



**ENHANCING QUALITY TEACHING AND LEARNING THROUGH FORMAL
ASSESSMENT IN GRADE 6 SOCIAL SCIENCES**

by

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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I, NOKULUNGA BOMELA, student number 20*****50, thus declare that the following research project which has been submitted to the Central University of Technology, Free State, for the degree: Master of education, is my own work; it complies with the Central University of Technology's Code of Academic Integrity, as well as other relevant policies, procedures, rules, and regulations; and it has never been submitted to any institution by myself or anyone else in fulfilment or partial fulfilment of the requirements for the attainment of any qualification.



18 November 2022

SIGNATURE OF STUDENT

DATE

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to the following people: my loving parents, Thabisa and Michael Matshediso Sebolai, whose affection, love, encouragement, and prayers, day and night, have enabled me able to succeed. Thank you for your overall support and patience from the beginning of my studies. To my son, Ayavuya Sipho, I can never repay you for the time that I have stolen from you while I had to conduct my research. I hope one day you will realise that it was all for you. Finally, to my brother Lazarus and Eric my partner I am forever thankful.

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to investigate how Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers enhance quality teaching and learning through formal assessment in the Lejweleputswa area. This study was inspired by the theories of social constructivism and cognitive constructivism, specifically, Piaget's cognitive constructivism and Vygotsky's social constructivism. It explored the following question: How do Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers enhance quality teaching and learning through formal assessment? Concurrent triangulation research design was adopted in this research. The respondents to the questionnaire were chosen through simple random sampling whilst purposive sample was used to select interviewees. The sample consisted of 106 Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers who responded to the questionnaire and ten teachers who were interviewed.

The results revealed that most teachers aligned assessment in Social Sciences with the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS). Teachers understood and considered the importance of setting quality assessment tasks and apply Bloom's taxonomy levels. However, the findings revealed that project question(s) modestly provide learners with opportunities to draw deductions and create universal trends, teachers modestly award marks for simplifying and drawing deductions, modestly grant marks for each ability tested in the project including presentation skills, and modestly award marks for conveying project ideas with suitable clarifications. The findings further revealed that teachers' implementation of formal assessments did not differ according to their gender, age, teaching experience, professional teaching qualification, class size and school quintile. There was also no difference among Social Sciences teachers who teach at different school quintiles on the application of formal assessment.

The study, therefore, recommends that teachers should use assessment to identify any academic problems experienced by the learners. Teachers who are deemed to be lacking pedagogical content knowledge should attend mandatory training seminars. The amount of mandated topic content and the time allocated to the Social Sciences subfields must be examined to address issues that arise from the rapid pace of the curriculum coverage. The Free State Department of Education must identify

overcrowded schools and provide these schools with additional equipment, language, and teaching support material (LTSM), teachers, and extra classrooms for productive and meaningful learning. Teachers must update their Social Sciences pedagogics. They must work in collaboration and share assessment tasks. Subject advisors should conduct in-service training workshops to provide teachers with information and competences for setting sensible project tasks that will allow them to evaluate learners' skills as set out in the CAPS.

KEYWORDS: Assessment, formal assessment, grade 6, informal assessment, intermediate phase, learning, quality learning, quality teaching, Social Sciences, teaching

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CHAPTER 1: ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Quality teaching, learning and assessment are major and comprehensive matters in education and have been widely debated in all related spheres. The quality of teaching and learning is currently a topic which should be investigated broadly. Assessment is the link between quality teaching and learning. Quality teaching is equal to quality learning. Killen (2015) postulates that assessment is an essential component of learning and teaching. Quality assessment must, therefore, be aligned to the idea of good quality teaching and learning. Quality assessment cannot be discussed without first looking at what quality teaching and learning entails (Reddy et al., 2015). Additionally, Killen (2015) emphasises that assessment becomes a natural element of the educational process rather than something that arrives at the end.

Consequently, assessment directs the whole teaching and learning process by offering common understanding to learners and teachers so that they can progress in their respective roles. Additionally, developing and executing effective teacher professional development requires a thorough grasp of teachers' thoughts, opinions, discernments, and views regarding assessment, along with the obstacles connected with classroom assessment procedures. In this study's first chapter, I describe the study's background, problem statement, rationale, research questions, research approach, information gathering, facts scrutiny and clarification, research expectations, quality measures for the research, moral issues, and confines.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH

Post-1994 South Africa has experienced many changes taking place in all spheres of life, including education which has experienced policy and structural changes. The changes in the curriculum have had an influence on what teachers assess and how they do so. The practice of assessing learners is not new. Assessment policies were developed, adapted, and adjusted in the education system when Curriculum 2005 was introduced. It was not easy to put these into practice hence teachers experienced difficulties in implementing the curriculum. The South African government recognized

that the adoption of Curriculum 2005 had several issues. Continuing criticisms and teachers' nonresponse to this curriculum left the government with no choice but to launch a second major review of the South African curriculum in 2009, which resulted in the new National Curriculum Statement Grade R-12 being developed. Teachers' assessment methods, tools, and strategies have been influenced by the current curricular model in use. Killen (2015) points out that all school education systems contain documents that outline what should happen when each topic is taught. These documents provide information about what learners should learn and how they should be assessed.

The Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) describes assessment as a fundamental instrument that instructors must employ to improve the quality of teaching and learning in their classrooms. The CAPS concentrates on the material to be covered each term as well as the four mandatory assessment assignments. The way instructors coordinate their classroom assessment methods to meet the expectations of the CAPS document, as well as how they cope with classroom assessment-related problems, is a significant concern.

Mnyanda and Mbelani (2018) argue that since the execution of outcomes-based education (OBE) in South Africa, teachers have been educated on existing assessment trends through workshops, work-related tutoring, and an abundance of curriculum documents, all in the pursuit of rapid transformation and improved teaching and learning quality. However, in my experience as a Grade 6 Social Sciences teacher, nothing has transformed in the field because of the problems or circumstantial considerations that teachers face in their daily assessment-related responsibilities. Mellati and Khademi (2018) highlight that teachers' conceptions of the classroom are a barrier in assessment, teachers regard classroom assessment as examinations given at set times, and their beliefs have been impacted by their experiences and credentials.

Frey et al. (2015) assert that teachers are challenged by the reality of their assessments and how assessment may be used as a tool to improve teaching and learning. Therefore, it is critical to recognise the issues teachers face in their classroom assessment processes, as well as how they cope with them, to assure

higher-quality teaching and learning. Therefore, this study sets out to explore how teaching and learning can be enhanced using formal assessment.

1.3 PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

The objective of this study is to investigate how formal assessment might improve quality teaching and learning in Grade 6 Social Sciences. As indicated in the previous section the Department of Basic Education [DBE] (2011a) in the CAPS, states that assessment is a basic tool that teachers should use to improve the quality of teaching and learning in their classrooms. Killen (2015) maintains that formal assessment happens when teachers assign serious assessment tasks to learners and keep official records of the findings. Because of this, my research investigates the challenges that Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers face in their classroom assessment practices, as well as how these challenges may indicate how certain teachers' instructional methods could impact teaching and learning, as well as clarifying implications for learners' performance.

1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH

This study is necessary to determine how assessment in Grade 6 Social Sciences in primary school in the Lejweleputswa district influences learners' academic achievement. How will the Social Sciences teachers in Grade 6 adapt to initiatives to advance the quality of teaching and learning? This study raises awareness about the required assistance that the Department of Basic Education ought to offer Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers, as well as the necessity for the DBE to provide professional development in this regard to teachers. Pia (2015) mentions that the teaching-learning practice is a premeditated encounter that facilitates behavioural change. Sempe (2014) suggests that the teach-and-assess technique is a method for ensuring that teachers recognise the relevance and significance of regular classroom activities.

Furthermore, Mege (2014) accentuates the need of assessment for determining how much teaching and learning has happened in the classroom. This current study is needed to find out how to assist teachers in implementing the teach-and -assess

technique in the Social Sciences in a manner that will result in functioning teaching and meaningful learning. It is argued in this research that assessment will be better integrated into teaching and learning because of the technique. The findings of this research aim to assist all learners in Grade 6 as well as teachers who teach Social Sciences.

The research will offer data to teaching experts who are in an influential position to comprehend the results and ramifications of making assessment policies in the Free State Department of Education. Besides that, the motivation behind this study is based on examining how the CAPS curriculum impacts the execution of formal assessment in Grade 6 Social Sciences in primary schools and improves methodologies. This research is also useful to Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers because it outlines strategies effective to teaching learning, and assessment.

1.5 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Casanave and Li (2015) assert that framing research or developing a theoretical framework requires the assigning of the research question throughout the information gathering or investigation. Grant and Osanloo (2014) highlight that a theoretical framework is the basis upon which supplying data for a research project is built, and it acts as the assembly and foundation for the study's explanation, problem statement, purpose, importance, and research questions. Kitchel and Ball (2014) mention that the phrases "theory" and "theoretical framework" can be used interchangeably since they equally refer to the complicated reasoning that explains and/or predicts occurrences. Nilsen (2015) affirms that frames will not give justification; instead, they only depict realistic events. Additionally, Imenda (2014) suggests that a theory is a foundational premise on which a subject is built. This study is inspired by the theories of social constructivism and cognitive constructivism. Constructive theory is relevant to this study because the social-constructivist theory of learning integrates assessment into the learning process. Furthermore, constructive theory in assessment may be applied by teachers to motivate learners to use hands-on methods to build additional knowledge, reflect on, and discuss what they are doing to improve the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom. Additionally, learners occasionally succeed in

this when they collaborate with their peers during assessment, which contributes to constructivism's social component.

1.5.1 Theories underpinning the research

Teachers must understand the teaching and learning processes to implement effective teaching and assessment procedures related to formal assessment. Teachers need to teach learners to actively construct new concepts and draw meaning from them, hence this study is grounded in constructivism philosophy. As theoretical foundations for this research, this section highlights Piaget's cognitive constructivism theory and Vygotsky's social constructivism theory.

1.5.1.1 Piaget's Cognitive Constructivism Theory

Piaget (1950) highlights that learning is created by inquiry, building of meaning, and processing information to build understanding within the environment, and that new knowledge is built upon existing knowledge. Voon et al. (2020) contend that in order to be aware of important features of a phenomenon, learners must first distinguish those aspects from their surroundings. Piaget (1952) also perceives intellectual development as a process of alteration to the environment. Donald et al. (2014) state that cognitive constructivism is a way of thinking about learning that sees humans as active participants in a continuous process of adaptation. People adapt by organizing and reorganising knowledge and experiences on a regular basis. Piaget proposed four stages of development. Using these stages, we recognise that Grade 6 learners are in the formal operational stage (from about 11 years of age onwards). Woolfolk (2016) argues that learners at this stage reason realistically and conceptually, and their thinking procedure becomes more logical, allowing them to solve intellectual problems. Voon et al. (2020) mention that the learners perceive the key parts of the phenomena throughout the constructivist learning process. Learning is recontextualised when learners apply the concept they have learned in different contexts in their daily lives (Wong, 2015).

This means that in this stage, teaching and learning focus on increasing learners' awareness of specific important characteristics of a phenomenon and integrating

experiences from various learning contexts. As a result, in a constructivist context, the teacher's primary duty should be to establish the atmosphere, pose the challenges, and provide the support that will motivate or encourage learners to generate their own knowledge through personal experiences. Teaching, learning, and assessment are all affected by the formal operational stage. The ramifications are active engagement and exploration, and an unevenness of cognitive development.

1.5.1.1.1 Active engagement and exploration

Intellectual development does not only happen to learners because of active involvement and investigation. Cognitive development is founded on their active participation in and investigation of their physical and social environments (Donald et al., 2014). This concept implies that, for teachers to optimise the cognitive development of their learners, teaching and learning must be an active and exploratory activity. This means that formal assessment created by teachers should challenge learners' cognitive thinking skills while also allowing them to recognise and solve problems on their own. Furthermore, Piaget (1977) claims that cognitive growth is a result of observation and experimentation by the mind. Active involvement, experiential learning, inquiry-based, problem-based learning, and cooperation with others are all characteristics of constructivist learning activities (Ekpenyong & Ekdokpolor, 2016).

The child is an active learner, which means that the child is not merely an inactive receiver of knowledge from the environment, but rather learners take an active role in their own learning and growth (Bruner et al., 1976). As a result, teaching should promote situations that require learners to be engaged learners and participants in the learning operation from this perspective. Svinicki and McKeachie (2014) affirm that active learning should contain experiences that promote brain activity, contribute to meaningful, personalised learning, and reduce the illusion of comprehension. Furthermore, teachers should engage various domains of the brain to increase intellectual activity, which will lead to active learning, to ensure the intellectual growth of learners.

1.5.1.1.2 Unevenness of cognitive development

The term 'cognitive development' relates to how people's thinking, intelligence, and linguistic processes change as they get older (King, 2011). Donald et al. (2014) maintain that cognitive development is not a steady, consistent method of accumulating increasing numbers of facts. The progression is uneven, but it follows a predictable pattern as children improve their ability to organise and operate information. Lightfoot et al. (2018) highlight that child development phases signify the acquisition of specific degrees of cognitive capacity and emerge from the child's experiences. Similarly, Mwamwenda (2019) asserts that while people appear to be the same and act the same, each person has a unique set of abilities and cognitive development, which may be influenced by their environment and experiences. Children develop differently and can perform competently within a given stage (Lightfoot et al., 2018). It is the responsibility of Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers to ensure that both instruction and learning take into consideration all learners' unique differences so that they can benefit from learning.

Teaching and learning must be provided in a manner that is consistent with the cognitive growth of the learners. It will be difficult for learners to understand what being is taught if this is not done (Mwamwenda, 2019). This means that teachers should use cognitivist teaching strategies to help learners assimilate new material into their existing knowledge and make the necessary changes to their existing intellectual framework to fit that information. Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers must also ensure that learning is transformed into a process of integrating existing knowledge and new data to change world representations based on experience.

1.5.1.2 Social constructivism theory of Vygotsky

The premise that cognitive growth involves societal contact is at the heart of social constructivism. Donald et al. (2014) maintain that the social constructivism viewpoint reflects social and cultural elements are relevant in learners' knowledge construction. The Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) and mediation are two educational constructs of Vygotsky's theory that are pertinent to this research. Moyes (2014) postulates that all forms of interactions with the environment cause a learner's mind to

change. Similarly, with specialised and targeted learning interactions, intellectual processes can be better developed and modified (Friedman et al., 2019). Vygotsky (1978) suggests that with the right social involvement, everyone can learn. Additionally, Weinbaum and Veita (2017) point out that individuals cannot evolve individuation and become thinkers, unless they engage with the people around them. Kapur (2018) emphasises that social construction of knowledge occurs in a variety of methods and at multiple locations. Furthermore, Flavian (2017) highlights that society's ability to influence and improve learners' cognitive growth is no longer a point of contention, because it is still conducted by professional teachers rather than by everyone.

As a result, all teaching and learning entails the sharing and negotiation of socially constructed knowledge. Peers play an important role in learning and teaching; learners learn from their peers and participate in group discussions. Omwirhiren (2015) describes discussion technique as a strategy that uses directed interaction to highlight a specific subject matter to aid learners. This suggests that teaching, learning, and assessment in the Social Sciences should encourage learners to discover things for themselves through informed conversations.

1.5.1.2.1 Mediation and the Zone of Proximal Development

The use of proximal mediation propels learner development and social contact is an important aspect of this. The ZPD is that significant area where children cannot completely grasp things on their own but can through proximal interaction with others. Vygotsky's understanding of the mediation process and his concept of proximal development have obvious consequences for teaching and learning. Above all, teachers must connect with each learner's potential in the ZPD and then actively guide them to new levels of cognitive functioning and understanding through mediation (Donald et al., 2014). The ZPD and mediation are pertinent and suitable to this study as they inspire teacher-learner collaboration.

Daniels (2016) asserts that people think differently for a variety of reasons, the most common of which being the disparities in the mediation they have experienced. Research reveals that all societies' tremendous effects have extended beyond

everyday routine activities, emphasising that when teachers and parents determine that a child lacks adequate thinking processes, they can intervene to improve the child's cognitive thinking and critical thinking skills (Flavian, 2017). Additionally, different mediation processes, involving different people and varying degrees of complexity, may result in different cognitive development across learners (Daniels, 2016). Vygotsky (1978) points out that learning and cognitive development necessitates mediators to look for learners' distinct intellectual developments to mediate according to the learners' mental specialty and needs.

This suggests that to understand how students learn from their environment, teaching, learning, and assessment should include cognitive assessments that focus on emergent cognitive purposes that can only be disclosed during problem solving shared with and supported by adults. Furthermore, for teachers to effectively mediate learners' cognitive growth in teaching and learning of Grade 6 Social Sciences, they must first understand the learners' cultural backgrounds and then base their mediation on that perspective.

Cohen et al. (2018) mention that literature must be influential and lead into all characteristics of the study. Marshall and Rossman (2016) suggest that the literature review offers an outline for starting to recognise the significance of the study and serves as a benchmark for correlating the outcomes with other discoveries. Therefore, the literature review reveals what the crucial subjects within the field to be investigated are, why they are relevant and helps the researcher to detect the knowledge gaps that need to be plugged in the field (Cohen et al., 2018). The literature review of this study examines teachers' formal assessment practices and helps the researcher to discover the challenges and dilemmas the teachers are confronted with in the implementation of formal assessment as a measure of quality teaching and learning.

Social Sciences, which include History and Geography, are taught in Grades 4-6 (Intermediate Phase). The goal of combining these learning areas to form Social Sciences, according to the DBE (2011a) was for learners to acquire and comprehend the value of human rights, governance, and conservational challenges. This integration was designed to allow learners to investigate and comprehend the links among civic, political, social, religious, and economic considerations. In the

Intermediate Phase, learners must get high-quality Social Sciences teaching and learning. This implies that high-quality teaching is required to achieve high-quality learning (Killen 2015).

As required in the CAPS, the teaching and learning of Social Sciences in the Intermediate Phase ought to be aimed at harnessing interest and advancing deep-rooted learning. This infers that teachers ought to teach in ways that empower learners to become autonomous and motivated. They should try and create a culture that advances quality teaching and learning in Social Sciences. Killen (2015) points out that quality learning occurs when learners can apply information and unravel issues, find or make new information for themselves. Assessment is a fundamental aspect of teaching and learning, with two forms of assessment being crucial in teaching and learning, namely, assessment *of* learning and assessment *for* learning. It is necessary to undertake quality assurance assessment processes to attain quality education.

Tomlinson et al. (2016) assert that assessment should be designed with the goal of allowing learners to demonstrate everything they know, understand, and can perform. Ntuli (2013) maintains that assessment in the field of education is currently a hot topic. It is frequently the focus of policy adjustments that effective teachers should use to review how they assess learners. Teachers often become unsure and confused about what is anticipated of them because of these changes, making assessment implementation difficult. Assessment gives feedback in terms of teaching and learning; it is a measure of learners' competence; it informs whether learners will advance into the next grade, and it is one of the success criteria on which the DBE rates teachers (DBE, 2012).

Tomlinson et al. (2016) maintain that when assessment gets to be a standardised part of the learning process, learners end up being progressively proficient at focusing on essential learning objectives, evaluating their own work in relation to those objectives, creating learning goals and timetables, and providing relevant feedback to one another. Scales (2013) lays much emphasis on the reasons for assessment. The central reason of assessment is to assist learners to remember, it ought not to be

almost testing learners to see what point they come up short. Scales (2013) contends that the reasons why teachers assess learners, and their learning are the following:

- For classifying, assortment, and development
- To determine whether or not learning has occurred
- To stimulate and inspire learners
- Identify the needs of the learners
- Evolving and appraising educational programmes (pp.192 -193).

Both informal (assessment *for* learning) and formal (assessment *of* learning) assessments should be conducted. *Assessment in the National Curriculum Statement Grades R-12* covers School-Based Assessment (SBA) and practical work for specific topics and end of year examinations (DBE, 2011a). Learners are assessed independently in accordance with the standards stipulated in the *National Protocol for Assessment (NPA) GradeR-12* (DBE 2011b). SBA must be included as part of the progression criteria. These assessments in Social Sciences comprise various types of formal assessments namely, projects, tests, examinations, and tasks.

Table 1 Table 1.1: Example of School Based Assessment (SBA) Requirements

Term 1	History	Task	School-Based Assessment (SBA) 75%	
	Geography	Task		
Term 2	History	Task/test		
	Geography	Task/test		
Term 3	History	Project		
	Geography	Task		
Term 4	History	Text/Examination		Year-end test/ examination 25%
	Geography	Test/ Examination		

(DBE, 2011a).

Moss (2013) suggests that some assessments provide learners with a perception of accomplishment and equality, while others give learners a sense of disappointment and injustice. Learning has both an academic and an emotional element. The emotional impact is the most significant in terms of learners' progress. Some research has revealed that children's happiness and well-being begin to deteriorate as early as year 6 (Grade 6), maybe because of the beginning of formal testing. Excessive formal

testing can reinforce learners' perceptions of their talents and the causes of their success and failure (Scales 2013).

Teachers in South Africa have had difficulties in comprehending and implementing earlier curriculum policies such as Curriculum 2005 and the Revised National Curriculum Statement. Due to these issues, the DBE was forced to implement the CAPS in 2012. The goal of CAPS was to advance teaching and learning. Teachers, however, continue to have difficulties in conducting effective assessment. Teachers are still having problems with CAPS, regardless that it was the consequence of the Revised National Curriculum Statement (Revised NCS) inquiry. Reddy et al. (2015) describe good pedagogies as classroom practices that enable all learners to attain high-quality learning goals (academic and social) that are required to succeed.

There is little doubt that a teacher's ability to establish an inviting learning environment for each learner is a significant contributor to learner achievement. Perry (2013) emphasises that insufficient teacher training is frequently highlighted as an obstacle to implementation and transformation. Changes in education policy and curriculum occur for a variety of causes, including political, social, and economic shifts within a country. Similarly, teacher transformation is critical since teacher opposition to change is the most significant barrier to curricular innovation. Beate (2013) states that certain research demonstrates that many teachers support national assessment policies and are comparatively knowledgeable about what assessment for learning requires. Though teachers assess learners in a variety of ways, they appreciate having autonomy over assessment since it allows them to function as directors or instructors and therefore to participate in beneficial collaboration with their learners (Beate, 2013). After providing a brief literature review on the enrichment of quality teaching and learning through formal assessment, the following section moves on to providing a statement of the problem.

1.6 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Most primary schools lack teaching and learning standards. This is due to learners' inability to read for meaning, which has an impact on their ability to learn the subject.

As a result, some learners are unable to comprehend what they read or learn. It is therefore critical to explore how Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers use formal assessment to advance quality teaching and learning. I have also observed that the assessment of learning in Grade 6 Social Sciences does promote good teaching and learning. In Social Sciences, assessment also presents a challenge in that it is not amalgamated into the teaching and learning practice and there are no techniques to integrate assessment into the teaching and learning method. Real teaching in the Social Sciences will take place if assessment can be incorporated into the teaching and learning process. As a result, for functioning teaching and learning in the Social Sciences, an approach that assimilates assessment into the teaching and learning practice is required. As such, the following section stipulates the research aim, questions, objectives, and hypotheses.

1.7 RESEARCH AIM, QUESTIONS, OBJECTIVES AND HYPOTHESES

This section provides the research aim, questions, objectives, and hypotheses.

1.7.1 Research aim

The research aims to explore how Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers enhance the quality of teaching and learning through formal assessment.

1.7.2 Research questions

In this study, the following research questions were addressed:

- How do Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers enhance the quality of teaching and learning through formal assessment?
- How do Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers design various assessments?
- What challenges do teachers encounter when executing various assessment tasks in Grade 6 Social Sciences?
- Why do teachers experience the identified challenges when implementing various assessment tasks in Grade 6 Social Sciences?
- To what extent do differences in biographical variables (gender, age, teaching experience, professional teaching qualification, class size and school quintile)

in Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers' responses relate to their implementation of formal assessments?

1.7.3 Research objectives

The following are the research objectives that the study hopes to achieve. To:

- Examine how teachers improve the quality of teaching and learning through various assessments in Grade 6 Social Sciences.
- Scrutinize how Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers design various assessments tasks.
- Identify challenges teachers encounter when executing various assessment tasks in Grade 6 Social Sciences.
- Establish why teachers experience the identified challenges when implementing formal assessment tasks in Grade 6 Social Sciences.
- Ascertain how significantly the responses of Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers differ in terms of biographical factors (gender, age, teaching experience, professional teaching qualification, class size, and school quintile) and how they execute formal assessments.

1.7.4 Research hypotheses

In this study, the underlying null hypotheses will be evaluated:

1.7.4.1 Hypothesis 1

H_0 : There is no statistically noteworthy variance among male and female Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers on formal assessment.

1.7.4.2 Hypothesis 2

H_0 : There is no statistically noteworthy difference between young and senior Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers regarding formal assessment.

1.7.4.3 Hypothesis 3

H_0 : There is no statistically significant difference in test results in formal assessment between Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers with teaching experience ranging from 0 to five years and those with teaching experience ranging from six to 35 years' experience.

1.7.4.4 Hypothesis 4

H_0 : There is no statistically noteworthy difference in formal assessment between Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers who have professional teaching credentials and those who do not.

1.7.4.5 Hypothesis 5

H_0 : There is no statistically significant difference in test scores between Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers who majored in the subject and those who did not.

1.7.4.6 Hypothesis 6

H_0 : There is no statistically noteworthy difference among Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers who teach class sizes of one to 35 learners and those who teach a class size of 36 to 110 learners on formal assessment scores.

1.7.4.7 Hypothesis 7

H_0 : There is no statistically substantial difference in the formal assessment results of Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers who work in various school quintiles.

The following section highlights the research design and methodology.

1.8 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Many researchers have described what research design is and how this links to methodology. Denzin and Lincoln (2018) highlight that research designs are styles of exploration within qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methodologies techniques that offer precise guidance for procedures in a research project. Palaiologou et al. (2016) assert that a research design is a road map that a researcher chooses to follow throughout their research expedition to discover answers to their research questions as realistically, precisely, correctly, and inexpensively as possible. Additionally, Bakker (2018) points out that a research design is a technique or operative strategy that specifies what and how various approaches and processes will be used throughout the study method. Cohen et al. (2018) mention that a research design is a plan or approach for organising and making research practicable so that it may be conducted.

This is a pragmatist study in which a mixed methods research design, namely, concurrent triangulation is adopted. This study will use mixed methods research to take advantage of the benefits of both quantitative and qualitative research alternatives. Quantitative research can be closed-ended, impersonal, and context-bound, whereas qualitative research can be open-ended, subjective and limited to a few people. When combining approaches, these drawbacks are mitigated (Creswell, 2015a). As a result, Fraenkel et al. (2015) claim that mixed methods research uses qualitative and quantitative data sets to explain, investigate, and justify research. This study's quantitative and qualitative components will be completed at the same time. The merging of two data sources, namely quantitative and qualitative research, is designed to make use of each of their strengths.

1.8.1 Quantitative research design

Ary et al. (2019) explain that quantitative research design uses objective measures classed as controlled settings to collect statistical data to investigate issues or test conventional hypotheses. Additionally, Creswell and Creswell (2018) explain that quantitative research design is a method for investigating the relationship between

variables to test objective theories. This study's quantitative method will be a survey. Cohen et al. (2018) maintain that surveys collect data at a certain point in time with the goal of defining the nature of current conditions or creating benchmarks against which existing circumstances can be linked. Creswell and Creswell (2018) outline that researchers collect data for partial and continuing studies using questionnaires or interviews.

In this study I will use questionnaires to obtain quantitative data from Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers through a survey. I will use a survey because all respondents will be asked identical questions for uniformity. The ability to derive conclusions from huge groups of individuals, rapid data processing, the ability to study linkages within data, and bias control are all advantages of quantitative research (Creswell, 2015a; Creswell, 2015b). Quantitative research's objectivity, on the other hand, limits context and makes participants' voices impersonal (Creswell 2015b & Mertens, 2015). The following section highlights qualitative research design as adopted in this study.

1.8.2 Qualitative research design

Creswell and Creswell (2018) mention that qualitative research design is a method for examining and considering the denotations that persons or groups attach to a situation. Pajo (2018) affirms that qualitative research design largely relies on descriptive language to explain its primary findings. Furthermore, Punch (2014) argues that qualitative research design aims to capture the unique characteristics of the social phenomena being studied. In this study, the qualitative research method adopted uses the phenomenological approach. Ary et al. (2019) highlight that phenomenological research design concentrates on comprehending the significance of occurrences for individuals in certain settings. Furthermore, Creswell and Creswell (2018) maintain that phenomenological research is a type of review originating in viewpoint and mindset in which the researcher recounts the lived understandings of persons in relation to a reality described by the participants. The ability to get detailed viewpoints from a few people and the contextual collecting of participant data, which is frequently presented in story form, are both advantages of qualitative research (Creswell, 2015a; Creswell, 2015b). Furthermore, qualitative research is broad and general due to its subjectivity and dependence on soft data (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018a; Mackey & Gass,

2016). In this research, the lived encounters of Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers are their experiences when implementing various assessments tasks.

The following paragraphs highlight the population and sample for this study.

1.9 POPULATION AND SAMPLE

This section briefly outlines the population and sample for this research.

1.9.1 Population

Ary et al. (2019) describe population as the wider group from whom a researcher seeks to generalise the findings of research, and it encompasses all members of a particular class of people, events, or objects. The target population is a group of people from which the researcher takes a sample and derives conclusions (Creswell, 2014). As a result, the target population in this study are all Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers in primary schools in the Lejweleputswa district.

1.9.2 Sample

A sample is a subset of a population preferred for study observation (Ary et al., 2019; Maree & Pietersen, 2020). Similarly, Creswell and Plano Clark (2018) emphasise that sampling is a method for determining the features of a vast collection by choosing an insignificant number of individuals. Researchers use sampling to select a subset of the population called a sample that can be used to conduct research (Pajo, 2018). The goal is to have the smaller study group resemble the larger group as closely as possible. In this study 150 Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers were used to gather data on enhancing quality teaching and learning through formal assessment at primary schools. Teachers of Social Sciences in Grades 6 who might be able to contribute information were chosen as potential participants in this research. The respondents to the questionnaire were selected using simple random sample. Purposive sampling was applied to choose the participants who were interviewed. The sample of this research is as follows:

- 150 Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers from 158 primary schools were selected randomly in the Lejweleputswa district.
- Ten Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers who were not respondents to the questionnaire were purposefully selected to be interviewed to explain and clarify how they attempt to enhance quality teaching and learning through formal assessment and to outline the challenges they encounter in the execution of assessment in primary schools. They were also asked about the strategies they apply to improve the quality of teaching and learning through formal assessment.

The following paragraphs briefly explain data collection instruments used in this study.

1.10 DATA COLLECTION TOOLS

Mkandawire (2019) emphasises that research is impossible to imagine without implying the presence of data collection procedures and the data that result from them. The term 'data collection' refers to the procedure through which scholars get data from the empirical field (Bryman, 2016). A questionnaire and semi-structured interviews were used to gather information in this concurrent triangulation mixed methods research.

Palaiologou et al. (2016) assert that a questionnaire is particularly good at gathering data from many people in a short amount of time, therefore its strength is breadth rather than depth. Cohen et al. (2018) state that a questionnaire is a commonly used and useful tool for gathering survey data, giving organised algebraic data, being able to be managed and being comparatively easy to analyse. Questionnaire items were used in this study to elicit information from Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers about how formal assessment can promote quality teaching and learning, as well as the problems they face when conducting assessment in their classrooms.

The respondents' feelings towards a given questionnaire item were measured using a seven-point semantic differential scale, with one indicating "not at all" and seven representing "always." Rosenberg and Navarro (2018) maintain that semantic

differential scales employ a standardised set of bipolar adjectives to grade an issue, and this technique has several advantages for both researchers and study participants. The semantic differential rule is that researchers must strike a compromise between comprehensiveness and practicality when asking participants, a reasonable number of questions (Cohen et al., 2018). The quantitative research findings are described in Chapter 3 and contrasted with the qualitative research findings. A semi-structured interview which was employed to obtain qualitative information is outlined in the next paragraph.

Bryman (2016) highlights that interviewing is a fundamental qualitative method. King et al. (2019) suggest that an interview entails asking open-ended questions to talk with respondents and gather data on a topic. Furthermore, Ary et al. (2019) state that semi-structured interviews are a useful data collection strategy when the researcher wants to delve deeply into personal and often sensitive matters and explore participants' thoughts and feelings about a particular topic. Semi-structured interviews were chosen for this study since they are made up of open-ended questions that enable participants to answer in their own unique way. In this case, follow-up questions took the form of probes as the interviewer tried to dig up more information on a topic. I conducted a detailed, online semi-structured interview which permitted the interviewees and me to clarify questions and answers to confirm correct replies and, as a result, a real portrayal of the participants' viewpoints was made possible. To guarantee that vital material was not missed, interviews were recorded with the participants' full knowledge and consent. The next section outlines how quantitative and qualitative data were analyzed.

1.11 DATA ANALYSIS

An analysis of data is a continuing process that ought to happen throughout the study rather than at the end (Hendricks, 2017). Ary et al (2019) postulate that data analysis is a procedure whereby researchers thoroughly pursue and assemble their data to comprehend them and their implications. Since this research used concurrent triangulation mixed methods, the analysis involved parallel analysis of quantitative and qualitative data. Creamer (2018) suggests that the benefit of using quantitative and

qualitative data analysis equally ensures that the limits of one type of data are balanced by the strength of another.

1.11.1 Quantitative data analysis

For me to explicitly consider the ways that quality teaching and learning in Social Sciences can be enhanced through formal assessment, descriptive and inferential statistics were used when analysing the data from the questionnaires. The predictor variables indicators such as the mean, median, standard deviation, and a measure of dispersion, were used in the descriptive data analysis. These statistical techniques were used because they are the most pertinent statistical techniques used to analyse data gathered through a semantic differential scale. The inferential statistics used to test hypotheses were independent-samples t-test and analysis of variance (ANOVA).

1.11.2 Qualitative data analysis

Hendricks (2017) asserts that qualitative data analysis is a method of extracting meaning from sources of information that can be interpreted in numerous approaches. Cohen et al. (2018) affirm that a qualitative data review concentrates on in-depth, context-specific, rich subjective data and connotations by the participants in particular circumstances. Similarly, Creswell and Plano Clark (2018) argue that qualitative data analysis allows the researcher to make sense of data in relation to the participants' descriptions of the condition, noticing patterns, ideas, groupings, and consistencies. Marshall and Rossman (2016) claim that qualitative research is used differently than quantitative research and it involves the following:

- *Data preparation and organisation*
- *Data description and presentation*
- *Data analysis*
- *Data interpretation*
- *Coming to conclusions*
- *Summarising the findings*

- *Assuring precision, consistency, coherence, corroboration, validity, and dependability* (p. 644).

To organize data clearly and properly, I revisited the raw transcripts and read over the notes numerous times to get a general idea of what each participant's comments were, with the goal of understanding the components of each individual response. I looked for patterns in each participant's responses and then attempted to aggregate, categorise, rearrange, and organize the data to better comprehend each response. After that, I wrote a segment on each participant's answers. I scrutinised the resulting information to create a detailed and descriptive account of the specific practices that the research participants were prepared to disclose. These descriptions were inscribed to provide a descriptive and illuminating explanation of interviewees' responses. Inscription of the responses assisted the analysis as the researcher pieced together the words of the contributors in a descriptive way. I then set about comprehending specific responses and wrote them down in a way that anyone could understand regardless of their circumstances. I wrote the responses of the participants after that. Accuracy and dependability of the research instruments are highlighted in the next section.

1.12 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY OF THE RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

The following section highlights the reliability and validity of the research tools that will be used to gather data.

1.12.1 Reliability

The term 'reliability' refers to the consistency and uniformity in which questionnaire items are developed and used in data collection (Johnson & Christensen, 2017). Mackey and Gass (2016) mention that establishing reliability contributes to the research's validity. In addition, ambiguous and unclear questions, differences in instrument administration, misinterpretation, and participant weariness all impair reliability (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). A pilot study was carried out to check the practicability of the questionnaire as a data-gathering instrument in this research. It

was administered to ten Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers who were not participants in the primary research. Cronbach's alpha was used to evaluate the internal consistency and reliability of the questionnaire.

1.12.2 Validity

Validity relates to the legitimacy of implications, descriptions, and actions concerning data analysis (Mertens, 2015). To examine the validity of the questionnaire the pilot study was carried out. By so doing, I determined whether the questionnaire tested what it was expected to test. The questionnaire items were derived from the literature review. The interview questions also came from the literature review and research questions. This process assisted in ensuring the validity of the interview questions. The transcriptions and phone recordings of the semi-structured interviews provided rich and thick descriptions of the data. The use of phone recordings supported external validity. The following section briefly discusses ethical issues that were considered in this research.

1.13 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

There are several ethical and moral dilemmas which researchers must observe when undertaking a study. In this study, I considered the following ethical issues:

- Trustworthiness
- Confidentiality, anonymity, and privacy
- Informed consent
- Avoidance of harm

1.13.1 Trustworthiness

Nieuwenhuis (2020) maintains that measuring trustworthiness is the acid test of data analysis, verdicts, and inferences. Trustworthiness of data will be determined by triangulation in which replies from transcripts will be ascertained to establish the

accuracy of statements. Participants were given the transcripts to check if the transcription was done correctly.

