

The thinking of African history teachers on Afrocentrism - a case study

By

Vuyo Jack

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NAME Brenda Gouws
CONTACT bgouws@iafrica.com | 0828220600
PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

Affiliate member of the Professional Editors' Guild (PEG)
Honorary Affiliate, Kaplan Centre, University of Cape Town
Administrator of the Beare Foundation

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Signed: Prof JM Wassermann (supervisor)

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Abstract

In recent years, there have been calls to reform the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) for the History curriculum in South Africa because it has been viewed as Eurocentric. As a result, in 2015 the Department of Basic Education (DBE) established a Ministerial Task Team to review the CAPS History curriculum. The Ministerial Task Team, which recommended that there should be a complete overhaul of the current CAPS History curriculum and a new Afrocentric History curriculum introduced, released its report in 2018. This paper addresses the thinking of African history teachers on Afrocentrism and the reasons behind their thinking. The qualitative case study focused on selected African history teachers in selected schools in Makhanda. Conversational interviews were used to construct the data that sought to understand the thinking of African history teachers on Afrocentrism and the reasons behind their thinking. Furthermore, the theoretical framework, the Logos of Afrocentrism, and thematic analysis were employed in the analysis of the constructed data. The findings of this study indicate that the thinking of the African history teachers on Afrocentrism was filled with ambiguities and even contradictions. This means that, at times, the thinking of the African history teachers was essentialist, although it could also be inclusivist in some instances. In addition, the findings of this study indicate that there were various factors, including age, education, and upbringing, that influenced the thinking of the African history teachers.

List of Acronyms

MTT	Ministerial Task Team
FET	Further Education and Training
CAPS	Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement
OBE	Outcomes Based Education
UCT	University of Cape Town
US	United States of America
HWUs	Historically White Universities
ANC	African National Congress
PAC	Pan African Congress
NP	National Party
RMF	Rhodes Must Fall
DBE	Department of Basic Education
FMF	Fees Must Fall

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Chapter 1

Introduction to the study

1.1. Introduction

One of the unfortunate consequences of colonisation and apartheid in South Africa was the de-Africanisation process. This was a process that attempted to isolate Africans in South Africa from the rest of Africa, dislocate them from their culture and history, and then provide them with a Eurocentric perspective of the world. Education, particularly history education, was one of the instruments that was used to achieve this purpose. African students were taught that their culture was inferior and heathen, and they were forced to adopt European culture and ways of thinking (Nkomazana & Setume, 2016). African students were also, for the most part, taught European history and the history of Europeans in Africa rather than African history from an African perspective. In sum, Africans and African history was marginalised from the History curriculum. As a consequence, Africans in South Africa have struggled to reconnect with their indigenous culture and history.

Since 1994, in the post-apartheid era, there have been attempts to infuse African history and culture into various History curricula. Various curriculum reforms at school level were made in an attempt to introduce a relevant history education (Angier, 2017). However, some researchers have continued to argue that the current CAPS History curriculum is still Eurocentric in outlook (Wassermann, 2017). Recently, Afrocentrism has been proposed as a viable solution to the problem of Eurocentrism in the South African

school History curriculum (Macupe, 2022). Afrocentrism is meant to help students to learn about African history and culture and to understand phenomena from an African perspective. Therefore, this study aimed to understand the thinking of African history teachers on the concept of Afrocentrism as it relates to school history. This chapter provides an introduction and overview of the study by outlining its context, rationale, and purpose as well as an overview of the theoretical and methodological approaches that were employed.

1.2. Background and Context

The context of this study is South Africa. To be more specific, this study focused on Quintile 3 schools in Makhanda (formerly Grahamstown) in the Eastern Cape. South African schools are categorised into five groups called quintiles, mostly for the purpose of the allocation of financial resources. According to Ogbonnaya and Awuah (2019), schools in the lower quintiles (1, 2 and 3) are categorised as non-paying schools, and they do not charge school fees. Such schools receive the majority of the government's funding and support. On the other hand, Quintile 4 and 5 schools only receive a small amount of funding from the government and are thus allowed to charge school fees to be able to sustain themselves. This system was meant to resolve the educational inequalities that were created by the apartheid system.

During both the apartheid and colonial periods in South Africa, the education system was Eurocentric and Europe was used as a point of reference (Christie, 2006). Africa and Africans were generally removed from the curriculum in favour of Europe and Europeans (Christie, 2006). Sesanti (2021) argues that this education system was used to de-Africanise Africans. In the process, they were dislocated from their culture, values,

languages and history (Sesanti, 2021). Instead, they were forced to adopt Eurocentric and Western culture and thinking, thereby negating the African view. In other words, the Eurocentric perspective was the dominant perspective of history. The consequence of this has been that the African view and other alternative modes of knowledge have been suppressed (Lal, 2012). Moreover, the African perspective has been regarded as backward. It can be further argued that “Eurocentrism has resulted in both explicit and subliminal racial self-hatred, where non-Western practices, beliefs and cultures may either just not be enough or [are] undesired” (Luu, 2011, p. 1). This means that Eurocentrism has caused Africans to regard their culture as inferior.

History education was one of the instruments that was used by the apartheid and colonial governments to achieve their purposes of conquering and colonising the **African people**. To this end, the South African History curriculum and education system did not cover the history of Africans. Instead, the curriculum contained the history of the West and Europeans in Africa. The National Party (NP) government, in line with their racist agenda, used the History curriculum and education to promote Afrikaner nationalist history (Langa et al., 2021). In the History curriculum and textbooks, Africans were hardly present (Langa et al., 2021). And if they did appear, they were presented from a Eurocentric perspective, mostly as backward and undesirable. Consequently, Langa et al. (2021) found that African parents who had studied History during the Apartheid era were so traumatised by the version of history that was taught to the extent that they now do not want their children to study it. Much of this can be attributed to history education during the colonial and apartheid periods denying Africans the opportunity to study about

their past, which denied them their existence (Langa et al., 2021; Van der Berg & Buckland, 1982).

