela- Tel: 0835306165.

Province of the
EASTERN CAPE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

MALUTI DISTRICT OFFICE

Maluti Teachers College of Education •206 Magistrate Street• Maluti • Private Bag X 9003 • Matatiele • 4730• REPUBLIC OF
SOUTH AFRICA • Tel: +27 (39) 256 0594Fax: +27 (439) 256 0516• Cell 072 147 3050 Website: ecprov.gov.za • Email:
zingisa.mtebele@edu.ecprov.gov.za

M.M.Magumela

Dept. of Education

Maluti

4730

Sir/Madam

Application to conduct a scientific research: Yourself.

As a sequel to your submission to this office, permission is hereby being given to you to
conduct a scientific research on a management problem in this district and as informed by
your research objectives or your research question. You are also advised to submit the
recommendations of your study in order to enable this office to influence policy development
in future.

Your cooperation in this regard will be highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully

LE Mtatyana

District Director: Maluti

2015/01/06
Date

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APPENDIX I
OBSERVATION GUIDE

ITEMS	COMMENTS
1. Punctual start to meetings	
2. Opening of the meeting	
3. Attendance register	
4. Minute book	
5. Reading of minutes	
6. Chairing of the meeting	
7. Participation in the meeting	
8. Matters of discussions	
9. Sitting arrangement in the meeting	
10. Conduct of participants	
11. Closure of the meeting	

STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS FOR POST LEVEL POST 1 TEACHERS

SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

Position

1. Principal
2. Deputy Principal
3. H.O.D
4. Teacher

Gender   # Age

1. Male   23 - 30Yrs
2. Female   30-35 Yrs
3. Other   35 - 40 Yrs

40Yrs & Over

Experience

1-5 Yrs
6 - 10 Yrs
11 - 20 Yrs
21 Yrs and Over

1	1-5 Yrs
2.	6-10 YRS
3.	11- 20Yrs
4.	21 Yrs & Over
4.	

Section B

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Rate SES's support to you as a subject teacher in terms of the following:

(a) Very good
(b) Good
(c)   Poor
(d)   Very poor

2. How often do you get support by SES's for your subject at your school?
(a) Once a quarter

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(b) Once a month
(c) Once a fortnight
(d) Once a week

3. Rate SES's quality of support for your subject at your school on the following aspects.
(a) Very high
(b) High
(c) Minimal
(d) Below expectations

4. Rate SES's level of content knowledge on the following
(a) Very high level
(b) High level
(c) Low level
(d) Very low level

5. Does the content knowledge of your SES's make you confident in the teaching of
your subject? Use the scale below.
(a)Yes
(b) No

6. In your opinion, do you think that SES's have the capacity to improve your level of teaching of your subject? Use
The scale below
(a) Yes
(b) No

7. In your opinion, do you think that SES's have the relevant work relations to work with subject teachers?
(a) Yes
(b) No

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS FOR THE SMT's i.e. PRINCIPALS, DEPUTIES AND HEADS OF DEPARTMENT.

SECTION A

BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

POSITION		POST LEVEL		
1. PRINCIPAL		1.	4	
2. DEPUTY PRINCIPAL		2.	3	
3. HOD		3.	2	

GENDER		AGE	
1. MALE		1. 23-30 YRS	
2. FEMALE		2. 30-35 YRS	
3.OTHER		3. 35-40 YRS	
		4.40-45Yrs	
		5. 45 & ABOVE	

EXPERIENCE	
1. 1-5 yrs	
2. 6-10 yrs	
3. 11-20 yrs	
4. 21 yrs & OVER	

SECTION B:

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Do you agree with the statement that SES's should have planning skills, assessment skills, teaching and learning skills, and management and leadership skills?
(a) Yes
(b) No

2. Do you agree with the statement that your SES's have the content knowledge to support subject teachers effectively? Support your answer.

(a) Strongly agree
(b) Agree
(c) Disagree

(d) Strongly disagree

3. In your opinion, do you think that SES's have a deep understanding of the various teaching and learning methods to support subject teachers? Support your answer.

(a) Yes
(b) No

4. Do you think that SES's have the capacity to support subject teachers to succeed in their classroom practice? Support your answer.
(a) Yes
(b) No

5. Rate the quality of support of the SES's to subject teachers using the following scale .
(a) Very high
(b) High
(c) Low
(d) Very low

6. Do you agree that SES's have the ability to support subject teachers in their classroom practice? Support your Answer?
(a) Strongly agree
(b) Agree
(c) Disagree
(d) Strongly disagree

7. Do your think that SES's have the relevant work relations to be able to support subject teachers in their work?Support your answer.

(a) Yes
(b) No

Thank you for your support