1.13.2 Confidentiality, anonymity and privacy

The respondents' names will not be disclosed to maintain confidentiality. I attempted to achieve the participants' reliance and co-operation by ensuring the confidentiality of the data and protecting their identities. The data was fabricated and then I told all participants that their participation is voluntary. Throughout the research, I observed the principles of protection from harm, confidentiality, and honesty.

1.13.3 Informed consent

I gave the participants an informed consent sheet detailing all information about the research process (See Appendix 5). They were required to complete the informed consent form after I had explained the purpose of the study to them. Participants were informed that they were taking part in the research voluntarily and that they could withdraw from the study at any point without fear of repercussions. The same practice was applied during interviews.

1.13.4 Avoidance of harm

Research should not harm participants regardless of whether they have volunteered to participate in the research or not. The possibility of causing harm cannot be ruled out in this research. I anticipated that the research may cause emotional harm to the participants, especially when narrating their experiences on how they manage teaching and learning, hence a debriefing of participants was essential after data gathering to help them express their emotions. The following section highlights the limitations of the research.

1.14 LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

Dimitrios and Antigoni (2019) postulate that the limitations of any specific study concern possible weaknesses that are typically out of the researcher's control and are often associated with the chosen research design. I identified the following factors that may limit the results of this research:

- Limitation related to participants' characteristics

This research will be limited to teachers who have the same and similar characteristics. Thus, this research study will not be representative of all primary schools in Lejweleputswa district. Consequently, the research findings will not be generalized to all Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers at primary schools.

- Limitations related to contextual characteristics

Contextual factors are expected to be substantial barriers to research (Hargreaves et al., 2014). In this research contextual factors refer to different primary schools having varying work environment constraints. The study's emphasis is on the several primary schools in the Lejweleputswa area, each with its own set of working conditions. This research may not have ecological validity because the results may not be generalized because the schools' contextual factors are different.

- Limitations related to methodology

Qualitative research accentuates a phenomenological framework that numerous realities are rooted in the teacher's contribution towards improving quality teaching and learning through formal assessment. The results cannot be generalized because purposeful sampling which is a non-probability sampling technique was used to select interviewees.

1.15 CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS

The functional concepts used in this study are explained in this section to provide clarity of how they are used in this study.

1.15.1 Social Sciences

Social Sciences are concerned with human behaviour and society. It is a subject that combines the Social Sciences and the Humanities (Obo & Adejumo, 2014). It integrates Business Studies with Geography, History, Religion, values, and ethics. (Hughes et al., 2020). The Social Sciences are concerned with teaching learners how to obtain, process, and use knowledge, and the curriculum in this field focuses on history, education, and skills (Ross et al., 2014).

1.15.2 Teaching

Killen (2015) describes teaching as a process of assisting learners with finding, remembering, understanding, organising, applying, and evaluating information, as well as doing creative things with it. Coe et al. (2014) claim that true teaching is that which focuses on improving learner's achievement based on results that are important to learners' performance advancement of their imminent prosperity. Furthermore, Jadama (2014) highlights that the purpose of teaching is to help learners build intellectual resources to engage in, rather than just learn about, the major areas of human thought and inquiry.

1.15.3 Learning

Goodwin and Webb (2014) mention that learning happens when learners are inspired and driven to constantly pursue more learning to transform themselves through acquired knowledge, skills and values. Furthermore, learning is the process by which a person acquires skills, knowledge, and experience that lead to behavioural changes.

1.15.4 Quality teaching

Killen (2015) emphasises that quality teaching is about assisting learners in making sense of new information (from whatever source), mixing new information with established ideas, being aware of their own learning and cognitive capacities, and thoughtfully and appropriately applying their newly acquired knowledge. Learners will be motivated to study if teachers provide high-quality instruction, and the knowledge they transfer will last.

1.15.5 Quality learning

Killen (2015) defines good teaching as supporting learners in making sense of new information (from any source), integrating prior knowledge, awareness of their own thought and knowledge production, and application of new knowledge in appropriate and efficient ways are all requirements for applying knowledge that has been acquired. If teachers deliver high-quality education, learners will be motivated to study, and the knowledge they impart will last.

1.15.6 Assessment

Killen (2015) asserts that assessment becomes an essential component of education rather than something that is addressed at the end. Assessment is the procedure of gathering, analysing, and interpreting data to aid teachers, parents, and other stakeholders in taking decisions regarding learner's progress (DBE, 2012). Furthermore, Reddy et al. (2015) argue that assessment is the process of gathering and analysing data to draw results about student learning. Both learners and teachers use assessment to identify where learners are in their learning, where they need to go, and the best way to get there. Mege (2014) emphasises the importance of evaluation in determining how much teaching and learning has happened during the teaching and learning procedure.

1.15.7 Intermediate Phase

Intermediate Phase in South African schools includes Grades 4, 5 and 6. The focal points for teaching and learning in this phase is technical skills and intellectual abilities of the learners are developed. Learners must learn a variety of disciplines in this phase, ranging from English and Mathematics to Social Sciences (DBE, 2011a).

1.16 DIVISION OF CHAPTERS

Chapter 1 presents an orientation to the study.

Chapter 2 presents the literature review on quality teaching and learning, and assessment.

Chapter 3 presents research design and methodology.

Chapter 4 presents the analysis of quantitative and qualitative data.

Chapter 5 provides a summary of findings, recommendations, and conclusions.

1.17 CHAPTER SUMMARY

The study's background has been presented in this chapter. There is also a statement of the problem, which includes both the main research question and several sub-research questions. In this chapter, I explain the study's reasoning. A research outline was presented in which I detailed the topic of each chapter. In addition, the study's limitations and delimitations were discussed, as well as definitions of essential terms. The literature review and theoretical framework are the topics of the next chapter.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Mudavanhu (2017) asserts that a literature review is a collection of accessible records both distributed and undisclosed on the topic, which comprise evidence, thoughts, and proof composed from a specific viewpoint to satisfy conclusive points or direct certain perspectives on the knowledge of the theme and in what manner it is to be explored. Furthermore, a literature review is helpful for researchers, as the reader gets an up to date and all-around organised outline of the writing in a specific region, and the review adds significance (Pautasso, 2013). Van Wee and Banister (2016) maintain that a literature review is an overview of all that has been developed on a specific topic, hypothesis, or research question. It might provide a basis for bigger work, or it might stand alone.

In Chapter 1, a synopsis of the research was explicated. The aims of the study, problem statement, methods and sampling of the study were communicated. This chapter evaluates contemporary literature related to teachers' use of assessment in schools. The ideas related to formal assessments will be explored as these relate to the central focus of this study. However, assessment cannot be discussed without first looking at what quality teaching and learning entail. Therefore, a brief explanation of what quality teaching and learning entail will be provided before the concept of assessment is discussed.

This chapter has four sections. The first section sets out the background for this research. The next section explores quality teaching and learning; specifically, the connection among teaching, learning and assessment. It further examines assessment for learning, assessment of learning and how assessment contributes to quality teaching and learning. The third section outlines post-apartheid curriculum changes in South Africa and their effect on teaching, learning and assessment. The fourth section highlights how educators plan different assessments and the difficulties they experience in actualising different assessments in Social Sciences. The literature review comprises of books, policy documents of the Department of Basic Education

(DBE) in South Africa and numerous journal articles. The theoretical framework is outlined in the next section.

2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Collins and Stockton (2018) describe a theory as a big concept that organises many more notions with strong clarifying influence. Consequently, a theory can assist to make sense of what will truly help to answer research problems. Saldana and Omasta (2018) argue that theories distil research into statements about social life that may be applied to different places, contexts, people, and perhaps historical periods. Maxwell (2013) defines the theoretical framework as a preliminary theory about the phenomenon being examined that informs the whole design of the investigation. Collin and Stockton (2018) argue that a theoretical framework is the joining together of the available information and previously developed concepts regarding complex phenomena which the research focuses on. Grant and Osanloo (2014) emphasise that a theoretical framework is the application of a recognised theory to an issue at hand to help researchers in understanding the various concepts and definitions that pertain to their research. They add that the theoretical framework should function as an anchor for data analysis, discussion and conclusion of a dissertation or thesis.

2.2.1 Theories underpinning this research

Understanding how the learning and teaching process happens is crucial for teachers so as that suitable teaching and assessment strategies can be applied. This research is grounded in the constructivism viewpoint because the goal is to understand the way teachers teach and learners actively put together new ideas and derive meaning from them. Vygotsky (1978) asserts that children learn best by working through problems and by inquiry-and-error methods rather than by memorisation of facts. They also engage in active learning rather than in inactive learning. To minimise knowledge gaps among learners, active learning should be used as this involves collaboration between both the teacher and the learners as well as among the learners and their peers. This claim suggests that Social Sciences teachers must support learners as they learn through practical application rather than lecturing them. Furthermore, constructive teaching

comprises hands-on intellectual growth and knowledge progression that challenges the reality of the situation. Piaget (1964) argues that learners gain knowledge through reflecting on and contrasting new experiences with prior ones. To get learners involved in problem-solving exercises, teachers should encourage creative learning, autonomous learning, scrutiny, and comprehension in the learners, as opposed to passive learning, rote learning, and uncritical memorisation of facts. Social Sciences teachers in South Africa must adhere to the CAPS guidelines which advocate for participative teaching and learning.

The constructivist approach is about the study of classroom philosophy and therefore the core of this method of teaching is problem solving. (Patil & Kudte, 2017). Moreover, constructivism's focal idea is that learning may be a cycle where people construct knowledge. Furthermore, constructivist learning theory approach make learners' own their learning and makes interest for learning. The constructivist approach in education focuses on building knowledge to create meaning by doing.

Constructivism emphasises the compelling area of learning, on cultivating positive inspiration, with an emphasis on addressing learners' interest in learning (Demircioglu & Cagatay, 2014). Olusegun (2015) believes that the constructivist perspective on learning influences learners to become experts within the process of learning. Aljohani (2017) affirms that constructivism embraces a "top-down" instead of a "bottom up" instructional procedure. Finally, instead of explaining all of the main points that cause key information, learners must realise the knowledge and create their own meaning.

In this section, two constructivism philosophies and notions allied to teaching and learning of Social Sciences are outlined to explain the conceptual background of this study. These theories are Piaget's (1970) cognitive constructivism and Vygotsky's (1978) social constructivism.

2.2.1.1 Cognitive Constructivism theory of Piaget (1896-1980)

Piaget (1964) argues that children are constantly showing new knowledge in their own contexts while also going through an ongoing stage of adaptation. Additionally, as children try to organise and become familiar with the environment around them,

they can make intricate maps of it from the initial phases of growth onward. Correspondingly, Khalid and Azeem (2012) argue that intellectual constructivism could be an interpretation of knowledge signifying that a learner becomes a knowledge constructor, learners construct data supported by their understandings and ideas of the situation. Additionally, in the constructivism learning approach learners vigorously construct or generate their own independent or impartial reality. Building on their definition of the constructivist learning approach, they further maintain that a learner does not start with a clean slate but rather draws on prior knowledge and their cultural context to make sense of new information in certain contexts.

Similarly, Voinea and Purcaru (2014) emphasise the use of virtual environments. They state that using a virtual world as a platform for learning has benefits for learning and therefore the engaging and interactive nature of the virtual environment can be advantageous for teaching. Dano-Hinosolango and Mindanao (2014) argue that using a constructivism approach improves learning engagement instead of just shifting of knowledge. The principle of constructivism allows learners create their own knowledge through active learning and to interpret what is being thought for themselves (Aljohani, 2017). The cognitive development concept as proposed by Piaget (1964) is described below.

2.2.1.1.1 The process of cognitive development

Piaget (1964) highlights that cognitive development is an unremitting process and same sequence of cognitive development occurs in all children, regardless of environmental context or cultural variation around the world. McLeod (2018) states that cognitive development explores how a child builds a conceptual image of the environment. Piaget (1932) suggests that children acquire knowledge through interacting directly with those around them, they become excited to resolve conflicts. Children learn the concepts from their peers as they are more familiar and less intimidating than the concepts of their teacher. Piaget (1964) argues that humans are unable to have an impartial view of reality since they are always changing and reconstructing it and themselves. That is, people make or derive meaning, comprehension, and experience of the world relying on their own interactions. Piaget (1977) maintains that learning is not a concept that is created unilaterally, but rather

conforms to the individual's current world. Cognitive constructivism is aligned with experiential learning theory which characterises learning as the interaction since knowledge is made over the change of practice and information outcomes after the blend of acquisitive and shifting knowledge (Dano-Hinosolango & Mindanao, 2014). Piaget (1964) describes how intellectual development occurs through three consistently connected forms, namely assimilation, accommodation, and equilibration. The phases are outlined below.

2.2.1.1.1 Assimilation

Piaget (1983) explains assimilation as a cognitive process that governs how learners obtain new material and integrate it into their prior knowledge. Building on Piaget's definition of assimilation reference is made that assimilation entails the application of a schema to a novel situation as a quick way to comprehend novel events. Additionally, it also serves as a mental shortcut that aids in the elucidation or explanation of unexplained occurrences.

Zhiqing (2015) describes assimilation as the strategy by which a problem incorporates a perceived stimulus into this schema. Piaget (1983) assumes that this learning method makes new schemas that are connected to present schemas (Hattie & Zierer, 2018). Piaget (1983) asserts that assimilation is the technique by which information that can fit into the learner's current knowledge gets integrated to the child's intellectual processes. This material strengthens and broadens the learners' cognitive architecture. For instance, in Social Sciences in Grade 6, a lesson introduces the use of latitude and longitude lines in identifying different places on a map based on the consideration that in Grade 5 learners became acquainted with these lines where identifying hemispheres requires the use of the equator and Greenwich Meridian. Then in lesson 2, learners receive an unknowable coordinate to locate different places in a map using latitude and longitude lines, when lesson 2 is presented, the learner can use prior understanding of lesson 1 as a connection to comprehend and analyse lesson 2's topic more fully. This practice does not fundamentally alter the learner's cognitive structures; rather, it broadens them.

2.2.1.1.1.2 Accommodation

Piaget (1983) argues that once new knowledge emerges that opposes or clashes with the learners' cognitive structures, accommodation occurs. In accommodation learners must adapt and rearrange their cognitive structures for the new data to be accepted in the learners' brains. Similarly, accommodation occurs when learners change existing schemes to respond to a new situation (Woolfolk, 2016). For instance, learners may see various kinds of maps including round and flat maps with many lines (assimilation) and learn that these lines are called latitude lines or longitude lines (accommodation). Learners have previous acquaintance of maps with lines. New concepts which are latitude lines and longitude lines are presented, so in this instance opposes with the child's present map. Through instruction and learning, the teacher can alter the learner's cognitive architecture to better understand new notions of latitude lines and longitude lines to vary the learner's cognitive structures. Piaget (1958) asserts that assimilation and accommodation demand an active learner rather than a sedentary one since problem-solving abilities must be pursued rather than imposed.

2.2.1.1.1.3 Equilibrium

Piaget (1983) indicates that equilibrium occurs when a learner transitions to a more complicated or successful way of organising and interacting with the outside environment. Furthermore, equilibrium is seen to be the impulse behind a learner's progress. Additionally, assimilation and accommodation respond in equilibrium, with accommodation generating assimilation potential and the other way around in an ever-expanding cycle. Zhiqing (2015) defines equilibrium as the condition within which the subject truthfully represents the article and so the item conforms to the subject. Piaget (1947) asserts that individuals engage with their environment instead of acting in response to stimulation and behaviours. Additionally, they integrate their behaviour throughout these encounters and create a model of the behaviours they carry out in their surroundings to create equilibrium.

Piaget's work on cognitive theory gives insight on how children differ from infants to older children in terms of their intellectual capacity. (Krause & Corts, 2012). Piaget's theory presents a development process which incorporates two major parts, ages and

stages that anticipates what children can and cannot recognise at different ages, and a theory of development that classifies how children mature in their cognitive abilities (Amineh & Asl, 2015). The development method is explained below.

2.2.1.2 Development through stages: Piaget’s development approach

Piaget (1952) suggests that children journey stages when developing their thinking skills. The age at which children achieve these stages of development can vary. Additionally, Piaget mentions that although all children go through the identical stages, different children would still progress at different stages. Sigelman and Rider (2012) mention that within the method of evolving from one stage to the next, children’s intellectual functions alter profoundly.

These stages are namely: the sensory-motor stage, pre-operational stage, concrete-operational stage and the formal-operational stage. The table below briefly outlines the range of ages to which they typically apply and their distinguishing characteristics.

Table 2Table 3.1: Piaget’s stages and characteristics

Stage	Age	Characteristics
Sensory-motor phase	0-2 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflexes, senses, and movement are all used. • Imitate others and recall past occurrences. • Recognises that items do not vanish just because they are no longer visible. • Moves from reflexive to understanding their surroundings.
Pre-operational phase	2-7 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Symbol-based language development. • Prefers to think about the present rather than the past or the future. • Thinks about procedures in a linear manner. • Inability to comprehend others’ points of view.
Concrete-operational phase	7-11 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Logical reasoning in real-world situations. • Organises and categorises information. • Possesses the ability to mentally undo actions by thinking backwards.

Formal – operational phase	11-15 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thinks deductively as well as theoretically. • The process of thinking becomes more scientific. • Is capable of resolving abstract difficulties. • Considers things from a variety of perspectives.
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(Woolfolk, 2016, p.73)

Carey et al. (2015) state that Piaget's philosophies are still relevant today. Learners in the Intermediate Phase of Social Sciences, i.e., Grades 4–6, are of particular interest in this study because they fall between the stages of concrete- and formal - operation (from about 11 to 13 years of age).

The developmental perspective of Piaget plays an important part in teaching which is perceptible in the educational implications outlined below:

2.2.1.3 Educational implications of Piaget's theory in the teaching and learning of Intermediate Phase Social Sciences

Piaget (1964) warns against teaching children to merely copy other people's thinking; rather, teachers should encourage children to use their innate curiosity to cultivate creativity, inventiveness, and critical thinking. Piaget's theory is crucial in reviewing curriculum. He claims that teachers should be aware that each child's cognitive development is unique and takes time. This means that all learners in a class are not necessarily performing at the same level. Teachers would benefit from and should endeavour to know their learners' cognitive levels so that they may alter their teaching accordingly. The Piaget's theory has significant implications for teaching and learning. Eggen and Kauchak (2016) suggest the following criteria, taken from Piaget's theory, for teaching and learning:

- Create tangible experiences to represent abstract concepts.
- Assist learners in connecting the concrete representations to the abstract concept.
- Encourage learners to interact with one another to assist them to progress.

- Create learning opportunities that serve as developmental steppingstones to more advanced phases of development.

Donald et al. (2014) concur that Piaget's theory contains two key attributes both of which have major educational implications. These are active involvement and exploration, as well as unequal cognitive development, which are each addressed separately below.

2.2.1.3.1 Active engagement and exploration

Piaget (1962) emphasises that children learn and adapt to their surroundings by combining environmental context with active participation, exploration, and creativity. Cognitive aptitude is not restricted to learners because of active participation and exploration. It is grounded in children's productive engagement with and inspection of their actual, normal settings (Donald et al., 2014). Lefa (2014) suggests that cognitive development is founded on learners' active participation in physical and social world exploration. Nel et al. (2016) mention that constructivist theory supports active engagement as well as social encounters in the learning process. Therefore, if the teacher optimises things, teaching and learning must be dynamic using, probing methods during which learners' question, discuss, reflect, and solve problems for themselves. Kusumoto (2018) points out that logical thinking abilities can advance through active learning. Research backs up the idea that using active learning techniques can boost learners' performance (Owens et al., 2020). In like manner, learning is a dynamic process during which experience plays a big part in comprehending and understanding the meaning (Amineh & Asl, 2015). Piaget's (1977) theory encourages learners to interact in active exploration while teachers provide direction. Active engagement and exploration do not only happen to learners. It is supported by their active participation within the conversation of their physical and social world (Donald et al., 2014). Learners' participation within the teaching and learning procedure is critical since it encourages active participation through collaborative group work and discussion, the exchange of views, and the presentation of their concepts in an exceedingly significant approach (Farizka et al., 2020).

Darmawansah and Indartono (2019) assert that teachers' encouragement and inspiration in the classroom may boost learners' engagement. Hoff and Lopus (2012) affirm that learner engagement in learning is defined as a circumstance in which a learner is driven to build meaning about their experience and is willing to put in persistent effort to do so. When given the opportunity, an engaged learner is thought to initiate, persist, and/or concentrate on understanding and applying new knowledge or abilities, use deep information processing or problem-solving procedures, and have a positive attitude toward the learning process (Deater-Deckard et al., 2013). There are reasons to believe that learner's participation and engagement in class improves learning in a variety of ways (Dallimore et al., 2017).

Piaget emphasises the need of active involvement of learners in learning, therefore teachers must see learners actively participating in what is being taught and learnt. This implies that if teachers are to improve cognitive development, Social Sciences teaching and learning in the Intermediate Phase must be an active, exploratory activity. Instead of learners simply listening and taking notes or attempting to memorise the Social Sciences concepts presented by the teacher, a classroom environment should be created that allows them to discuss and apply the concepts they have learned. Furthermore, in the Intermediate Phase, teaching, learning, and evaluation should provide opportunity for learners to try things out, ask questions, and discuss possible answers, as well as solve problems for themselves. Additionally, as described in the following paragraph, teachers in the Social Sciences should be mindful of the inequality of learners' intellectual skills.

2.2.1.3.2 Unevenness of cognitive development

Piaget's primary theory is that biological processes are the 'engine' of cognitive development for Vygotsky this 'engine' is social. Vygotsky believes that rather than being a product of an individual's makeup, cognitive growth is mostly a result of external variables like cultural, historical, and social interaction. (Amineh & Asl, 2015). Cognitive development is an inconsistent operation, individual learners' move into respective disciplines at various times, and the constraints of the group environment in which the child is evolving have an impact on the learners' growth. (Lefa, 2014). Cognitive development is not a gradual, homogeneous process of accumulating ever-

larger amounts of knowledge. Although the progression is uneven, there is a set order of stages that the child must pass through as they develop their capacity for theoretical concept and interpretation (Donald et al., 2014).

The implication is that teachers should plan activities that encourage learner's intellectual development. Piaget's research reveals that a child's knowledge is limited by the stages they have reached, and teachers should keep this in mind when teaching children at various stages of intellectual development. Teachers must consider the differing intellectual stages of their learners' development when they plan formal assessment activities, as indicated in Bloom's taxonomy.

Piaget's theory of cognitive development has been questioned and doubts have been raised about it. Some argue that Piaget paid inadequate attention to the role of social elements on the cognitive process, yet he did not completely dismiss it (Kail, 2012). While most psychologists believe that Piaget's descriptions of how children think are insightful, many disagree with his theories of why thinking develops in the way it does (Woolfolk, 2016).

Sabu (2012) recognises the following as some of the most significant criticisms of Piaget's theory:

- *Piaget misjudged the abilities of new-borns and children.*
- *The idea appears to imply that cognitive growth is uniform.*
- *Whether many adults ever reach the formal operations stage. It's possible that entire cultures will never reach this point (p.112).*

These criticisms imply that teachers should supplement the application of Piaget's cognitive constructivism theory with Vygotsky's (1981) social constructivism theory, so the next section discusses the application of Vygotsky's (1981) social constructivism theory to the teaching and learning. This has important implications for this study.

2.2.2 Social constructivism theory of Vygotsky (1896-1934)

Vygotsky (1978) argues that learning is collaborative, and this is what is meant by social constructivism. The community is crucial to the act of creating meaning in children. Additionally, Vygotsky (1986) states that:

The perception of actual objects is a unique element of human cognition. I see the world not just in terms of visual appearance, but also as a world with logic and purpose. I see a clock, not just something round and black with two hands.
(p.39).

Amineh and Asl (2015) contend that social constructivism is a sociology and communication philosophy of knowledge that studies the information and considerations of the world that are formed collaboratively by individuals. Understanding and meaning, according to this theory are formed in collaboration with other people. Vygotsky (1978) has paid much more attention to socially situated learning and the mechanisms involved in learners' appropriation of cultural knowledge, which is what academic subjects can be said to be. Piaget emphasised individual self-regulation without neglecting social factors in the formation of rationality, social constructivism views learning as occurring via encounters with other learners, teachers, and the wider environment (Aljohani, 2017).

Vygotsky (1978) asserts that children's intellectual functioning matures initially at the social level as they learn to internalise and alter content with others. He emphasises the importance of social contact in cognitive development (Hockenbury & Hockenbury, 2011). Furthermore, Vygotsky (1986) maintains that learning occurs best when individuals can create own their experiences with others through cooperative relationships and in this way create their own meaning. Through social engagement, children can achieve greater levels of cognitive progress (King, 2011). Vygotsky (1978) emphasises the importance of three aspects: social environment, language, and mediation in social constructivism theory. These are explained below.

2.2.2.1 Social context

Vygotsky (1986) affirms that social connection is essential to and directly improves development. Vygotsky (1978) thought that development begins at a social level and is then internalised by individuals, and this theory can be applied to any or all kinds of development. Furthermore, children learn by active participation with others who are more knowledgeable. As part of a broad examination of young children's growth and learning, Vygotsky (1978) suggested the zone of proximal development (ZPD). The principle of this is that adults or more mature peers can help a child's growth. Additionally, Vygotsky describes the ZPD as the space between what learners can accomplish on their own and what requires assistance. He claims that children's minds develop in a social framework instead of through encounters with a physical item, as Piaget proposed. The concept that community plays a fundamental part within the process of "creating meaning" is at the centre of Vygotsky's theory, in the environment within which children's ages will influence how they think and what they consider. Vygotsky (1986) states that the method of knowing is influenced by others and mediated by community and culture. Moreover Vygotsky (1981) argues that:

Each facet of a child's societal evolution is represented repeatedly. It first manifests on the social level before moving on to the psychic one (p.163).

Additionally, Vygotsky (1981) contends that: "Psychological tools... are neither natural nor individual; they are social" (p.137).

Constructivism is an educational ideology that states that teachers must initial analyse learners' knowledge before allowing them to apply it (Mvududu & Thiel-Burgess, 2012). When the teacher just teaches, the learner has a passive position however, when the instructor promotes the learning process and assists learners in learning, the learner takes an active role (Amineh & Asl, 2015).

This implies that Social Sciences teachers in the Intermediate Phase must realise that teaching and learning is about adapting socially formed knowledge. Teachers should teach and assess learners so that they can find principles, concepts, and facts out for themselves, and they should encourage intuitive thinking. Topolovčan, & Matijević,

(2017) claim that learners take on a proactive role as participants who actively engage in research, conflict, interpersonal interactions, and rational thinking in a new didactic learning paradigm. In the next paragraphs, language as a component of social constructivism is discussed.

2.2.2.2 Language

Language develops through social interactions. Vygotsky (1978) views language as a social concept and argues that children's participation in social events helps them learn new things through language. Krashen's (1985) and Vygotsky's (1978) ideal approach highlights that learning a language happens through natural communication. Moreover, when native speakers of a language employ strategies like linguistic simplicity, repetition, and modelling learners are supported. Language competency gradually grows with time, especially when a speaker uses the language in contexts that are naturally conducive to communication (Hugo, 2016). Additionally, Vygotsky's theory (1978) outlines that learners' cultural background can influence or mould their cognitive development. Mercer (2013) mentions that language is important for cognitive growth, since it allows people to communicate their thoughts and ask questions, as well as think about categories and concepts and the past and future. Furthermore, language liberates us from the in-between state, allowing us to reflect on what was and what may have been. Kohn (2018) suggests that communication-based learning and interaction across groups of friends or classmates promotes uniform linguistic skills and learning among all learners. Cacioppo and Freberg (2013) assert that during this contact, children converse and pose inquiries through language and others react, and this process aids in the development of children's cognitive abilities.

Vygotsky (1978) highlights that language attainment can be viewed as a complicated method of individual and societal construction. Furthermore, language allows for thought and is thus the foundation of consciousness; without language, human evolution would be limited to the fundamental sense and perception processes found in lower animal species. Vygotsky (1986) describes language as a cultural tool that facilitates social contact and, as a result, the direction of behaviour and attitudes, as well as the propagation and development of culture. Vygotsky argues that

psychological tools help people master their behaviour, and he identifies language as the most essential psychological tool (Amineh & Asl, 2015). The next paragraph describes mediation as a component of social constructivism.

2.2.2.3 Mediation: Pedagogy as guided assistance

Vygotsky's theory argues that a child is not alone in the world when it comes to discovering the cognitive functions of conservation and classification; rather, family members, teachers, and classmates support or mediate this discovery. Vygotsky (1978) refers to mediation as a method for achieving successful school learning. Furthermore, he also points out that information is built through exchanges between a child and an intermediary (a parent, a teacher, or a peer with greater experience); the youngster internalises the information, leading in the growth of more sophisticated brain developments. Shulman (1987) describes pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) as a combination of understanding of the subject topic and pedagogical skills that is unique to teacher thought. Stephen and Edwards (2018) point out that adult participation is required to bridge either end of the proximal or nearest zone of the child's comprehension. Shulman (1987) emphasises that the wisdom of practice is the most central basis of teacher acquaintance.

The concept of mediation is based on the principle that a learner should be placed in settings where they must work hard to understand but can get help from other learners, peers, family, and teachers. This implies that in the administration and teaching of Social Sciences, the perfect teacher is frequently a learner who has just figured out ways to resolve the problem because a particular learner may be acting within their own ZPD,

Vygotsky (1978) highlights that learning is a continuous progression from one degree of intelligence to the next. In Vygotsky's work, guided help is defined as mediation within the ZPD which comes close to the capacity of the learner. As a result of social engagement, this movement happens in the ZPD. Zhou and Brown (2017) mention that the ZPD describes what a learner can do with competent guidance, therefore it describes the actual work that the teacher can effectively support. Woolfolk (2016) affirms that the ZPD is the area between the child current performance (issues that

the child can handle without assistance) and the level of performance that the child could accomplish with adult direction or by collaborating with a more developed child. As learners and teachers engage and understandings are developed, it is a dynamic and changing environment. Berger (2012) describes this area as the magical medium between what the learner is capable of learning and what the learner understands. Substantial educational repercussions for Social Sciences teaching and learning in the Intermediate Phase are examined in the following paragraphs drawing on Vygotsky's theory.

2.2.2.4 Educational implications of Vygotsky's theory in the teaching and learning of intermediate phase social sciences

Vygotsky's theory has diverse educational implications for this study. Three of these are discussed in this section: potential mediators, mediation and the ZPD mediation.

As a key component of constructivist learning theories, Vygotsky (1978) developed the broad idea of scaffolding. Similarly, Boon et al. (2021) postulate that constructivist learning theories often highlight that appropriate scaffolding must be used to enhance knowledge acquisition. Vygotsky's theory emphasises the combination of teacher-assisted learning, adult learning, and peer learning to help learners reinvent or rediscover information. Wood et al. (1976) state that this adult or peer aid is referred to as 'scaffolding'. They define scaffolding as the provision of external support during the early stages of learning. Hirsh-Pasek et al. (2015) argue that social contact through appropriate scaffolding is vital because interactions assist children become actively involved in their learning. Scaffolding is also most successful when tasks are within the learners' ZPD (Naidoo, 2012).

Similarly, Kucirkova and Sakr (2016) suggest that this is initiated through parent-child social interactions, with parents serving as more informed people when mediating or scaffolding children's learning to use the independently. Reynolds-Blankenship (2013) supports the idea that teachers play an important role as mediators of social connections and active engagement. In keeping with Vygotsky's theory, Kirova and Jamison (2018) argue that teacher scaffolding can help children achieve higher levels of independence in their abilities and knowledge. Fitzgerald and Smith

(2016) highlight that many primary school teachers reportedly find it difficult to properly teach Social Sciences. Killen (2019) argues that there are various things teachers may do to help learners deepen their understanding, which can be considered as scaffolding, such as emphasising a cognitive or social approach to constructivism. Van Driel et al., (2018) outline the following scaffolding strategies which teachers could apply in the teaching- learning situation:

- *Reword learners' written or spoken statements in a manner that is more scientific.*
- *Request that learners speak clearly or otherwise work to improve their language skills.*
- *Employ tools or gestures to bolster your vocal arguments.*
- *Reiterate words that learners use correctly.*
- *Recall learners to use a planned scaffold as a material for support.*
- *Describe ideas that must be understood for learners to grasp Social Sciences (p.3).*

This implies that teachers should assist learners in their endeavours to increase their acquaintance and abilities in Social Sciences programmes. As a result, teachers must develop learning activities and accompanying resources to place learners in their ZPD mediation and the ZDP.

Vygotsky (1978) argues that learners are neither wholly independent nor completely dependent, and thus require the assistance of more capable persons to advance within the ZPD. The difference in what a learner can do without guidance from a peer or teacher and what a learner can do with support that helps, is referred to as the ZPD (Siyepu, 2013). Donald et al. (2014) mention that teachers must identify each learner's potential in the ZPD and then actively encourage them to new levels of cognitive functioning and understanding through mediation. To argue that learning is mediated is to say that someone functions as a learning facilitator, moving between the learner and the topic to be learnt. Lerman (2014) puts it thus:

Vygotsky contends that any reaction to a sensation is often filtered or understood, clarified, and elucidated: by a parent, a sibling, a peer, a text, and, obviously by, teachers. Consequently, mediation is Vygotsky's method of

changing the orientation of a perceptual reaction. The reaction is mediated as follows: stimulus mediation response (p.18).

Therefore, Vygotsky's theory needs many Intermediate phase Social Sciences teachers to consider that good learning does not develop naturally; it is something that happens in association with other people and hence to put the theory into practice in the teaching and learning of Social Sciences.

2.3 THE TEACHING AND LEARNING OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

The following subsections highlight the concepts of teaching, learning and Social Sciences. The successful schooling of learners is dependent on quality teaching and learning events in every educational situation. Teaching is, without a doubt, a central topic among educational researchers and experts. The result of teaching is learning, which is one of the most central goals of teaching, and there is a strong similarity between the two notions (Gholami & Asady, 2014).

2.3.1 Teaching

Killen (2015) maintains that teaching is a process of assisting learners with finding, remembering, understanding, organising, applying, and evaluating information, as well as doing creative things with it. Bhowmik et al. (2013) define teaching as a career or profession of a group of people known as teachers, or an activity or activities to assist an individual in learning or acquiring some knowledge, skills, attitudes, or interests. Jadama (2014) asserts that the purpose of teaching is to help learners in the creation of intellectual capabilities so that they can participate in learning, not simply observe. Teaching is a set of activities aimed at promoting learning (Bhowmik et al., 2013).

The constructive learning hypothesis presented by Piaget and Vygotsky has an impact on teaching, a constructivist approach also views a teacher as a resource for diversified instructions and activities. The term 'teaching' is a broad term that can be defined in a variety of ways (Esterhuizen et al., 2019). Teaching allows for a wide range of theoretical perspectives. Teaching is also tied to differentiating perspectives.

Esterhuizen et al. (2019) define 'differentiation' as a teaching strategy based on the creation of diverse assessment tasks and the use of various strategies to meet the varying needs of learners. Valinande (2015) concurs by mentioning that differentiation is based on the idea that disparities exist in all classroom contexts. There are two presuppositions that must be met for differentiation to be effective and successful, namely, extensive subject knowledge on the side of the teacher and deep knowledge of individual learners. Teachers must adjust and change their teaching and learning activities in response to the feedback they receive from their students (Valinande, 2015).

2.3.2 Learning

William (2013a) describes learning as an active and self-directed process, yet success is not solely dependent on the learner. Hattie and Zierer (2018) state that learning should be tough, and it is the teacher's primary responsibility to provide this while also ensuring that the level of challenge is neither too high nor too low. Additionally, Bhowmik et al. (2013) mention that learning is a process rather than a product; it entails all the experiences and training that an individual receives from education in order to modify behaviour and prepare for the necessary adjustments and adaptations in a changing environment. From a sociocultural perspective, learning is produced during interaction and engagement with others, social and individual processes are interdependent in the co-construction of knowledge (Gil & Mataveli, 2017).

Learning necessitates a strong interaction between learners and teachers. Hattie and Yates (2015) point out that the more intense teachers' ties with learners are, the more attentively they copy one another. Esterhuizen et al. (2019) mention that teachers must establish a setting that is suitable for teaching and learning to ensure that their students learn effectively. Additionally, learning also necessitates motivation, and it is impossible to begin the learning process without it intrinsic and extrinsic motivation can be employed to drive learners and improve effective learning (Hattie & Zierer, 2018).

2.3.3 Social Sciences

Omosulu (2013) states that Social Sciences include any academic subject that analyses human behaviour and society. However, the Department of Basic Education [DBE] (2011a) states that:

History and Geography are essential to Social Sciences subject. Considering the distinction between the two subjects, this curriculum is intended to supplement the information (material, ideas, and abilities) specified in each. The Social Sciences curriculum strives to give chances for learners to critically examine their own environments and, more crucially, to expose learners to a reality beyond their everyday lives (p.8).

This definition implies that Social Sciences learners are expected to be exposed to quality teaching and learning to enable them to construct a world beyond their everyday realities.

2.4 QUALITY TEACHING AND LEARNING

The concept of high-quality teaching and learning has been debated, with various researchers explaining quality teaching and learning in different ways. Research findings expressed by Devine and McGillicuddy (2013) reveal that there has been an increase in international attention on teacher 'quality' and 'efficacy'. Furthermore, it is emphasised that discussions about quality teaching must consider contextual and sociocultural elements that influence how teachers build and deliver instruction.