Post-1994, the DBE changed the pre-1994 education system (Angier, 2017). There were numerous curriculum changes such as the **Outcomes Based Education (OBE) and CAPS curriculum** that were intended to transform the education system (Angier, 2017). However, the African National Congress (ANC) led government struggled to succeed in this regard, particularly when it came to history education. Despite several curriculum reforms, including the current CAPS curriculum, certain educationists and other stakeholders have argued and complained that history education remains Eurocentric (Heleta, 2016) and all the curriculum reforms that have occurred post-1994, have been criticised for sanitising history and keeping Africans in the margins (Mthembu, 2019). According to these critics, this was done by the DBE to bring about unity and nation building in the post-apartheid period in South Africa.

In response, in 2015, the DBE appointed a Ministerial Task Team (MTT), made up of historians, educationists, and archaeologists, to scrutinise the school History and restructure and overhaul it and make it Afrocentric and relevant to the students of South Africa. The MTT released its first report in 2018. According to this report, the history curriculum needed a complete overhaul so that it is made to be Afrocentric (Ndlovu et al., 2018). The report found that the CAPS History curriculum had been written from a Eurocentric and liberal historiographical point of view and that the history that was taught at school was “sanitised” (Ndlovu et al., 2018). According to the MTT report, the manner in which history was taught in South Africa was “sanitised” and approached African topics and themes in a “touristy” manner (Ndlovu et al., 2018). The MTT report further stated

that if the history curriculum was not overhauled, South Africa would run the risk of returning to the pre-1994 period when African history was absent from the History curriculum (Ndlovu et al., 2018). Other events that acted as the catalyst to bring about change in the history curriculum were the Afrophobic attacks in South Africa in 2008 and 2013 (Davids, 2016). It was assumed that these Afrophobic attacks were caused by a lack of knowledge of the history of the African continent (Davids, 2016). Therefore, the DBE decided to change the CAPS History curriculum and introduce an Afrocentric History curriculum (Macupe, 2022).

This proposed Afrocentric curriculum was meant to help students learn about Africa and African history (Macupe, 2022) and this was seen by the government as a step towards decolonisation. Moreover, the MTT report recommended that the history curriculum should be located in the South African context, and it should cover multiple perspectives rather than have one dominant distorted Eurocentric perspective (Ndlovu et al., 2018).

The MTT report further stated that a comprehensive and well-rounded history education would help students to better understand themselves (Ndlovu et al., 2018).

The report further argued that African history needed to be given the depth and breadth that it deserved and it concluded that the CAPS History curriculum did not place enough emphasis on indigenous pre-colonial knowledge, particularly in the higher grades in which older students could make deeper connections to such content (Ndlovu et al., 2018). According to the MTT report the South African history curriculum neglected African empires, kingdoms and chiefdoms, and the relationships and experiences which occurred in these spaces (Ndlovu et al., 2018). The report further claimed that South African

students were taught more and in greater depth about the French Revolution, World Wars 1 and 2, the Spanish Inquisition, and various other monumental European events, than about African events (Ndlovu et al., 2018).

In addition, African history in the CAPS curriculum, was taught superficially and was not interrogated in the same way as European history. Consequently, the report argued, South African students struggled to fully understand the context in which they lived, and they lacked knowledge of the history of both South Africa and Africa. Hence, there was a need for an Afrocentric History curriculum and education. Currently, the process of overhauling the CAPS History curriculum, as per the MTT's report, is still in progress.

However, the MTT report has been contested by some scholars. Van Eeden and Warnich (2018) argued that the recommendations in the report were superficial and they suggested that further research needed to be conducted. They also contested the quality of the research conducted by the MTT panel, which they argued, brought the entire report and its recommendations into question. Furthermore, Van Eeden and Warnich (2018) questioned the credentials of the MTT panel, arguing that the members of the panel did not have the necessary expertise in history education, which placed doubt on the reliability of the report. Yet, despite such contestations the MTT report was adopted by the DBE.

The attempt to introduce an Afrocentric History curriculum came at a time when there were growing calls for decolonisation and transformation, particularly in South African institutions of higher learning. While demanding free quality education, South African university students also began calling for a change in university curricula (Fataar,

2018). The students argued that curricula and thus knowledge in South African universities was Eurocentric. The call for free quality higher education became known as the Fees Must Fall (FMF) movement. The university students further argued that university culture in historically White universities (HWU) was untransformed and exclusionary (Fataar, 2018). For instance, students at the University of Cape Town successfully called for the removal of the statue of imperialist Cecil Rhodes. This became known as the Rhodes Must Fall (RMF) movement. Therefore, to a certain extent, the attempt by the DBE to introduce an Afrocentric curriculum could be regarded as part of the government's response to the growing calls for decolonisation and transformation which began during the RMF and FMF movements.

In light of the above, it was suggested that if the thinking of the history teachers was not aligned to the proposed new History curriculum, then its implementation would be compromised (Bantwini, 2010; McCrum, 2013; Smith & Desimone, 2003). This was experienced in the recent South African past with the introduction of OBE (Musitha & Mafukata, 2018). Changing the curriculum without understanding the views of the history teachers could prevent the objectives of the curriculum reform from being achieved. What teachers do is affected by what they think. Therefore, the success of a newly implemented Afrocentric History curriculum will be dependent on the teacher's thinking about, understanding of and attitudes towards the content, objectives, and goals of the curriculum (Bantwini, 2010; McCrum, 2013; Smith & Desimone, 2003). In addition, the success of a new curriculum would be dependent on the teacher's past experiences, beliefs and values (Bantwini, 2010; McCrum, 2013; Smith & Desimone, 2003).

1.3. Rationale and Motivation

This study was motivated by four factors; personal, professional, conceptual, and scholarly. On a personal level, I am a qualified history teacher who is busy studying towards a masters degree. As a history teacher, I hold the view that the current CAPS History curriculum is overtly Eurocentric. I believe that it prioritises European history and associated perspectives of the world. When I first heard that the DBE was planning to reform the History curriculum and introduce an Afrocentric History curriculum, I was delighted because this would give me the opportunity to teach African history and teach it from an African perspective and provide me with an opportunity to teach South African students a history that they could resonate with. As a history teacher, I believed that Afrocentrism would assist in resolving the persistent challenge of Eurocentrism. Based on this, I was interested to find out what other history teachers thought about the idea of Afrocentrism in history education.