In a school context, improving the nature of teaching and learning is at the forefront. 'Quality' and 'teaching' are two concepts that are difficult to reconcile. Delivering quality and acknowledging teaching's commitment to growth are critical. Furthermore, the link between quality and instruction has been established and investigated for quite some time. There was a lot of debate in the 1980s and 1990s about the meaning of the word 'quality' and its alternatives, especially when it came to instruction (Woodhouse, 2012).

Young (2013) claims that parents frequently send their children to school so that they might be exposed to things that they would not be exposed to otherwise. Teaching and learning in a school setting involve exposing learners to things they would not otherwise be exposed to. The Council of Higher Education [CHE] (2012) concur by stating that improving teaching and learning quality is a critical strategic emphasis area in the educational setting. The foundation of the schooling system's purpose is the provision of high-quality instruction and learning. It prioritises the learner and the teacher. Teachers are used to instruct learners. This is their primary duty and obligation, and it must be carried out properly. Learning should be consistent with teaching. It should be done meaningfully and expertly, not as a requirement or a means of making money. It should be viewed as a calling that moulds learners into significant persons and responsible citizens capable of serving the country with pride. I examine the many theories of what quality teaching and learning entail in the next section of this chapter. It is important to focus on the topic of what quality means in the context of education on quality teaching and learning in the light of this study.

2.4.1 Quality teaching

Tam (2014) mentions that quality teaching is instruction that alters learners' perspectives and how they approach applying their insights to real-world problems. This means that good teaching includes good learners, a stable environment, subject expressed in relevant curriculum and materials, and a measure by which prepared teachers are child-centred and good results are achieved. Wittek and Kvernbeek (2011) affirm that quality means both "fitness for purpose" and "fitness of purpose" in the educational setting. Kamla- Raj (2016) points out that teaching and learning should be assessed, examined, and critiqued on a regular basis to ensure fitness of purpose and fitness for purpose. Schindler et al. (2015) assert that the word is difficult to define and quantify and no single explanation seems to hold water. The fundamental issue is that no one in the education community can agree on these definitions (Greatbatch & Holland, 2016). The term quality is frequently used in conversations, particularly in educational settings. It is a much-discussed concept in the educational setting, and it means different things to different people. Each educational leader promises to provide a high-quality education to the broader public. The word 'quality' is defined in this manner of fundamental significance. Smimou and Dahl (2012) highlight that

quality is intrinsic and quality is indicated by the degree of some quantitative consequence of organisational stuff. Furthermore, they state that quality has three separate definitions, characterising it as compliance to specific assumptions. To begin with, quality can imply magnificence. Second, it could be a distinguishing feature or trademark. Finally, quality may refer to something that is superior to another.

The views expressed above imply that quality means different things in different occupations, and different individuals can comprehend quality to be the attributes of services that are appreciated by clients. The *Encyclopaedia of Business* (2010) reports that quality is an idea that fulfils and exceeds the client's expectations for the service given. Ross (2009) agrees that quality relates not only to the service provided, but also to the product delivered. The method for transferring knowledge is critical in any learning endeavour. A high level of concern for quality results in a high level of quality (Chijioke, 2014). Any education investor should be extremely concerned about the genuine nature of teachers. Nyenya and Bukaliya (2014) affirm that quality should be a fundamental component of teaching and learning and the emphasis ought to be on ways to improve quality. The problem of quality is important as schools strive to remain relevant by generating learners who integrate into society and help to drive its socioeconomic and political features. To be responsible in their teaching, teachers in schools must understand and appreciate the concept of quality.

We now move on to a definition of quality teaching to gain a greater knowledge of the notion. There are numerous debates on what probably accounts for high-quality teaching and learning. Over the years, the quality of teaching has become an important criterion in academia (Smimou & Dahl, 2012). Quality of teaching has been debated with a variety of definitions that attempt to describe it (Wittek & Kvernbekk, 2011). Quality teaching is frequently mistaken for just effective teaching, in which learners absorb what the teacher teaches. To further elucidate the subject of quality teaching, a differentiation between teacher and teaching quality is made to add another dimension to the assertions stated in the preceding paragraphs.

Darling-Hammond (2012) defines quality teaching as the narrative of expertise and competences that the teacher brings to the teaching and learning environment, and teaching quality is defined as the nature of learning that permits diverse learners to

learn. Quality is largely dependent on teacher quality. Furthermore, while teacher quality increases the likelihood of effective instruction, it does not ensure it. Teaching quality is defined by the impact of instructor quality on student learning within a specific instructional situation (Darling-Hammond, 2012). Bhowmik et al. (2013) state that quality teaching is characterised as instruction that effectively achieves the teacher's learning objectives for the learners. The best learning occurs when the most effective education is provided. Kamla-Raj (2016) emphasises that ensuring the standard of teaching and learning is accomplished with a kind of method used in the classroom. Personality and an evaluation of teaching methods, departmental course review processes, summative course and teaching evaluation, and referee developments are several of the foremost prevalent ways for assuring the standard of teaching and learning within an academic institution.

Teacher quality appears to be the most critical aspect in the classroom. In both primary and secondary schools, high-quality teachers have the potential to close the achievement gap. Wiliam (2013b) claims that that teacher quality can help bridge the achievement gap for both primary and secondary schools. From the debate in this study quality teaching is defined as having both an undertaking and an accomplishment sense. The question that remains unresolved is how a teacher may achieve high-quality teaching and learning.

The Center for the Future of Teaching and Learning (2008) reports that the quality of teaching imparted to learners influences how they learn, and the teacher's quality is the most important determining aspect in learning. Teachers who are competent and knowledgeable and can effectively apply their knowledge and abilities to their practice bring high-quality teaching to the classroom. This will result in a learner-centred approach to teaching and learning being elevated. Pretorius (2012) asserts that the teacher is the single most important school-based student achievement determinant, whether intuitively or objectively.

Consequently, Bhowmick et al. (2013) point out that quality teaching is defined as instruction that effectively achieves the students' learning goals as identified by the teacher. The most effective teaching results in the most effective learning. Quality teaching has two essential components, namely, the teacher should be able to

recognise what needs to be reinforced, and the teacher sets up and offers instruction. In a similar vein, Ko and Sammons (2012) argue that operative schools must spread and learn important enquiry and review evidence on active teaching executions; strengthen evidence-based educator teamwork and consciousness as ways to improve achievement and achieve soundness through all structures of learning; and inspire checking and perception, by means of suitable examination methods. Ibrahim and Ibrahim (2018) highlight that it is critical to not only recruit learners to a school, but also to keep them engaged and happy until they complete their education; excellence is one way to do so. Furthermore, the school's image is vital in attracting learners, but it can be shattered if learners lose confidence or faith after encountering real-life teaching circumstances and low-quality instruction.

Quality teaching is a complex, multi-dimensional, and multi-layered interplay of a variety of strategies and practices that contribute to quality learning, as evidenced by the discussion above. In the next section, I will examine the concept of quality learning considering what has been said by many scholars.

2.4.2 Quality learning

The discussion now narrows to what quality learning is and what it entails. The terms 'quality' and 'learning' are interchangeable. Killen (2015) mentions that quality learning happens when a learner's previous understanding is reinforced or altered. In contrast, an incompatibility between the learner's prior beliefs and the new information indicates that the learner's current knowledge is either faulty or incomplete. When a learner's past notions are challenged, quality learning occurs (Killen, 2015). Considering this definition of quality learning, the issue now becomes: What does quality learning entail? As Killen (2015) points out, quality learning is most likely to occur when the teacher is able to meet a number of criteria, such as, but not confined to:

- *Demonstrate excellent addressing skills and a thorough understanding of how learners think about topic material.*
- *Demonstrate a thorough understanding of the subjects they teach.*
- *Allow enough training time for the learners' information to be implanted.*
- *Identify and support any learner who is slipping behind and encourage everyone to make up for lost time.*

- *In exercises, check for knowledge and provide clearly coordinated and optimum assistance.*
- *In accordance with the school's assessment strategy, assign remedial tasks to learners who receive harsh feedback.*
- *Determine how to test academics in accordance with the school's policy.*
- *Teachers are committed to learners' success and encourage them to put up a good effort.*
- *Learners are eager to enhance their learning and outcomes.*
- *Parents are given clear and optimal information about their child's progress and how well they are doing in comparison to the expected standards (p. 44).*

These criteria imply that formal assessments should be administered to learners for teachers to determine if they have offered excellent teaching and for learners to determine whether they have received quality learning.

2.5 THE LINK BETWEEN TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

The DBE (2011a) recommends that teachers must begin with certain aims when planning for assessment, teaching, and learning (aims and goals in CAPS). Collymore (2013) asserts that if teachers wish to improve learner performance, they should align curriculum, instruction, and assessment. This means that assessment is not a separate component of a teacher's job nor something that happens after teaching and learning. Killen (2015) suggests that decisions about planning, teaching, learning, and assessment are guided by four questions:

- *What would we want learners to know?*
- *Why would we want learners to study?*
- *How then can we best enable learners in learning?*
- *How can teachers determine whether learners learned? (p.22).*

These four questions not only help with planning, teaching, and assessment, but also illustrate the intimate connection between teaching, learning, and assessment. The first two questions are about the learners, what they are intended to learn, and whether the teacher believes what they are learning is valuable. The final question concerns delivery, instruction, and the teacher's responsibility in assisting students in their

learning. The fourth and last question concerns assessment and how teachers judge if learners have grasped the material.

Teachers are accountable for components of the curriculum like teaching, learning, and assessment. Assessment provides schools with additional data to assist within the development of effective curricula and teaching approaches that best suit student learning. Teaching is an interaction with learners that permits them to understand and use information, notions, and method. It contains elements of instructional content, implementation, assessment, and feedback. It's the learner's responsibility to find out, not the teacher. Assessment and learning are intricately intertwined. The cornerstones of any teaching are objectives, delivery, and assessment (Kulasegaram & Ranachari, 2018).

As stated in the CAPS for Social Sciences:

Assessment is an ongoing, integrative process of recognizing, obtaining, and analyzing details concerning learners' performance and can take several forms. It consists of four steps: producing and acquiring indication of learning, analyzing this indication, documenting the discoveries, and applying this evidence. The data is primarily utilized to comprehend and hence aid the growth of learners in terms of improving the teaching-learning process. (DBE, 2012, p.49).

This suggests that assessment should be ongoing and assesses whether the course's learning objectives have been reached. Therefore, teachers who administer one or two tests every term are not employing assessment to its full potential. Teachers of Social Sciences should regularly assess their learners and follow up with feedback. Moreover, Anthony et al. (2014) suggest that assessment is a constant cycle of finding, acquiring, and decoding evidence on learners' competence through various methods of assessment. Assessment is divided into four stages, namely, developing and gathering proof of accomplishment; analysing this proof; recording the findings; and employing this data to grasp and help learner's advancement to enhance the learning and teaching process. To improve the learning experience, teachers should give learners consistent responses. Furthermore, the viewpoints expressed in their

clarification not only allude to the strong relationship that should exist between teaching, learning, and assessment, but also to the key role that teachers play in ensuring that assessment improves the teaching-learning process. What students learn cannot be predicted with any certainty, no matter how carefully teachers prepare and execute the guiding. Teachers may only determine whether the educational activities in which teachers involve learners have resulted in the planned learning through assessment. Assessment is the foundation for both teaching and learning (William, 2013b). This implies that assessment is an important part of any teaching and learning environment, and the goal of assessment is to collect data on learners' achievement and progress.

Hattie and Zierer (2018) argue that teachers cannot answer the questions of whether teaching and learning are successful on their own. They must ask the learners what they think because they supply crucial input. Additionally, they believe that the most noteworthy type of feedback is from learners to teachers about their impact on the learners. They note that good teachers are equally adept at providing feedback on students' learning processes through asking for and interpreting information from learners on their own teaching processes.

From the explanation above we can see that learning and teaching are dialogic processes. Dialogic teaching and learning aim to stimulate and extend learners' thinking, allowing the learner and the teacher to identify more precisely what the learners know or misunderstand. DBE (201a) points out that assessment is a cycle of gathering, examining and deciphering data to enable teachers, parents, and different stakeholders in settling on choices about the advancement of learners. Furthermore, assessment is a never-ending cycle of identifying, socialising, and interpreting learners' presentations (Angier et al., 2013).

Hult and Wernerson (2012) believe that assessment is the engine that propels learning and then expands it. DBE (2011a) reports that assessment should be used as part of a cycle of increasing awareness of learners' performance. It also entails gathering and categorising data (credibility of learning) assess what learners have accomplished. Furthermore, it clarifies the decisions that need to be taken in the classroom and encourages teachers to assess if learners are reaching their maximum capabilities

and progressing toward the appropriate degrees of execution (or guidelines) as delineated in the National Protocol for Assessment.

Dilley et al. (2012) assert that assessment is linked to obtaining documentation of student learning. It is an important aspect of teaching and learning, and it should be considered when planning the lesson's content. Teaching, learning, and assessment are not usually considered as separate occurrences; rather, they are intertwined. This intimate relationship between teaching, learning, and evaluation is briefly explored in the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS), Grades 4-6 Social Sciences (DBE, 2011a). Popham (2014) states that assessment is a never-ending cycle of identifying, obtaining, and understanding information on learners' performance through various methods of assessment. Angier et al. (2013) highlight the following four processes related to assessment, namely, developing and gathering proof of accomplishment; assessing this proof; recording the discoveries; and employing this data to comprehend and, as a result, assisting learners in their progress to improve the teaching-learning environment. Ranby and Moeng (2012) mention that assessment is a continuous process. It should be a component of every lesson and class.

Learners who are well-motivated and receive reliable information about their progress are more likely to succeed (William, 2011a). Reddy et al. (2015) contend that the term 'assessment' means to sit beside. This implies that the teacher will sit next to a learner to observe what they are doing or to assess their progress. Nikto and Brookhart (2011) view assessment as a method of gathering data that is used to make judgments about learners, curriculum, schools, and education policy. In this research, assessment refers to the process of gathering data on learners, curricula, programs, classroom management, and classroom interaction.

Fisher and Frey (2014) maintain that assessment in the classroom entails a wide range of actions in which data are obtained and evaluations are produced. Fisher and Frey (2014) state that assessment in the classroom comprises a broad variety of activities involving the collection of data and the creation of evaluations. Furthermore, assessment relates to data and assessments of learners and their development, but there are also other measurement goals. The assessment can be used at any point

during the learning process, including before, during, and after training (Anthony et al., 2014). Glazer (2014) points out that assessment meets a variety of needs and can be implemented in a variety of structures: Teachers use assessment to track the progress of different groups of learners in the classroom and they also use assessment assignments to monitor achievement and progress. Additionally, teachers can use assessment techniques to identify learners' erroneous beliefs as well as discern traits. Assessment results can have ramifications for everyone involved, whether they are at the level of an individual learner, a school, a regional education authority, or a country (Shiel & Murchan, 2017). This implies that because assessment results can have substantial ramifications for all parties involved, it is critical that assessments be of the greatest quality. In addition, assessment has characteristics such as learner-centredness, teacher-directed, learner participation, formative, context specific, and a continuous process.

- **Learner-centred assessment**

Yang and Lin (2016) argue that learner-centred assessment is frequently seen as a basic characteristic of constructivist learning. Furthermore, they mention that learner-centred assessment is based on constructivist theory, which states that students learn better by doing and experiencing rather than by watching. Learner-centred assessment is defined as a type of instruction in which the learner is the centre of attention, and the teacher has the least impact on the lesson (Zohrabi et al., 2012). Learner-centred assessment has received a lot of appreciation and is encouraged (Yang & Lin, 2016). Learners are more engaged in learning activities when they can interact with one another and take an active role in their education (Mpho 2018). Likewise, Atjonen (2014) contends that learner participation in the evaluation process is a successful strategy to boost learners' confidence since with higher confidence comes a greater belief that learning is achievable. Learner-centred assessment has been related to a slew of advantages. It is usually thought to help teachers and students learn better (Warming & Frydensberg, 2017). Learner-centred assessment promotes cross-cutting abilities and critical thinking, and it is thus thought to better prepare learners for the current and future labour market. However, learner-centred assessment is not without several flaws (Yang & Lin, 2016). Control in learner-centred classrooms may be difficult owing to behaviour issues. Although this will be tedious,

teachers can use it to their advantage by encouraging learners to develop a greater sense of responsibility. Mart (2013) states that enthusiastic teachers recognise that it is their responsibility to encourage learners to engage in active learning and to promote their intellectual and moral development.

- **Teacher-directed assessment**

In teacher-led assessment activities in the classroom, the teacher challenges learners through teaching and then requests them to complete problem-solving exercises in the classroom or at home (Al-Zu'be, 2013). This learning method requires teachers to be active in the learning of their students. Tarmizi and Bayat (2012) assert that teaching and learning entails a variety of non-learning activities (e.g., requiring learners to seek out unfamiliar knowledge to solve difficulties). Additionally, the lesson is created by the teacher, hence it is simple to attain the desired results (Umar, 2013). This implies that the teacher oversees deciding what to assess, how to assess, and how to respond to the information gleaned from the assessment. Zohrabi et al. (2012) mention that teacher-directed assessment occurs in a scenario where the teacher is the primary figure. This implies that a learner is considered as a passive receiver of knowledge, and the teacher's job is that of an information provider or assessor who monitors learners to ensure that they get the correct response. The content is chosen not because it is interesting to the learners, but because it embodies the essence of the subject (Bull, 2014).

Teacher-directed assessment has its own set of strengths and weaknesses, as well as competitions (Yang & Lin, 2016). Concordia University-Portland (2013) reports that teacher-directed assessment does not encourage learners to interact with one another during teaching and learning. Similarly, Gao (2013) argues that teacher-directed assessment prevents learners from expressing themselves, asking questions, or directing their own learning hence it stifles learners' enthusiasm and initiative. This implies that when learners work alone, they do not learn to collaborate with other learners, and their communication skills may deteriorate as a result.

- **Mutually beneficial learners are participants**

Kouba (2018) emphasises that classroom assessment necessitates active participation from learners. Learners are included in planning and implementation, and they also share accountability, which is the product of democracy (Braun & Zolfagharian, 2016). Active learning is described as any activity that encourages learners to engage in learning ways that engage them with course material and improve critical thinking as they apply what they have learned outside of the classroom (Lumpkin et al., 2015). Today's classroom encourages learner participation in a variety of ways, including problem-based learning, and cooperative learning (Hyun et al., 2017). Fung and Lui (2016) highlight that collaborative and cooperative learning can help learners improve their cognitive abilities, develop a motivation to study, and increase their happiness. For learners to attain their goals, they must be mentally and emotionally involved (Frymier & Houser, 2016). Abdullah et al. (2012) point out that learners' participation in class is deliberate. Teachers feel that increased learner participation leads to increased learning (McMullen, 2014).

Students learn better when they are actively interested, mentally engaged, and emotionally invested in the exploration, finding, and interpretation process (Tesfaye & Berhanu, 2015). Research findings reveal that active learning, has a favourable impact on student learning since it helps learners absorb and recall new material (Hyun et al., 2017). Intermediate Phase Social Sciences teachers must allow learners to participate in classroom assessment to guarantee that quality teaching and learning is improved. Furthermore, teachers should try to think of ways to make their learners active participants as they prepare for class each day.

- **Formative assessment**

Pryor (2015) describes formative assessment as all activities conducted by teachers and/or learners that produce knowledge to be used as information to improve the teaching and learning activities in which they are involved. Oral questioning, homework, learner presentations, quizzes, and any other activity that gives the teacher information about the learners are examples of formative assessment. Killen (2015)

affirms that formative assessment occurs in between teaching with the explicit goal of creating evidence that may be used to enhance current knowledge. Similarly, Booyse and Du Plessis (2014) stress that when evidence is incorporated, assessment becomes formative to change the teaching to fit the learners' needs in the lesson. Reddy et al. (2015) maintain that formative evaluation happens throughout the teaching and learning process through formal and informal assessment procedures. Adkins (2018) emphasises that the technique to get learners more active in the classroom is to create opportunities for formative assessment. Formative assessments are used to help students learn more effectively and to support their teachers (Crisp, 2012). Using formative evaluations has numerous advantages. When learners' complete formative tests, they can become less reliant on teachers, better plan for future assessments, and take more ownership of their own learning (Owen, 2016). Research findings report on the validity of the feedback loop that is accessible on a continuous basis when formative assessments are used (Heinerichs et al., 2016). Flórez and Sammons (2013) argue that formative assessment activities, can benefit students learning if they provide data that can be used as feedback by teachers and learners in appraising themselves and adjusting the teaching and learning activities in which they are involved.

- **Context specific**

Assessment allows teachers and learners to demarcate implications from the information attained and act consequently (Black & Wiliam, 2018). The assessment context may be considered the key to understanding assessment in action. Classroom assessments need to be context-specific and cater to the needs and characteristics of the teachers, learners, and disciplines in which they are used. In a context-specific setting, what works in one class is not necessarily appropriate for another. Wilson (2018) argues that it is critical to keep in mind that assessing actual content is not what matters; rather, it is how it is used. DeLuca et al. (2019) further point out that studies have repeatedly shown that teachers' evaluation practices have a major impact on students' learning experiences and academic progress. Similarly, Heinerichs et al. (2015) also mention that it has been demonstrated that how teachers conduct assessment in their classrooms can either excite or demotivate their students' learning, engage or disengage learners from school, and support or hinder learner

growth. Within the context of classroom learning, assessment is a potent and enduring force.

- **Ongoing Classroom assessment is a continuous process**

Learning could also be described as continuous assessment as a method for assessing all learners' work during a given period in the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains of learning (Falayalo, 1986). The classroom assessment process is probably best viewed as an ongoing procedure that includes the creation and maintenance of a "feedback loop". Changes are made depending on the findings of classroom research and input from learners. Continuous assessment is a way of examining and evaluating a person's attributes on a regular and systematic basis. Teaching and learning require continuous follow-up, and learners' educational progress requires frequent evaluation.

There are a variety of reasons for assessment to take place. Le Grange and Reddy (2017) provide several reasons why assessment is implemented in the classroom. The reasons are to provide feedback to learners (including support and progress); to offer critique to the teacher on the teaching process, on the curriculum, on teaching methods and on assessment methods); to assign grades to learners (formative or summative); to act as selection and certifying device to drive the curriculum and teaching. These purposes are always important when conducting assessment in a classroom. Nikto and Brookhart (2011) suggest a set of five guiding principles for teachers to follow when selecting and implementing assessment: These basic principles of teacher assessment are discussed in the following section.

2.5.1 Principles of teacher assessment

Nikto and Brookhart (2011) remark that designing efficient assessments is essential for each teacher. Additionally, teachers require as much precise information as possible on each learners' progress or the progress of the class as a whole to make any decisions about the status of a learner or an entire class at any given point in time. Esterhuizen et al. (2019) emphasise that any type of assessment must be founded on assessment principles, and they consider reliability, validity, and justice to be

significant factors to consider when performing successful assessment. Similarly, Shiel and Murchan (2017) mention that validity, reliability, and fairness are all important characteristics of assessment quality. Moreover, they argue that a knowledge of these factors might help teachers make judgments and decisions about learners.

The above views indicate that if assessment is to be used as an instrument to promote high-quality teaching and learning, teachers must be familiar with the principles that govern assessment. Prior to delivering a summary of teacher assessment, it is necessary to research what the crucial principles of legitimacy and unwavering quality imply. The following sections examine and evaluate the guiding principles that teachers must adhere to, to ensure that assessment is valid.

2.5.1.1 Reliability

The exactness and consistency of assessments are what reliability refers to. Internal flaws with examinations or assignments, as well as the circumstances in which they are locked in, can be sources of instability (Johnson, 2012). The term 'reliability' refers to the consistency with which an assessment is made. Gibbs (2012) maintains that when it comes to controlling dependability, the most important issue to contemplate is whether an assessment would provide the same or comparable scores on two tests given by two assessors. Shiel and Murchan (2017) argue that while considering assessment reliability, the following questions should be considered:

Are indeed the findings (results, ratings) stable over time? Will the outcomes have been the same if the assessment had taken place at a later context? Is there a consistency to the assessment assignments? Would the conclusions have been the same if the assessment had been assessed by someone else?
(p.21).

However, it is crucial to note that no assessment can be a hundred percent exact, thus the goal is to get as close as feasible within the circumstances. Johnson (2012) contends that there is a lack of proof about the reliability of teacher assessment although it is considered the most practical instrument for confirming both validity and

reliability in teacher assessment. Shiel and Murchan (2017) assert that 'reliability' refers to the consistency of scores obtained from an assessment. Glazer (2014) mentions that assessment is an essential part of the learning process and should be thorough, dependable, and simple. This means that in classroom assessment activities, validity and reliability are at the forefront of assessment discussions.

2.5.1.2 Validity

Newton and Shawn (2014) highlight that validity is one of the most useful concepts in educational assessment. Characterisations of validity and explanations of the test validation process have changed in significant ways over the past century (Geisinger, 2016). Frey (2014) asserts that validity is the characteristic of an assessment that measures the intended construct. Assessments that are valid, then are probably of high quality. Esterhuizen et al. (2019) define validity as a test/assessment that measures what is intended to be evaluated. Validity is one of the most contended concepts in assessment (Newton & Shawn, 2016). Shiel and Murchan (2017) define validity as the step to which evidence and supposition endorse the interpretation of test scores for intended uses of a test or other assessment that have been validated rather than the test itself. Assessment is such an important part of a learner's life, assessment validity is especially vital in the educational system (Secolsky & Denison, 2012).

Much evidence that might substantiate a conviction that an assessment score is valid can really be classified in several ways (Frey, 2014). The four categories of validity identified by Le Grange and Reddy (2017) are construct validity, predictive validity, content validity, and consequential validity. Le Grange and Reddy (2017) argue that these types of validity are outdated and do not have a great influence on teacher's thinking when doing assessment.

2.5.1.2.1 Construct validity

Construct validity is the widest category of validity because it encompasses most good arguments. The construct validity argument claims that test results do not accurately reflect the underlying knowledge, skill, or attribute that is being measured. Frey (2014)

claims that construct validity is concerned with whether the assessment reflects the constructs underlying a curriculum or programme of study. Evidence should be provided to confirm that the scores or grades achieved by learners do indeed reflect the intended constructs (Shiel & Murchan, 2017).

2.5.1.2.2 Predictive validity

Shiel and Murchan (2017) assert that some assessments or tests are assembled with the main purpose of predicting learners' performance or behaviour at some future point in time. Carless (2015) states that the ability of a test to predict future performance is referred to as predictive validity. In addition, assessments of intellect, aptitude tests, vocational interest inventories, and projective procedures use this form of validity. Predictive validity is particularly valuable for selection or admissions tests.

2.5.1.2.3 Content validity

Frey (2014) states that content validity indicates that the test items are an impartial and representative sample of the items that should appear on the exam. This implies that content validity is investigated through formal procedures. It is essential to consider evidence related to test content; this evidence includes a statement by test developers about how test items based on a curriculum were developed (Murchan & Sheil, 2017)

2.5.1.2.4 Consequential validity

The concept of validity has its roots in the educational context. Isaac et al. (2013) report that validity evidence has mostly centred on content validity, constructive validity, and predictive validity. The concept of validity has been extended to comprise evidence of consequential validity. Scott-Clayton (2012) mentions that claims and decisions based on the test result are what are validated, not the test or the test results. Slomp et al. (2014) propose an eight-area diagnostic approach for gathering consequential validity evidence. The following are the eight areas:

- *strategy procedure,*

- *construction definition,*
- *construction remodelling,*
- *scoring methods,*
- *performance fragmentation,*
- *the anticipated effects, and*
- *unanticipated repercussions* (p. 279-284).

Cochran-Smith et al. (2016) point out that the consequential validity framework corresponds with a 'strong equity' perspective that supports social justice education. The question of what is regarded central to Social Sciences as a discipline or school subject should be the starting point for a discussion of the consequential validity of assessment in the Social Sciences.

2.5.1.3 Fairness

The Association of Educational Assessment (2014) reports that fairness should be considered a fundamental validity concern that should be addressed at all stages of test development and use. When it comes to assessment, fairness is a key idea that states that every learner should be given an equal chance (Le Grange & Reddy, 2017). Fairness is a symbol of an excellent teacher assessment system. Popham (2012) maintains that it is unfair to assess a learner on a test of English reading if they have not had a reasonably opportunity to acquire the language. Nikto and Brookhart (2014) argue that teachers' assessment procedures should be fair to learners from all ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds, as well as learners with disabilities who are mainstreamed in their classes. Murchan and Sheil (2017) is also in support of the view of ethics in assessment by outlining that fairness has an ethical dimension where test developers and test users have an obligation (and sometimes a legal requirements) to ensure that assessment is fair.

2.5.1.4 Flexibility

Pretorius et al. (2017) argue that allowing learners control over assessment weighting, kind or format, time, criteria, or the final assessment outcome achieves flexibility in assessment. Studies presenting various approaches to creating diverse assessment,

show that assessment versatility may include learner discretion or freedom in assessment scoring, type, or style (Irwin & Hepplestone, 2012). Additionally, evaluations that provide more flexibility and influence over the assessment process can help them think more creatively. This means that when teachers create activities for Intermediate Phase teaching and learning, they should think about assessment flexibility so that learners can take an active role in their own learning. Allowing learners some flexibility appears to improve their mood and motivation for the work (Pacharn & Felton, 2013).

2.5.2 Methods of assessment

Teacher evaluation methods in South Africa have transformed since democracy began in 1994 and the implementation of Curriculum 2005 in 1998. Prior to 1994, teacher assessment was carried out in the country by a panel of school inspectors who may or may not have been professionals in the topics they examined. Furthermore, the evaluation systems were created to exert control over the environment.

This has since changed, as the National Protocol for Assessment Grades R–12 (DBE 2011b) mandates the following new assessment techniques and systems:

- *Both teachers and learners are familiar with the nature and purpose of the assessment frameworks.*
- *Evaluators collaborate closely with teachers, department heads, or other seniors who exhibit honesty, integrity, and accountability.*
- *Instead of simply examining some recognized characteristics, the instructor is evaluated as complete.*
- *Evaluators have a good attitude toward instructors and are willing to help and guide them.*
- *Assessors are not skewed against instructors, and they eliminate practices that are harmful to successful teaching and learning (p.3-5).*

A variety of methods could be employed to guarantee that teachers assess in accordance with the National Protocol for Assessment Grades R–12 (DBE 2011b).

These methods are explained on the following paragraph:

2.5.2.1 Baseline assessment

Bondie et al. (2019) claim that for assessment to serve the baseline purpose teachers are encouraged to construct activities that target levels of abilities and existing knowledge gap at the start of the new grade and before introducing the new subject of learning context. Tomlinson (2020) highlights that the results of the baseline assessment give the instructor information about the learners' capacities and knowledge gaps. In like manner, Baubeng et al. (2019) argue that using the data acquired during the assessment, teachers may tailor subject matter knowledge and settings of learning ideas and support to the benefits, experiences, and aptitudes of their learners. Tomlinson (2020) claims that the primary purpose of baseline in teaching and learning is to ascertain where learners are at the start of a new school year. Tomlinson and Moon (2013) explain that baseline assessment is supposed to be at the heart of curricular adjustments since it establishes a benchmark for measuring future development, not just for individual learners but for the entire class.

2.5.2.2 Criterion-referenced assessment

Reddy et al. (2015) mention that this form of evaluation is based on predetermined criteria. The learner's work is assessed against predetermined criteria, with the learning being deemed successful if the teacher considers the criteria have been satisfied. An evaluation of this kind is particularly useful for formative assessment. A criterion-referenced test is a type of assessment in which a learners' performance in the classroom is judged against the same criterion (Mrunalini, 2013). The learning process must be clear to both teachers and learners. This signifies that teachers in Social Sciences teaching and learning should be aware that criterion -referenced assessment can only measure the relative performance of individuals within a group, not the learning attainment or advancement of the entire group.

Muthaiyan and Ananthi (2020) outline the following characteristics of the criterion -reference test:

- **Authority**
It genuinely evaluates if they are measuring what they claim to be measuring or not. A single item corresponds to a certain aim.
- **Consistency**
If it always measures what it says, it is said to be accurate. Consistency refers to whether or not they have a high level of confidence in the results.
- **Practicality**
Due to time and cost constraints, not all assessments are reliable and a reliable and accurate test cannot always be designed.
- **Subject Mastery**
Criterion- referenced tests assess the learner's level of intelligence and comprehension of the subject. Teacher can track learners' progress and performance in their study courses.
- **Managed Locally**
Test results are immediately obtained in order to equip learners with useful comments about their performance and the teacher can assess whether standards have been met in a timely manner (p.611).

2.5.2.3 Norm-referenced assessment

Norm-referenced assessment is inversely related to criterion-referenced assessment. Learners' work and output are compared to those of the group. Evaluations of this type are usually related to summative evaluations (Reddy et al., 2015). Norm-referenced assessments are intended to compare an individual to a group of their peers, usually using national criteria and sometimes adjusting these for age, race, or other variables. About.com (2012) highlights that a norm-referenced test evaluates a learner's position on the normal distribution curve. It involves competition between students on this kind of test. This means that criterion-referenced tests are used to assess the performance of a whole group.

2.5.2.4 Diagnostic assessment

Chappuis (2015) states that diagnostic evaluation is used to discover whether learners confront learning hurdles and, if so, what those barriers are and what causes them. The goal is to determine a learner's strengths, limitations, knowledge, and skills, as well as what they need to learn in specific disciplines. Combrinck (2019) supports the above views by claiming that diagnostic assessment is a type of assessment that occurs at the start of a learning experience, and it is used to give teachers data about the learners' abilities. Teachers can diagnose any difficulties or deficiencies in this way, and endeavour to help and enable learners to succeed in their learning (Taole, 2013).

From the contents of the preceding paragraph, it can be concluded that teachers' self-assessment is diagnostic in the sense that it shows the teacher's strengths and deficiencies before the real classroom observation, and that this simplifies the evaluator's job and puts him/her in a better position to assist the educator.

2.5.2.5 Peer and self-assessment

Qasem (2020) argues that learners' self-assessment is a helpful and learner-facilitating task and emphasise the value of allowing learners a degree of autonomy which has an effect on learner performance. Andrade et al. (2015) assert that teachers are not the only people who can provide criticism. Carefully crafted self- and peer-assessment lessons can show learners how to offer helpful, learning-focused comments on their own. Reddy et al. (2015) affirm that peer- and self-evaluation are relatively recent contributions to the concept of assessment. They further state that many academics believe that having peer- or self-assessment might help learners succeed and learn a lot. Taole and Mncube (2012) concur by stating that teachers can benefit greatly from employing other learners as a learning and assessment resource. Peers can be used to explain work to other learners or small groups in the classroom. When the teacher wants to conduct some evaluation activities in class, peers can also be used.

2.6 TEACHER IMPLEMENTATION OF ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING

Darling-Hammond and Adamson (2014) mention that assessments help learners develop metacognitive and co-cognitive skills including planning, organising, and other aspects of executive functioning, as well as resilience and tenacity in the face of adversity and a growth attitude. Hattie and Zierer (2018) argue that learners' assessments are not necessary feedback for learners they are much more beneficial for teachers since they provide information on the lesson they taught and, as a result, about all pertinent pedagogical issues, such as whether the learners reached the learning outcomes, comprehended the topic, and found the approaches to be suitable. Similarly, Dann (2014) argues that in learning, it is critical that assessments are properly defined, used, and completed. Therefore, teachers must have confidence in the conclusions they draw from the data (validity), the findings must be repeatable (reliability), and learners' rights should not be compromised by the assessment or its use (fairness).

Donald et al. (2014) assert that in teaching and learning, assessment must be evaluated in order to determine how effective the process has been. Although assessment is a vital aspect of teaching and learning, it is also frequently misunderstood, therefore we must address it independently. Furthermore, when doing assessments, teachers must always evaluate why they are conducting them and how they will affect future learning, or in other words, their objectives, and effects. Dreyer (2014) mentions that assessment is multidimensional in nature and is defined by at least the following characteristics:

- It is continuous throughout the learning process.
- It is incorporated into learning.
- It is planned as part of learning.
- It encourages learning by providing useful comments and feed-forward.
- It's a way to show that students have learned something.
- It allows assessors to prevent fraud.

Angier et al. (2013) affirm that assessment of learners' and teachers' activities is critical in determining the effects of their inputs. It is vital to note that there are two types of assessment: formative and summative. In each educational assessment, two of them should be used. The formative assessment functions as a guide. The summative assessment aids in determining the learners' overall understanding of what they have been required to go through. This is why certification is based on summative assessment.

Assessment is an ongoing process, and it needs to form part of every lesson. Dreyer (2014) contends that assessment informs us about the quality of the learning and teaching that is taking place. Without assessment it is very difficult for educators to know if learning is taking place (Ranby & Moeng, 2012). Angier et al. (2013) emphasise that assessment should be both informal (assessment for learning) and formal (assessment of learning). In like manner, meaningful assessment is both formative and summative, relying on a variety of indicators, including informal observations (Bhowmik et al., 2013). Furthermore, in the context of education, assessment should not only be supporting the aim of teaching and learning, but it should also be a direct reflection of it. There are two things that must be determined. These are how the learners will be taught and what the objective of assessment will be. Shiel and Murchan (2017) assert that it is not only teachers who need to know how learners are doing but both teachers and learners need to be involved in the practice of teaching and learning. This implies that better input will lead to better outcomes. For both teachers and learner's assessment must be meaningful and trustworthy. Assessment is considered good when teachers purposefully align their tests with their classroom content.