On a professional level, this study enables me to engage with other history teachers and learn from them. It also enables me to understand Afrocentrism better and thus be in a position to properly teach an Afrocentric curriculum when it is implemented. This study offers me professional growth. Furthermore, it will hopefully also help other history teachers to understand Afrocentrism better.

On a conceptual level, I hoped that this study would assist me to understand the thinking of history teachers on Afrocentrism as it relates to history education. It was important for me to understand what history teachers thought about Afrocentrism given the fact that there are plans to introduce an Afrocentric history curriculum in South Africa (Macupe, 2022).

On a scholarly level, my goal was, and still is, to contribute to research that focuses on Afrocentrism as it relates to history education. I am of the view that this is important given the fact that there are plans to introduce an Afrocentric History curriculum in South Africa to replace the current CAPS History curriculum (Macupe, 2022). If we are to implement Afrocentric history education we need to clearly understand the concept of Afrocentrism as understood by African history teachers. I believe that the idea of Afrocentrism and its implication for history education need to be thoroughly explored because this is under researched, possibly because the idea of introducing an Afrocentric History curriculum has been a relatively recent one. Therefore, there was a gap that needed to be filled in this regard on a scholarly level.

1.4. Purpose and Focus of the Study

The purpose of this study was to understand the thinking of selected African history teachers on Afrocentrism. The focus of the study was on selected African history teachers and their thinking about and understanding of Afrocentrism. Furthermore, the purpose of this study was to gain an understanding of the reasons behind the thinking of the African history teachers on Afrocentrism. **Moreover, it is important to emphasise that this study focused on history teachers who identified as African, whether they taught African history or not.**

1.5. Research Questions

Research questions are necessary to assist the researcher to focus the purpose of the research. Therefore, the following questions, which are linked directly to the title, focus, and purpose of the study, were posed.

- What is the thinking of African history teachers on Afrocentrism?
- Why do African history teachers think about Afrocentrism the way they do?

1.6. Concept Clarification

The following concepts were clarified to create a frame of reference for this study. Clarification is necessary given that there are broad and complex terms. Thus, these concepts are presented as “working definitions” below for the purpose of this study.

Afrocentrism/Afrocentric: The idea of Afrocentrism is a complex and multifaceted one. Afrocentrism is “essentially a quality of perspective or approach rooted in the cultural image and human interest of African people” (Karenga, 1988, p. 404). In other words, Afrocentrism is a concept that seeks to understand the perspective of Africans. This concept will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 2 of this study. **It should be noted that the term “Afrocentrism is used in this study because other Afrocentric scholars have also used it instead of the term “Afrocentricity”.**

African: Afrocentric ideology states that Africa and Africans should be centred. However, there is a contentious debate about what it means to be African (Maposa, 2014). It is relatively easy to define and demarcate the geography of Africa; however, the same cannot be said about African identity or the person (Maposa, 2014). For the purposes of this study, an African is conceptualised as anyone who identifies themselves with Africa and the African people, or are being identified as such (Adibe, 2009). Sobukwe (1960, as cited in Lebakeng, 2018) describes an African as “anyone who lives in and pays their allegiance to Africa and who is prepared to subject himself to African majority rule” (p. 1). This means that African identity is dependent on the self. Moreover, it means that African

identity is not unconditional according to this perspective. One has to identify themselves with Africa and the people of Africa in order to be considered African.

Thinking: Holyoak and Morrison (2012: p.1) describe thinking as “explicit claims of what someone takes to be the truth about the world”. In other words, it is a way of seeing the world or a particular phenomenon.

Eurocentrism: This concept is used in this study to refer to a worldview that is centred on Western civilisation, or a biased view that favours Western civilisation over non-Western civilisation (Joseph et al., 1990).

1.7. Methodological Overview

This is a qualitative case study about the thinking of African history teachers on Afrocentrism. Mack et al. (2005) state that qualitative research seeks to understand phenomena from the perspective of the local population it involves. This qualitative study followed the interpretative paradigm. Interpretivists believe that knowledge is subjective (Creswell, 2003; Dean 2018) and this view was adopted in this study.

The methodology of this study was a case study of selected history teachers in Quintile 3 schools in Makhanda (formerly Grahamstown). Creswell and Poth (2016) state that case studies seek to better understand a case. This case study thus sought to understand the thinking of African history teachers on Afrocentrism. The participants were African history teachers in six Quintile 3 schools in Makhanda. The data for this study were constructed through individual conversational interviews. The Afrocentrism school of thought served as the theoretical framework for this study. Furthermore, the data obtained from the history teachers were analysed using thematic analysis. The analysed

data were used to understand the thinking of African history teachers on Afrocentrism and to propose answers to the research questions that were posed in this study.

1.8. Overview of Study

This chapter provided the introduction, background, and context to this study. The next chapter, Chapter 2, provides a review of literature related to this study and the theoretical framework. Chapter 3 outlines the research design and methodology and the data analysis will be presented in Chapter 4. Chapter 5 provides a discussion and analysis of the findings. The reflection, recommendations, summary, and conclusion of the study are also dealt with in Chapter 5.

1.9. Conclusion

The main purpose of this chapter was to introduce my dissertation. In this chapter, I provided the context and background and discussed the purpose of the study. This chapter also outlined the factors which motivated it. Furthermore, I discussed why it was important to understand the views and thinking of history teachers on the concept of Afrocentrism. In the next chapter, I engage with the literature and theory related to Afrocentrism, history education, and teacher's thinking about Afrocentrism.

Chapter 2

Review of the Literature

2.1. Introduction

The first chapter of this study revealed that the focus of this study is on Afrocentrism and the thinking of African history teachers on it. The purpose of this chapter is to review the literature on Afrocentrism as it relates to history education. This chapter is divided into four sections. The origins and main arguments of Afrocentrism are reviewed in the first section. The second section reviews the perspective of Afrocentrism on history education and the Afrocentric teacher. In the third section I review Afrocentrism in the South African context. In addition, the fourth section of this review discusses the importance of teacher thinking and its role in the implementation of the curriculum. A conclusion and summary are provided in the conclusion and the gap exposed in the literature is outlined. This is essential to locate my study and to understand and contextualise the data that was generated during this study. Furthermore, based on the literature, a theoretical framework for this study was also developed.

2.2. The Foundations of Afrocentrism as an Idea

The origins of Afrocentrism cannot be established with confidence (Chawane, 2016). The consensus is that although it originated in the United States (US), its focus is on the African continent and Africans (Chawane, 2016). There were several factors which contributed to the development of the idea of Afrocentrism. One of these factors was the denial of proper education to African-Americans, which caused African-Americans to call

for an education system that would focus on them and their culture (Chawane, 2016; Early, 1994).

Another was the experience of double consciousness experienced by African-Americans, which caused some people to reject Americanisation and focus on what they perceived to be African culture (Chawane, 2016; Pittman, 2016). Double Consciousness refers to the challenge of navigating between the African and European-American culture experienced by African Americans in the US (Pittman, 2016).

Afrocentrism seeks to achieve a similar objective to those of Pan-Africanism and Negritudism which had been established earlier and from which it draws and borrows its ideas. Both these movements sought to unify Africans, particularly those in the diaspora, and to link them to their roots and culture in Africa (Adi, 2018). The leaders of these movements believed that Africans in the US had been treated as outsiders and thus needed to find their own identity (Adi, 2018).

Afrocentrism is usually associated with American professor and philosopher Molefi Kete Asante. He was born Arther Lee Smith Jr but changed his name to be Afrocentric. However, realistically the idea of Afrocentrism can be traced as far back as the 1920s. During that time, scholars including Houston argued that African history should be studied through the perspective of Africans rather than Europeans (Houston, 1926). The idea of preserving and centring African culture had also been discussed by Du Bois (1935) and Woodson (1933). However, the idea only began to gain traction in the 1950s and 1960s (Achebe, 1965; Diop, 1954). This might have been due to the influence of the Civil Rights Movement led by African Americans which sought to fight for their rights, liberty and recognition in the USA. In the 1980s, Afrocentrism became popular both in academic and

cultural settings (Asante, 1980; Williams, 1987). The reawakening of these ideas came as African Americans began to realise that civil rights were not enough, instead, there needed to be an eradication of the dominance of Eurocentrism. From the above scholarship it is evident that Afrocentrism has a long history, it is not a new idea.

The recent scholars and proponents of Afrocentrism were encouraged by the aforementioned scholars. Contemporary Afrocentrism scholars build on the earlier schools of thought, providing very little originality. As such, elements of the earlier scholarship can be found in nearly all the popular modern Afrocentric scholarship. Very little in recent scholarship goes beyond the main arguments of Diop, DuBois, and others. For instance, much of the arguments found in Asante's (1980) major works can be traced back to the early 1900s. This is despite his erroneous claim that he was introducing a new and original academic discipline. Contemporary Afrocentric scholars such as Asante (1980), Keto (2001), Sesanti (2021) and others only gave new life to already existing ideas.

It is fair to argue, based on the above, that the makeup of Afrocentrism is complex, it is a mixture or blend of ideas. In this regard, Afrocentrism is a "cocktail of thoughts, ideas and emotions" (Nadezhda, 2016, p. 1). The two main groups that have influenced Afrocentrism are the so-called African and African American groups. The ideas of the first president of independent Senegal, poet, scholar, and founder of Negritudism, Leopold Senghor, first president of Ghana and Pan-Africanist, Kwame Nkrumah, and Senegalese historian and scholar Cheikh Anta Diop are some of the African thinkers who influenced the ideas of Afrocentrism. The ideas of these scholars have been widely used by Afrocentric scholars. The ideas of the uniqueness of Africans, for example, were drawn

from Senghor's theory of Negritudism; the ideas of African socialism and consciencism were drawn from Nkrumah; and the ideas about Egypt and African culture were drawn from Diop. Furthermore, Afrocentrism was influenced by African American scholars such as William DuBois and Frederick Douglass. The ideas about slavery and freedom were drawn from the thinking of Douglass, and the ideas about education reform and identity were drawn from DuBois. There is a third group which can be seen in the ideas of Afrocentrism, these include the ideas of Orientalism of Edward Said (1978) and ideas from Frantz Fanon (1967). This thus demonstrates the complexity of Afrocentrism.

Afrocentrism spread rapidly from its conception until the middle of the 1990s when it began to decline (Chawane, 2016). Afrocentrism is no longer as popular as it was both in America and Africa. The ideas of Black Consciousness, Pan-Africanism, Negritudism and others declined alongside Afrocentrism. Some of the reasons for this decline were the change in the politics, the fall of segregation laws in America, and the fall of colonisation and apartheid in Africa. Activists and scholars began to adopt new ideas such as multiculturalism, ideas that sought to unite all cultures and not just a single culture, being African culture in this instance. Black Consciousness, Pan-Africanism, Negritudism, and Afrocentrism were formed mostly as a response to colonisation, segregation, and apartheid. Multiculturalism is now a much more popular approach both in Africa and America. However, the idea of Afrocentrism has been given new life in South Africa due to the calls for the decolonisation of both higher and basic education. South African scholars, politicians, activists, and students have called for an Afrocentric curriculum, particularly for history education (Macupe, 2022). The calls for decolonisation and Afrocentrism have been led mostly by the students themselves in South Africa.

Students at South African universities began to call for decolonisation through the Rhodes Must Fall and the Fees Must Fall movements which shook the entire country (Ndlovu, 2017). These were calls made by students demanding free and decolonised higher education in South Africa. They complained that the curriculum in higher education institutions was Eurocentric, and that this needed to be changed, given that South Africa was in a post-colonial period (Ndlovu, 2017).

2.3. The Afrocentric Idea

Afrocentrism can be viewed as a worldview in which the values, culture, interests, experiences and perspectives of Africans centre and dominate (Asante, 1980). This means that Africans should centre in all spheres. Centring means that Africans become agents instead of just the “other”. It can also be defined as an academic and political movement which focuses on the accomplishments and culture of Africa as a geopolitical space and on Africans (Early, 1994). From this perspective, it can be understood that Afrocentrism is calling for the recognition of the contributions of Africans in the world. From these conceptualisations of Afrocentrism, it is evident that Afrocentrism is calling for a change in the way that the world has been viewed and in the way which world history has been narrated. That change should take into consideration the role of Africa and Africans in the world. Furthermore, from these conceptualisations of Afrocentrism it is clear that Afrocentrists assume that Africans have common views, cultures, and are different from other people in the world physically, culturally and in terms of thinking. This is a very essentialist view of the African experience and being. It is simply not possible to confine African experiences into a singular and monolithic narrative. Africans, by dint of

size and the geographical size of the continent, have very unlike positions and experiences.