I present a summary of the debate of summative and formative assessment, as well as a few instances of different sorts of formative and summative assessments that can be employed in the classroom. I outline how these two methods of assessments are complementary, and that the distinctions between them are frequently in how they are used. Formative and summative assessment are two strategies that teachers typically employ to measure student learning. Black and Wiliam (2018) explain that assessment for learning aims to support students' learning while giving teachers and learners the knowledge they need to adjust their teaching and learning methods. Brown

and Remesal (2017) highlight that formative assessment and the pedagogic equivalent are other names for assessment for learning. Assessment of learning is thought of as summative and is used at the conclusion of any process (e.g., end of study course, study programmes, etc. (Brown & Remesal, 2017). Furthermore, the goal of assessment of learning is to appraise learners' apprehension and abilities by assigning suitable marks, equate learners based on their achievements. Monteiro and Santos (2021) emphasise that the principle of assessment of learning is focused on accountability, ranking, grading, and test feedback delivered, largely in the form of marks.

2.6.1 Assessment for learning

Beate (2013) asserts that many teachers are optimistic about national assessment policies and are fairly up-to-speed on what assessment for learning implies. Black (2013a) argues that teachers can improve what and how effectively students learn by acting on strong evidence obtained over the course of teaching. Assessment for learning is formative assessment. Formative assessment focuses on the learner's development as it tries to develop and offer evidence of a learner's progress (Combrinck, 2019). Additionally, Tomlinson (2014) asserts that effective formative assessment is critical for teachers to understand learners' readiness throughout the academic year. Black (2013) mentions that assessment for learning can be casual and formative in character and can be done through excellent questioning. Teachers can, for example, use questioning tactics to elicit evidence of learner understanding and make learners' thinking apparent to the entire class, as well as other learning tasks that elicit evidence of learner understanding.

Halvorson (2012) highlights that assessment for learning is an ongoing procedure of acquiring and analysing data about students' learning to determine where learners understand what they are doing in their learning, where they should go, and how to do it. Dante et al. (2016) describe formative assessment as every activity that provides learners with input on their academic outcomes and progress while they are learning. Questions with open-ended replies, narratives, and group practice such as displays, demonstrations, or activities are examples. Closed-ended questions, such as multiplication problems, may be included in formative assessment. Chappuis et al.

(2015) outline that assessing learners and providing feedback to them throughout the teaching and learning process rather than after a period of instruction is an essential part of the classroom practice. The primary goal of formative assessment is to enhance student learning by giving information about achievement.

The CAPS stipulates that teachers must clearly state learning goals and criteria as well as seek feedback from learners using a variety of assessment strategies and tools, engage learner feedback as part of instruction, learners need frequent and detailed feedback on their learning. They need to practise peer- and self-assessment skills; they need support in determining and setting their learning goals (DBE, 2011a).

Hattie and Zierer (2018) assert that formative assessment embodies feedback. They argue that while feedback can be provided from the teacher to the learner or from the learner to the teacher, formative assessment offers feedback from the learner to the teacher. Teachers can use formative assessment to change instructions, observe the effects of their teaching thus far, and see where to move forward. Additionally, Hattie and Zierer (2018) affirm that while feedback emphasises all aspects of teaching, formative assessment is concerned with determining what the learners have learned and whether they have achieved those goals in the end. Formative assessment serves the purpose of determining the learners' progress toward their learning objectives and it is the teacher's responsibility to draw conclusions from it as to the course of the learning process accordingly. Likewise, to assess students' learning status teachers should seek feedback through assessment (Hattie & Donoghue, 2016). James (2013) describes the value of assessment for learning as a means of transitioning from a system in which teachers provide feedback to one in which learners evaluate their own progress.

The above views suggest that evaluation practice cannot be considered in isolation. Both the teacher and the learner are impacted and influenced by assessment. Learners and teachers in Social Sciences classes are impacted on how assessment is designed, administered, perceived, and regarded.

2.6.2 Assessment of learning

Assessment of learning is summative assessment. Isaac et al. (2013) contend that summative assessment relates to the measure of evaluating students' learning outcomes at the end of a unit, programme, or school year. Most often the evaluation process is a formal one with teacher evaluations and tests. Hattie (2012) describes summative assessment as the method of gathering evidence for summarising learning at a point of time and assessing the quality of student learning in relation to the criteria established and assigning a value to that learning. Furthermore, Hattie (2012) mentions that teachers may use information about learners' accomplishments to communicate with parents, course participants, and other teachers. Assessment of learning takes place towards the end of a learning cycle. Perera-Diltz and Moe (2014) assert that evaluation of learners is done in summative assessment which usually consists of a numerical score or letter grade with limited or no feedback. Additionally, summative assessment is a written test given as a grading or evaluation exercise at the end of a period of study. Examples of summative assessments include multiple-choice questions, true/false questions, and questions that ask for answers. As a means of determining achievements, open-ended responses may also be included in a high-stakes test. Eyal (2012) highlights that using smaller components, summative assessments can be used as formative assessments or can be presented to the learners for review and comment.

Booyse and Du Plessis (2014) and Reddy et al. (2015) affirm that summative assessments serve as a means of evaluating learners' progress over time in a specific area of learning, generally at the end of the learning, school year, or term. Harlen (2014) argues that summative assessment is intended to report and consolidate on what has been learned at a certain time, which is why it is also referred to as test-based assessment. Summative assessment has become known as assessment of learning given that it is done after a learning event has occurred (Reddy et al., 2015). Additionally, DBE (2011b) specifies that assessment of learning occurs typically at the end of the term or year and is meant to encourage promotion and certification. Summative assessment becomes a valuable tool for assessing how well learners are doing in a specific topic. DBE (2012) mentions that summative assessment (assessment of learning) enables teachers to stay on top of the progress of learners

in a subject and in a grade. Beate (2013) indicates that teachers expressed their satisfaction with taking control of assessment because it enabled them to serve as guides or coaches, which allows them to work with learners more effectively. All formal assessments are assessments of learning which have been changed in the post-apartheid curriculum.

2.7 POST-APARTHEID CURRICULUM CHANGES IN SOUTH AFRICA AND THE IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

A lot has changed since 1994, when the South African system of education felt the impact of the newly elected democratic government that started the procedure of tearing down the inherited apartheid regime. The key goal of the reform procedure was to alleviate educational inequity. The establishment of alternate assessment policies was one of the most important components of this transformation process. Several changes were developed to the assessment policy as outlined in the in the National Education Act (DoE, 1996).

Curriculum 2005 (C2005) and outcomes-based education (OBE) were firstly proposed in 1997. The National Policy on Assessment (NPA) and Qualifications for Schools in the General Education and Training (GET) Band were released by the Department of Education (DoE) in 2007 (DoE, 2007). The National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9 assessment criteria were consolidated by this policy and provided a structure for assessment and credentials for all private and public schools, along with community-based facilities for learners in the GET band (NCS). The NCS was then changed to improve its implementation, with the changes taking effect in 2011. The NCS was amended to include policies on curriculum and assessment in the educational sector. To replace the outdated Subject Statements, a single all-inclusive Curriculum and Assessment was designed per subject along with Learning programme Guidelines and Subject Assessment Guidelines in Grade R-12. The Ministry of Education (2013) uses the CAPS to define minimum outcomes and standards, as well as protocols and procedures for assessing learner achievement in public and independent schools (DoE, 2010).

Unlike in the C2005 era, the advent of CAPS drew a distinct divide between the teaching and learning of Geography and History material. The most significant aspect of the CAPS curriculum is subject content. Aims and objectives are met through the acquisition of topic information, and learners are evaluated based on what they learn in class. The CAPS and NCS Social Sciences were created with the goal of forcing instructors to make significant changes in their assessment processes. To ensure that assessments are accurate, objective, and fair, teachers are encouraged to make use of both formal and informal assessments. A teacher's role also includes continuous assessment and identifying, assessing, and providing support to learners who are experiencing learning and development challenges.

Assessing continuously throughout the year enables teachers to detect learners' performance early. In contrast with the previous assessment policy, which heavily relied on summative assessments as a means of evaluating learners' achievement, this new assessment policy focuses more on formative assessments to gauge learner progress. Kanjee and Sayed (2013) in their article on assessment in post-apartheid South African schooling highlight that in the formal teaching sector, the testing system was composed primarily of school-based tests and matriculation examinations which were used greatly to recruit learners to advanced levels of education. Furthermore, they argue that the goal of implementing an effective classroom assessment system is a classroom measurement system (Kanjee & Sayed, 2013). It requires active and critical learning in South Africa's schools to implement the CAPS (DBE, 2011a). New assessment policies present challenges to teachers as they are implemented because teachers become uncertain about what is expected of them. Research indicates that teachers have trouble implementing new policies and that learning support materials have not been provided to support the implementation curriculum changes (Selesho & Monyane, 2012).

2.7.1 SOCIAL SCIENCES AS A SUBJECT

Social Sciences as a subject currently taught in the Intermediate Phase, Grades 4 to 6 will be discussed. The contents below are mostly limited to the CAPS document for Social Sciences.

2.7.1.1 Teaching and Learning Intermediate Phase Social Sciences according to the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement

Social Sciences is currently one of the four compulsory non-language courses in the Intermediate Phase Grades 4 - 6 that was added as a learning area with the introduction of Curriculum 2005. It consists of Geography and History, which are two different subjects (DBE, 2011a). This indicates that they must be learned and comprehended individually. Considerations on how teaching and learning should occur in Social Sciences are offered below.

2.7.1.2 Specific aims and skills

The DBE (2011a) outlines specific aims and skills for both History and Geography in the Intermediate Phase. These are tabulated in the following table:

Table 2.2: The specific aims and skills for Intermediate Phase History

The specific aims of History	Examples of the skills involved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discovering many types of historical knowledge. 	Being able to combine information from text, visual material and employing multiple types of printed materials (books, magazines, newspapers, websites).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifying necessary data 	Having to pick what knowledge is important enough to utilise. This could include selecting knowledge for a specific history topic.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determining whether data may be accepted 	Having the capability to explore the source of the data who authored or developed the data, and why? It also includes analysing if the data is accurate by correlating the source to other sources.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seeing something that occurred previously from multiple perspectives. 	Considering how data might seem like when it is viewed or even applied from a different angle.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussing why historical events are frequently understood differently. 	Understanding how authors of textbooks, reporters, and broadcasters among them, reach different findings and being able to explain why on a specific historical topic.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arguing over what occurred in the past using the available information. 	Participating in conversations or debates and establishing points of view regarding

	historical events based on evidence derived from available sources.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Studying history in an organized sequence, with a coherent method of reasoning. 	Having the ability to create a historical artefact that includes an initiation, organises the necessary facts logically and chronologically, and then concludes with a response to the question addressed in a comprehensible manner.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognising the significance of heritage and conservation. 	Understanding the reason and why persons and events are remembered openly in a community, town or city, region, or country.

(DBE, 2011a, p.11).

The skills and objectives in Table 2.2 are essential for any content topic. Learners must fully absorb and understand the topic to accomplish and display these skills. However, memory skills continue to be vital.

Table 2.3 The specific aims and skills for Intermediate Phase Geography

The Geography curriculum aims to develop learners who:	Examples of the skills involved. Learners will be able to:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seem to be curious about the world they live in 	Pose inquiries and recognise problems. Talk about it and give attention. Gather and engage with data.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have a broad understanding of geographies and the physical working abilities on Planet. 	Recite and utilise references for knowledge assimilation. Use data to characterise, analyse and answer inquiries about humans, things, events and their relationships.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognise the connection among community and the environment. 	Deliberate, synthesise, and study of reasoning make connections among action and reaction; alter and consistency. Recognise and value varied habits and worldviews.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Think for themselves and back up their opinions with solid facts. 	Use knowledge of geography to conflict resolution Argue and engage in dialogue. Identify prejudice and opposing viewpoints. Generate new ideas based on available evidence.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerned with the environment and the well-being of everyone who lives in it 	<p>Deal with concerns about the earth Be responsible to others and the environment.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interpret and handle a variety of sources, such as maps, statistics, and images. 	<p>Make and use maps. Recognise and gather data from books, atlases, and other sources such as images. Use graphs, tables, and diagrams to represent facts and statistics. Use multiple sources to merge facts.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore and interact with occurrences in their immediate surroundings 	<p>Gain experience in viewing, questioning, and capturing through fieldwork. Conduct interviews and use interpersonal skills. Learn data processing, interpretation, and evaluation.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn from places, people, events, and concerns via a variety of sources, such as books, people, photography, and the Internet. 	<p>Formulate and arrange questions. Enhance and arrange questions. Collect, organise, and display information.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share their thoughts and knowledge. 	<p>Communicate in a lucid and knowledgeable manner. Write in a logical and organised manner. Create maps, sketches, basic drawings, graphs, and visualisations. Offer logical reasons.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generate sound judgments and take the necessary steps. 	<p>Work collaboratively as well as individually. Design and analyse actions in a careful and rigorous manner.</p>

(DBE, 2011a, p.13 - 14).

Interpreting the above specified purposes and skills, one can see that teachers play a crucial role in assisting teaching and learning toward the achievement of certain competencies. This indicates that learners should be provided with Social Sciences topic information to build necessary skills. These abilities will enable them to become knowledgeable about diverse subjects.

2.7.1.3 Time allocations and weighting of topics

DBE, (2011a) states that History and Geography must be covered and assessed in every term of the school year. Schools are free to set up their timetables within this limitation. Every week, three hours of time are dedicated to Social Sciences. As a result, 30 hours of teaching time are allotted to a ten-week term. As a result of this policy, History is assigned around 15 hours per 10-week term. Geography is also allocated approximately 15 hours per 10-week semester.

2.7.1.4 Teaching plan

The 2011 CAPS also include information about the teachers' file, which was formerly referred to as portfolios of teachers in the 2007 policy. It also requires the school administration to assess learner identities and information as well as provide Learner Progress Reports and advancement forms and timetables. Teachers are currently obliged to participate in three levels of planning, namely, creating a learning program, a work schedule, and a lesson plan. They must also possess the following documents: A school appraisal plan, a teacher evaluation framework, and a teacher portfolio, which are all examples of connected school assessment plans.

Annual Teaching Plan

The annual teaching plan is grade specific and divides the themes into school terms and weeks. The following information should be included in an effective Annual Teaching Plan:

- Resources
- The materials
- The period (in ours)
- Evaluation specifics (including Formal Assessment Tasks)
- Grade-level topics
- Week breakdown
- Content for each grade level

The above features are demonstrated in the example below, which is taken from the subject policy documents. The annual teaching plan makes teachers' jobs easier by

providing them with clarity on the topic to be taught, the timeframes in which to do so, and the resources that should be employed.

The DBE (2011a) summarised the Social Sciences teaching plan into four primary areas for each school level. The following table lists the topics that are covered in the teaching plans for grades 4 to 6.

Table 2.4: Content overview of History in the Intermediate Phase

Term	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6
1	Local history.	South African hunter-gatherers and herders.	Mapungubwe was a long-gone African monarchy in southern Africa.
2	Leaders to learn from.	Southern Africa's first farmers.	European explorers discover southern Africa
3	Travel through time.	Egypt was an ancient African society.	South African politics and nationality.
4	Time-based communication.	A historic trail through South Africa's provinces.	Healing over time.

(DBE, 2011a, p.17).

The most evident element of CAPS' History content understanding is that it begins in both phases with ancient history (gradually moving through grades 4 and 5) and progresses through time until the end of the twentieth century. The sixth grade concludes with the current day. Social Sciences content primarily consists of chronologically arranged events. A second feature is for the curriculum to integrate South African history with the history of Africa and global history. Various topics pertain to only South Africa, Africa, and the rest of the world, etc. There are also some topics, such as Transport, Communication (both in grade 4) and Medicine (grade 6), that incorporate South African content with content from around the world. The third point to note is that some of the topics are old, having appeared in History Curriculum in a similar manner for many years, while others are new, appearing in CAPS for the first time.

Table 2.5: Content overview of Geography in the Intermediate Phase

Term	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6
1	Locations where people live (settlements)	Map abilities (Focus: Africa)	Map abilities (Focus: world)
2	Map skills	South Africa's physical characteristics	Trade (global emphasis)
3	Agriculture and horticulture in South Africa	South Africa's weather, climate, and vegetation	The global climate and vegetation
4	South African surf	South African commodities and minerals	Demographics - why do people are living where they do? South Africa and the rest of the world

(DBE, 2011a, p.17).

Grades 4 to 6 have clear and structured content which follows the very well-known and acceptable principle that Geography content knowledge starts where one is (one's local area) in the grade 4, then moves to one's city, one's district, one's province and, finally, the whole world - in the Senior Phase. This implies that teachers of Social Sciences should begin instruction with the known and work their way to the unknown. Secondly, the skill of drawing maps is separate from other aspects of Geography. According to the CAPS curriculum, it is essential that students master the skills of reading maps and making them prior to learning other geographic content. As a result, mapping skills in each grade are done in Term 1 and Term 2 in Grade 4.

Programme of Assessment

The DBE (2011b) stipulates that the Programme of Assessment is meant to distribute formal assessment assignments across all disciplines in a school over the course of a term and the year mark is considered for promotion purposes. All formal assessment tasks for each grade are included in the programme of assessment. For each subject, the CAPS document specifies the number and kind of assessments.

The Programme of Assessment provides the following:

- The allocation of task marks
- References to pages in the Teacher's Guide and Learner's Book.
- Breakdown of Assessment tasks for the four terms

- Numbered Formal Assessment Tasks

The subject-specific CAPS documents provide access to all the above levels of planning. They may be presented in many ways depending on the subject. Teachers are instructed to use the information in the policy document to create their daily lesson plans. In the CAPS document there is no defined lesson plan. Samples on the other hand can be found in a variety of textbooks. It is recommended that teachers construct their lesson plans based on the needs of their learners, keeping in mind that the lesson should be able to suit all learners.

CAPS also mandate teachers to create a 'Teacher File' for each subject they teach, regardless of how many subjects they teach. Angier et al. (2013) outline a list of items that must be included in the teacher's file:

- *Topic policy documents*
- *Plan of assessment*
- *Structured assessment tasks*
- *Marking tools - memos and rubrics*
- *Personal timetable*
- *Evidence of reading materials and other resources*
- *Marking sheets for students*
- *Unofficial notes or any deliberate actions to support learners (p. xvi).*

The school must maintain files of learners for purposes of moderation. Tasks must have clear indicators and be always readily accessible upon request (DBE, 2011a).

2.7.1.5 Teaching and learning materials required in Social Sciences

As stated in DBE (2011a), a proper textbook and an organised notebook should be part of every learner's education. Learning materials must be appropriate for the purpose, language level, and grade level of learners. Content should be precise and should support skills development, concepts, and values. It is essential that textbooks contain appropriate assessment activities. These sub-topics do not have to be covered in the order in which they appear in this document. Wall maps, globes, atlases, dictionaries, as well as reading material appropriate for the grade are a

requirement for every Social Sciences classroom. To bring the world to the classroom, Social Science teachers should use additional resources.

2.7.1.6 Assessment in Social Sciences

Clacherty et al. (2012) mention that in the Intermediate Phase, formal assessments in Social Sciences takes the form of a project, formal assessment, tasks and examinations. It is designed to extend formal assessment tasks throughout a term in all subject areas of a school.

Formal Assessment Tasks for the Intermediate Phase in Social Sciences include examinations in June and November. Marks for these are as follows:

- Grade 4: 25 marks
- Grade 5: 30 marks
- Grade 6: 40 marks

School-Based Assessments (SBA) are the formal part of formal assessment. They are outlined in the National Curriculum Statement Grade R-12 and the National Protocol for Assessment (NPA). These SBAs come in many forms of assessments. They cover projects and examinations in Social Sciences. For each grade level, learners are required to complete a Social Sciences project. Each year, they then choose between History or Geography as their project. Projects in the Social Sciences Intermediate phase are illustrated in the following table.

This is the way that the projects are separated between the two subjects in the CAPS curriculum:

Table 2.6: Social Sciences division of projects

Intermediate phase	
Grade 4 -term 1	History project
Grade 5- term 3	Geography project
Grade 6- term 3	History project

(DBE, 2011a, p.14).

In the History category, CAPS provides information on what the projects may include. It is imperative that Intermediate Phase Social Sciences teachers note that these

projects are only suggested choices of projects, not mandatory ones. Geography projects should feature field observation and research in the local area. Grade 4 is local history, grade 5 is weather and grade 6 is the life story of a leader (DBE, 2011a). Term 1 and term 3 have tasks or projects. Additional to the mid-year exams, in term 2 each grade completes a task or a test, and in term 4 the final examination is the only examination. The following table illustrates the School Based Assessments (SBA) requirements prescribed for Intermediate phase – Social Sciences.

Table 2.7: School-Based Assessment

Grade 4				
Term 1	History	Project	School Based Assessment 75%	
	Geography	Task		
Term 2	History	Task/Test		
	Geography	Task/Test		
Term 3	History	Task		
	Geography	Task		
Term 4	History	Test/examination		Year-end test/examination 25%
	Geography	Test/examination		
Grade 5				
Term 1	History	Task	School Based Assessment 75%	
	Geography	Task		
Term 2	History	Task/Test		
	Geography	Task/Test		
Term 3	History	Task		
	Geography	Project		
Term 4	History	Test/examination		Year-end test/examination 25%
	Geography	Test/examination		
Grade 6				
Term 1	History	Task	School Based Assessment (SBA) 75%	
	Geography	Task		
Term 2	History	Task/Test		
	Geography	Task/Test		
Term 3	History	Project		
	Geography	Task		
Term 4	History	Test/examination		Year-end test/examination 25%
	Geography	Test/examination		

Source: DBE (2011a, 51-52).

This policy also places more emphasis on continuous assessment (CASS) also called School Based Assessment (SBA). Guidelines on how SBA should be conducted for different subject areas are included in the CAPS document. The policy also specifies how much weight should be given to both the end-of-year examinations and SBA tasks, as well as which cognitive levels contribute and how scores should be reported. A percentage of SBA should be added to the end-of-year mark as part of the advancement and promotion process, providing clear guidelines. Currently, SBA and the end-of-year examination carry greater weight. School-based assessments are administered to learners and learners are evaluated through a final examination. A 100% SBA was used earlier for promotion in the Intermediate and Foundation Phases. In the Intermediate Phase, learners' final marks now include 75% of their assessments and 25% of their examinations. Examination results from the mid-year examination are included in the SBA (75%).

2.7.1.7 Test and examinations

The DBE (2011a) acknowledges that “designing excellent assessment activities can be difficult, so teachers are urged to utilize properly selected materials as a reference and to exchange successful assessment tasks with teachers from other schools” (p.49). Eyal (2012) asserts that tests or examinations are widely employed to assess academic progress, raising concerns about fairness and the validity of learning in the educational context. Both Geography and History learners must complete an end-of-year assessment. It is possible for teachers to set this examination by themselves depending on what is needed for their learners and what content has been covered throughout the year. Formal assessment tests and examinations should cover a large quantity of content. Testing and examinations must be done in a controlled environment. Controlled environments are required for testing and examinations. Various levels of cognitive ability must be accommodated by each test and examination.

The table below illustrates the range of formal assessments necessary to meet the needs of individuals with different cognitive level.

Table 2.8: Suggested weighting of cognitive levels in the Intermediate Phase

Level of understanding and ability	Percentage of assessment at each level
Lower order: recollection and knowledge	30%
Middle order: Understanding and application	50%
Higher order: Analysis, assessment, and synthesis are concepts.	20%

(DBE, 2011a, p.48).

While it can be difficult for teachers to ensure that every assessment meets these requirements, it can be quite easy. Based on the type of question asked, the types of assessment activities that have been devised and a description of the assessment products needed cognitive level is determined. In order to be valid, formal assessments must consider each learner's cognitive competence and ability, as depicted below. It is important to include low-, middle-, and high-level questions in the assessment process.

Table 2.9: Sample questions stems based on Bloom's revised taxonomy

Remember	Understand	Apply	Analyse	Evaluate	Create
Lower order		Middle order		Higher order	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> List Definition Recognize Respond Trace Respond Name State Match Recite Repeat Categorise Choose Locate Quote Tabulate Copy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Briefly outline Translate Reword Restate Categorise Contrast Merge Analyse Distinguish Show Illustrate Imply Evaluate Cite an example Compare 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adjust Calculate and apply Complete Edit Estimate Pick out Display drawing Anticipate Connect and use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examine Categorise and contrast Dig into Partition Design Coincide Finish Choose 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the Rule Evaluate the Opinion Contrast, and suggest Conserve Approximate Check for errors Gauge Anticipate Argue point Guess Measure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concept synthesis Devise a schedule Merge Construct and form hypotheses Arrange and summarise Integrate Alter Reorganise

(DBE, 2011a, p.50).

Developing learners' cognitive skills beyond those required by their schooling should be a priority. Learners can demonstrate their ability to attain far beyond expectations by adding additional assessments that require them to demonstrate advanced knowledge and skills.

Table 2.10: Recording and Reporting

Rating code	Description of competence	Percentage
7	Outstanding achievement	80 - 100
6	Meritorious achievement	70 - 79
5	Substantial achievement	60 - 69
4	Adequate achievement	50 - 59
3	Moderate achievement	40 - 49
2	Elementary achievement	30 - 39
1	Not achieved	0 - 29

(DBE, 2011a, p.52).

The number and type of tasks to be recorded were also amended, as stipulated in the CAPS document each term is assigned several tasks, with a list of each of these tasks. It lists formative (assessment for learning) and summative (assessment of learning) purposes. DBE (2011b) stipulates that recording is when a teacher indicates the level of a learner's performance in an assessment task and indicates their progress to attaining a specific goal. Kanjee and Croft (2012) affirm that it will not be possible to show effective learning or teaching practices using the assessment information without reporting or recording the assessment. Additionally, DBE (2011a) describes reporting as the method of conveying learner performance to learners, parents, schools, and other stakeholders. Reporting learner performance can take different forms. Learners' performance records should show how conceptually they have progressed through a grade and how ready they are to develop new skills or move forward to the next grade.

2.7.1.8 Moderation of school-based assessment

The DBE (2011a) states that during moderation, assessment tasks are scrutinised for fairness and accuracy and moderation should occur at school, district, provincial and national level. All subject assessments need to be moderated in a comprehensive and appropriate manner for quality assurance (DBE, 2011a). As far as formal assessment is concerned, tasks in grades 4 - 6 are moderated both internally and externally.

To fully comprehend this document, teachers must read it along with:

- National policy pertaining to the programme and promotion requirements of the National Curriculum Statement Grades R-12
- National Protocol for Assessment Grades R-12
- Subject specific School Based Assessment Exemplar booklet.

2.8 HOW TEACHERS DESIGN LEARNER ASSESSMENT TO PROMOTE QUALITY TEACHING AND LEARNING

Students learning experiences are influenced by the teacher's understanding of and implementation of assessment (Johnson, 2012). This research is thus driven by the

desire to better understand assessment practices. Designing accountable assessment procedures that are credible and provide quality data about learners' performance without stifling effective instructional practices, is fundamental to classroom assessment. From the experience I gained through working in the field of teaching, I observed that teachers often face difficulties planning quality assessment tasks that satisfy their own needs, such as easy-to-test and easy-to-score tests. Taking such actions is likely to compromise the assessment's quality. Therefore, teachers must bridge the gap between teaching and learning in the Intermediate Phase Social Science classrooms by integrating assessment into teaching and learning.

Assessing learners' ability and doing it successfully rely on the design of assessment and its corresponding processes (Carless, 2015). Students' learning and progress at schools are critically dependent on assessment. López-Pastor et al. (2013) assert that assessment is a difficult and nerve-racking area of classroom practice. Wiliam (2013) points out that assessment connects teaching and learning since it can assist in determining whether effective teaching and learning have occurred. An important way to improve teachers' knowledge of learners' needs is to use effective assessment methods to support the learning process (Vonderwell & Boboc, 2013). Garrison (2011) contends that assessment methods send a clear message about what matters and how learners should approach an educational experience. Assessing with a variety of techniques is essential for teachers and redundant ways should be avoided (Vonderwell & Boboc, 2013). Wiliam (2013) emphasises that it can only be determined whether learners' engagement in instruction has resulted in the intended learning, after assessments have been conducted. Killen (2015) argues that assessment plays an important role in teaching and learning because it helps learners succeed by providing feedback on knowledge, skills, and attitudes.

Planning is essential in the assessment process. The specific aims, skills and concepts that should be addressed in the lessons must be established by teachers before identifying the assessment tasks. Specific aims, skills and concepts in each learning area are crucial because they determine the minimum required for obtaining the learning goal at a particular grade level (DBE, 2011a). Ainsworth (2015) affirms that teachers must identify the priority standards because they cannot assess all of

them. This implies that teachers must identify and prioritise the requirements that learners must understand and be able to perform. At every grade level, a learner will be expected to demonstrate and know concepts, aims, and skills. Learners should be aware of the recommended specific aims, skills and concepts that will enable them to be more prepared when they are assessed. A task design follows right after identifying the specific aims, skills, and concepts.

Black (2013) states that successful assessment procedures in the Social Sciences classrooms can be developed when teachers are able to apply assessment strategies such as questioning and responding to their learners' thinking. An important element of initiating and continuously improving systematic teaching practices is the implementation of formative assessments. Previous research findings report that many teachers cannot effectively apply assessment in the classroom because they view it as a challenge (Hay et al., 2015). It can be a challenge to set effective assessment tasks. Ranby and Moeng (2012) outline the following steps that teachers should follow when designing their assessment tasks in their classrooms:

- *Provide details about the assessment (Why?)*
- *Determine which activity or activities to perform. (Method of assessment)*
- *Define the content, concepts, and skills, as well as their assessment. (What?)*
- *A learner presentation should have a specific format. (Describe the method how?) (p. xviii).*

Bennett (2011) argues that successful assessment implementation in the classroom is a complex process that requires excellent teachers and capability of implementing assessment in the classroom. Teachers have been left in the dark with regards to how to conduct teacher assessments, as there is a lack of advice and support (Turner et al., 2013). Johnson (2012) highlights that teachers require assistance in establishing assessment literacy so that they can make informed judgments about how to implement effective formal assessment. It is difficult to decide how to enhance practice if teachers do not have a clear understanding of what constitutes good assessment.

Austin et al. (2011) report that prospective teachers encounter difficulty in posing word problems as part of assessment task design. Hay and Penney (2013) accentuate that

contributing to student learning and improving teachers' practices, using assessments that are reliable and relevant to the learner will promote a mechanism of accountability. In like manner, Austin et al. (2011) mention that in the case where a learner's prior knowledge is used as a reference, they might be able to understand the content assessed. To effectively teach and learn, assessments need to be planned properly. Dreyer (2015) recommends that teachers must consider the following when designing an assessment:

- *Why is assessment necessary?*
- *How will the assessment be carried out (teacher or self-assessment, peer or peer assessment, and why?)*
- *When and where will the assessment (s) take place (during lessons, after lessons, at home?)*
- *How will a teacher tailor instruction to fit each student's learning style, aptitudes, and interests?*
- *Do your assessment(s) adhere to local standards, values, and content, that is, are they accurate?*
- *How will you ensure that evaluation is a constant and vital aspect of learning?*
- *What are the measures you will take to ensure assessments are manageable, and time efficient?*
- *How will you ensure that assessments are appropriate for each learner's developmental stage?*
- *Ensure assessments are unbiased and take gender, race, cultural background and ability into consideration (p.163).*

If a teacher answers the above questions, then they will have a better understanding of what and how they should assess, ensuring that they do not omit an important aspect of the assessment that could potentially make it less effective or invalid.

2.9 CHALLENGES IN SOCIAL SCIENCES TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

The relevance and usefulness of Social Sciences as a field of study have long been questioned around the world. Research shows that there is an increasing demand for

the topic, putting a large burden on teachers to keep the trend going (Bhatnagar, 2018). Despite the substantial role that teachers are expected to play in Social Sciences teaching, learning, and assessment, research further reveals that teachers confront a variety of obstacles in this area. Dhurumraj (2013) highlights that education policies, curriculum changes, ineffective school management, overcrowded classrooms, a lack of trained teachers, and other factors are obstacles to learner success in Social Sciences teaching, learning, and evaluation. The following is a discussion of these difficulties.

2.9.1 Lack of knowledge of History and Geography sections of Social Sciences

Geography is taught with History in the Social Sciences Learning Area in the Intermediate and Senior Phases (DBE, 2011b & c). Negumbo's (2016) research reveals that most schools used inadequately qualified and unqualified teachers to teach Social Sciences. Teachers oversee one of the portions that involves one of the two disciplines. Some teachers studied one of the two in their junior qualifications. Those who solely studied Geography are unable to deal with the History component of the curriculum, which limits their success in classroom assessments and as such, they end up focusing on the portion where they excel, and learners suffer as a result. Furthermore, the research findings of Matthews (2017) on the topic of teachers who lack expertise of the Social Science parts of History and Geography complement the opinions expressed above. Participants in Matthews (2017) study provided the following responses:

Since I did not pursue additional study in Geography, the Geography portion is particularly taxing. Though Social Sciences is made up of Geography and History, and because I am a Historian, Geography was challenging because I had to consult references. "I know less about History and more about Geography. a lack of understanding of Social Sciences' historical component. I'm under a lot of stress because I did not even do it in high school (p.77-78).

The NSC Diagnostic Report for Geography (DBE, 2014) identified the following important issues for non-geography major teachers:

- Language, with second and third language applicants unable to express themselves well in English.
- A lack of topic knowledge, including a failure to grasp basic concepts.
- A lack of essential map knowledge (p.89).

Wilmot and Irwin (2015) argue that there is little, if any, evidence obtainable on primary teachers' Geography content and pedagogical content understanding. In response to these viewpoints, Spaul (2013) advocates for the implementation of a national system of diagnostic teacher testing and training to increase fundamental competency. The Centre for Development and Enterprise [CDE] (2015) reports that some teachers did not study Geography while they were in school, and others did not study it as part of their teacher trainee degrees. Their limited understanding does not bode well for the efficient instruction, learning, and evaluation of Social Sciences in Grades 4-7. Immediate intervention is necessary to find a way to produce enough qualified teachers who can deliver quality teaching, learning, and assessment across all school topics and stages (CDE, 2015).

2.9.2 Poor Learning and Teaching Support Material

Fernandez (2014) claims that the availability of learning and teaching support material (LTSM) is the most consistent predictor of educator viability toward teaching, learning, and evaluation in primary schools. This suggests that if a school does not have adequate educational materials, such as textbooks and revision books, it is doomed. New policy studies from UNESCO (2016) and the World Bank (Fredriksen & Brar, 2015) highlight textbooks' potential as a cost-effective contribution for boosting learning results. Understanding the impact of a lack of facilities and resources in schools is at all times imperative when there is substantial shortfall in schools. Kwinda (2014) demonstrates that learners who attend well-resourced schools in terms of textbooks outperform their peers who attend under-resourced schools. Additionally, Bakwai (2013) contends that educational planners should enhance the capacity and quality of the education system to provide more to national development with the available resources. Ministry of Education (2013) stated that:

The ability of teachers and educators to administer and utilize those resources in the schools and in the classrooms, as well as an adequate supply of

acceptable teaching and learning resources, such as textbooks and reading materials, have a substantial impact on quality (p.137).

Benjamin and Orodho's (2014) research reveals that teachers in Rwanda attribute inadequate teaching, learning, and assessment', as well as material delivery, to a lack of resources. In like manner, a shortage of instructional materials hampers teaching and learning and assessment (Matimbe, 2014; Mestry & Ndhlovu, 2014; Mogute, 2013). Research reveals that one of the most important strategies to increase learners' academic performance is to supply high-quality textbooks (Kwinda, 2014). Phakathi (2015) asserts that the government should supply quality textbooks to boost learner performance in schools. Najumba (2013) argues that schools that are adequately equipped with necessary learning material perform significantly better in controlled assessments than those that are not.

2.9.3 Challenge of overcrowding

Mestry and Ndhlovu (2014) affirms that big classroom sizes make teaching complicated since good teaching cannot occur without catering to the particular circumstances of individual learners. This means that such a classroom does not produce good results due to the high learner-teacher ratio. Social Sciences is a subject that necessitates constant contact between the teacher and the learners. Likewise, Mboweni (2014) contends that big classroom sizes have an impact on the teaching and learning process, because teachers face problems in such as unmanageable classrooms. Additionally, Awases (2015) highlights that the application of constructivist educational approaches is hampered by overcrowding.

The above points of view imply that when a class is overcrowded, discussion and engagement with all the learners becomes practically impossible. Learners who are not actively engaging in the discussion usually lose enthusiasm and become separated from the class. The class size is a major impediment for teachers to manage because they must provide their best within the framework offered by the school.

2.9.4 Curriculum coverage within specified timeframe

The term 'curriculum' refers to the techniques and expertise that learners are required to gain, and the instructional units and workbooks, as well as the tests and other methods used to assess student learning (DBE, 2011). Shulman (1987) asserts that one of the key components that influence what must be taught in schools is the curriculum. Phajane and Mokhele (2013) mention that one of the primary functions of the curriculum is to describe what should be taught in schools. Time management is emphasised in the national curriculum with explicit time requirements (DBE, 2011). Sibam (2014) points out that teachers found it difficult to finish the CAPS curriculum within the time constraints. Additionally, the Social Sciences curriculum is so extensive that teachers struggle to achieve the required covering of the curriculum (Bhatnagar, 2018). Mlambo (2014) mentions that teachers are begging for parts of the CAPS content to be changed. Referring to the teachers' complaints, the misunderstanding about the allotted time has a negative impact on curricular components such as aims and objectives, content, instructional techniques, and assessment.

Punch (2014) contends that integrating teachers in a broader variety of curricular tasks is critical, and that teachers perceive curriculum as everything that occurs in the classroom and school in general. To overcome this difficulty, teachers should plan ahead of time and create a methodical teaching timetable. Kizlik (2014) concurs by adding that the best and most effective teachers are good planners and thinkers. This means that Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers must constantly be learners of Geography and History in terms of thinking and planning, considering that planning begins in a teacher's thinking. Dyer (2014) mentions that time management is a big difficulty due to the amount of content to be produced.

2.9.5 Teachers view formal assessments as an administrative burden

Regarding new and growing administrative responsibilities, teachers in schools maintain their primary attention on matters directly associated with working with learners in teaching, learning and assessment. Similarly, Barnes et al. (2017) mention that many teachers regard assessment as unnecessary or even conflicting with their

work. Dyer (2014) argues that teachers regard formal assessments as the most time-consuming and administratively burdensome aspect of their profession. McGrath-Champ et al. (2017) have revealed that teachers in NSW public schools are facing rising and burdensome administrative job expectations. NSW Department of Education, reports that teachers spend a considerable proportion of their time on administrative chores, which has become an unacceptable demand (Deloitte, 2017). Additionally, teacher workload had also been a source of concern in Australia (Weldon & Ingvarson, 2016). Today's teachers have enormous obstacles in managing assessment context driven by discussion, competing aims, and increased demands for both innovation and responsibility (Hill & Barber, 2014).

The views presented above imply that teacher overburdening is mostly a consequence of increased teacher workload. This suggests that assessments entail a large workload and take a long time to accomplish. The following paragraph identifies teachers' lack of knowledge of formal assessments as a difficulty.

2.9.6 Lack of knowledge of formal assessments

Teachers must have a sufficient level of expertise to promote effective teaching, learning, and assessment. Kyttälä et al. (2022) argue that assessment has become an essential component of all teaching scenarios. As a result, teachers' assessment competencies are a far more complex phenomenon than merely employing certain skills in interpretation of data. Formal assessments are an unavoidable component of teaching and learning (Tomlinson, 2014). Mellati and Khademi (2018) highlight that being well informed in assessment enables teachers to construct suitable tests that stimulate more learner engagement and better satisfy students' learning requirements. Teachers' assessment approaches are inevitably influenced by a variety of conceptual and practical restrictions, such as time, funding, competence, and curricular, contextual, and institutional demands for external responsibility, among others (Leung, 2020). Research reveals that assessment practice is determined by both assessment knowledge and assessment skills (Deneen & Brown, 2016). There are significant gaps in assessment practice knowledge hence Kanjee and Sayed (2013) urge teachers in South Africa to pull up their socks to build effective evaluation systems that increase learning.

This indicates that teachers must be familiar with assessment to construct assessments that assess learners' use of scientific inquiry abilities, planning, observing, and acquiring information. Furthermore, Social Sciences teachers should teach and construct assessments that will help learners to respond to the outside world using what they have learned in class.

2.9.7 Teachers' poor content and pedagogical knowledge

Schulman (1987) defines content knowledge as teachers' understanding of the subject area they teach. This type of knowledge enables teachers to teach in a manner that recognises the ideology's structure and processes of inquiry and makes the subject comprehensible to others. Moreover, Killen (2015) explains that pedagogical content includes teacher-learner interaction, learner-teacher interaction, learner-content interaction, and teacher-content interaction. This indicates that the teacher should comprehend who the learner is, have a strong command of the subject matter, and be capable of selecting appropriate and relevant teaching tactics, learning styles, and information specific to the teaching profession. Similarly, Kibirige and Maake (2021) concur by stating that teachers' teaching strategies are critical in increasing learners' performance. Teaching, learning and assessment cannot rise above the ceiling imposed by low teacher capacity (Taylor, 2014).

Mavhundutse (2014), asserts that one of the primary aspects contributing to good teaching is knowledge. Fullan and Langworthy (2013) contend that unless a new methodology emerges, learners will become increasingly weary and disinterested, while teachers will be even more agitated. Similarly, Gbadamosi (2018) states that a lack of pedagogical expertise that may be used to improve the impact of material delivery results in learner discontent. Kalpana (2014) accentuates that pedagogical knowledge is important in helping teachers perceive how to involve learners in the teaching-learning situation, and how to use intellectual, sociological, and cognitive theories of classroom learning. This shows that teachers' methodology influences the effectiveness of teaching, learning, and assessment.

2.9.8 Lack of ongoing professional development

Tshabalala (2014) maintains that the quality of teacher training impacts teaching approaches and skills' development. Quyen and Khairani (2017) suggest that rigorous teacher training and support for teachers should be prioritised to effectively apply formative assessment. Lumadi (2013) emphasises that teachers should be given more opportunities for professional growth, and that teacher training should be a long-term process. This argues that to support their professional growth and morale and enable them to produce at a high level, Social Sciences teachers should be allowed to attend conferences, training sessions, seminars, and workshops. This could help learners improve their bad performance in Social Sciences. Chemwei et al. (2014) assert that schools should place a high priority on the training and development of teachers which will improve the schools' implementation of any change initiative.

Principals of schools are urged to work with relevant parties to support teacher capacity development (Chukwumah & Ezeugbor, 2015) Furthermore, Quyen and Khairani (2017) state that for teachers to execute the assessment effectively, they need to get long-term help and coaching. Hofman et al. (2015) assert that the assessment ought to be informed on material that is pertinent to learners.

2.9.9 English language as a language of learning and teaching

Teachers face difficulties when it comes to teaching and mastering language. De Jager and Evans (2013) mention that the research findings demonstrate that misunderstanding is mostly caused by teachers' poor oral skills. Webster (2018) alludes that teachers' lack of English fluency and ability may contribute to learners' inadequate use of the language. Evans and Cleghorn (2014) maintain that one of the primary challenges to successful teaching, learning, and assessment is a dearth of suitably qualified teachers to teach in English. Phajane and Mokhele (2013) emphasise that teachers are not equipped to teach word recognition. Furthermore, in South Africa most teachers do not speak English (Nel et al. 2016). Resultantly, this adds to the continuation of English language faults among Social Science learners. Merriam Webster (2018) alludes that teachers' lack of English fluency and ability may contribute to learners' inadequate use of the language.

Ebersöhn (2014) asserts that learners face the issue of acquiring a new language and using it as a LoLT in Social Sciences. Presently, more than two decades after apartheid's end, black learners' performance is still frequently quite poor, comparing unfavourably with that of their white peers (Howie et al., 2017). Similarly, Dhurumraj (2013) claims that the language of instruction in schools has an impact on learner performance since the language barrier makes it more difficult for learners to understand questions during assessment tasks. Bhaskar and Soundiraraj (2013) highlight that it is critical for teachers to help learners to learn English for them to fit into the global community. English is the most extensively used language in Social Sciences teaching, learning, and assessment.

2.9.10 Difficulties in understanding assessment policies

Assessment is fundamentally tied to teacher practice and is among the most crucial areas of teacher preparation. Sellar (2015) indicates that teacher and school practices are evolving because of assessment policies and processes aimed at enhancing performance through increased accountability. Furthermore, assessment is increasing the 'visibility' of teachers (Kilderry, 2015). Hardy (2018) mentions that assessment is leading to a rise in teacher distrust in schools. Additionally, teachers are frequently challenged to adapt their classroom practice as novel insights on teaching and learning emerge. Modifications in instruction necessitate changes in assessment techniques (Scott, 2015).

Excessive testing is one of the most profound impacts on what is taught and learned in the classroom (Creese et al., 2016). Teachers still have difficulties with comprehending how to design formal assessment assignments in line with the National Protocol on Assessment (Department of Basic Education, 2012). Teachers were not formerly involved in the design of these many policies, even though teachers are expected to serve as facilitators in the new curriculum (Skosana & Monyai, 2013). Diseko (2014) highlights that if teachers seem unable to use CAPS, learners will almost certainly fail to advance to the next grade level. The following section explores strategies to overcome obstacles in Social Sciences teaching, learning, and assessment.

2.10 HOW TO OVERCOME CHALLENGES IN TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

The potential of learners to conquer and respond to obstacles they face is quite significant (OECD, 2019). Bhatnagar (2018) suggests the following steps to address challenges in Social Sciences teaching, learning, and assessment.

- *Teachers should examine their instructional methods.*
- *Regular and meaningful training sessions for teachers should be provided.*
- *They should be given assistance in integrating new technology into their classroom.*
- *Topic-related field trips should be scheduled.*
- *Continuous teacher evaluation is essential.*
- *Prizes for teachers who use creative methods or experiment with their pedagogical approaches.*
- *A personalized tie and interaction between the parent, teacher, and learner should established.*
- *The government should ensure that teachers' health and physical fitness are taken care of.*
- *Unique teachers for children with any type of special learning disability (p.530).*

To overcome obstacles in Social Sciences teaching, learning, and assessment, Agasti et al. (2018) emphasise the importance of comprehending and expanding the multiple worlds of the learners. Additionally, this entails enhancing learner well-being by either enhancing quasi abilities or attitudes of learners or cultivating a supportive learning environment. Additionally, OECD (2018) argues that teacher knowledge transfer helps teachers and other staff members who directly provide support to recognize and overcome learning challenges more successfully.

2.11 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This section reviewed literature on assessment as a means of guaranteeing high-quality teaching and learning. According to several authors, effective teaching may be seen in the activity that happens both in a classroom and the nature and quality of the

tasks that the teacher assigns to lead students' learning. Teachers cannot assess their own teaching unless they see the result in the form of quality learning, I believe that quality teaching should be based on the foundation of great learning, appraised and specified. The terms 'quality teaching' and 'quality learning' were discussed in depth in the first section of the chapter. The two primary aims of assessment, namely assessment for learning and assessment of learning, were described. Following that, the chapter's focus switched to an analysis of the link between teaching, learning, and assessment. The goal of assessment was also examined after a complete definition of what comprises assessment for learning and assessment of learning was provided. Second, a brief history of post-apartheid curricular revisions in South Africa was examined, as well as their effect on teaching, learning, and assessment. Finally, the literature investigated how teachers create various assessments and the obstacles they have when putting them into practice in the Social Sciences. According to the literature reviewed, assessment is about determining the quality of students' learning and teaching more effectively, as it permits an investigation of what learners know and do not know. Furthermore, it became clear that if quality learning and teaching are to be achieved through teacher assessment, the exercise should employ a variety of assessment characteristics, methodologies, and sound assessment concepts. The following chapter presents the research design and methods utilized to investigate the problem.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter's goal is to give both the results and analysis of the data gathered and highlights the research methodology applied in this study. Creswell and Plano Clark (2018) postulate that a well-written methodology section discusses the design chosen, and describes the data collecting, analysis, and integration procedures that guide the study's implementation. The research approach, data gathering methodologies, sampling approaches, data interpretation procedures, and ethical considerations used in this study are also outlined in this chapter. The pragmatism research paradigm that this study is based on is explained and justified. This chapter reflects a concurrent triangulation research design in which quantitative and qualitative data are composed simultaneously to determine how quality teaching and learning can be improved through formal assessment in the Intermediate Phase in Social Sciences. Finally, a conclusion summarising the chapter's content is offered.

3.2 RESEARCH PARADIGM

Denzin and Lincoln (2018a) contend that a paradigm, is a set of theories that govern the underlying hypothesis and research technique and serve as a guide for action. Similarly, Nieuwehuis (2020) maintains that a paradigm, is a set of assumptions or ideas about essential features of reality that give rise to a specific point of view. Creswell and Plano Clark (2018) describe a paradigm as a set of generalisations, beliefs, and values shared by a group of experts. A research paradigm is a way of thinking about and conducting research, and hence producing knowledge (Johnson & Christensen, 2017). Additionally, Pajo (2018) asserts that a paradigm is an unchanging pattern that researchers repeat. Creamer (2018) agrees that paradigms are a set of theoretical beliefs about the essence of reliability and the researcher's role in producing it that is agreed upon by a community of scholars, rather than being original individual inventions. Consequently, Flick (2018) asserts that a paradigm is a set of broad theoretical beliefs about the essence of the world (ontology) and how people potentially recognise it (epistemology) that are combined by academics in a

particular subject. Additionally, these theoretical conventions guide the researcher by providing a comprehensible insight on the essence of reality (ontology); the essence of knowledge (or how a researcher identifies what they know); and the essence of understanding (or how a researcher recognises what they recognise) (epistemology).

This study followed the pragmatist paradigm that necessitates the interpretivist and positivist paradigm because it followed a mixed-methods research approach. The research paradigms and data gathering techniques were used for the current study. First, the study's positioning within the pragmatic paradigm can be attributed to the research questions' need for both objective information such as data from questionnaires and interviews. In addition, the pragmatic paradigm mandates the blending of quantitative and qualitative approaches in research methodology. Mitchell (2018) affirms that a pragmatism is seen as the "philosophical companion" of the mixed research methodology since its fundamental principles offer a foundation for combining research methodologies. The research paradigms are explained in depth in the next section.

3.2.1 Ontology

Al-Ababneh (2020) argues that positivism guarantees unambiguous and correct knowledge of the world and alludes to anything that has been proposed (i.e., something that is given). Furthermore, positivism is involved in the establishment of comprehensive Social Sciences that use a scientific method to examine society and human beings for their benefit. Creamer (2018) emphasises that ontology reveals philosophical ideas about the nature of truth and reality, as well as whether they are external or produced. Similarly, Creswell and Plano Clark (2018) emphasise that ontology refers to the researchers' assumptions about reality (and what is real) when conducting their research. The idea of using this strategy in this study was to see how participants dealt with the obstacles they face when implementing quality teaching, learning, and assessment. Therefore, the function of the positivist paradigm is to ensure that the researcher is objective and not biased. In addition to the positivist stance, I regard knowledge as subjective, as I was interested in obtaining information from the teacher participants regarding the promotion of quality teaching and learning through assessment in Grade 6 Social Sciences teaching and learning.

From an ontological perspective there are differentiated certainties, and this variation determines individual perceptions of reality. People come across a range of clarifications about the world, because human reality is reciprocally and socially constructed and presented (Willig, 2016). The challenge in this research was to realise and interpret the practices of the teachers; I expected that each teacher experiences the world through several various truths, and that no two certainties can ever be alike or even equal.

In the qualitative strand of this research, the researcher took advice from Creswell and Poth (2018) that in a qualitative approach the researcher often makes knowledge declarations based mostly on constructivist viewpoints, that is, expanded meanings of individual experiences, socially constructed with a goal of developing a concept. I obtained the views and perspectives of teachers as key informants; meaning I examined what the teachers said, understood and did. I also had an opportunity to interact with teachers to obtain an in-depth understanding of the challenges affecting their classroom assessment practices. I was not only concerned with the challenges but also with providing insight into the way such challenges influence quality teaching and learning.

Epistemology (interpretivism) philosophy is discussed in the following section.

3.2.2 Epistemology

Maree and Pietersen (2020) point out that epistemology is concerned with the acceptability of knowledge in the study field. Ma (2016) highlights that interpretivism focuses on a person's personal immersion in knowledge acquisition and appropriation, and the researcher acknowledges that contact with reality can only be accomplished through social construction. Interpretivism, also known as constructivism, stresses an individual's power to generate meaning (Nieuwehuis, 2020). Creswell and Plano Clark (2018) assert that constructivism, which is often linked with qualitative techniques, is based on a different set of assumptions.

Creamer (2018) posits that epistemology reflects philosophical assumptions about the relationship between the knower and reality, as well as what makes trustworthy or acceptable findings or inferences. Similarly, Leedy and Ormrod (2021) claim that epistemology is concerned with knowledge and includes a certain notion of what it entails to know. Maree and Pietersen (2020) mention that epistemology is concerned with the essence of knowledge, its possibilities, breadth, and general base. The interpretive paradigm is appropriate for this study since it allows participants to present their perspectives and information regarding the obstacles they face during teaching, learning, and assessment. Therefore, the study is based on the epistemological viewpoint that knowledge is comparative, diverse, and personal, and that the researcher and the research participants co-build this understanding. In this research I maintained an interpretivist stance to the gathering of data. In the setting of this research, I affirm that knowledge should be seen as solid, real and objective, also known as the positivist stance.

Consequently, from an interpretive standpoint, I have presented and depicted the teachers' descriptions in such a way that the reader can gain some insight into their ' assessment experiences. Because of the research design and the nature of the problem under investigation, I used an interpretive approach to highlight on the encounters disturbing teachers' classroom assessment practices, and how teachers deal with these encounters daily, and how these challenges influence teaching and learning. My view is that teachers' challenges can best be understood by interacting with and listening to them.

3.2.3 Pragmatism

Mitchell (2018) claims that mixed methods research offers both quantitative and qualitative perspectives that result in the greatest data interpretation and knowledge of the study phenomena under consideration. The primary premise of mixed methods research is that combining quantitative and qualitative methods yields a more thorough grasp of the research subject than using only one type of method (Molina-Azorin, 2016). Quantitative and qualitative research methodologies are not only congruent but also corresponding (Mitchell, 2018). Many researchers believe pragmatism to be the most prevalent philosophical basis for the mixed methods research approach

(Hathcoat & Meixner, 2017). Mitchell (2018) postulates that pragmatism is seen as the moral companion of mixed research methodology since its fundamental principles offer a foundation for combining research methodologies. Instead of being based on suppositions about the quality of information, pragmatism is primarily focused on everyday problems in the real world (Shannon-Baker, 2016).

Creamer (2018) affirms that pragmatism provides a suitable foundation for a variety of approaches to educational research because it emphasises flexibility in method selection to match the aims of the inquiry and, in certain cases, the needs of the research context. Nieuwehuis (2020) asserts that pragmatism declares that reality exists in the world and supports Science's objective nature. Similarly, Ghiara (2019) asserts that the pragmatist does not accept or trust subjectivity, but instead embraces the concept of intersubjectivity, which allows researchers to capture the phenomenon's subjective and objective duality before describing it as a social reality. In this study I chose methods, techniques, and processes of research that best matched the study's demands and objectives. A pragmatic approach to mixed methods research allows researchers to use a variety of ways to answer research questions. This study used both quantitative and qualitative data to gather information regarding the complicated nature of Social Sciences assessment in Grade 6. The study's mixed method components gathered information on Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers' enhancement of quality teaching and learning through formal assessment. This methodology provided more options for the collection of data. The opportunities were to combine relevant techniques from both quantitative and qualitative research approaches and therefore address research questions that could not be answered by a single method.

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design used in this study is described in this section. Creamer (2018) states that design refers to a consciously built link between a research study's aim and the methods used to carry it out. Creswell and Plano Clark (2018) maintain that research designs are an organising logic for gathering, analysing, interpreting, and reporting mixed methodologies data. A research design advances the strategies and measures used to handle a study issue (Privitera & Ahlgrim, 2019). Additionally, a

research design is used to organise research methodologies and demonstrate how all the essential components of a research project work together to answer the study's main study questions (Creswell, 2014).

Kumar (2014) contends that research design is a method of uncovering legitimate, objective, correct, and cost-effective solutions to one's research questions during one's research project. A research design is a toolbox containing all the research tools used in a study, which are decided by the essence of the study topic rather than c (Creswell, 2014). Chimirri (2015) mentions that research design has experienced a paradigm shift in terms of involving the people who will benefit from the design. A mixed methods research design was used in this study, which was directed by the pragmatic research paradigm, which develops toward partnering with human beings who will benefit from the design, and the study is focused on thoughtful explanations from an insider's perspective. The concurrent triangulation research design was used for this research study. Kumar (2019) asserts that triangulation entails using the same data from multiple sources to meet the study's goal. Yin (2018) mentions that triangulating measures from diverse sources improves the validity of a study by reducing bias that can result from a single measure and hence helps in the establishment of facts. Panke (2018) claims that triangulation denotes the use of many methods of data collection to complement and cross-check the information received.

Creamer (2018) claims that the main objective for employing mixed approaches is to improve validity through triangulation. Furthermore, triangulation entails corroboration or verification of a phenomenon using several data points or different types of data. Triangulation is a useful research strategy since it allows academics to use diverse research approaches to increase study quality (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). The purpose of using a concurrent mixed method for this study was to compare quantitative and qualitative data to come up with validated conclusions about the difficulties Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers encounter when implementing assessment in primary schools in the Lejweleputswa district.

3.4 RESEARCH SITE

This section outlines that research site for this study.

3.4.1 Recruitment of participants

I emailed a letter requesting permission to conduct this study in the Free State and a letter asking the principals of primary schools in the Lejweleputswa district if I could research what was occurring in their school in terms of teaching, learning and assessment of Social Sciences in Grade 6. (See Appendices 3 & 4) I also visited neighbouring schools to discuss the plan to conduct research at the school. The principal, deputy principal, and the HOD for Social Sciences were all briefed on the research initiative. Some principals were enthusiastic and approved that their school could be used as a research location, but others were not interested and refused to partake in the study. Teachers in the Social Sciences were requested to inform the principal and the head of department (HOD) regarding whether they were willing to accept the invitation to participate voluntarily in the research,

3.4.2 Participants

The respondents were geographically representative, meaning they were chosen at random from Lejweleputswa District primary schools. Teachers of Grade 6 Social Sciences who might be able to contribute information were chosen as potential participants in this study. I chose this topic because of my experience and knowledge of teaching Social Sciences. The questionnaire was distributed to 150 Intermediate Phase Social Sciences teachers and 106 teachers returned them which is 70.66% return. Most teachers were willing to participate while others indicated that they did not have time to complete the questionnaire, or they did not return it at all. Teachers were used as primary sources of information in each school since they are actively involved in the implementation of numerous assessment activities in the Intermediate Phase Social Sciences.

3.5 POPULATION AND SAMPLING

Brynard et al. (2014) point out that a sampling population is referred to as subjects, objects, phenomena, cases, events, and activities that are under investigation by the researcher to acquire new knowledge. Frankel et al. (2015) mention that to generalise the results of a study, researchers use a population. The population for this research

was Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers. Johnson and Christensen (2017) affirm that the practice of selecting a subset of a population to be investigated is known as sampling. Aurini et al. (2016) assert that selection of samples is an important component of research design, irrespective of whether it is qualitative, quantitative, or a mix of both. Sampling is the selection of a subset of items from defined groups for inclusion in a study. These items can include people, events, places, or point in time (Guest et al., 2013). Brynard et al. (2014) highlight that sampling should be based on some form of objective or research question. Additionally, Aurini et al. (2016) emphasise that sampling is a strategy for finding the characteristics of a big group (the population) by selecting a small group (the sample). Both simple random sampling and purposive sampling were applied in this study. The respondents to the questionnaire were chosen using a simple random sample.

The Simple random sampling of this research was as follows:

- 106 Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers from 158 primary schools were selected randomly in the Lejweleputswa district.
- Ten Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers who were not part of the respondents to the questionnaire were purposefully selected.
- Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers were interviewed to explain and clarify how Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers enhance quality teaching and learning through formal assessment and challenges they encounter in the implementation of assessment in primary schools, and the strategies they applied to improve the quality of teaching and learning through formal assessment.

Frankel et al. (2015) emphasises that is important to note that in a basic random sample, each participant of the population has an equivalent and independent possibility of being chosen. Maree (2020) asserts that a sample's members are selected to represent a phenomenon, group, occurrence, place, or type in respect to a key criterion.

Aurini et al. (2016) point out that purposeful sampling can be used improve the credibility of research methodologies. Furthermore, Frankel et al. (2015) state that

with purposive sampling, researchers do not merely study anyone who is available, but rather use their judgment to select a sample that they feel, based on prior information, is representative of the population. Similarly, Johnson and Christensen (2017) mention that in purposive sampling, the researcher determines the features of a population of interest and then searches for persons who share those traits. Purposive sampling also necessitates a variety of strategic decisions about where, how, and with whom researchers conduct research (Aurini et al., 2016). My decision was because each teacher has a unique teaching and learning culture, and I wanted to know how much the use of various assessment tasks influences teachers' classroom. In purposive sampling the researcher selects cases that are representative or typical based on the researcher's experience and judgment.

To further explain the conclusions of the simple random sampling, purposive sampling) was used as follows:

Purposive sampling was used in the qualitative phase, and 10 participants were purposefully chosen by the researcher from local schools based on their teaching experience, educational background, and grade they teach to obtain detailed information. The value of employing purposive sampling in qualitative research is to choose participants who will best help the researcher in comprehending the issue and providing a solution to the research questions. Consequently, to obtain detailed and up-to-date information on practical practices that improve the quality of teaching and learning through grade 6 assessment, and to examine the factors that may contribute to the non-applicability of such practices.

I am comfortable with this framework, and I chose primary schools since I wanted to include teachers and schools that were enthusiastic and competent to engage in the research study, I chose a purposive sampling method. A criterion for selecting respondents was accessibility; simply put, I wanted to engage with teachers who were more accessible rather than those who were less accessible.

The paragraph below outlines how data was collected in this study.

3.6 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE

Mkandawire (2019) asserts that it is hard to think about research beyond assuming the presence of data collection approaches and the data that results from them. The term "data collection" refers to the process through which researchers get data from the empirical field (Bryman, 2016). Additionally, Johnson and Christensen (2017) claim that a method of data collection is a way for physically gathering data to be analysed. To collect data for this study, I used questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. The next paragraph delves deeper into the execution of these two research tools.

3.6.1 Data collection instrument for quantitative research design

Mkandawire (2019) suggests that quantitative data collection methods are those strategies primarily from the positivism paradigm that highlight non-aligned estimations more often and data in amounts, and data analysis using descriptive and inferential figures. Setting the limits for the study through selection and conscription, gathering statistics through unstructured or semi-structured interviews, records, and visuals, and setting up the procedure for recording information are all steps within the information collection strategies (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

A questionnaire as a quantitative data collection instrument is discussed in the next paragraph.

3.6.1.1 Questionnaire

Questionnaires make it possible to collect data from many people at once (Privitera & Ahlgrim-Delzell, 2019). Kumar (2019) mentions that a questionnaire may be composed list of questions, the replies to which are documented by replier. Similarly, Privitera and Ahlgrim-Delzell (2019) describe a questionnaire as a sequence of questions or assertions, referred to as items in print form or an interview, used to measure respondents' responses. Furthermore, Kumar (2019) further asserts that a questionnaire is highly useful because it necessitates the same questions being asked of all respondents to make precise judgments. In this study, respondents completed a structured questionnaire in which they were required to select between fixed

responses and record their responses themselves. This is in contrast with interviews in which the interviewer asks questions, explains them if required, and records the responses on an interview schedule. The items on the questionnaire were designed in such a way that respondents had to pick from a list of alternatives that elicited information on how to enhance teaching and learning quality through assessment. It also drew out the difficulties that Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers have in learning and teaching.

The following paragraphs outline how the questionnaire was designed.

3.6.1.2 Format of the Questionnaire

Leedy and Ormrod (2021) articulate that the questionnaire begins with an overview to explain the study. The questionnaire's main purpose is to elicit and comprehend participants' opinions on factors linked to the study's objectives (Johnson & Christensen, 2017). Maree and Pietersen (2020) also advocate that while designing a questionnaire, the researcher must observe the following factors:

- *The introduction of a questionnaire*
- *The sequence of the questions*
- *Questions should be phrased in a certain way.*
- *Replying to groups (p. 200).*

Kumar (2019) mentions that a questionnaire's form should be designed in such a way that it is uncomplicated and gratifying to the eyes, and the instructions must be straightforward to follow. When designing the questionnaire, I kept this in mind to ensure that it was a user-friendly instrument for eliciting the information needed for the study. The questionnaire was designed in an easy-to-read format to make answering all the questions as simple as possible. The questionnaire's form and spacing were meticulously planned to avoid items seeming crowded (Mill & Gay, 2016). The items for the questionnaire were taken from Chapter 2's content. Because they are simple to respond to, code, and analyse, closed questionnaire items were chosen. Double questions and hypothetical questions were avoided since the respondents could quickly grasp plain and straightforward questionnaire items.

Johnson and Christensen (2017) and Privetera and Alhgrim-Delzell (2019) assert that researchers should avoid mixing two or more concerns or attitudes in a single item. Bearing this in mind, I structured the questionnaire into sections, each of which covered a different construct to answer the research questions. Kumar (2019) emphasises that a questionnaire should be created in an interactive format. Consequently, the order, or sequence, of the questionnaire items should be considered (Johnson & Christensen 2017).

The questions were arranged in an orderly manner (See Appendix F). to ensure logical structure and not confuse the respondents. I kept questions on the same construct together; for instance, Section B was on planning for assessment; Section C was on the type of tasks given to learners during teaching and learning; Section D was on projects used to assess learners; Section E was on assessment feedback to the learners, while Section F was on challenges in Social Sciences. A seven-point semantic differential scale with one representing 'not at all' and seven representing 'always' was used to measure how respondents feel about a particular concept in the questionnaire (See below):

Not at all						Always
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Aurini et al. (2021) postulate that a semantic deferential scale is employed in a questionnaire to determine people's emotional reaction or attitude toward a specific topic of interest. Maree and Pietersen (2020) describe semantic differential as a scaling approach used to quantify the meaning given to diverse ideas by participants. The questionnaire was divided into four components, each of which was related to the study topic, research questions, and aims. Table 3.1 shows the arrangement of the items in each segment of the questionnaire.

Table 3.1: Items per sections in a questionnaire

Section	Description	Items	Question number
A	Biographical data	7 closed items	A1- A8
B	Planning for assessment	10 Closed items	B1- B10
C	Tasks	29 closed items	C1- C29
D	Projects	15 closed items	D1- D15
E	Assessment feedback to the learners,	5 closed items	E1- E5
F	Challenges in Social Sciences.	11 closed items	F1- F11

The questionnaire consisted of 77 items, assembled into six key sections, as each addressed the investigated study questions and objectives. Questionnaire items aimed to elicit information on teachers' planning for assessment, implementation of assessment tasks, assessment feedback to learners, and challenges experienced. Creswell and Creswell (2018) argue that research instruments should be piloted to discover biases, modify questions, and alter research processes to reflect actual conditions. Regarding the questionnaire, piloting was conducted which was necessary to refine the questions and adapt the distribution and collection procedures. A pilot study was undertaken using ten Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers in primary schools in the Lejweleputswa district, who were also excluded from the distribution sample, before fieldwork was conducted.

The questionnaire was reviewed based on responses received from the pilot study participants. Comments from participants in the pilot study were minimal and there were no major changes needed on the questionnaire. A limited number of teachers had a challenge explicating some question(s), for example A6 in Section A. Since some of the teachers' experiences challenges in responding to this item, the wording of this question was changed to improve the clarity. The respondents requested to speak with the researcher personally for clarity in some questions and to explain what the question meant. I employed measures that were always valid and reliable, and the questionnaire was demonstrated to be reliable. This is in accordance with Leedy and Ormrod (2021) and Mertler (2020) who believe that the researcher's instrument must measure exactly what the researcher believes it is measuring (validity). Secondly, the researcher's instrument must be accurate at all times and in places (reliability). The

reliability of the questionnaire was high because Cronbach's alpha coefficient indicated that the internal consistency reliability was 0.99.

The final questionnaire was emailed or delivered to the selected primary schools. The following documents were emailed or delivered to the schools:

- Letter to the principals requesting authorization to conduct research at their primary schools (Appendix D).
- Approval letter from the Free State Department of Education allowing the researcher to research the selected primary schools in the Lejweleputswa district (Appendix C).
- Covering letter with the consent form which must be signed by intermediate phase Social Sciences teachers explaining the purpose of the study and assuring confidentiality and ethical considerations (Appendix E).
- The questionnaire with structured questions (Appendix F).

I emailed all the documents mentioned above to the principals and delivered some to primary schools without online services. I also contacted principals telephonically to discuss the research and explain its aim and objectives. The principals were requested to email or hand the questionnaires to the Intermediate Phase Social Sciences teachers. I took into consideration the period in which the data were collected, as advised by McMillan and Schumacher (2014). Most of the research was carried out in the second and third terms because this was when teachers appeared to be coping with a variety of issues such as COVID-19 pandemic which has resulted in many changes being implemented in the school context affecting teaching, learning and assessment practices. Byrnard and Byrnard (2014) highlight that is critical to stress the importance of providing respondents with uniform instructions on how to complete the questionnaire and a clear explanation of what is expected of them. The arrangements were made with Intermediate Phase Social Sciences teachers on when to email the completed questionnaires back to the researcher and when the researcher could collect the completed questionnaires from some primary schools. Questionnaires were issued to 150 Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers in primary schools in the Lejweleputswa district and 106 questionnaires were returned.

Therefore, the returned rate was 70.66%. I then identified potential schools for interviews and principals were notified about this as the questionnaires were collected.

Semi-structured interviews are discussed in the next paragraph as this was the second tool for collecting data.

3.6.2 Data collection instrument for qualitative research design

The post-positivism research paradigm emphasises subjective kinds of data, which are mostly used in qualitative data gathering methods. (Mkandawire, 2019). Kumar (2019) claims that qualitative data collecting tools are characterised by flexibility in terms of study organisation and order. Similarly, Privitera and Ahlgrim-Delzell (2019) argue that qualitative research data can be obtained via tools such as tests, questionnaires, observations, interviews, focus groups, or data collected by others. In this study, semi-structured interviews were used therefore they are described below.

3.6.2.1 Interviews

Interviews are the most common qualitative information gathering tools, and they are a wonderful way to get individualised data (Kumar, 2019; Mkandawire, 2019). Kumar (2019) explains that an interview is a spoken exchange in which an interviewer endeavors to obtain facts, beliefs, or ideas from another person. It is usually conducted face-to-face however it may also be conducted over the phone. Maietta and Hamilton (2018) argue that interview questions should be welcoming (familiar, not opaque, or multivalent), accessible (affecting but not obtrusive), and unrealisable (useful in meeting project goals and answering research questions).

The researcher performed detailed, face-to-face, semi-structured interviews for this study, which permitted the researcher, respondents, and interviewers to clarify questions and answers to confirm correct replies and, as a result, a real portrayal of the respondents' viewpoints. Semi-structured interview is a qualitative form of data gathering that allows the interviewer to follow-up different angles of an issue by probing and eliciting dialogue compared to using a present question or an interview guide (Brinkmann, 2018).

To help limit biases, I was non-judgemental about the responses made by the participants. To guarantee that vital material was not missed, interviews were also phone-recorded with the participants' full knowledge and agreement. All participants were given open-ended questions by the researcher so that they could freely express their feelings. The participants were given the freedom to come up with their own responses to these questions. The face-to-face interview was significant to me since it gave me useful information and allowed respondents to describe personal details in detail. I asked precise questions to encourage content that is substantial and massive throughout the interviews, I attained increased control over the nature of information I obtained. Semi-structured interviews permitted me to relate directly with the participants and to take the conversation to any issue of interest that arose. I also asked follow-up questions to delve deeper into broad viewpoints or thoughts. Semi-structured interviews were selected by the researcher since they are made up of open-ended questions that permit respondents to answer in their own unique way.

Semi-structured interviews are directed dialogues in which broad questions about a current topic are asked in a casual way (Awases, 2015). I used an interview guide that included questions to ask during the interview as well as instructions for what to say at the start and end. The interviews were conducted to learn how teachers apply various assessment tasks, as well as the problems they face in doing so, and how these challenges affect successful teaching and learning. The results and conclusions of this study were totally based on information provided by the participants during interviews. As a result, it was critical to ensure that the interview process became efficient and dependable. For the need to respond to the main research question: How quality teaching and learning can be improved through formal.

The following section discusses population and sampling for this study.

3.7 DATA ANALYSIS

The collected data were analysed in two separate ways, as the research had quantitative and qualitative data. Statistical techniques were used to analyse questionnaire data and thematic analysis was undertaken to analyse interview data. Flick (2018) posits that interpretation is a fundamental qualitative activity for grasping

or interpreting what is in the data Mann (2013) affirms that researchers begin by preparing data for analysis, then they conduct statistical (or thematic) analysis, and then report and analyse the results (Guetterman, 2019).

3.7.1 Questionnaire data analysis techniques

The descriptive statistics and inferential statistics I used to analyse questionnaire data will now be discussed.

3.7.1.1 Descriptive statistics

Privitera and Ahlgrim-Delzell (2019) mention that a set of scores is summarised, organised, and made sense of using descriptive statistics, which are often displayed graphically, in tables, or as summary statistics. Kaur et al. (2018) affirm that descriptive statistics is both the discipline of quantitatively summarising the key characteristics of a set of data, or the quantitative description itself. Additionally, Parampreet et al. (2018) argue that the connection among variables in a sample or population is described using descriptive statistics, which are used to summarise data in an ordered manner. Subanji et al. (2021) suggest that descriptive statistics contain measures of dominant propensity and distribution, whereas inferential statistics comprise assumption testing, which can be used to simplify samples and draw inferences about populace features. The mean (M) and median (MD) were used as measures of central tendency in this investigation. The data dispersion was measured using the standard deviation (SD).