In terms of the genesis of the idea, certain Afrocentrists argue that African history and culture started in Ancient Egypt, which they refer to as “Kemet” (Asante, 1980; Diop & Cook, 2012; Will, 1996). They believe that world civilization began in Ancient Egypt rather than in Greece or Rome (Asante, 1980; Diop & Cook, 2012; Will, 1996). In addition, Afrocentrists believe that Ancient Egypt was made up of a Black society (Asante, 1980; Diop & Cook, 2012; Will, 1996). The attempts to colourise ancient history and civilisations should be rejected. In other words, the attempts to fit the ancient society of Egypt into modern racial categories of black and white are done from a position which lacks historical and biological justification. The racial constructions of black and white, and the boundaries of continents and countries did not exist until much later. Furthermore, according to Afrocentrism the ideas, history, technologies, culture and achievements of Ancient Egypt were stolen and obscured by the Europeans (Asante, 1980; Diop & Cook, 2012; Will, 1996). Again, the attempt to claim every success in world history for African people is problematic, and it is no different from what the Europeans have been doing all along, especially when there is no sufficient historical evidence to support those claims.

Afrocentrism states that Africa and Africans have been oppressed and dominated for many centuries (Asante, 1980; Diop & Cook, 2012). This domination happened mainly through colonisation, slavery, and apartheid and was conducted by the Europeans. The oppression and domination of Africa and Africans through slavery, colonisation and apartheid, disrupted the history, culture and development of Africa and the African people. This disruption makes it seem as if Africans were not capable of

developing and advancing on their own. Thus, Afrocentrism argues that this needs to be rectified and Afrocentrists believe that the rectification should begin by amending the manner in which history is taught currently.

In light of the above, proponents of Afrocentrism argue that Africa must be used as a point of reference. They state that to date Europe has been wrongfully centred and used as a point of reference (Chawane, 2016; Sesanti, 2018). The dominance of Europe is not, in their view, based on merit; rather it was embedded forcefully and violently. Therefore, the central position that is occupied by Europe cannot be justified. There are, as per the Afrocentric view, other groups of people who contributed to the world and should be recognised. The European view and experience of the world should not be imposed as universal (Asante, 1991; Mazama, 2001). Furthermore, Afrocentrists argue that the African experience has been viewed through a Eurocentric lens and that this is not possible (Mazama, 2001). They argue that this must change and that the African experience must be viewed from an African perspective. The experiences of these groups are not the same. The African and European experiences are irreconcilable. Therefore, each group must be given the opportunity to speak for themselves.

2.4. Homogenous African Culture

The culture of a group of people is what differentiates them from other groups. Culture is a way of life, and each group of people has a way of living and doing things which differs from other groups (Idang, 2015). Before the idea of race became popular, Africans distinguished other groups, particularly Arabs, based on culture and language (Mazrui, 2005). Afrocentric scholars contend that there is a distinct African culture and that there is such a thing as a pure African culture (Mamdani, 1999). This culture is

transferred from generation to generation (Khoapa, 1980). According to this view, African culture is homogeneous (Diop, 1978; Eze, 2013; Tembo, 2016).

In addition, Africans all over the African continent, it is argued, share similar dominant cultural traits and these distinguish them from other groups of people in the rest of the world (Dei, 1994; Diop, 1978; Mazrui, 2005; Nkrumah, 1970; Tembo, 2016). This view is problematic because it reduces the cultural diversity of Africans. In Africa, there are as many cultures as there are people. There are similar characteristics amongst Africans, but there are also differences. For instance, it would be unrealistic to argue, as certain Afrocentrists do, that Africans in the diaspora and those on the continent have the same culture. This cannot be the case given the fact that they have been separated for centuries and the process of acculturation has taken place. Similarly, people on the African continent share little in common, except for geographical location, which is the continent. The attempt to present African culture as homogeneous is, therefore, problematic. Afrocentrism must recognise the different cultures within Africa.

Certain Afrocentrists also believe that Afrocentrism can assist Africans by taking them back to their traditions and cultures (Asante, 1980; Chawane, 2016; Karenga, 2012; Mazama, 2001; Sesanti, 2018). To them this is important because Africans must reclaim their cultures and preserve them for the future generations. They cannot be expected to blend into European culture and they also cannot be emissaries of Eurocentrism. Furthermore, Africans cannot be expected to move back and forth between African and European cultures. They must be completely independent and pave their own way. Anything less certainly would make them less African.

2.5. The African Person

The ideology of Afrocentrism proposes that Africa and Africans should be centred. However, there is a contentious debate about what it means to be African. It is easy to define and demarcate the geography of Africa; however, the same cannot be said about the African person or identity. The defining of African identity through skin colour became entrenched during the colonial period (Idang, 2015). During this period, it was driven by racism, oppression and discrimination directed towards the Black people. According to Idang (2015) skin colour is a trait that differentiates population groups because it is the largest organ, it is visible and stands out. The categorization of the people of Africa as Black was not a case of self-definition, these were categories and names that they were given by others, particularly by those who colonised Africa. The majority of Afrocentrists continue with the use of this colonial categorisation of the African people as Black people. In this regard, Asante (1988: 19) states that Afrocentrism “resembles the blackman, speaks to him, looks like him and wants for him what he wants for himself”. The words “Black” and “African” are usually used interchangeably by most scholars of Afrocentrism. According to this view, Afrocentrism means that the perspective, experiences and history of Black people should be centred.

Furthermore, Afrocentric scholars, essentialise African identity. They believe that there are certain characteristics or traits that one must possess in order to be regarded as African. If one does not possess any of the above traits then they are excluded from African identity. Black skin colour is the most dominant definition of African identity amongst the Afrocentrists. The essentialist view of African identity rejects the idea that African identity is complex. They argue that “if everyone is African, then no one is African” (Appiah & Gutmann, 2009, p. 14). According to this view, if there are Africans, then there

must be non-Africans- we cannot all be Africans. There must be categories, measurements, borders, limits, characteristics, and so forth to the African identity.