3.7.1.2 Inferential statistics

Guetterman (2019) affirms that while descriptive statistics characterise the properties of a data collection, inferential statistics assist researchers in drawing inferences and making predictions based on data. Hair et al. (2018) highlight that inferential statistics are a large group of approaches that go beyond summarising a data set. Creswell and Guetterman (2019) maintain that inferential statistics can assist researchers derive inferences from a sample to a population. To compare the difference between two

population groups or three population groups, I used independent-samples t-test and analysis of variance (ANOVA) statistical techniques.

3.7.2 Interview data analysis techniques

I went back over the raw transcripts, and I read over the notes numerous times to get a general idea of what each teacher's comments were like, with the goal of understanding the components of each individual response. I looked for patterns in each response and aggregated, categorised, prearranged, and organised the data to better comprehend each teacher's evaluation issues. After that, I wrote a segment on each teacher's answers. I scrutinised the resulting data to create a detailed and descriptive account of the specific practices that my research participants were prepared to disclose. These descriptions were inscribed to provide a descriptive and illuminating explanation of teachers' evaluation issues. Inscription of the responses became my analysis as I pieced together the words of the teachers in a descriptive fashion. I wrote because I was curious about something. I wrote to get knowledge of something I did not know previously. I embarked on comprehending specific responses and portraying them in a way that anyone could relate to, regardless of their circumstances. I wrote the responses of the participants after that.

Before categorising these four sub-interview questions into categories, I listened to and understood each interview and grouped comparable themes into notes. Then I whittled down the categories and found their interrelationships, assembled the categories for preliminary analysis, and recoded other data needed for the analyses. Interviews were executed in settings such as the staffroom, classroom, and offices after reading through each of the qualitative data. Contextual sound and disturbances may perhaps jeopardise the complexity and excellence of the interviews thus, venues were planned to guarantee they were free of these. Nobody entered without an appointment. Therefore, it was considered a pleasant setting. Teachers were interviewed during their leisure time during the school day. Transcriptions and audio recordings of focus individual interviews also gave rich and detailed details.

The final section of this chapter explains how I kept the research's design and data collection processes trustworthy and genuine.

3.8 REALIABILITY AND VALIDITY OF THE RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

Unwavering quality and legitimacy are basic issues when inquiring about research. (Babbie, 2021). Kumar (2019) mentions that reliability is a degree of a research instrument's correctness, constancy, and replicability. Validity refers to the accuracy of inferences, interpretations, and actions involving data analyses (Frankel et al., 2015). Additionally, Johnson and Christensen (2017) affirm that reliability involves consistency and stability in developing the instrument and using it in data collection. Establishing reliability contributes to the validity of the research (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Ambiguous and unclear questions, variation in instrument administration, misinterpretation, and fatigue amongst participants affect reliability (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

The reliability of the questionnaire employed in this study is discussed in the following paragraph.

3.8.1 Reliability and validity of the questionnaire

Participants' scores from the used instrument are examined for consistency along with their reliability and precision in the questionnaire. A measure's reliability can be determined by looking at whether the results are the same under the same circumstances. Additionally, Kumar (2019) emphasises that the outlook on reliability should be the reliability of an instrument and unreliability of its results.

Privitera and Ahlgrim-Delzell (2019) have acknowledged numerous divergent forms of reliability, which are:

- *try out-retest consistency,*
- *comparable form reliability,*
- *split-half or split-halves consistency and*
- *internal reliability* (p.107).

Internal reliability was employed in this study because when numbers of items are measured, there should be a high degree of similarity. Therefore, the reliability of the study was 0.97, as shown in Table 3.2 below:

Table 3.2: Reliability of the questionnaire

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
0,973	0,975	70

Analysis of data in Table 3.2 indicates high degree of reliability. As outlined by Maree and Pietersen (2020) a Cronbach's alpha coefficient value of .90 is acceptable and shows high scale reliability. The reliability of the questionnaire was 0.97, which suggested high internal consistency reliability.

The validity of the questionnaire is discussed in the next paragraph.

The questionnaire was initially put to the test to see if it was valid and reliable in terms of following the instructions for gauging what it was supposed to investigate. Kumar (2019) emphasises that an instrument's validity refers to its capacity to measure what it was meant to assess. Additionally, Maree and Pietersen (2020) mention that criterion validity investigates the link between scores obtained on a construct measure and some criteria, result, or indication of the construct. Privitera and Alhgrim-Delzell (2019) outline the following categories of criteria validity:

- *Extrapolative validity*
- *Simultaneous validity*
- *Convergent validity and*
- *Discriminant validity* (p.111).

Therefore, the questionnaire for this study is valid as it measured how Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers implement assessment to improve quality teaching and learning. All questionnaire items from B1 to F11 were derived from the literature review chapter. Majid et al. (2017) assert that a pilot study is required in any research to confirm that

the instruments are valid. As discussed in sections 1.14.4 and 3.6.1.1 a pilot study of the questionnaire confirmed face and content validity and the respondents understood the questions and that there were no issues with language. In the pilot study ten Intermediate Phase Social Sciences teachers from primary schools in Lejweleputswa completed the questionnaire. They were asked to remark on the questions, structure of the questionnaire, and precisely to rectify any inadequacies in time before the questionnaire was administered to the actual respondents. This sought to reduce biases. The questionnaire was accepted as it was, and it was deemed valid.

The validity of the interview is discussed in the paragraph to follow.

3.8.2 Validity of the interview

Newton (2017) states that the validity of an interpretation is determined by the appropriateness of the technique used to create the evidence. One of the advantages of qualitative research is the strength to determine if the findings are correct from the researcher's perspective (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Additionally, validity also refers to the precision with which judgments, interpretations, and actions based on data analyses are made (Frankel et al, 2015).

At every level of the research, self-reflection was used. My expertise and experience as a Grade 6 Social Sciences teacher helped rather than impeded the study process, and I tried to remain impartial and unprejudiced while drafting the questions and conducting the interviews. I was able to avoid selective data notation, which would have resulted in bias, by recording the interviews. This also ensured that the replies were relevant to the research topic. Therefore, validity in qualitative research signifies the research's trustworthiness.

3.9 TRUSTWORTHINESS AND CREDIBILITY OF THE STUDY

In research, trustworthiness entails collecting and analysing accurate and correct data without prejudice or inaccuracy. (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Morse 2018) Trustworthiness, together with fairness and honesty, contribute to the rigour of a study.

The confirmability, credibility, dependability, and transferability of the research depicts its trustworthiness (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Morse, 2018).

The above criteria in this study were applied to augment the dependability of the research and are discussed in the following paragraphs.

3.9.1 Credibility

Hendricks (2017) indicates that the study findings for the setting studied are referred to as credibility. Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest that credibility refers to a researcher's capacity to account for the complexities that occur in a study and cope with difficult-to-explain trends. Furthermore, credibility is defined as the degree to which observed results reflect participants' reality in such a way that they agree with the research report (Privitera & Ahlgrim-Dezell, 2019).

To ensure trustworthiness, I used the following strategies to minimise bias:

- Multi-methods: Intermediate phase Social Sciences teachers were interviewed and issued with a questionnaire to gather different insights about the topic.
- Data: interviews were recorded and transcribed to text. An audiotape recorder was used during the interaction with the participants to ensure the accurate capturing of data.
- Direct narrations: quotations from the recorded data were transcribed to highlight the perspectives of the participants.
- Participant language: English was used as the medium of communication between the researcher and the participants.
- Low-inference descriptors: descriptions were verbatim and understood by the participants in the study.
- Member checking: topics were phrased and probed to obtain complete and unstated meanings to confirm the accuracy of the interview transcript.

Researchers can compare qualitative data to quantitative data and data gathering methodologies using mixed methods research (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The validity of this study was enhanced by various layers of information gathering and scrutiny (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The researcher was able to incorporate a variety of representative samples in this study using quantitative and qualitative data acquired

through questionnaires and interviews, maximising the variation of data collecting methods (Johnson & Christensen, 2017).

By conducting interviews alongside the questionnaire, I ensured validity. To examine the research findings' legitimacy and authenticity, I interviewed 10 grade 6 Social Sciences teachers and compared the interview data with the data from the questionnaires to confirm the correctness of the interview transcripts and whether they are connected. By checking the transcribed data from the interviews, the study's data became more credible. The duration of each interview was approximately 40 minutes. Furthermore, the data was also double-checked by the researcher to establish credibility.

Transferability is discussed in the next paragraph.

3.9.2 Transferability

Hendricks (2017) asserts that transferability refers to the extent to which a study's discoveries may be useful to other settings. Similarly, Privitera and Ahlgrim-Delzell (2019) state that transferability refers to how well the outcomes may be applied to other people or situations. Additionally, Lincoln and Guba (1985) claim that transferability, refers to the extent to which qualitative research findings may be used in a variety of scenarios or applied to different respondents. To improve transferability, I used the following strategies: I gathered sufficient information about the issue in the process of study and provided full descriptions of the study's background, methods, and results. Knowledgeable teachers were selected through purposeful sampling; hence Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers from Primary Schools in the Lejweleputswa District took part in the study, and participants were carefully chosen to fit the study's environment.

3.9.3 Dependability

Privitera and Ahlgrim-Delzell (2019) assert that dependability is the degree to which observed results would be identical if a study were conducted in the same circumstances. Similarly, Hendricks (2017) emphasises that dependability signifies

the extent to which research conclusions can be simulated with the same or similar individuals or circumstances. Lincoln and Guba (1985) describe dependability as participants' assessments of the study's findings, interpretations, and recommendations, all of which are supported by data gathered from study informants. I have described the data gathering techniques utilised as well as how the data analysis was carried out and analysed. The motivation was based on several decisions made during various phases of the study process. I recorded the analytical process to show how I made the judgements and interpretations and how I arrived at the conclusions. The data collection, analysis, and interpretation were all audited by the researcher's supervisor and the participants who did member checking.

3.9.4 Confirmability

Hendricks (2017), postulates that confirmability emphasis demonstrates that the data and clarifications of the findings are not fictitious but are clearly derived from the data. The level to which the findings of the investigation might be validated or verified by other researchers is referred to as confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Additionally, the extent to which observed results reflect the actual environment of participant experiences rather than the researcher's opinions is referred to as confirmability (Privitera & Ahlgrim-DeLzell, 2019). I implemented important components of the audit trail throughout this study. Keeping raw data records and triangulating data gathering methods are two of these factors. Throughout the study, I preserved electronic (phone) recordings. These records helped in the cross-checking the correctness of data and the production of the study's final report.

3.10 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

I ensured that the following ethical guidelines were observed during the research process:

- First, the Title Registration Committee (TRC) approved the research proposal and second, the Faculty Research and Innovation Committee (FRIC) of the Faculty of Humanities approved the research proposal with RESOLUTION: FRIC 19/05/11 (Appendix 1).

- FRIC granted ethical clearance on 19 January 2021 (Appendix 2).
- The Free State Department of Education granted permission to the researcher to conduct research at selected primary schools in the Lejweleputswa district (Appendix 3).
- The researcher requested permission from the principals whose schools were selected to conduct research and informed them about the study and its purpose (Appendix 4).
- The researcher ensured that the consent forms were distributed to all participants and highlighted that the study was autonomous, and that there would be no penalty for refusal to partake and their privacy and dignity were guaranteed (Appendix 5).
- The researcher secured all participants from physical or mental inconvenience, trouble, harm, threat, or deprivation.
- The researcher assured all participants that the information obtained from them would be treated confidentially, in keeping with the principle of not committing harm.

3.11 LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

Limitations of any study are possible flaws that are frequently beyond the researcher's control and impose restrictions (Theofanidis and Fountouki, 2018). These can be arithmetical model limits, financing limitations, or other variables.

3.11.1 Limitation related to participants characteristics

This research was limited to Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers in the Lejweleputswa district. The results of this research cannot be universal to a larger population owing to a small sample because of COVID-19 restrictions placed on the research by the Free State Department of Education.

3.11.2 Limitations related to contextual characteristics

School cultures are complicated, not static, and ever-changing (Hargreaves et al., 2014) The first fundamental feature of the context of this study is that it focused on several primary schools in the Lejweleputswa area, each with its own set of working conditions. Even though primary schools in the Lejweleputswa area are divided into quintiles, their socioeconomic position and resource availability varies. Consequently, the results cannot be generalised because the contextual elements at each school differed.

3.11.3 Limitations related to data collection tools

The administration of distributing the questionnaires was a limitation because some school principals did not allow visits due to COVID-19 restrictions. Kumar (2019) highlights that the key complication with emailing a questionnaire is the result of short replies and limited reply rate so that the response has inadequate relevance to the population studied.

3.11.4 Limitation related to the methodology

Merriam and Tisdell (2016) highlight that qualitative research may be used to investigate issues or phenomena in greater depth. Denzin and Lincoln (2018a) postulate that qualitative research attempts to understand study challenges through participant-focused data collecting. With its subjectivity and dependence on soft facts, qualitative research is also broad and general (Mackey & Gass, 2016) As a result, the study's findings cannot be generalised due to differing perspectives.

3.12 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter has discussed how empirical research was conducted following pragmatist paradigm procedures. The study was conducted using a concurrent triangulation research design, in which quantitative and qualitative data were gathered simultaneously. This chapter has outlined the research approach, which included the research participants, data gathering strategies, data collection processes, research

procedures, and data analysis. In this chapter, questionnaires and semi-structured interviews are outlined as they were used to gather data on the implementation of assessments in Social Sciences in Intermediate Phase teaching and learning. Methodological norms such as credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability were also examined in depth to show how make the research aimed to be legitimate and dependable. The next chapter presents and analyses the quantitative and qualitative data.

CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a description and discussion of the analysis of the data from this study. The purpose of this chapter is to systematically present the findings from the interviews in the schools as well as from the questionnaires. The research question: How do teachers enhance quality of teaching and learning through formal assessment in the Intermediate Phase in Social Sciences? was addressed by looking at data collected from teachers, those involved in the day-to-day teaching and assessment of Social Sciences. The analysis of the quantitative data and qualitative data happened concurrently. The analysis of quantitative data is presented in two sections. The first section presents the descriptive statistics, and second section provides the inferential statistics.

Qualitative data which was collected using semi-structured interviews with ten Social Sciences teachers in the Intermediate Phase, was recorded using a cellular phone and then transcribed and analysed. The data aggregated from the interviews was triangulated with data from the analysis of the questionnaire. The interview questions were arranged from the literature and research questions. Four themes emerged from the interview data. Theme (1) was on how teachers design various assessments. These questions sought to understand how teachers design various assessments whether they consider Bloom's taxonomy in designing assessments. Theme (2) was on the challenges teachers in the Intermediate Phase experience when implementing various tasks in Social Sciences teaching and learning. This theme raised the challenges that delay effective implementation of assessments. Theme (3) was on the cause of challenges when implementing various assessments tasks in Social Sciences. This theme raised the challenges that obstruct effective implementation of assessments. Theme 4 was on how teachers solve the problems they experience when implementing various assessment tasks in Grade 6 Social Sciences teaching and learning. This theme aimed to enquire about the possible strategies teachers use to solve the challenges they encounter when implementing various assessment tasks.

4.2 PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE DATA

In this section, quantitative data is presented and analysed. Descriptive statistics are presented first, followed by the inferential statistics.

4.2.1 Presentation and analysis of descriptive data

The following section will present the analysis of the data obtained from the questionnaire. The descriptive statistics in this study will address the following research question: How do teachers enhance quality of teaching and learning through formal assessment in the intermediate phase in Social Sciences? The following table presents the biographical data of the respondents.

4.2.1.2 Biographical details of the respondents and participants

Table 4.1: Biographical details of the respondents **N=106**

Personal Items		% Respondents According to Category	% Total
A1. Gender	Male	46 (43%)	100
	Female	60 (57%)	
A2. Age			100
	Mean	41 years old	
	Minimum	20 years old	
A3. Teaching experience	Maximum	67 years old	
	Mean	13 years old	
	Minimum	0-year-old	
A4. Professional teaching qualification in the intermediate phase	Yes	64 (60.4%)	100
	No	42 (40%)	
A5. Major in Social Sciences in your teacher training	Yes	49 (46.2%)	100
	No	57 (53.8%)	

A6. Average number of learners	Mean	45	
	Minimum	14	
	Maximum	110	
A7. Highest grade taught Social Sciences in intermediate phase	Grade 4	20 (18,9%)	100
	Grade 5	34 (32.1%)	
	Grade 6	52 (49%)	
A8. School's quintile	Quintile 1	41 (38.7%)	100
	Quintile 2	20 (18.9%)	
	Quintile 3	38 (35.8%)	
	Quintile 4	5 (4.7%)	
	Quintile 5	2 (1.9%)	

Analysis of data shown in Table 4.1 indicates that the Intermediate Phase is dominated by female teachers (57%) with their male counterparts making up 43%. This revelation can be associated with the fact that the number of female teachers comparable to male teachers is high at primary schools. This can be associated with the perception that females tend to have more of a liking for the young children and have temperament suited to working with them. Intermediate Phase learners are in the concrete operational stage and they need patience and care. Children and childcare are perceived as women's work and thus teaching younger learners. Further analysis of data indicates that 18.87% of teachers in the Intermediate Phase are between 20 and 35 years of age, and 81.13% are between 36 and 67 years of age. Another statistic indicates that the oldest teacher in this study is 67 years old; while the youngest is 20 years old and their average age is 41 years of age. The teacher who is 67 might be in a School Governing Body post. There is a huge difference in terms of age group which reveals the fact that few young teachers work at primary schools and is not a good indication of staff allocation. Further analysis of data reveals that the average experience of teachers is 13 years, whereas the highest is 35 years and the lowest is zero (0). This indication can have both negative and positive impact on teaching and learning. The finding may have a positive impact in a sense that experienced teachers will be able to manage teaching and learning effectively and be of assistance to the teachers who are less experienced like the ones who have (0%) teaching experience. Consequently, the teachers who have no teaching experience may impact on the outcomes of effective teaching and learning. Moreover, the data indicates that the average number of learners is 45, the highest is 110, and the lowest is 14. The findings

reveal that the teacher ratio of 1:40 continues to be the problem that needs to be addressed in the education context to make sure that teaching and learning takes place efficiently. Overcrowded classes hinder the process of achieving quality teaching, learning and assessment in the Intermediate Phase Social Sciences and other classrooms. Further analysis of data indicates that 60% of the participants have professional teaching qualifications in the Intermediate Phase whilst 40% of teachers in this study lack professional qualifications. This indication may have a positive impact on the implementation of quality teaching and learning in the Intermediate Phase. Many teachers who have professional qualifications are likely to be more prepared for the work realities and have opportunities to apply their knowledge to the learners they teach. Additionally, data shown in this table indicates that 46.2% of the teachers in this study majored in Social Sciences in their teacher training whereas 53.8% did not. There is a minor difference in terms of subject major in their teacher training. This might have a positive significance in improving quality teaching and learning and implementation of assessments in the Intermediate Phase Social Sciences. Teachers' effectiveness is enhanced by the by the depth and breadth of teacher-knowledge. Majoring in, and knowing the subject, affects how teachers interpret the content.

Table 4.2: Biographical details of the participants N= 10

Personal items		%Participants according to Category	% Total
A1. Gender	Male	6 (60%)	100
	Female	4 (40%)	
A2. Age	29 - 30	3 (30%)	100
	40 - 44	3 (30%)	
	50 and above	4 (40%)	
	Mean	40 years old	
	Minimum	29 years old	
A3. Experience as a Social Sciences teacher	Maximum	58 years old	100
	0 – 26 years	6 (60%)	
	27– 31 years	4 (40%)	
	Mean	5 years	
	Minimum	1year	
	Maximum	31 years	

Analysis of data shown in Table 4.2 indicates that 60% of the teachers who participated in interview process were male. Statistics reveal that 30% of the teachers

who participated in the study are between 29 to 30 years of age, 30% are between 40 to 44 years of age and 40% are 50 years old and above. Another statistic indicates that the oldest teacher interviewed was 58 at the time, while the youngest was 29 years old and the average age of the teachers interviewed, was 40. This can be associated with the fact that few young teachers teach Social Sciences in the Intermediate Phase. 60% of the participants have 0-26 years of experience as Social Sciences teachers whereas 40% have between 27-31 years of experience as Social Sciences teachers in the Intermediate Phase.

The average experience of teachers is 5 years, whereas the highest experience is 31 years and the lowest is 1 year. The finding is helpful because experienced teachers will be able to influence the effective implementation of assessments to enhance quality teaching and learning.

4.2.2 The implementation of formal assessments in the intermediate phase Social Sciences as a foundation of teaching and learning

The following table presents the teachers' planning for assessment

Table 4.3: Planning for assessment in Social Sciences N=106

	Questionnaire Items	Mean	Median	Standard deviation
B1	When planning for assessment I use carefully selected textbooks as a guide,	6.06	6.00	1.15
B2	I share good assessment tasks with teachers in other schools	4.70	5.00	2.02
B3	When designing my own task or activity, I clarify the purpose of the assessment (Why?)	5.81	6.00	1.28
B4	When designing my own task or activity, I decide on the task activity or activities (Form of assessment)	6.17	6.00	0.92

B5	When designing my own task or activity, I decide on the content, concepts and skills to be assessed (What?)	6.17	6.00	1.05
B6	When designing my own task or activity, I select a format for learner presentation (Clarify the method: How?)	5.98	6.00	1.05
B7	My formal assessments cater for a range of cognitive levels and abilities of learners	6.23	6.00	0.93
B8	Any of my formal assessment includes low, middle and high order activities or questions, with a weighting towards the cognitive level of the middle order.	6.39	7.00	0.86
B9	I submit formal assessment tasks for moderation for the purpose of quality assurance and maintaining appropriate standards.	6.63	7.00	0.64
B10	I use various forms of assessments like project, tasks and examination as the recommended nature of formal assessments according to the CAPS document.	6.64	7.00	0.71

Analysis of data shown in Table 4.3 reveals that the participants use various forms of assessments like projects, tasks and examinations as the recommended nature of formal assessments according to CAPS document ($M=6.64$; $MD=7.00$; $SD=0.71$). The statistics reveal that the data is skewed as the mean is lower than the median. However, this suggests that there is agreement amongst the respondents because standard deviation is closer to the mean. Another revelation is that participants submit formal assessment tasks for moderation for the purpose of quality assurance and maintaining standards ($M=6.63$; $MD=7.00$; $SD=0.64$.)

The statistics indicate that the data is negatively skewed again as the mean is lower than the median. However, there is agreement amongst the respondents because the standard deviation is very close to the mean. The next table presents an analysis of

the data on planning for assessments in Intermediate Phase Social Sciences teaching and learning.

However, it is important to note that teachers share good assessment tasks with teachers in other schools ($M=4.70$; $MD= 5.00$; $SD=2.02$). This implies that sharing of good assessment tasks amongst teachers at different schools is modest.

4.2.2.1 Interview responses

The findings disclosed that teachers understand and consider the importance of setting quality assessment tasks and apply Bloom's taxonomy levels as stipulated in the CAPS policy document. Furthermore, the findings revealed that teachers, before giving the task to learners, decide what type of assessment that they are intending to administer selecting from the considering that various types of assessments suggested in CAPS. Most of the responses indicated that teachers adhere to CAPS principles whenever they conduct Social Sciences assessments in terms of the directive from the department to balance the question paper. Other responses indicated that teachers accommodate all learners' cognitive levels when setting assessments. Some teachers view Bloom's taxonomy as a tool that helps all learners to acquire marks. Additionally, findings revealed that the monitoring of tasks takes place beforehand and informal tasks are given to learners to prepare them for formal tasks. I wanted to understand if teachers consider Bloom's taxonomy when designing various assessments in Social Sciences. Teacher 7 who seemed to be very knowledgeable about how assessment should be designed in Social Sciences had this to say:

First, I must decide about the type of assessment that I 'am intending to administer for instance we have got various types of assessments such as assignments, projects and examination. One must also use the CAPS document and the subject policy of the school. You cannot just sit down and decide to set a test without looking at those documents. each type of assessment should be designed according to its prescriptive (T 7, male teacher).

The above statement was supported by teacher 1 who said:

Yes, Mme I do consider Bloom's taxonomy and it is also part of the policy document when you set a formal assessment or any task you should consider

six Bloom's taxonomy as you know that our learners differ in their cognitive levels. Learners' personality differ, they are not all the same, it will be unfair if you focus only a certain cognitive level. The assessment that only focuses on one cognitive level will be unfair to learners who are good on other levels (T1, male).

Teacher 2. agrees with teacher 1 stating:

I do consider Bloom's taxonomy because of in it we have low order middle and high order questions. The reason I consider It, it makes the assessment to be fair and equal to learners because in terms of their understanding there are those who can master all questions there those who cannot master all questions It accommodates all learners in terms of acquiring marks in order for them to pass the assessment (T2, male).

Teachers understand the significance of moderation when designing various assessments and begin with informal assessments before introducing formal assessments. This was depicted in T2's response when asked about designing various assessments. He remarked:

I just want to add also the other step that is important the assessments need to be moderated by Departmental heads (DHs) following a guideline to make sure that the question paper is in the standard that is needed. The other thing that is important is that before we can assess learners formal, the informal assessment is important just to make learners know the style of question paper (T2, male).

Pursuing this point further, teacher 10 stated:

Absolutely as a teacher Bloom's taxonomy is like the bible of teaching u have to use all the steps of Bloom's taxonomy so that learners can see the different styles the have to know (T10 female).

4.2.2.2 Summary of the questionnaire and interview responses

This section presents an analysis and interpretation of how participants understand curriculum as a concept and as a process. Their views on how the process of curriculum implementation are also presented. Both analyses of data in Table 4.2 and the interview responses have revealed that the participants in this study are conversant with designing various assessments and align themselves with the CAPS document when designing assessments. They are also aware that it is not fair to learners not to consider Bloom's taxonomy when designing various assessments, and formal tasks should be moderated. Data from both research instruments reveal that

designing formal assessments that cater for a range of cognitive levels and abilities of learners need to be considered. The findings confirm that the participants continually use CAPS when designing various assessment tasks.

Table 4.4: Formal assessment tasks

N=106

Questionnaire Items		Mean	Median	Standard deviation
C1	Writing short answers to questions (these may be single words, short phrases or sentences).	6.27	7.00	0.97
C2	Writing paragraphs and, from grade 7, sequencing these into passages of extended writing.	5.79	6.00	1.43
C3	Researching questions or topics.	5.79	6.00	1.54
C4	Writing up a small piece of research.	5.09	5.00	1.62
C5	Reading and summarizing.	5.47	6.00	1.49
C6	Listening and note-taking.	5.38	6.00	1.54
C7	Recording observations.	5.23	5.00	1.60
C8	Answering questions (short and/or longer responses).	5.99	6.00	1.09
C9	Asking questions (questions reveal insight).	6.09	6.00	1.11
C10	Completing worksheets.	5.94	6.00	1.33
C11	Drawing and labelling.	5.89	6.00	1.21
C12	Matching, sorting, listing, describing and comparing texts, graphs, maps, photographs, pictures.	6.12	6.00	1.09
C13	Making connections between causes and effects.	5.70	6.00	1.30
C14	Identifying similarities and differences.	5.82	6.00	1.14
C15	Selecting and organising information.	5.72	6.00	1.18
C16	Analysing and synthesising information.	5.58	6.00	1.24
C17	Reading, completing and/ or drawing maps.	5.87	6.00	1.17
C18	Working with data (graphs and tables).	5.81	6.00	1.21
C19	Finding and/or working with sources.	5.76	6.00	1.26

C20	Cross-referencing and comparing information.	5.52	600	1.30
C21	Giving an explanation (orally, written or visually).	5.75	6.00	1.30
C22	Identifying and discussing issues.	5.58	6.00	1.38
C23	Expressing and justifying a view.	5.39	6.00	1.36
C24	Evaluating ideas and actions.	5.34	6.00	1.45
C25	Detecting bias.	5.08	5.00	1.47
C26	Doing a presentation (orally, written or visually).	5.15	500	1.58
C27	Making a model, poster or chart.	5.10	5.00	1.61
C28	Interpreting photographs and writing captions.	5.40	6.00	1.33
C29	Participating in a structured, prepared discussion, debate or role play.	5.14	5.00	1.53

Analysis of data shown in Table 4.4 disclosed that these give learners formal tasks that include writing short answers to questions these may be single words, short phrases or sentences ($M=6.27$; $MD=7.00$; $SD=0.97$). The statistics stipulate that the data is negatively skewed as the mean is lower than the median. However, this implies that there is agreement among the respondents because the standard deviation is closer to the mean. Another revelation is that the participating teachers give learners formal tasks that include matching, sorting, listing, describing, and comparing texts, graphs, maps, photographs ($M=6.12$; $MD=6.00$; $SD=1.09$). Statistics indicate that the data is positively skewed because the mean is higher than the median.

Analysis of data further indicated that these teachers provide learners with formal assessment tasks that involve writing up small piece of research ($M=5.09$; $MD=5.00$; $SD=1,62$). The data is positively skewed because the mean is higher than the median. Furthermore, the standard deviation is far from the mean, confirming the dissimilarity among respondents. These teachers provide learners with formal assessment tasks which enable then to detect bias ($M=5.08$; $MD=5.00$; $SD=1.47$). However, data for this item is positively skewed as the mean is higher than the median. Another notable, revelation is that there is disagreement among respondents in detecting bias the standard deviation is far from the mean, showing that there is disagreement amongst respondents.

4.2.2.3 Interview responses

Some responses indicated that the interviewees, before setting a question paper, first decide the type of assessment they are intending to administer. Findings revealed that they have a clear understanding of activities that should be included on the formal assessment tasks given to the learners. Questionnaire and interview responses disclosed that paragraph writing, brainstorming and problem-solving activities are also encouraged for example one of the teachers indicated that learners sometimes are given a certain topic for investigation which is then discussed in class with other learners. Most of the responses specified that once participants start having different levels of questions in their formal tasks they get to see where learners are struggling and where they need to push learners to attain certain goals or where they want them to be. Furthermore, responses revealed that teachers apply different assessments not only on paper but do things such as questionnaires or speaking just to see where they are with the learners. Teacher 5 stated:

We normally when we start or before we start our question paper, we compile few questions that we think as teachers must be in the question paper. Then we will look and see the order of the levels: low, middle and high because we must accommodate all learners in the class we will seat and see the first question for example will be column A and B match only and then we will go to true or false then we go to more difficult questions where the learners must feel missing words, write a paragraph or read a scenario so we want to accommodate low level, middle and high level (T 5, female).

Teacher 10 shared the same sentiment when she added:

When we do informal assessment, I let them to investigate the whole topic so that they must do a summary, for example page 80 to 100 they have to go and read. I read with them in class a few pages they can choose how they want to summarise I teach them to use a mind map and they do a paragraph because in the curriculum from 4 to 7 they are implementing a paragraph writing. I teach them mind map first get your ideas and start paragraph writing (T 10, female).

Teacher 7 said:

Cognitive levels should appear on the question paper as follows it must have low order questions that comprise knowledge, take 50% of the paper followed by middle order questions which are mainly based on understanding and

application of knowledge they mistake 35% and then high order questions that need learners to evaluate, analyse, synthesise the knowledge should only take up to 15%. Lastly the percentages differ from one subject to another which why every time when you set a question paper you must have CAPS document with you because it is going guide you a great deal in terms of setting quality paper as required by the department (T 7, male).

4.2.2.4 Summary of the questionnaire and interview responses

Teachers in both the questionnaires and interview responses showed that they share similar opinions that the setting of question papers should include all cognitive levels. Furthermore, they share the same sentiments on ensuring standardised question papers to promote quality teaching and learning. Teachers indicated that they ask learners questions starting from known to the unknown. The findings indicated that teachers assess learners on oral and written work. Furthermore, learners are assessed on their abilities to respond to both high-order and low-order questions. This implies that the questions set by teachers challenge learners' cognitive thinking.

Table 4.5: Projects

N=106

	Questionnaire Items	Mean	Median	Standard deviation
D1	I use projects to assess a variety of skills and competencies.	5.82	6.00	1.07
D2	I ensure the integration of various activities like planning, research, data analysis and reporting when setting projects.	5.92	6.00	1.08
D3	I ensure that learners can demonstrate their understanding of different Social Sciences concepts through projects and apply them in real-life situations.	5.93	6.00	1.15
D4	I set projects, which are appropriate to age of learners and not above learners' cognitive levels.	6.22	6.50	1.01
D5	I clearly indicate the assessment criteria on the project specification.	6.02	6.00	1.09

D6	I focus on the Social Sciences content involved and not on duplicated pictures and facts copied from reference material.	5.92	6.00	1.37
D7	The projects I give contain the collection and display of real data.	6.16	6.50	1.09
D8	I ensure that I teach skills like research and presentations before handing out projects for assessment.	5.70	6.00	1.39
D9	I allow my learners to be seek assistance when doing the initial projects at home, however, the final write-up is done in class, under my supervision.	6.11	6.00	1.09
D10	My project question(s) allow learners to inquire, as well as experiment.	5.61	6.00	1.28
D11	My project question(s) allow learners to draw deductions.	4.79	5.00	1.87
D12	I award marks for simplifying and drawing deductions.	4.63	5.00	1.61
D13	I award marks for each ability tested in the project including presentation skills	4.45	4.00	1.66
D14	I award marks for conveying project ideas with suitable clarifications.	4.98	5.00	1.57
D15	I assess projects with rubrics.	5.68	6.00	1.36

Analysis of data shown in Table 4.5 disclosed that teachers set projects, which are appropriate to the age of learners and not above their cognitive levels ($M=6.22$; $MD=6.50$; $SD=1.01$). The standard deviation is far from the mean, confirming disagreement amongst the respondents. The statistics stipulate that the data is negatively skewed as the mean is lower than the median. Another revelation is that teachers allow learners to seek assistance when doing the initial project at home, however, the final write-up is done in class, under teacher's supervision. ($M=6.16$; $MD=6.50$; $SD=1.09$). Statistics indicate that the data is negatively skewed because

the mean is lower than the median. The standard deviation is far from the mean, confirming that there is disagreement amongst the respondents.

Another revelation is that teachers modestly award marks for generalising and drawing conclusions ($M=4,63$; $MD=500$; $SD=1,61$). Data for this item is negatively skewed as the mean is less than the median. Moreover, teachers modestly ensure that they award marks for each skill tested in the project including presentation skills ($M=4.45$; $MD=400$; $SD=166$). This item data indicated the positive skewing of data due to the lower mean compared to the median. The standard deviation for both items is far from the mean confirming disagreements amongst the respondents for the items discussed.

4.2.2.5 Interview responses

Responses indicated that interviewees are familiar with projects and set projects, which are appropriate to the age of the learners. Findings disclosed that the projects given to learners are not above the learners' cognitive levels and they contain thought-provoking questions as they are done outside the controlled classroom situation. Responses showed that the participants try to ask learners higher-order questions because they are aware that they are going to be helped by knowledgeable people outside the classroom. However, some learners do not submit their projects because of lack of resources at home. Teacher 1 confirmed this by saying:

When we give them outside projects like projects most learners do not do the project (T1, male).

Teacher 7 remarked:

Projects must contain thought provoking questions as they are done outside the controlled classroom situation for that you must try to ask learners questions of higher order because they are going to be helped by outside people (T 7, male).

Teacher 1 had this to say:

Some assessments are practical assessments that learner take home like projects (T1, male).

Teacher 10 had this to say:

I try to do the research projects because it is important for learners to have the ability to learn on their own (T10, female).

4.2.2.6 Summary of the questionnaire and interview responses

Analysis of the data revealed that participants administer projects as required by the CAPS document. Even though they set projects which are appropriate to the age of the learners and not above learners' cognitive abilities, learners still struggle with answering project questions. The findings revealed that participants set projects to help learners learn on their own at home. Furthermore, they allow learners to seek assistance when doing the initial projects at home. Projects assist learners to learn independently and contain thought provoking questions.

Table 4.6: Assessment Feedback to the Learners

N=106

	Questionnaire Items	Mean	Median	Standard deviation
E1	I mark assessment tasks without delay.	5.55	6.00	1.54
E2	I give learners continuous, constructive feedback informally.	6.37	7.00	0.92
E3	I give learners continuous, constructive feedback formally.	6.30	7.00	0.90
E4	Feedback is accompanied by action plans on how learners will be supported.	6.02	6.00	1.14
E5	Feedback provided to learners encourages them to do better and builds their self-confidence.	5.94	6.00	1.24

Analysis of data shown in Table 4.6 revealed that teachers give learners continuous, constructive feedback informally ($M=6.37$; $MD=7.00$; $SD=0.92$). The statistics stipulate that the data is negatively skewed as the mean is lower than the median. However, this implies that there is agreement amongst the respondents because the standard deviation is closer to the mean. Moreover, teachers give learners continual, constructive feedback formally ($M=6.30$; $MD=7.00$; $SD=0.9$). Statistics indicate that

data is negatively skewed because the mean is lower than the median. Statistics reveal that the standard deviation is far from the mean. This implies that there is disagreement amongst the respondents because the standard deviation is far from the mean. Data in both items are negatively skewed because means are lower than the medians.

It is important to note that participants mark assessment tasks without delay ($M=5.55$; $MD=600$; $SD=1.54$); However, data for this item is negatively skewed since the mean is lower than the median. The standard deviation is far from the mean, confirming the dissimilarity amongst the respondents.

4.2.2.7 Interview responses

Some responses indicated that teachers believe that feedback provided to the learners encourages them to do better and builds their self-confidence. Other responses indicated that giving feedback to learners focuses on helping learners understand assessment of their learning and gives them an explanation of what they are doing correctly and incorrectly.

Teacher 2 mentioned:

I give learners feedback to assist learners and encourage learner's performance and after I have drafted the Error analysis, I meet with parents of the learners who did not perform. Mark the scripts in time and give them feedback on time help learners to improve their marks (T2, male).

Teacher 3 had this to say:

I sacrifice my time when I have free periods, I take learners to one of the classes give them activities when they come tomorrow, I check the activity we mark after marking the activity I give them corrections that is marking and giving the feedback (T3, female).

Teacher 7 concurred with Teacher 2 by saying:

After marking every term, I meet with parents of learners who have obtained level 1,2 and 3 I give them feedback on the results of their children so that they can assist them to o improve their results in the next term (T7, female).

Table 4.7: Challenges in social sciences assessments

N=106

	Questionnaire Items	Mean	Median	Standard deviation
F1	Formal assessments allow me to have adequate teaching time.	5.80	6.00	1.24
F2	My class sizes are suitable for formal assessment tasks.	4.91	6.00	2.09
F3	I can mark formal assessment tasks and give my learners individualised attention.	5.38	6.00	1.85
F4	I find it easy to pay attention to the learners' individual needs.	5.40	6.00	1.50
F5	I find it easy to provide quality feedback when implementing formal assessments.	5.45	6.00	1.53
F6	I have adequate knowledge and skills for the implementation of formal assessments.	5.72	6.00	1.29
F7	I underwent training for the implementation of formal assessments.	5.78	6.00	1.23
F8	I know exactly what formal assessment is.	5.35	6.00	1.75
F9	I know exactly how to implement formal assessments.	5.95	6.00	1.28
F10	I have Social Sciences content knowledge to notice and analyse learners' social thinking.	6.04	6.00	1.08
F11	I have adequate content knowledge on the implementation of formal assessments in Social Sciences.	5.72	6.00	1.25

Analysis of data shown in Table 4.7 reveals that class sizes are modestly suitable for formal assessment tasks ($M=4.91$; $MD=600$; $SD= 2.09$). Data are negatively skewed as the mean is lower than the median. There is also disagreement amongst the

respondents on the suitability of class sizes for formal assessments because the standard deviation is not close to the mean.

4.2.2.8 Interview responses

Findings revealed that teachers are challenged as they implement various assessments. This is demonstrated by the outcomes of the interviews as presented in the following paragraphs. Some responses highlighted that there are factors that cause challenges for teachers to implement various assessments successfully. These factors are learners not being able to summarise; learners struggling with paragraph writing; shortage of textbooks; learners struggling to answer long questions; learners not used to read; learners writing without understanding; illiterate parents; learners not studying; progressed learners; retained learners and, slow learners. Furthermore, setting standardised question papers is a challenge for some participants especially when, introducing some of the terms for example: arrange, design, define, decide, and conclude during formal assessments. Not used in informal assessment is also a challenge. Lack of adequate parental involvement in their children's schoolwork; language barriers; the COVID-19 pandemic; lack of teaching and learning resources; large class sizes; contextual factors; lack of subject knowledge; learner absenteeism; and lack of reading with understanding also present challenges. Most of the responses indicated that lack of parental involvement in the children's learning and teaching is a major challenge. Most of the teachers expressed that learner rotation due to the COVID-19 pandemic also affects assessment negatively. Additionally, the pandemic also provided an opportunity for teachers to reach all learners as they came in small groups. Teachers alluded to the fact that lack of teaching and learning resources affect learners' performance. Findings further revealed that teachers face the challenge of learners who are not able to express themselves well in English and as the Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT) is English, this makes it difficult for learners to understand assessment instructions and not being able to read with understanding. Most of responses indicated that teachers experience a high number of learner absenteeism with learners taking advantage of COVID-19 regulations. Further findings revealed that parents are unable to encourage learners to attend school regularly. Other findings indicated that external, contextual factors such as domestic violence affect learners' progress at school.

Teacher 10 commented:

Learners cannot do the summary and struggle with paragraph writing cannot understand things they are learning you have to introduce new concepts first (T10, female).

Teacher 2 had this to say:

First of all, there is not enough time due to Covid- 19. We are the school that is running weekly learners comes in groups in the process we not able to get all groups. Shortage of textbooks, absenteeism, the long questions give some learners problems (T2, male).

Similarly, this is what teacher 3 added to support the above statement:

Ever since the Covid-19 pandemic learners not waiting to write lot of absenteeism, learners do not want to do assignments. The challenge is you will get learners who do not want to do anything in class, our learners are not used to reading, even if you implement the assessment, it becomes difficult because when they write most of the learners fail tasks (T3, male).

Teacher 4 mentioned:

Most parents in my area are not educated the do not encourage learners to do work and make our work difficult, learners absent them we have high number of absenteeism, learners get low marks as they are not encouraged to learn, LoLT is the challenge (T4, female).

Teacher 5 said:

For me the most difficult thing is the implementation it is fine in class learners master it but when it come to the formal assessment learners fail. Learners are underperforming because they don't study (T5, female).

Teacher 6 remarked:

One of the challenges which I experienced is the language, it is one of the problems that is the most challenging thing amongst learner amongst learners you will have to explain some of the things. Progressed learners, retained learners because they must be accommodated, learners who are slow (T6, male).

Teacher 7 stated:

Setting standardised question paper is a challenge only to find out it contains more high questions than lower or middle questions some teachers just design assessment tasks for the sake of complying not following the CAPS document (T7, male).

Teacher 8 said:

The challenge that I can say the highest one when learners fail because sometimes, we introduce some of the terms for example arrange, design, define, decide, conclude during formal assessment not used in informal assessment. When learners do not answer at all for example when you say they must interpret they just write without understanding the question (T8, female).

Teacher 10 confirmed what Teacher 8 has said by stating:

Sometimes learners know the answer, but they don't understand when they do on their own. Use of high English words they don't understand for example when you say classify, they don't understand what to do (T10, female).

Teacher 9 said:

I am teaching Grade 6 so when these learners come to our classrooms, they have problem with English. They have a problem of reading without understanding, have problem with keeping time, problems with instructions they don't understand instructions, problem with expressing themselves during assessment (T9, female).

Teacher 10 shared the same sentiments by stating:

Big challenge is the language barrier not all words in English can be translated into a learner's own language. Learners reading without understanding (T10, female).

4.2.2.9 Summary of the questionnaire and interview responses

The interviewed teachers share the same challenges that affect the implementation of assessment to enhance quality teaching and learning. They believe that parents are accountable for the challenges they are experiencing in implementing various assessments. Also, teachers are not being fully supported by their circuit managers in trying to reduce the challenges that hinder the progress of promoting quality teaching and learning. There is also a lack of resources and parental involvement in the learners' education. The findings disclosed that teachers share the same challenges that affect the implementation of their assessment. Learners are not able to learn independently. Some teachers mentioned the importance of introducing new concepts to learners whilst others indicated that the use of new words confuses learners and results in them struggling to understand the instructions.

4.3 PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF INFERENCE STATISTICS DATA

Hair et al. (2018) assert that inferential statistics are another broad category of techniques that go beyond describing a data set. Guetterman (2019) points out that inferential statistics can help researchers draw conclusions from a sample to a population. Further reference is made that researchers can use inferential statistics to examine differences among groups and the relationships among variables. Ary et al. (2019) concur that researchers use what they observe in samples and what is known about sampling error to reach fallible but reasonable decisions about population. All the inferential statistics data which are presented and analysed in this section are found in (Appendix I). The following section presents data which leads to inferences about the difference in the application of assessments in teaching and learning Social Sciences (usually mean differences) amongst Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers who participated in this study.

4.3.1 Comparison of male and female Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers on formal assessment

The following table presents data on the comparison of male and female Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers on formal assessment.

Table 4.8: Comparison of male and female Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers on formal assessment (n = male 46, females 60)

Variables	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>CI</i>	<i>d</i>
Formal Assessment			0.39	104	0.70	-25.54 to 17.21	0.00
Males	396.35	54.96					
Females	400.52	55.04					

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to make a comparison of male and female Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers on formal assessment. This was done to test the following hypotheses:

H_0 : There is no statistically significant difference between male and female Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers on formal assessment.

H_1 : There is a statistically significant difference between male and female Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers on formal assessment.

Analysis of data in Table 4.8 revealed that there is no statistically significant difference in scores for males ($M=396.35$, $SD= 54.96$) females ($M = 400.52$, $SD = 55.04$; $t(104) = 0.39$, $p<.70$, two-tailed). The degree of the difference in the means (mean difference - 4.17, 95% CI : -25.54 to 17.21) is very small (eta squared = .00). Furthermore, when deciding based on the confidence interval, statistics in the table reveal that the interval includes 0 (zero) which again indicates that there is no statistically significant difference between the means. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted whereas the alternative hypothesis is rejected.

4.3.2 Comparison of young and old Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers on formal assessment

The following table presents data on the comparison of teachers aged between 19 - 35 years and 36-67 years on formal assessment.

Table 4.9: Comparison of teachers aged between 19-35 years and 36-67 years on Formal Assessment (n = 19-35 years old 42, 36-67 years old 64)

Variables	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>CI</i>	<i>d</i>
Formal Assessment			1.36	104	0.18	-36.18 to 6.79	0.02
19-35 years old	398.83	55.21					
36-67 years old	404.53	54.14					

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to make a comparison of Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers in different age groups on formal assessment. This was done to test the following hypotheses:

H_0 : There is no statistically significant difference between young and old Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers on formal assessment.

H_1 : There is a statistically significant difference between young and old Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers on formal assessment.

Analysis of data in Table 4.9 showed that there is no statistically significant difference in the mean scores for young and old teachers on the implementation of formal assessment ($M= 398.83$, $SD= 55.2$) and old teachers ($M = 404.53$, $SD = 54.14$; $t(104) = 1.36$, $p < .18$, two-tailed). The magnitude of the differences in the means (mean difference = -5.7 , 95% CI -36.18 to 6.79) is moderately small (eta squared = 0.02). Moreover, the confidence interval analysis reveals that the interval includes 0 (zero), which confirms no statistically significant difference between the means. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted whilst the alternative hypothesis is rejected.

4.3.3 Comparison of Teachers with Teaching Experience of between 0-5 years and 6-35 years on Formal Assessment

The following table presents data on the comparison of novice and experienced of Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers on formal assessment.

Table 4.10: Comparison of teachers with teaching experience of between 0-5 years and 6-35 years on formal assessment (n = 0-5 years 41, 6-35 years 65)

Variables	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>CI</i>	<i>d</i>
Formal Assessment			-0.35	104	0.73	-25.61 to 17.90	0.00
0-5 years	396.34	48.57					
6-35 years	400.20	58.68					

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare novice and experienced Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers on formal assessment. This was done to test the following hypotheses:

H_0 : There is no statistically significant difference among Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers with teaching experiences of 0-5 years and 6-35 years on formal assessment.

H₁: There is a statistically significant difference among Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers with teaching experiences of 0-5 years and 6-35 years on formal assessment.

Analysis of data in Table 4.10 showed that there is no statistically significant difference in the mean scores for teachers with 0 to 5 years of teaching experience ($M=396.34$, $SD=48.57$) and 6-35 years of teaching experience ($M = 400.20$, $SD = 58.68$; $t(104) = -0.35$, $p < .73$, two-tailed). The magnitude of the differences in the means (mean difference = -3.86 , 95% CI: -25.61 to 17.90) is very small (eta squared = $.00$). Moreover, when deciding, based on the confidence interval, statistics in the table reveal that the interval includes 0 (zero) which again indicates that there is no statistically significant difference between the means. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted whereas the alternative hypothesis is rejected.

4.3.4 Comparison of teachers with or without professional qualification in intermediate phase teaching on formal assessment

The following table presents data comparing Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers with or without professional teaching qualification in the Intermediate Phase on formal assessment.

Table 4.11: Comparison of teachers with or without professional qualification in intermediate phase teaching on formal assessment (n = yes 64, no 42)

Variables	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>CI</i>	<i>d</i>
Formal Assessment			0.93	104	0.36	-11.46 to 31.71	0.01
Yes	402.72	57.10					
No	392.60	51.12					

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers with or without professional qualifications in Intermediate Phase teaching on formal assessment. This was done to test the following hypotheses:

H₀: There is no statistically significant difference among Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers with or without professional teaching qualification in the intermediate phase on formal assessment scores.

H₁: There is a statistically significant difference among Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers with or without professional teaching qualifications in the Intermediate Phase on formal assessment scores.

Analysis of data in Table 4.11 revealed that there is no statistically significant difference in scores of means for teachers with qualifications ($M=402.72$, $SD=57.10$) and without qualifications ($M=392.60$, $SD=51.12$; $t(104) = 0.93$, $p<.36$, two-tailed). The magnitude of the differences in the means (mean difference= 10.12 , 95% CI: -11.46 to 31.71) is small (eta squared= $.01$). Furthermore, when deciding based on the confidence interval, statistics in the table revealed that the interval includes 0 (zero) which again indicates that there is no statistically significant difference between the means. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted whereas the alternative hypothesis is rejected.

4.3.5 Comparison of teachers who majored or did not major in Social Sciences on formal assessment

The following table presents data comparing grade 6 social teachers who majored or did not major in social sciences on formal assessment.

Table 4.12: Comparison of teachers who majored or did not major in Social Sciences on formal assessment (n = yes 49, no 57)

Variables	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>CI</i>	<i>d</i>
Formal Assessment			1.65	104	0.10	-3.52 to 38.46	0.03
Yes	408.10	52.90					
No	390.63	55.54					

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to make a comparison of teachers who majored or who did not major in Social Sciences on formal assessment. This was done to test the following hypotheses:

H_0 : There is no statistically significant difference among Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers who majored or did not major in the subject on formal assessment scores.

H_1 : There is a statistically significant difference among Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers who majored or did not major in the subject on formal assessment scores.

Analysis of data in Table 4.12 disclosed that there is no statistically significant difference in scores of means for teachers majored with in Social Sciences ($M = 408.10$, $SD=52.90$) and teachers who did not major in Social Sciences ($M = 390.63$, $SD = 55.54$; $t (104) =1,65$, $p<.10$, two-tailed). The degree of the difference in the means (mean difference 17.47; 95% CI : -3.52 to 38.46) is moderately small (eta squared = .03). Since the confidence intervals analysis revealed that the interval includes zero (0) this confirms that there is no statistically significant difference amid the means of Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers who majored or did not major in the subject on formal assessment scores. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted whilst the alternative hypothesis is rejected.

4.3.6 Comparison of teachers with class size of between 1-35 learners and 36-110 learners on formal assessment

Table 4.13 presents data that tested the following hypotheses:

H_0 : There is no statistically significant difference among grade 6 Social Sciences teachers who teach class size of 1-35 learners and class size of 36-110 learners on formal assessment scores.

H_1 : There is a statistically significant difference among grade 6 Social Sciences teachers who teach class size of 1-35 learners and class size of 36-110 learners on formal assessment scores.

Table 4.13: Comparison of teachers with class size of between 1-35 learners and 36-110 learners on formal assessment (n = 1-35 learners 25, 36-110 learners 81)

Variables	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>CI</i>	<i>d</i>
Formal Assessment			-1.41	104	0.16	-42.36 to 7.11	0.02
1-35 learners	385.24	62.68					
36-110 learners	402.86	51.83					

An independent-sample t-test was conducted to make a comparison between teachers who teach a class size of between of 1 to 35 learners and one of 36 to 110 learners. Analysis of data in Table 4.13 revealed that there is no statistically significant difference in scores for teachers who teach an average of 1 to 35 learners ($M=385.24$, $SD=62.68$) and those who teach class size of 36 to 110 learners ($M=402.86$, $SD=51.83$; $t(104)=1.41$, $p=.16$, two-tailed). The magnitude of the differences in the means (mean difference= -17.62 , 95% CI: -42.36 to 7.11) is moderately small (eta squared= $.02$). Furthermore, since the confidence intervals analysis reveals that the interval includes zero (0) and the probability value is 0.16, which confirms no statistically significant difference amid the means. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted whilst the alternative hypothesis is rejected.

The following section presents and analyses data which compared five school quintiles on formal assessment.

4.3.7 One-way analysis of variance summary table comparing five school quintiles on formal assessment

A one-way between-groups analysis of variance was also conducted to compare the variance between Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers who teach at different school quintiles with the variability within each of the school quintiles on formal assessment. ANOVA was done to test the following hypotheses:

H_0 : There is no statistically significant difference among intermediate mathematics teachers who teach at different school quintiles on formal assessment scores.

H_1 : There is a statistically significant difference among intermediate mathematics teachers who teach at different school quintiles on formal assessment scores.

Table 4.14a: Means and standard deviations comparing five school quintiles on formal assessment (n = Quintile 1 = 41, Quintile 2 = 20, Quintile 3 = 38, Quintile 4 = 5, Quintile 5 = 2)

School Quintile	Formal Assessment		
	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Quintile 1	41	394.20	58.57
Quintile 2	20	397.85	51.02

Quintile 3	38	397.97	56.48
Quintile 4	5	435.80	19.37
Quintile 5	2	421.00	12.73

Table 4.14b: One-way analysis of variance summary table comparing five school quintiles on formal assessment (n = Quintile 1 = 41, Quintile 2 = 20, Quintile 3 = 38, Quintile 4 = 5, Quintile 5 = 2)

Source	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>d</i>
Formal Assessment						
Between groups	4	8743.171	2185.793	0.72	0.58	0.03
Within groups	101	306360.763	3033.275			
Total	105	315103.934				

Analysis of data in Tables 4.14a and b showed that there is no statistically significant difference at the $p < .05$ level in the formal assessment scores for the five school quintiles in the Intermediate Phase grades: $F(4,101) = .72$, $p < .58$. The effect size, calculated using eta squared, was 0.03 which is a moderately small effect. Post-hoc comparison using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean scores for Quintile 1 ($M=394.20$, $SD=58.57$), Quintile 2 ($M=397.85$, $SD=51.02$), Quintile 3 ($M=397.97$, $SD=56.48$), Quintile 4 ($M=435.80$, $SD=19.37$) and Quintile 5 ($M=421.00$, $SD=12.73$) did not differ significantly. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted whereas the alternative hypothesis is rejected.

A one-way between groups analysis of variance was conducted to explore the difference amongst school quintiles and Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers on planning for assessment, tasks, projects, and assessment feedback. Participants were divided into five groups according to their quintiles (Quintile 1; Quintile 2; Quintile 3; Quintile 4; Quintile, Quintile 5).

Table 4.15a: Means and standard deviations comparing five school quintiles on planning for assessment, tasks, projects and assessment feedback (n = Quintile 1 = 41, Quintile 2 = 20, Quintile 3 = 38, Quintile 4 = 5, Quintile 5 = 2)

School Quintile	Planning for Assessment			Tasks		Projects		Assessment Feedback	
	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Quintile 1	41	60.59	7.31	15.,78	28.34	83.41	13.98	30.15	4.63
Quintile 2	20	61.70	6.51	163.05	29.49	80.85	10.52	30.50	5.02
Quintile 3	38	60.03	7.08	162.55	26.72	84.55	13.71	29.63	4.97
Quintile 4	5	63.40	1.67	174.20	9.20	94.80	7.60	32.60	2.79
Quintile 5	2	62.50	2.12	172.00	2.83	87.50	6.36	32.00	4.24

Table 4.15b: One-way analysis of variance summary table comparing five school quintiles on planning for assessment, tasks, projects, and assessment feedback (n = Quintile 1 = 41, Quintile 2 = 20, Quintile 3 = 38, Quintile 4 = 5, Quintile 5 = 2)

Source	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>d</i>
Planning for Assessment						
Between groups	4	80.279	20.070	0.42	0.79	0.02
Within groups	101	4810.825	47.632			
Total	105	4891.104				
Tasks						
Between groups	4	1170.170	292.543	0.39	0.81	0.02
Within groups	101	75416.169	746.695			
Total	105	76586.340				
Projects						

	Between groups	4	831.568	207.892	1.22	0.31	0.05
	Within groups	101	17149,196	169.794			
	Total	105	17980.764				
Assessment Feedback							
	Between groups	4	49.430	12.358	0.54	0.70	0.02
	Within groups	101	2298.64	22.754			
	Total	105	2347.594				

Analysis of data in Tables 4.15a and b showed that regarding planning for assessment, there is no statistically significant difference at the $p < .05$ level in the score for five school quintiles in the Grade 6 Social Sciences teaching: $F(4,101) = 0.42 = p < .79$. The effect size, calculated using eta squared, is approximately 0.02 which is a moderately small effect. Post-hoc comparison using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for Quintile 1 ($M=60.59$, $SD=7.31$), Quintile 2 ($M=61.70$, $SD=6.51$), Quintile 3 ($M=60.03$, $SD=7.08$), Quintile 4 ($M=63.40$, $SD=1.67$) and Quintile 5 ($M=62.50$, $SD=2.12$) do not differ significantly.

Regarding tasks as a form of formal assessment, there is no statistically significant difference at the $p < .05$ level for the five school quintiles in the Intermediate Phase Grades: $F(4,101) = 0.39$, $= p < .81$. The effect size, calculated using eta squared, is approximately 0.02 which is a moderately small effect. Post-hoc comparison using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for Quintile 1 ($M=15.78$, $SD=28.34$), Quintile 2 ($M=163.05$, $SD=29.49$), Quintile 3 ($M=162.55$, $SD=26.72$), Quintile 4 ($M=174.20$, $SD=9.20$) and Quintile 5 ($M=172.00$, $SD=2.83$) do not differ significantly.

Regarding project as a form of formal assessment, there is no statistically significant difference at the $p < .05$ level for five school quintiles in the Intermediate Phase Grades: $F(4,101) = 1.22 = p < .31$. The effect size, calculated using eta squared, is approximately 0.05 which is a moderately small effect. Post-hoc comparison using the

Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for Quintile 1 ($M=83.41$, $SD=13.98$), Quintile 2 ($M=80.85$, $SD=10.52$), Quintile 3 ($M=84.55$, $SD=13.71$), Quintile 4 ($M=94.80$, $SD=7.60$) and Quintile 5 ($M=87.56$, $SD=6.36$) do not differ significantly.

Lastly, analysis of data shows that with reference to assessment feedback there is no statistically significant difference at the $p < .05$ level for five school quintiles in the Intermediate Phase Grades: $F(4,101) = 54$, $p < .70$. The effect size, calculated using eta squared, is approximately 0.02 which is a moderately small effect. Post-hoc comparison using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for Quintile 1 ($M=30.15$, $SD=4.63$) Quintile 2 ($M=30.50$, $SD=5.02$), Quintile 3 ($M=29.63$, $SD=4.97$), Quintile 4 ($M=32.60$, $SD=2.79$), and Quintile 5 ($M=32.00$, $SD=4.24$) do not differ significantly.

4.4 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter was based on the presentation, interpretation and analysis of the data collected from the questionnaires and interviews of the Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers, in the Lejweleputswa District. Descriptive statistics used to analyse data were the mean, median and standard deviation. Qualitative data were based on the implementation of formal assessment tasks to improve quality teaching and learning and analysed according to the themes that emerged, namely how teachers design various assessments; the challenges teachers in the Intermediate Phase are experiencing when implementing various tasks in Social Sciences teaching and learning; the cause of the challenges when implementing various assessments tasks in Social Sciences; the strategies that teachers apply to overcome the challenges they experience when implementing various assessments tasks in Social Sciences. The next chapter provides summarised findings, implications, recommendations, and conclusions.

CHAPTER FIVE: FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides the summarised findings of reviewed literature and collected quantitative and qualitative data on the use of formal assessment in Grade 6 Social Sciences teaching and learning. It also covers the conclusions drawn from the data. Furthermore, the chapter provides recommendations, outlines the challenges faced while conducting the study and offers suggestions for future research. The study's research questions investigated in this study include the following:

- How do teachers enhance the standard of teaching and learning through formal assessment in Grade 6 Social Sciences?
- How do Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers design various assessments in Social Sciences?
- What difficulties do teachers experience when executing various assessment tasks in Grade 6 Social Sciences?
- Why do teachers experience the identified challenges when implementing various assessment tasks in Grade 6 Social Sciences?
- To what extent do differences in biographical variables (gender, age, teaching experience, professional teaching qualification, class size and school quintile) and Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers' responses relate to their implementation of formal assessments?

5.2 SUMMARISED FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The initiation of CAPS (DBE, 2011a) mandates the goal, context, subject matter, and appraisal for each subject enumerated in the National Curriculum Statement Grades R–12 with Geography and History /clearly demarcated to simplify the implementation of assessment. Challenges were encountered by Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers owing to teachers' lack of knowledge and preparation for its introduction, which resulted in several difficulties and problems. The implementation was completed hurriedly; hence, the objective of the review of the literature in Chapter 2 on the application of assessments was to provide a theoretical basis and interpretation of the

CAPS document. In Chapter 4, I attempted to determine the degree to which variations in biographical factors, including gender, age, teaching experience, professional qualifications, and quintiles of schools, affect the implementation of formal assessments. A questionnaire was used to determine how formal assessments were carried out. Subsequently, interviews were held to further clarify the findings of the questionnaire. For each of the interview questions participants were required to offer solutions for any problems they had mentioned. To identify findings and offer suggestions for action, these suggested solutions were used in this research study to identify findings and suggest appropriate action when designing and reinforcing the conducting of formal assessment in Social Sciences. The literature review's synopsis and conclusions, which addressed the main study objective, are presented in this section.

5.2.1 Conclusions and recommendations from the literature review

To present the theoretical framework, the essence of formal assessments in Grade 6 Social Sciences teaching and learning, and the encounters faced by Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers in implementing formal assessments, a literature review on how teachers enhance quality teaching and learning through formal assessment was undertaken and presented in Chapter 2. This section provides a summary of this research as it relates to the research question: How do grade 6 Social Sciences teachers enhance quality teaching and learning through formal assessment?

The subsection that follows relates to the implications of the study's constructivist theories.

5.2.1.1 Intellectual and social constructivism theories

The theoretical underpinnings of this research are based on two constructivist ideologies and philosophies linked to Social Sciences teaching and learning. An examination of the conceptual basis discussed in Chapter 2 revealed that constructivist theories are the basis for the implementation of formal assessments. Dano-Hinosolango and Mindanao (2014) suggest that the application of a constructivist approach enhances learning engagement rather than merely transferring data. According to the constructivist theory, understanding is

strengthened by skilfully constructing mental frameworks, whereby knowledge is gained (Killen, 2015). Two constructivist theories, cognitive and social constructivism were used in this study to create the conceptual framework. The work of Piaget is included into the cognitive theory (1964). Piaget (1964) emphasises that children constantly demonstrate new knowledge in their own environments while also transitioning through a stage of adaptation. Khalid and Azeem (2012) argue that intellectual constructivism is a theory of knowing that suggests that learners create their own knowledge based on their unique worldviews and worldview-supporting assumptions.

The argument is that teachers should apply constructivist teaching so that learners can become autonomous learners. The concept has substantial ramifications for education, including active participation and inquiry, unequal cognitive development, and thinking ability. Amineh and Asl (2015) contend that social constructivism is a sociological and communication logic that studies the information and world views that are formed collaboratively by individuals. Vygotsky (1981) outlines some key elements of the social constructivist approach, including the function of language, contextual factors, and interventions. These two constructivist theories suggest that Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers should understand that teaching and learning are about allocating and modifying distinctive social connections. Social Sciences teachers should teach and assess learners in a manner that stimulates self-discovery of ideas, concepts, and information along with abstract conceptualisation.

The summarised conclusions and adoption of formal assessment as a cornerstone to enhance quality teaching and learning in Grade 6 Social Sciences are discussed in the next section.

5.3 RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF FORMAL ASSESSMENT

Considering the literature review the questionnaire used in this research, and the replies from participants' interviews, this section discusses the findings and conclusions of the study of the application of formal assessments as a cornerstone to promote quality teaching and learning. Johnson (2012) suggests that the teachers'

comprehension and use of assessments have an impact on the learning experiences of the learners. Kulasegaram and Ranachari (2018) agree that one of the four pillars of any instruction is assessment (cf.2.5). Darling-Hammond and Adamson (2014) mention that assessments support the growth of learners' metacognitive and co-cognitive abilities, such as executive functioning abilities like planning and organising as well as resilience, tenacity, and a growth mindset (cf.2.6). One of the specific aims and skills of Social Sciences, which is to promote learners' formulation, arrangement of questions, collection, organisation, and display of information, also reinforces this viewpoint (cf.2.7.1.2). Furthermore, there is a close relationship between assessment and learning. Similarly, Hult and Wernerson (2012) support this theory by contending that evaluation is the catalyst for learning, which then accelerates (cf. 2.5). Furthermore, the classroom environment must promote collaborative learning and the creation of engaging, demanding learning opportunities (Killen, 2015). Similarly, Fung and Lui (2016) support the idea of collaborative learning by emphasising how it can aid learners in developing their cognitive skills, cultivating a desire to learn, and improving their overall happiness (cf.2.5). One of the specific goals of Social Sciences is to increase learners' motivation to work both independently and jointly, which is supported by this principle (cf. 2.7.1.2).

The results of the questionnaire reveal how Social Sciences education and learning are regarded to be improving. This is a goal of formal task marking, recording, and moderating as well as designing tests, setting examinations, setting projects, and giving feedback on assessments. Furthermore, the semi-structured interview replies support the findings. The results of the questionnaire showed how Social Sciences teachers use formal assessment to enhance the quality of their teaching and learning. This is the reason why all formal tasks—tests, examinations, projects, assignments, and investigations—are marked, recorded, and moderated. The results are further clarified by the semi-structured interview replies as well.

Irrespective of the suggestions from the literature review, inquiry form items, and interview questions on how teaching and learning improved, the implementation of formal assessments is not done properly, considering most class sizes are overly large during the efficient application of formal assessment, teachers encounter difficulties. Table 4.7 indicates that the subsequent constraints, i.e., the class sizes ($M=4.91$)

seem to have a considerable impact on teachers when they participate in formal assessment. Regarding the appropriateness of class numbers for formal assessments, there is also disagreement amongst the respondents on the suitability of class sizes for formal assessments because the standard deviation is not close to the mean. The next section offers responses to the following question:

What difficulties do teachers encounter when conducting formal assessments?

5.4 RESULTS AND CONSEQUENCES REGARDING DIFFICULTIES IN IMPLEMENTING FORMAL ASSESSMENTS

This segment outlines the conclusions and implications of the difficulties that teachers face while implementing formal assessments in practice. Literature review, the questionnaire and the responses from the semi-structured interviews are all sources of information. Killen (2015) explains that pedagogical content covers interactions between teachers and learners, as well as interactions between learners and content. This suggests that the teacher should have a thorough understanding of the learner and the subject matter, as well as the ability to choose effective and relevant teaching strategies, learning styles, and knowledge specific to the teaching situation. According to Vygotsky (1978), the best method for learning a language is through natural communication. In earlier sections of this research, the function of language (cf. 2.2.2.2) was addressed. Quyen and Khairani (2017) contend that to use formative assessment effectively, intensive teacher preparation and support for teachers should be given priority (cf.2.9.9.8).

Research shows that teachers encounter several difficulties when implementing formal assessments. These difficulties include a lack of continual professional development, instructors' lack of expertise, teachers' weak subject knowledge and conceptual understanding of formal assessments, teachers' lack of knowledge of the History and Geography sections of Social Sciences, poor learning and teaching support materials, the challenge of overcrowding, the need to cover the curriculum within a given time frame, and the use of English as a language of learning and teaching (cf. 2.9.1 to 2.9.9). The quantitative results also show that the implementation of formal assessments presents difficulties for the teachers (cf. Table

4.7). Reference is made to the participants' answers to interview questions 2 and 3 to support this quantitative finding. In accordance with the results of the interviews, teachers' problems relating to successfully carrying out assessment tasks increased during the COVID-19 pandemic. (cf. T2 & T3). Five participants (T4, T8, T6, T9, & T10) indicated that the LoLT made it difficult for them to balance teaching and learning.

Moreover, Ebersöhn (2014) asserts that learners must deal with the challenge of learning a new language and applying it as a LoLT in the Social Sciences (cf. 2.9.9). T1 also raised the issue of parental disengagement from their children's education. These inquiries were designed to highlight the difficulties faced by Social Sciences teachers of Grade 6 learners when implementing formal tests. The implications of biographical factors in conducting formal appraisals are discussed in the segment that follows. The section provides an answer to the following question:

How much do the responses of teachers of grade 6 Social Sciences differ in terms of biographical factors (gender, age, professional teaching certification, teaching experience, class size, and school quintile) and how they carry out official assessments?

5.5 RESULTS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE USE OF BIOGRAPHICAL VARIABLES

The section answers the following study questions:

- To what extent do differences in biographical variables (gender, age, teaching experience, professional teaching qualification, class size and school quintile) and grade 6 Social Sciences teachers' responses relate to their implementation of formal assessments?

The conducting of formal assessments in grade 6 Social Sciences was contrasted according to biographical factors such as gender, seniority, class size, professional teaching certifications, teaching experience, and school quintiles. The findings of the independent-sample t-tests and the ANOVA, which were used to test various hypotheses, were used to create the comparison. The usage of formal assessments

was examined with respect to gender, age, teaching experience, professional teaching credentials, and class size using the t-test.

5.5.1 Use of formative assessments based on demographic information

The results and consequences of independent-sample t-tests are presented in this section. The following elements, namely gender, age, teaching experience, teaching qualifications, class sizes, and school quintiles were all examined in the context of five different hypotheses. The first to be discussed is a comparison of grade 6 Social Sciences teachers, both male and female, in terms of how formal assessments were carried out.

5.5.1.1 Comparison of the implementation of gender-specific formative assessments

The use of formal assessments was compared among male and female teachers using an independent-sample t-test. To equate how formal assessments are used by each gender, the following hypotheses were tested:

H_0 : There is no statistically noteworthy variance among male and female grade 6 Social Sciences teachers on formal assessment.

H_1 : There is a statistically weighty modification among male and female grade 6 Social Sciences teachers on formal assessment.

The analysis of the results reveals that there is no statistical difference between the male and female teachers, $p < .70$. Both genders implement assessments equivalently (cf. 4.3.1 & Table 4.8). Consequently, the null hypothesis is accepted. However, the competing hypothesis is rejected. This means that gender of teachers teaching grade 6 Social Sciences does not affect their implementation of assessments. The DBE does not need to change recruitment plans based on gender.

The subsequent section deliberates whether there is a difference in the results achieved by young and senior grade 6 Social Sciences teachers regarding the way in which they conduct formal assessments

5.5.1.2 Comparison of formal assessments in relation to the teachers' age

An independent-samples t-test was employed to compare grade 6 social sciences teachers in different age groups regarding formal assessment implementation. The following hypothesis was tested: to

H_0 : There is no statistically noteworthy difference between young and senior grade 6 social sciences teachers regarding formal assessment.

H_1 : There is a statistically substantial variance between young and senior grade 6 social sciences teachers regarding formal assessment.

The results indicate that there is no statistically substantial variance in the results of young and senior teacher's assessment implementation, $p < .8$. The scale of the differences in the mean measures was reasonably small (eta squared = 0.02). Moreover, the confidence interval analysis reveals that the interval includes 0 (zero), which confirms no statistically substantial variance between the means (cf. 4.3.2 Table? & Table 4.9). Consequently, the null hypothesis is accepted while the alternative hypothesis is rejected.

The main motive for the change can be ascribed to the significant contributions that the experienced teachers can bring to their teaching practices compared to that of the younger teachers. It is recommended that when the allocation of subjects is being done at the beginning of the year, it is necessary that there are experienced teachers in each grade to contribute to the development of new teachers teaching Social Sciences.

The following section reports on the contrast among grade 6 Social Sciences teachers in the implementation of assessments in terms of years of teaching experience.

5.5.1.3 Use of formal assessments based on a teacher's experience

An independent-sample t-test was conducted to compare novice and veteran grade 6 Social Sciences teachers regarding their implementation of formal assessment. To this end, the following hypotheses were tested:

H₀: There is no statistically significant difference in test results in formal assessment between the two groups of grade 6 Social Sciences teachers with teaching experience ranging from 0 to five years and those with to six to 35 years' experience.

H₁: There is a significant statistical disparity in test results in formal assessment between teachers of Social Sciences in grade 6 with teaching experiences of between 0 to 5 years and those with between six to 35 years' experience.

The findings indicate that there is no statistically noteworthy difference in the mean results for teachers with 0 to five years of experience, $p < .73$. The effect size was 00, which resulted in a moderately slight difference in magnitude. Additionally, the confidence intervals show that there is a 0 (zero) between the statistical difference intervals (cf. 4.3.3 & Table 4.10). Consequently, the alternate hypothesis is rejected? and the null hypothesis is accepted.

The reason for there being no difference could be that all grade 6 Social Sciences teachers, whether experienced or not, have the National Protocol for Assessment (NPA) as specified in CAPS which provides clear direction on the implementation of assessment for each grade. This implies that less experienced teachers implement formal assessment in the same way as those with more experience. This further indicates that teachers' implementation of formal assessment is dynamic and continually changes owing to new developments regarding the curriculum and the different needs of communities. Additionally, the years of experience might not necessarily be a possible contributing factor to the ineffective implementation of assessment in grade 6 Social Sciences.