The reality is that the African identity is complex and cannot be simplified or essentialised. The essentialising of African identity must be rejected. Africans should be allowed to define themselves, rather than have to use colonial definitions of who they are. The thinking of Robert Sobukwe on African personhood provides an alternative. He conceptualises an African as “anyone who lives in and pays their allegiance to Africa and who is prepared to subject himself to African majority rule” (Sobukwe, 2019, p. 1). This means that African identity is dependent on the self. It also means that African identity is not unconditional. According to this perspective, one has to identify oneself with Africa and the people of Africa to be considered African. Regardless, people are allowed to define who they are. Anyone is African if they choose to define or identify themselves as African. The African people themselves should be given the freedom and right to construct their own ideas of what it means to be an African (Mbeki, 1998). In this thinking on African personhood, the idea of self-identification should be the most important aspect of African identity.

2.6. Divergent Views Amongst Afrocentrists

Afrocentrists have a diversity of views and ideas. They agree in some arguments and disagree on others. They agree that Afrocentrism is meant to contribute to a comprehensive history of the world, a perspective that is not one-sided (Asante, 2002; Chawane, 2016; Dei, 1994; Karenga, 2012; Keto, 2001; Mazama, 2001; Sesanti, 2021). Proponents of Afrocentrism also agree that introducing the history and experiences of Africans into the current Eurocentric perspective of history would lead to a better

understanding of world history as a whole (Asante, 2002; Chawane, 2016; Dei, 1994; Karenga, 2012; Keto, 2001; Mazama, 2001; Sesanti, 2021). Furthermore, proponents of Afrocentrism agree that Africa should be treated as the centre and starting point of world civilization (Asante, 2002; Chawane, 2016; Dei, 1994; Karenga, 2012; Keto, 2001; Mazama, 2001; Sesanti, 2021). In addition, Afrocentrists agree that the biases of Eurocentrism must be eradicated and that Africans must narrate their own history from their own perspective (Asante, 2002; Chawane, 2016; Dei, 1994; Karenga, 2012; Keto, 2001; Mazama, 2001; Sesanti, 2021).

However, they disagree on the issue of race. While some Afrocentrists are clear that their focus is on Black people (Asante, 2002; Chawane, 2016; Dei, 1994; Karenga, 2012; Mazama, 2001). Others advocate for a more inclusive approach when it comes to race (Keto, 2001; Sesanti, 2021). Furthermore, while some Afrocentrists argue that Africa is a unique and an exceptional place in the world and deserves to be treated as such (Asante, 2002; Dei, 1994; Mazama, 2001), others believe that Africa is just an ordinary place and needs to be treated in the same way as other places in the world (Keto, 2001). There are also nationalists amongst Afrocentrists who believe that Africans, particularly in America, should have their own separate independent state. On the other hand, there are Afrocentrists who are opposed to such an idea. They prefer to remain in the US, they advocate for Afrocentrism within the United States. Some Afrocentrists support the Pan Africanist approach to education, which has it that Africa should have one unified curriculum which focuses on Africa and Africans (Asante, 2002), while other Afrocentrists argue that each country should have its own curriculum as long as it centres on Africa and Africans (Keto, 2001).

In addition, there are Afrocentrists who exclude Africans who were born and live on other continents. Mafeje (2001) argues that Africans who were born and live on other continents, for instance, African Americans, have ceased to be Africans because they are different culturally, socially and historically from the Africans who were born and live on the African continent. According to this perspective, people who live in Africa have their own history, culture, perspective, and way of viewing phenomena, which is different from the people who live in other parts of the world. A person from Africa cannot view things in the same way as a person from Europe or Asia (Mafeje, 2001).

Therefore, Afrocentrism, according to this view, means that only the people of Africa should be given the opportunity to provide their perspective of the world. This is against the views of other Afrocentrists who view African people in Africa and those in the diaspora as one (Asante, 2002; Dei, 1994; Mazama, 2001).

2.7. From Eurocentrism to Afrocentrism

As demonstrated in this literature review, Afrocentrism has developed as a response to Eurocentric historiography. In this regard, it has been argued that Eurocentrism is a huge threat to African people (Asante, 1990). As a consequence, Afrocentrism has been viewed as the opposite of Eurocentrism. This has consequently been argued by some to be a view which seeks to remove the European perspective of the world. The argument that Afrocentrism seeks to replace Eurocentrism is based on the fact that Afrocentrists argue that Ancient Egypt should be given prominence over and replace Ancient Greece. Afrocentrists who support this perspective argue that Ancient Greece should take glory for only the contribution that they have made in the world, rather than claim achievements which are not of their own. They further argue that Ancient Egypt

must be given its rightful place as a civilisation that existed before Ancient Greece. In other words, Afrocentrists who support this thinking believe that both Ancient Greece and Ancient Egypt should be given their rightful place in the history of the world (Adeleke, 2015).

Other Afrocentrists argue that Afrocentrism is not meant to replace Eurocentrism and other world views (Asante, 2000; Chawane; 2016; Chukwuokolo, 2009). They posit that this is not meant to create new divisions, instead, it is meant to add new perspectives to those that already exist (Asante, 2000; Chawane; 2016; Chukwuokolo, 2009). In this regard, Afrocentrism is one perspective with which to view the world. It is not the opposite of Eurocentrism, and it does not seek to replace other cultural perspectives of viewing the world (Asante, 2000; Chawane; 2016; Chukwuokolo, 2009). Afrocentrists in this school of thought further assert that Afrocentrism, unlike Eurocentrism, does not deny others their rightful place in the world (Asante, 2000; Chawane; 2016; Chukwuokolo, 2009). Instead, it seeks to collaborate with others (Asante, 2000; Chawane; 2016; Chukwuokolo, 2009). In this regard, Chukwuokolo (2009) argues that Afrocentrism is not violent and does not aim to violate other people. Instead, it seeks to set the record straight.