The comparison of grade 6 Social Sciences teachers with and without professional teaching credentials is covered in the paragraph that follows.

5.5.1.4 Comparison of the implementation of formal assessments according to teaching qualifications

The comparison of formal assessment results of grade 6 Social Sciences teachers in the intermediate level regarding whether they have professional teaching credentials

or not was conducted using an independent-samples t-test. To compare the application of formal assessments according to teaching credentials, the following assumptions were tested:

H₀: There is no statistically noteworthy difference in formal assessment scores in the intermediate phase between grade 6 Social Sciences teachers who have professional teaching credentials and those who do not.

H₁: In the intermediate phase, there is a statistically significant difference in formal assessment scores between grade 6 Social Sciences teachers who have professional teaching credentials and those who do not.

The results show that there is no statistically substantial difference in the results of assessments by teachers with qualifications and those without qualifications at primary schools studied in the Lejweleputswa district.

5.5.1.5 Comparison according to class size

An independent-sample t-test was employed to equate teachers of classes with between one and 35 learners and those with 36 and 110 learners. To compare the implementation of formal assessments in terms of teaching credentials, the following assumptions were tested:

H₀: There is no statistically noteworthy difference among grade 6 social sciences teachers who teach class sizes of one to 35 learners and class size of 36 to 110 learners on formal assessment scores.

H₁: There is a statistically significant difference among grade 6 social sciences teachers who teach class size of one to 35 learners and class size of 36 to 110 learners on formal assessment scores.

The results show that there is no statistically significant difference in scores for teachers who teach an average of one to 35 learners and those who teach class sized of 36 to 110 learners in the Lejweleputswa district.

5.5.1.6 Comparison of formal assessment according to school quintiles

To compare the difference between Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers who work in various schools' quintiles considering the variation on formal assessments within each school quintile, a one-way between-groups analysis of variance was also carried out. The following hypotheses were put to the test using an ANOVA:

H₀: There is no statistically substantial difference in the formal assessment results of grade Social Sciences teachers who work in various school quintiles.

H₁: There is a statically significant difference among grade 6 Social Sciences teachers who teach in various school quintiles? in terms of formal assessment results.

In relation to the findings, there was no statistically significant difference between the test results for the five intermediate-level schools of the Lejweleputswa district for each of the five school quintiles.

The conclusions of data that comprise both qualitative and quantitative elements were covered in the previous Chapter. The results of this study showed that the Lejweleputswa district's use of formal appraisals of learning and tuition of Social Sciences in Grade 6 is unsatisfactory. As a result, the recommendations presented in the paragraphs that follow can be considered to address the identified difficulties.

5.6 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are made for the Free State Department of Education, teacher training institutions, Social Sciences academic specialists, Social Sciences teachers and all stakeholders in the teaching and knowledge acquisition of Social Sciences in Grade 6.

5.6.1 Assessment process

The process of teaching and learning must be interwoven with assessment, which cannot be viewed as a stand-alone activity. It is not always necessary to use written

assessment methods; teachers may also use spoken questions. Before proceeding to the next topic, the teacher must use assessment to identify any issues that the learners may be experiencing so that they can be addressed. To help both learners and teachers perform better, feedback is essential. For the teacher to know what the learners already understand and to proceed from the known to the unknown during the teaching and learning process, it is necessary to ascertain the learners' prior knowledge. Teachers are required to provide assessment tasks that speak to the material being covered in each lesson. It is best to adapt activities from textbooks and past examination papers to suit the subject matter and setting of the lesson. Before conducting an assessment, assessment tools should be created.

Learners must be evaluated using a variety of questions and evaluation methods. Informal work can be marked by peers; however, the instructor must periodically select a sample of learners' books to mark. When correcting learner work, the teacher must use the sample books to identify errors made by the learners. Assessments must be used to help learners grow, and not to monitor teachers. In addition, the time allotted for Social Sciences must be used for teaching and learning, not for protracted evaluation procedures. Teachers should also design their activities for teaching, learning, and assessment carefully. Because learners arrive at class with a specific set of knowledge and skills, teaching should build on those foundational skills. This is known as moving from the known to the unknown.

Moreover, the classroom setting must be both learner- and teacher-centred, and learners must take an active role in their learning. Activities for teaching, learning, and assessment must be learner-paced and consider the various learning styles of the learners. It should be possible for learners to work with one another, form groups, and participate in peer tutoring. Furthermore, activities in the classroom must be related to the outside world. Every lesson needs to include appropriate reflection from both the teacher and the learners. When teachers offer extra sessions, those classes ought to be used to help learners who are having difficulties with the learning process. In addition, an appropriate allocation of various and pertinent resources is required. To give hesitant learners a chance to speak, small groups must be used. To implement the technique effectively, teachers should organise and prepare their daily and weekly lesson plans carefully. Effective teaching should begin in the junior years before high

school. To assist teachers in identifying where their learners' topic material gaps are, baseline assessment must be carried out at the start of the school year. Different question styles and various assessment methods must also be used to assess learners. Teachers should not hurriedly finish the lesson plan while slower learners are being neglected.

5.6.2 Teacher development and support

Teachers who are deemed to be lacking in topic or pedagogical content understanding should attend mandatory training seminars. The district should take the initiative in addressing development difficulties by sending out more Grade 6 Social Science consultants to reduce the disparity between teachers with CAPS expertise and those without it. Correspondingly, this might be sufficient for subject cluster continuation meetings that teachers have not attended since CAPS was introduced. The problem of teachers who lack History and Geography knowledge needs to be sensitively addressed. By designating Social Sciences as a specialisation topic for students in higher education attending both part-time and full-time the district should stimulate and promote the professional growth of teachers. This effort may help teachers better understand how to teach Social Sciences and how to meet CAPS curriculum objectives. Additionally, it would assist teachers in correctly and successfully using assessment strategies that could enhance learner achievement.

5.6.3 Curriculum coverage

The amount of required topic content and the time allotted for each subject should be examined to address issues that arise from the rapid pace of the curriculum coverage. Curriculum content for the fourth term should be reduced since teachers lack the necessary time to complete the curriculum adequately while also undertaking extensive remedial work, assessments, feedback, revision, and preparation for the end-of-year examinations. In addition, both teachers and learners must arrive for class on time. This is especially important when learners change classrooms at the end of each period, teachers need to co-ordinate this movement to ensure that learners arrive promptly for the next class.

To safeguard children's access to basic education, policies that regulate collective bargaining in the teaching sector should be reviewed. Learners are denied the opportunity to learn when teachers' unions call time off and strikes during class hours. Such events should ideally take place on the weekend or after hours since they have a detrimental impact on curriculum coverage. Transgressors should face consequences for their actions.

5.6.4 Overcrowding

In addition to inadequate textbook supplies and cramped classrooms, overcrowding places a heavy burden on teachers to maintain order, mark an excessive number of scripts, and prepare and distribute photocopied materials. The education department needs to identify overcrowded schools and provide these schools with additional equipment, language and teaching support material (LTSM) teachers, and extra classrooms. Not only should the teacher-to-learner ratio be recorded, but it should also be applied in practice.

5.6.5 Provision of language and teaching support material

Ample LTSM ought to be made available to schools so that Social Sciences instruction can be carried out effectively. The DBE could also help schools set up their own Social Science libraries where additional instructional resources could be safely stored. For example, reference materials, guidebooks, large-scale landscapes and panoramas, globes, transparencies, and displays for visual and audible aids could be included. To prevent shortages of textbooks, the money that parents pay to replace books that their children have lost should only be used to buy new replacement copies.

5.6.6 Learner control and parenting practices assistance

Parenting practices interventions for learning and learner discipline requires undivided attention. The DBE should support this effort with all its authority. Without the support of other stakeholders, including parents, schools cannot maintain learner discipline. To combat associated issues, media tools including newspapers, radios, and television should be used. Learners and parents might be informed of moral and

ethical matters that can improve schools through various means of public communication. These moral and ethical principles such as justice, loving others, caring for others' property, respecting others' rights and the property of the school, and punctuality ought to be promoted. Media sources must be vociferous about the following issues:

- Explaining to learners the importance of school attendance.
- Showing up promptly in the mornings and at the conclusion of breaks; and
- Respecting and carrying out formal assessment activities to the best of one's abilities.
- Using mobile telephones appropriately; and
- Wearing the correct school attire.

5.6.7 Lifelong learning by Grade 6 Social Sciences teachers

As was mentioned earlier in this chapter, teachers are responsible for carrying out the requirements of the curriculum. This implies that they must have a solid general understanding of the subject. It is disappointing to note that some of the research participants were not prepared to teach Grade 6 Social Sciences since they did not major in Geography or History. It is suggested that teachers should embrace their responsibility to be active learners. They need to make a significant effort to remain up to date on emerging innovations in Social Sciences teaching and learning. If they require assistance, their schools must engage academic mentors. They can advance their professional development in this way.

5.6.8 Teacher collaboration in assessment tasks

Although, interview responses indicated that participants share good assessment tasks with teachers in other schools, questionnaire findings reveal that sharing of good assessment tasks amongst teachers at different schools is modest (Table 4.3, B2). It is recommended that teachers must work in collaboration and share assessment tasks. School-based assessment (SBA) requires teachers to share assessment tasks and collaborate to ensure comparable quality on assessment tasks given to learners

in different schools. This will improve their assessment skills and contribute to the development of better learning.

5.6.9 Application of projects as assessment tools

Data in Table 4.5 have revealed that project question(s) modestly provide(s) learners with opportunities to draw deductions; teachers modestly award marks for simplifying and drawing deductions; modestly grant marks for each ability tested in the project including presentation skills, and modestly award marks for conveying project ideas with suitable clarifications. Although qualitative findings from participants disclose that the projects given to learners are not above learners' cognitive levels and they contain thought-provoking questions as they are done outside the controlled classroom situation, some learners do not submit their projects (cf. T1, T7 and T10). It is recommended that subject advisors should conduct in-service training workshops to equip teachers with knowledge and skills for setting sensible project tasks that will allow them to evaluate learners' skills as set out in the CAPS. Furthermore, teachers should guide learners in generating researchable questions that will enable them to improve their presentation skills, communicate project ideas with appropriate explanations to draw conclusions and establish general trends in problems related to Social Sciences.

The difficulties encountered while conducting the study are covered in the paragraph that follows.

5.7 PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED IN THIS RESEARCH

Some of the teachers were apprehensive about taking part in the interviews. This also caused a delay in data collection and interviewing. The difficulty of incomplete and late-returned questionnaires was also something challenging to deal with. In addition, owing to the high rate of COVID-19 infections during the fieldwork period, I had to visit schools to collect the surveys, which raised concerns.

Suggestions for additional research are presented in the following paragraph:

5.8 FURTHER RESEARCH

There are issues addressed in this research which could receive further emphasis with more in-depth research. The following are areas which could be investigated in future:

- In-depth analysis of the challenges teachers experience when implementing assessments in Social Sciences.
- Investigation into how effective and reliable the use of indigenous languages in assessment can benefit learners.
- Strategies for actively involving parents in learners' projects.
- Strategies for effective assessment in large classes.

Concluding observations are found in the next section.

5.9 CONCLUSION

The articulated findings and conclusions of both the research study and the descriptive and inferential statistics of the application of formal appraisals in Grade 6 Social Sciences in elementary schools in the Lejweleputswa region have been presented in this chapter. The aim of this study was to propose the enhancement of quality teaching and learning through formal assessments as a strategy for effective teaching and learning in Social Sciences. This chapter discussed constructivist theories as the theoretical framework for this study and the questionnaires and semi-structured interviews used as data generation methods for this study. In addition, it presented the findings, conclusions, and recommendations of this study. It also discussed the limitations of the study and offered suggestions for further research.

Teachers of Grade 6 Social Sciences experience challenges that make it difficult for them to implement assessment effectively. These include challenges in keeping track of how the curriculum is being taught in the classroom, insufficient assistance for managing teaching and learning, and unfavourable working conditions. Policy designers are therefore requested to address any inadequacies highlighted by this research to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Social Sciences. Moreover, if addressed, these difficulties faced by Grade 6 Social Sciences

teachers may be minimised to enhance assessment implementation at primary schools.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: FRIC Approval Letter

Appendix B: Ethics Clearance Certificate

Appendix C: Letter approval to Conduct Research

Appendix D: A Letter to the Principal Seeking Permission to Conduct Research in the School

Appendix E: A Covering Letter to the Teachers Requesting Them to Participate In the Research

Appendix F: A questionnaire directed to teachers to elicit information on the implementation of formal assessments

Appendix G: Semi-structured Interview Questions

Appendix H: Questionnaire Descriptive Statistics Outputs

Appendix I Inferential Statistics Outputs

Appendix J: Interview Transcripts

Appendix A: FRIC approval letter

Dear Dr Rambuda

Your application was approved but FRIC made a few suggestions kindly apply changes and send through the updated document for signature.

5. LS 262a Forms:

5.1 Bomela, N – M. Ed (Dr. Rambuda, A) [D.FRIC.19.05.11](#)

Noted:

- a) The FRIC noted that the “exploration” of assessment was not tangible.
- b) The aim was clear and it should link with the study topic.

RESOLUTION:

The FRIC approved that proposal subject to the above recommendations.

Appendix B: Ethics clearance certificate



RESEARCH ETHICS APPROVAL

Date: 20 January 2021

This is to confirm that ethical clearance has been provided by the Faculty Research and Innovation Committee [01/06/16] in view of the CUT Research Ethics and Integrity Framework, 2016 with reference number to [HREIC 21/01/21]:

Applicant's Name and student number	N. Bomela 208023950
Supervisor's Name for Student Project	Dr AM Rambuda
Level of Qualification for Student's Project	M.Ed
Title of research project	Enhancing quality teaching and learning through formal assessment in Grade 6 Social Sciences

All conditions as set out below have to be met as set out in your LS 262 a form.

As this research focuses primarily on human beings you will be ethically responsible for:

- protecting the rights and welfare of the participants;
- gaining the trust and co-operation of all the participants with the assurance that the information collected will be kept confidential;
- informing the participants from the outset that their participation will be voluntary, and that the data collected will be conducted with the consent of the Free State Department of Education, the principal(s) of the sample school(s), the teachers, and the learners;
- adhere to the principles of rigorous data collection, analysis and interpretation consistent with the design of the study;
- keeping a data trail for possible auditing purposes and safe-keeping of raw data for a period of three years after publication of the results/findings; respecting the confidentiality of the data.

We wish you success with your research project.

Regards



Prof JW Badenhorst

(Chairperson representative: Research with humans)

(On behalf of the Faculty of Humanities Ethics Committee)

Appendix C: Letter of approval to conduct research

Enquiries: MZ Thango
Ref: Research Permission: N. Bomela
Tel. 082 537 2654
Email: MZ.Thango@fseducation.gov.za



6839 k/8
Kutloanong Location
Odendaalsrus
9480

Dear Ms. N. Bomela

APPROVAL TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE FREE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

This letter serves as an acknowledgement of receipt of your request to conduct research in the Free State Department of Education.

Topic: Enhancing quality teaching and learning through formal assessment in Grade 6 Social Sciences.

- 1. List of schools involved:** Allanridge, Aurora, Bedelia, Boase, Bofihla, Boikutlo, Boitekong, Boliba, Bopapadi, Boshof, Bothaville, Brandwag, Bronville, Dagbreek, Daluvuyo, Dealesville, Dieketseng, Difateng, Dihwai, Dikgomong, Dirisanang, Dr MG Mngoma, Eben Dönges, ECCO, Embonisweni, Excelsior, GM Polori, Golden Park, Graslaagte, Hamsverwacht, Hani Park, Harmonie, Harmony, Hartbeesdraai, Hennenman, Hlaboloha, Hlolohelo, Hou Aan, Humansvlakte, Icoseng, Ikaheng, Ikemisetseng, Ikemisetseng (mine), Iketsetseng, Ikgwantelle, Inpocuko, Itumeleng, Kalkvlakte, Katoloso, Kegomoditswe, Kgauhelo, Khotso, Khotsong, Koppie Alleen, Kweetsa, La Riviera, Lakeview, Leboneng, Leeukraal, Lehakwe, Lemotso, Lethola, Letlotlo Naledi, Letsibolo, Loboneng, Loskuil, Magakajane, Makelekella, Malebaleba, Mapule, Mariendal, Marobe, Matima-Lenyora, Merriespruit, Middelpan, Misgun, Mmabana, Mmantshebo, Mohobo, Mojaho, Okgwabong, Monamodi, Moremaphofu, Moso, Naudeville, Nelsdrif, Niekerskuil, Ntuthuzelo, Odensia, Ons Sin, Ons Waardeer, Oranjekuil, Paballong, Papiessvlei, Phahamisanang, Phela Hantle, Phomolong, Piccanin, Polokong, President Brand, Rabonie, Rappardsvlakte, Reiketseditse, Reitzpark, Reseamohetse, Iebeekstad, Sa Mokgothu, Saaiplaas, Saamwerk, Sacsonia, Sardinia, Seabo, Seka, Serei, Setshabelo, St Helena, Stille, Summerville, Swaelfontein, Tataiso, Tebello, Thabang, Thabong, Thembekile, Thoriso, Thusanong, Tidor, Tikwe, Tjantjello, Tlamanang, Tlongkganyeng, TS Matlaletsa, Tsakani, Tshediselang, Tshemetso, Tshireletso, Tshomarelo, Tswelopele, Verkeerdevele, Virginia Mine, Virginia, Volstruispan, Welkom Preparatory School, Welkom Volksskool, Western Holdings, Willendank, Winkelpos, and WSM Malotle.
- 2. Target Population:** One hundred and fifty Intermediate phase teachers teaching Social Sciences at the selected primary schools.
- 3. Period of research:** From the date of signature of this letter until 30 September 2021. Please note that the department does not allow any research to be conducted during the fourth term (quarter) of the academic year. Should you fall behind your schedule by three months to complete your research project in the approved period, you will need to apply for an extension. The researcher is expected to request permission from the school principals to conduct research at schools.
- 4. The approval is subject to the following conditions**
 - 4.1** The collection of data should not interfere with the normal tuition time or teaching process.

Dear Ms. N. Bomela

APPROVAL TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE FREE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Topic: Enhancing quality teaching and learning through formal assessment in Grade 6 Social Sciences.

Enquiries: MZ Thango
Ref: Research Permission: N. Bomela
Tel. 082 537 2654
Email: MZ.Thango@fseducation.gov.za



education

Department of
Education
FREE STATE PROVINCE

- 4.2 You will be expected, on completion of your research study to make a presentation to the relevant stakeholders in the Department.
- 4.3 The ethics documents must be adhered to in the discourse of your study in our department.
5. Please note that costs relating to all the conditions mentioned above are your own responsibility.

Yours sincerely


Mr. J.S. Tladi
Acting DDG: Corporate Services

23/03/2021
DATE:

Appendix D: A letter to the principal seeking permission to conduct research in the school

6839 k/8
Kutloanong Location
Odendaalsrus
9480

Dear School Principal

Research on enhancing quality teaching and learning through formal assessment in Grade 6 Social Sciences

I hereby apply for permission to conduct research at your school. The target population for this research are intermediate phase social sciences teachers. The research has two phases. The first phase will commence on 09 August 2021 and end on 31 August 2020. In this phase, teachers will digitally complete a questionnaire that will elicit information on their implementation of formal assessment. They will complete the questionnaire at their homes. It is highly anticipated that their response will provide the stakeholders involved in the implementation of formal assessment with insight into teachers' experiences. Such insight will guide them towards creating enabling environments for the effective implementation of formal assessments that promote quality teaching and learning.

The second phase will commence on 01 September 2021 and end on 17 September 2021. In this phase, teachers will be interviewed through Zoom or Microsoft Teams at their homes.

The research has the approval of Free State Department of Education. The researcher will be grateful for their response and wishes to ensure that their response will remain completely confidential and anonymous. They will participate in the study voluntarily, and they may withdraw at any time.

Thank you for your cooperation.



Ms N. BOMELA

Consent Form

I, the undersigned, school principal of _____ primary school hereby give permission / do not give permission for the research on the enhancement of quality teaching and learning through formal assessment in Grade 6 social sciences to be conducted at the school.

Signature of the school principal

Date

Appendix E: A covering letter to the teachers requesting them to participate in the research

6839 k/8
Kutloanong Location
Odendaalsrus
9480

Dear Intermediate Phase Social Sciences Teacher

Research on enhancing quality teaching and learning through formal assessment in Grade 6 Social Sciences

The purpose of this questionnaire is to obtain information on the enhancement of quality teaching and learning through formal assessment in Grade 6 Social Sciences. Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement promotes quality teaching and quality learning through formal assessments. Attached is a questionnaire that elicit information on your implementation of formal assessment. It is highly anticipated that your response will provide the stakeholders involved in the implementation of formal assessment with insight into your experiences. Such insight will guide them towards creating enabling environments for the effective implementation of formal assessments that promote quality teaching and learning.

The research has the approval of Free State Department of Education. The researcher will be grateful for your response and wishes to ensure that your response will remain completely confidential and anonymous. You will participate in the study voluntarily, and you may withdraw at any time. Kindly refer to the consent form below.

The statements below seek to measure the extent to which you implement formal assessments to promote quality teaching and learning. Indicate your opinion on the level of frequency between a scale of 1 and 7, with 1 being **NOT AT ALL** (the lowest rank) and 7 being **ALWAYS** (the highest rank). Tick the number which best represents and describes your opinion on the scale for each statement provided.

After completing the questionnaire email it to thulibomela@gmail.com not later than 31 August 2021. If you have questions and problems related to the study, please feel free to contact me by email or cell phone at 076 600 8416.

Thank you for your cooperation.



Ms N. BOMELA

Appendix F: The questionnaire directed to teachers to elicit information on the implementation of formal assessments

6839 k/8

Kutloanong Location

Odendaalsrus

9480

Dear Intermediate Phase Social Sciences Teacher

Research on enhancing quality teaching and learning through formal assessment in Grade 6 Social Sciences

The purpose of this questionnaire is to obtain information on the enhancement of quality teaching and learning through formal assessment in Grade 6 Social Sciences. Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement promotes quality teaching and quality learning through formal assessments. Attached is a questionnaire that elicit information on your implementation of formal assessment. It is highly anticipated that your response will provide the stakeholders involved in the implementation of formal assessment with insight into your experiences. Such insight will guide them towards creating enabling environments for the effective implementation of formal assessments that promote quality teaching and learning.

The research has the approval of Free State Department of Education. The researcher will be grateful for your response and wishes to ensure that your response will remain completely confidential and anonymous. You will participate in the study voluntarily, and you may withdraw at any time. Kindly refer to the consent form below.

The statements below seek to measure the extent to which you implement formal assessments to promote quality teaching and learning. Indicate your

opinion on the level of frequency between a scale of 1 and 7, with 1 being **NOT AT ALL** (the lowest rank) and 7 being **ALWAYS** (the highest rank). Tick the number which best represents and describes your opinion on the scale for each statement provided.

After completing the questionnaire email it to thulibomela@gmail.com not later than 31 August 2021. If you have questions and problems related to the study, please feel free to contact me by email or cell phone at 076 600 8416.

Thank you for your cooperation.



Ms N. BOMELA

Consent Form

I, the undersigned hereby agree / do not agree to participate in the research on the enhancement of quality teaching and learning through formal assessment in Grade 6 social sciences.

Signature of the teacher

Date

INTERMEDIATE SOCIAL SCIENCES TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE

For office use		

PART A: PERSONAL DATA

A1. Indicate your gender.

Male	1
Female	2

A2. Indicate your age in the box provided below.

A3. Write the total years of your teaching experience below.

A4. Is your professional teaching qualification in the Intermediate Phase?

Yes	1
No	2

A5. Did you major in social sciences in your teacher training?

Yes	1
No	2

A6. What is the highest number of learners you teach in one class only? Write the number in the box provided.

A7. Indicate the highest grade you teach social sciences in the intermediate phase.

Grade 4	1
Grade 5	2
Grade 6	3

A8. Indicate your school's quintile.

Quintile 1	1
Quintile 2	2
Quintile 3	3
Quintile 4	4
Quintile 5	5

How to respond to each statement.

Indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree as described in the statement. Please respond by making a cross (X) over the number in the appropriate block, with 1 being NOT AT ALL (the lowest rank) and 7 being ALWAYS (the highest rank).

PART B: Planning for Assessment

	Statement								Office use only
B1	When planning for assessment I use carefully selected textbooks as a guide,	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
B2	I share good assessment tasks with teachers in other schools	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
B3	When designing my own task or activity, I clarify the purpose of the assessment (Why?)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
B4	When designing my own task or activity, I decide on the task activity or activities (Form of assessment)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
B5	When designing my own task or activity, I decide on the content, concepts and skills to be assessed (What?)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
B6	When designing my own task or activity, I select a format for learner presentation (Clarify the method: How?)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
B7	My formal assessments cater for a range of cognitive levels and abilities of learners	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
B8	Any of my formal assessment includes low, middle and high order activities or questions, with a weighting towards the cognitive level of the middle order.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
B9	I submit formal assessment tasks for moderation for the purpose of quality assurance and maintaining appropriate standards.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

B10	I use various forms of assessments like project, tasks and examination as the recommended nature of formal assessments according to the CAPS document.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
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PART C: Tasks

<i>Formal assessment tasks I give to my learners include the following activities:</i>									Office use only
C1	Writing short answers to questions (these may be single words, short phrases or sentences).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
C2	Writing paragraphs and, from Grade 7, sequencing these into passages of extended writing.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
C3	Researching questions or topics.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
C4	Writing up a small piece of research.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
C5	Reading and summarizing.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
C6	Listening and note-taking.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
C7	Recording observations.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
C8	Answering questions (short and/or longer responses).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
C9	Asking questions (questions reveal insight).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
C10	Completing worksheets.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
C11	Drawing and labelling.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
C12	Matching, sorting, listing, describing and comparing texts, graphs, maps, photographs, pictures.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
C13	Making connections between causes and effects.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

C14	Identifying similarities and differences.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
C15	Selecting and organising information.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
C16	Analysing and synthesising information.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
C17	Reading, completing and/ or drawing maps.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
C18	Working with data (graphs and tables).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
C19	Finding and/or working with sources.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
C20	Cross-referencing and comparing information.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
C21	Giving an explanation (orally, written or visually).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
C22	Identifying and discussing issues.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
C23	Expressing and justifying a view.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
C24	Evaluating ideas and actions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
C25	Detecting bias.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
C26	Doing a presentation (orally, written or visually).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
C27	Making a model, poster or chart.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
C28	Interpreting photographs and writing captions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
C29	Participating in a structured, prepared discussion, debate or role play.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

PART D: Projects

	Statement									Office use only
D1	I use projects to assess a variety of skills and competencies.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
D2	I ensure the integration of various activities like planning, research, data analysis and reporting when setting projects.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
D3	I ensure that learners can demonstrate their understanding of different social sciences concepts through projects and apply them in real life situations.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		

D4	I set projects, which are appropriate to age of learners and not above learners' cognitive levels.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
D5	I clearly indicate the assessment criteria on the project specification.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
D6	I focus on the social sciences content involved and not on duplicated pictures and facts copied from reference material.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
D7	The projects I give contain the collection and display of real data.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
D8	I ensure that I teach skills like research and presentations before handing out projects for assessment.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
D9	I allow my learners to be seek assistance when doing the initial projects at home, however, the final write-up is done in class, under my supervision.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
D10	My project question(s) allow learners to inquire, as well as experiment.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
D11	My project question(s) allow learners to draw conclusions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
D12	I award marks for simplifying and drawing deductions.	1	2	3	4	5	6		
D13	I award marks for each ability tested in the project including presentation skills	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
D14	I award marks for conveying project ideas with suitable clarifications.								
D15	I assess projects with rubrics.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

PART E: Assessment Feedback to the Learners

	Statement								Office use only
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E1	I mark assessment tasks without delay.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
E2	I give learners continuous, constructive feedback informally.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
E3	I give learners continuous, constructive feedback formally.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
E4	Feedback is accompanied by action plans on how learners will be supported.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
E5	Feedback provided to learners encourages them to do better, and builds their self-confidence.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

PART F: Challenges in social sciences assessments

	Statement								Office use only
F1	Formal assessments allow me to have adequate teaching time.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
F2	My class sizes are suitable for formal assessment tasks.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
F3	I can mark formal assessment tasks and give my learners individualised attention.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
F4	I find it easy to pay attention to the learners' individual needs.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
F5	I find it easy to provide quality feedback when implementing formal assessments.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
F6	I have adequate knowledge and skills for the implementation of formal assessments.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
F7	I underwent training for the implementation of formal assessments.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

F8	I know exactly what formal assessment is.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
F9	I know exactly how to implement formal assessments.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
F10	I have social sciences content knowledge to notice and analyse learners' social thinking.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
F11	I have adequate content knowledge on the implementation of formal assessments in social sciences.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
F12	I have adequate pedagogical knowledge on the implementation of formal assessments in social sciences.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
F13	I have proper qualifications in social sciences.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
F14	I have proper experience in social sciences.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
F15	I have prior knowledge of all my learners' cognitive levels before I assess them.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
F16	I receive professional development, which addresses areas of my pedagogical challenges.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
F17	I am competent in developing and validating new assessments.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
F18	I am competent in validating existing assessments.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
F19	I am part of teacher networking, where we work together as teachers to share ideas on formal assessment tasks (Professional Learning Committee).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
F20	I receive adequate support from the subject advisors.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
F21	I understand the National Protocol on Assessment very well.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
F22	I can adapt my assessment practices on the changing demands of the contents' school education system.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

F23	I view the National Protocol on Assessment as confusing and complex.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
F24	I view the National Protocol on Assessment as clear and simple.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
F25	The language of teaching and learning makes it easy for my learners to understand the instruction for assessment questions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
F26	I can perform dual tasks, namely teaching both social sciences and English at the same time.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
F27	My learners can solve word problems due to language clarity and word structure.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
F28	My learners can perform in social sciences because they can read and write fluently in English.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION

Appendix G: Semi-structured interview questions

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SOCIAL SCIENCES TEACHERS

September 2021

- How do you design various assessments in social sciences? Do you consider Bloom's taxonomy?
- What challenges do you experience when implementing various assessment tasks in social sciences?
- Why do you experience the identified challenges when implementing various assessment tasks in social sciences?
- How do you solve the problems you experience when implementing various assessment tasks in social sciences?

Thank you for your participation.











Consent Form

I, the undersigned hereby agree / do not agree to participate in the interview for the research on the enhancement of quality teaching and learning through formal assessment in Grade 6 social sciences.











Signature of the teacher

Date

Appendix H: Questionnaire descriptive statistics outputs

 <p>Assessment Feedback to the Lea</p>	 <p>Challenges in Social Sciences Asse</p>
 <p>Extra Personal Data.xlsx</p>	 <p>Formal Assessment Tasks .xlsx</p>
 <p>Personal Data.xlsx</p>	 <p>Planning for Assessment.xlsx</p>
 <p>Projects .xlsx</p>	 <p>Reliability of the Questionnaire.xlsx</p>

Appendix I: Inferential statistics outputs

 t-test results, Age.xlsx	 t-test results, Class size.xlsx
 t-test results, Gender.xlsx	 t-test results, Professional qualific
 t-test results, Social sciences major.xlsx	 t-test results, teaching experience
 T-tests on formal assessment.xlsx	 ANOVA, Formal Assessment.xlsx
 ANOVA, Highest Grade Taught.xlsx	 ANOVA, School quintile.xlsx

Appendix J: Interview transcripts

Steps followed to analyse the text:

- Transcription of the participant's responses by the researcher.

INTERVIEWER: How do you design various assessments in Social Sciences? Do you consider Bloom's taxonomy?

INTERVIEWEES:

Educator7	<i>First, I must decide about the type of assessment that I 'am intending to administer for instance we have got various types of assessments such as assignments, projects and examination. One must also use the CAPS document and the subject policy of the school. You cannot just sit down and decide to set a test without looking at those documents. each type of assessment should be designed according to its prescriptive (Educator 7, male).</i>
Educator 1	<i>Yes, Mme I do consider Bloom's taxonomy and it is also part of the policy document when you set a formal assessment or any task you should consider six Bloom's taxonomy as you know that our learners differ in their cognitive levels. Learners' personality differ, they are not all the same, it will be unfair if you focus only a certain cognitive level. The assessment that only focuses on one cognitive level will be unfair to learners who are good on other levels (Educator 1, male).</i>
Educator 5	<i>We normally when we start or before we start our question paper, we compile few questions that we think as teachers must be in the question paper. Then we will look and see the order of the levels: low, middle and high because we must accommodate all learners in the class we will seat and see the first question for example will be column A and B match only and then we will go to true or false then we go to more difficult questions where the learners must feel missing words, write a paragraph or read a scenario so we want to accommodate low level, middle and high level (Educator 5, female).</i>
Educator 2	<i>I do consider Bloom's taxonomy because of in it we have low order middle and high order questions. The reason I consider It, it makes the assessment to be fair and equal to learners because in terms of their understanding there are those who can master all questions there those who cannot master all questions It accommodates all learners in terms of acquiring marks in order for them to pass the assessment (Educator 2, male).</i>

Educator 10	<i>Absolutely as a teacher Bloom's taxonomy is like the bible of teaching u have to use all the steps of Bloom's taxonomy so that learners can see the different styles the have to know (Educator 10, female).</i>
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INTERVIEWER: What challenges do you experience when implementing various assessment tasks in Social Sciences?

INTERVIWEES:

Educator 10	<i>Learners cannot do the summary and struggle with paragraph writing cannot understand things they are learning you have to introduce new concepts first (Educator 10, female).</i>
Educator 5	<i>For me the most difficult thing is the implementation it is fine in class learners master it but when it come to the formal assessment learners fail. Learners are underperforming because they don't study Educator 5, female).</i>
Educator 6	<i>One of the challenges which I experienced is the language, it is one of the problems that is the most challenging thing amongst learner amongst learners you will have to explain some of the things. Progressed learners, retained learners because they must be accommodated, learners who are slow (Educator 6, male).</i>
Educator 7	<i>Setting standardised question paper is a challenge only to find out it contains more high questions than lower or middle questions some teachers just design assessment tasks for the sake of complying not following the CAPS document (Educator 7, male).</i>
Educator 8	<i>The challenge that I can say the highest one when learners fail because sometimes, we introduce some of the terms for example arrange, design, define, decide, conclude during formal assessment not used in informal assessment. When learners do not answer at all for example when you say</i>

	<i>they must interpret they just write without understanding the question (Educator 8, female).</i>
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INTERVIEWER: Why do you experience the identified challenges when implementing various assessment tasks in Social Sciences?

INTERVIWEES:

Educator 2	<i>First of all, there is not enough time due to Covid- 19. We are the school that is running weekly learners comes in groups in the process we not able to get all groups. Shortage of textbooks, absenteeism, the long questions give some learners problems (Educator 2, male).</i>
Educator 4	<i>Most parents in my area are not educated the do not encourage learners to do work and make our work difficult, learners absent them we have high number of absenteeism, learners get low marks as they are not encouraged to learn, LoLT is the challenge (Educator 4, female).</i>
Educator 10	<i>Big cause of the challenges is the language barrier not all words in English can be translated into a learner's own language. Learners reading without understanding (Educator 10, female)</i>
Educator 1	<i>Sometimes learners know the answer, but they don't understand when they do on their own. Use of high English words they don't understand for example when you say classify, they don't understand what to do (Educator 10, female).</i>
Educator 3	<i>Ever since the Covid-19 pandemic learners not waiting to write lot of absenteeism, learners do not want to do assignments. The challenge is you will get learners who do not want to do anything in class, our learners are not used to reading, even if you implement the assessment, it becomes difficult because when they write most of the learners fail tasks (Educator 3, male).</i>

Educator 9	<i>I am teaching Grade 6 so when these learners come to our classrooms, they have problem with English. They have a problem of reading without understanding, have problem with keeping time, problems with instructions they don't understand instructions, problem with expressing themselves during assessment (Educator 9, female).</i>
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INTERVIEWER: How do you solve the problems you experience when implementing various assessment tasks in Social Sciences?

INTERVIWEES:

Educator 3	<i>I sacrifice my time when I have free periods, I take learners to one of the classes give them activities when they come tomorrow, I check the activity we mark after marking the activity I give them corrections that is marking and giving the feedback (Educator 3, female).</i>
Educator 2	<i>I give learners feedback to assist learners and encourage learner's performance and after I have drafted the Error analysis, I meet with parents of the learners who did not perform. Mark the scripts in time and give them feedback on time help learners to improve their marks (Educator 2, male).</i>
Educator 7	<i>After marking every term, I meet with parents of learners who have obtained level 1,2 and 3 I give them feedback on the results of their children so that they can assist them to improve their results in the next term (Educator 7, female).</i>
Educator 10	<i>When we do informal assessment, I let them to investigate the whole topic so that they must do a summary, for example page 80 to 100 they have to go and read. I read with them in class a few pages they can choose how they want to summarise I teach them to use a mind map and they do a paragraph because in the curriculum from 4 to 7 they are implementing a paragraph writing. I teach them mind map first get your ideas and start paragraph writing (T 10, female).</i>