Furthermore, some Afrocentrists argue that multiculturalism cannot be achieved without Afrocentrism (Asante, 2000; Chawane; 2016; Chukwuokolo, 2009). More specifically, Asante (2000) argues that is just one of several perspectives that will eventually contribute to multiculturalism. According to Asante (2000: p. 17) Afrocentrism does not deny “the right of Europe to view the world from its cultural centre”. However, Afrocentrism emphasises that its main objective is to stop the imposition of Eurocentrism on other cultures; it contends that Eurocentrism must not be regarded as a universal view

(Asante, 2000; Chawane; 2016; Chukwuokolo, 2009). It can thus be concluded that Afrocentrism is a view which seeks to coexist with other world views rather than replace or dominate them. Furthermore, according to Afrocentrists, Afrocentrism is anti-hegemonic.

In sum, there could be no Afrocentrism if there was no Eurocentrism. Without Eurocentrism, Afrocentrism is devoid of many basic epistemological premises. In fact, Afrocentrism borrows many of its structures from Eurocentrism, so the links between the two are not coincidental. This is dangerous because we should not move from one hegemony to another.

2.8. The Case Against Afrocentrism

However, criticism of Afrocentrism also exists. Some critics have argued that Afrocentrism is not a theory for Africans. Instead, it is a theory for African Americans because it was founded by African-Americans (Collins, 2005). Such critics further argue that because Afrocentrism was founded in the US, it should not be imposed on Africa, and that it is wrong to impose American theories on Africa (Collins, 2005). The view that Afrocentrism is a theory for African Americans lacks substance. Afrocentrism resonates with the people on the African continent and has a large following here, despite its foundations being in the US. In fact, Afrocentrism draws from the views of many African scholars who are based on the African continent, and some of the most prominent Afrocentric scholars are based on the African continent. Therefore, the attempt to separate the Africans in the diaspora from those on the continent is not a convincing exercise.

The critics of Afrocentrism have argued that Afrocentrism was meant to cause disunity amongst Black and White people, both in Africa and in America (Appiah, 1998; Lefkowitz, 1992; Schlesinger, 1991). Arguably, the said unity is actually artificial; there can be no true unity while one group is still dominant over the other. It could further be argued that what Black and White people in Africa and the rest of the world need is equality, and that unity should be secondary.

Critics of Afrocentrism further argue that Afrocentrism is a political movement, and that it is not scholarly in nature (Collins, 2005). More specifically, Lefkowitz (1992) argues that Afrocentrism and its approach to history is nothing but a myth and is only designed to boost the confidence of Africans rather than to set the record straight. The problem with Lefkowitz (1992) is that she dismisses the perspective of Africans. Her perspective further perpetuates the marginalisation of the African people and seeks to maintain the status quo which sees the European perspective as more reliable, scientific and accurate. Such an approach is problematic because it seeks to leave African people in the same marginalised position which they were at previously.

2.9. Responses to Criticism of Afrocentrism

Proponents of Afrocentrism have responded to the criticism levelled against it. It has been pointed out that most of the critics of Afrocentrism are White scholars. The response was to argue that White scholars who criticise Afrocentrism do so because they fear that Afrocentrism will challenge and displace Eurocentric hegemony (Early, 1994). In other words, Afrocentrists believe that the criticism is based on fear rather than merit. European White scholars want to dominate and control knowledge, hence they criticise and reject anything which seeks to challenge them (Asante, 2016). Asante (2016) further

argues that White scholars do not want to admit that European civilisation was influenced by other cultures. Instead, they want the world to continue believing that world civilization was brought by White people, thus they oppose everything that seeks to suggest otherwise, even when hardcore historical evidence is provided.

Afrocentrists also respond to the Black people who criticise them. Asante (2010) argues that Black people who criticise Afrocentrism are brainwashed and are uncomfortable with themselves. In his thinking, the Black scholars who criticise Afrocentrism have self-hate (Asante, 2020). They are people who do not believe that Black people are capable of making contributions to world history. Included amongst these Black people are Antony Appiah and Stanley Crouch. They are referred to as Black people who criticise Afrocentrism to please their white masters. These Black critics of Afrocentrism are referred to as White people in black skin (Asante, 2020; Early, 1994). By rejecting Afrocentrism, they are rejecting themselves, their true culture, and history. Furthermore, by rejecting Afrocentrism, Black people are accepting White domination and racism.

2.10. Afrocentric History Education

One of the main objectives of Afrocentrism is to influence curriculum content, particularly in history education, so that it puts an emphasis on the role of Africa and Africans in the history of the world. The idea of having an Afrocentric curriculum can be traced to the early 1900s (DuBois, 1940; Woodson, 1933). Afrocentric scholars argued that Africans had accepted the European ideas of who they were historically and allowed themselves to be reliant on the education systems of the Europeans (Clarke, 1991). The Afrocentric approach states that Africans should have a self-reliant education system so

that their education would not be dependent on others. Decolonisation and the complete emancipation of Africa and its people cannot be achieved if they are still being educated from the perspective of their colonisers. The process of decolonisation cannot be driven by those who were the colonisers; it has to be driven by those who were colonised. However, that cannot happen if those who were colonised, namely; Africans, are still being educated from the perspective of those who were colonisers. Afrocentric scholars, especially Asante, further argue that Eurocentric education has caused psychological damage to Africans (Asante, 1990). Thus, Africans cannot continue to rely on Eurocentric education, given the damage that it has caused to African societies. This damage can be undone through Afrocentric education, an education system by Africans for Africans that prioritises their development and healing.

Afrocentrists such as Asante believe that the role and contribution of Africa and Africans in world history and civilisation has been distorted, particularly in history education (Asante, 1991). In his view, Africa and Africans have not been given the prominence that they deserve in history education (Asante, 1991). Instead, such prominence has been, wrongfully, given to Europe and Europeans (Asante, 1991; Forbes, 1993; Moses, 2015). Consequently, Afrocentric education is meant to correct this distortion and restore the role of Africa and Africans, particularly in history education. It is also meant to place Africa and Africans at the centre of history education and narrate history from the perspectives of the Africans. Africans have their own history, and this should be centred and emphasised in history education. Hence, Afrocentric education affirms Africans as active historical agents and challenges European claims to superiority.

Some Afrocentrists also argue that Eurocentric education is anti-African (Asante, 1991; Giddings, 2001). In this regard, Afrocentric scholars argue that the Eurocentric education system that exists at present creates inequalities between Black and White students, leaving Black students at a disadvantage (Asante, 1991; Giddings, 2001; Gocking, 1993). The criticism is that the Eurocentric education system was designed for European people and thus cannot be suitable for educating African people. Africans should have an education system which centres them and teaches them from their own cultural context. Each group should be educated according to their own cultural context and the history of that group should be centred. The Eurocentric education system was never meant to properly educate African students. Instead, it was meant to miseducate African students, prevent their cultural development and keep them in a position of second-class citizenship.

2.11. The Afrocentric History Teacher

One of the most important aspects of Afrocentric education is the teacher. For Afrocentric education to be implemented properly, the right teachers must be available (Shockley, 2011; Shockley & Frederick, 2010). Manley (1994) proposes rather idealistically that the Afrocentric teacher should be bias free. In her thinking, the Afrocentric teacher is supposed to provide the students with multiple perspectives of history, rather than a one-sided version of history (Manley, 1994). Moreover, an Afrocentric teacher should be someone who does not function to maintain the status quo (Manley, 1994). For Afrocentrism to be fully implemented in education, there must be teachers who are willing to act against the dominance of Eurocentrism, rather than support it. Furthermore, Afrocentric teachers should be teachers who understand the

needs of the African students (Akua, 2020). To provide Afrocentric pedagogy the teachers must understand the cultures and experiences of the African students.

Afrocentric teachers should, furthermore, have respect for the cultures, beliefs, and values of African students. Afrocentrism is about respecting Africans, their history and culture, therefore, the Afrocentric teacher is expected to do the same in the classroom (Akua, 2020). Teachers who do not respect or appreciate the African experience automatically oppose the objectives of Afrocentrism (Manley, 1994).

The Afrocentric teacher should be someone who has a strong knowledge about the history and achievements of Africans (Shockley, 2011), should know about the historical contributions of Africans, and should pass this knowledge to the students. In addition, Manley (1994) argues that for Afrocentrism to be successfully implemented, the teachers should undergo special training. The teachers should be properly trained to implement Afrocentrism in the classroom (Ntseane, 2011). The teachers must be properly trained on how to respond to the issues of African students. Most of the time teachers are generally well trained to deal with the issues of learning and culture of the dominant cultural group. This is most certainly the case in South Africa, where the teachers are experts when it comes to Western culture but they are absolutely clueless about African cultures, hence, developing the curriculum is important. However, it is also important to develop the teachers as well.

2.12. Impact of Teacher Thinking on the Curriculum

In South Africa, curriculum changes are primarily meant to address the racial inequalities that are present in the country as a result of the colonial and apartheid periods (Bantwini, 2010). Hence, the Afrocentric curriculum that the government wants to

introduce also has this objective at heart. In the view of Bantwini (2010), the meanings that a teacher assigns to a new curriculum affects their implementation of the curriculum. This means that the thinking of the teachers affects the success of education reforms. Therefore, it is important that teacher thinking is aligned with the vision of the curriculum. Moreover, teachers are crucial to the success of any curriculum reform and their knowledge, thinking, beliefs and perceptions play an important role in the success of any curriculum changes (Bantwini, 2010; Smith & Desimone, 2003). Therefore, it is important to involve the teachers and understand their views when it comes to curriculum changes. Curriculum changes are always subject to individual interpretation, regardless of how they are portrayed in documents or by their proponents (Bantwini, 2010; Little, 2001). Thus, if teacher thinking is not aligned with the curriculum, then it has an impact on the implementation of the curriculum, and consequently, there might be divergence in practice (Bantwini, 2010).

The knowledge, thinking, and understanding of teachers have a significant impact on their teaching, and thus on student learning. It is argued that teacher thinking shapes what and how teachers teach (Mccrum, 2013; Muchmore, 2002). In their study, Muchmore (2002) found that teacher thinking and beliefs were affected by a variety of factors including childhood experiences, high school experiences, and university experiences and that these factors then guided the teacher's teaching practices. Therefore, the educational background of the educator has an impact on their thinking and thus teaching. Additionally, Moncrieffe (2020) argues that history teachers who were socialised and educated through a Eurocentric perspective of history are likely to possess such thinking and reproduce it in their history classrooms as well. Moreover, the

educational achievement of students is affected by the manner in which the educator delivers content (Phatshwane & Faimau, 2019). Education involves the teacher, the learner and the content (curriculum); hence, changing one of these aspects without considering the others will not lead to the desired change (Vandeyar, 2020). The teachers should never be overlooked as they are the key agents when it comes to delivering the curriculum. The majority of history teachers in South Africa grew up and were educated during or towards the end of apartheid and that influenced their thinking and thus classroom teaching practices (Nussey, 2018). Consequently, history teachers in South Africa need to address how their personal biographies have influenced their teaching (Weldon, 2009). The history teacher's thinking has the capacity to either broaden or reduce the scope and depth of the curriculum content, thus, framing the historical views of the students.

The most important person in the implementation of the curriculum is the teacher as they have knowledge and experience when it comes to curriculum practice. They spend time in the classroom implementing the curriculum and they work with the students for whom the curriculum is meant. Teachers know the needs of the students very well, compared to other education stakeholders. Therefore, they should play a central role when it comes to any curriculum development and reform. Teachers are the ones who know best about what a curriculum should be. Any approach to curriculum design should be assessed and supported by them. The perceptions, thinking, attitudes and beliefs of teachers should not be disregarded when it comes to curriculum development. In fact, the ideas, opinions, and knowledge of the teachers should be incorporated into curriculum development.

2.13. Afrocentrism in South Africa

What then is the position of Afrocentrism in South Africa? Sono (1998) argues that the idea of Afrocentrism was not popular in South Africa in the 1980s and 1990s. According to Sono (1998) South Africans were rather more occupied with the Black Consciousness and Pan Africanist movements. It was only recently that scholars started to talk about Afrocentrism, specifically after the release of the MTT report. This was brought about by calls for the decolonisation of education and the demand for Afrocentric education, particularly at higher education levels.

During the colonial and apartheid periods in South Africa, African learners struggled to obtain proper formal education (Christie, 2020). This is still the case- even in the democratic era, when promises of equal education have not been fulfilled (Christie, 2020; Mahabeer, 2020). The government has changed the curriculum several times to try and remedy this situation. This has prompted certain scholars to call for an Afrocentric education model to address the struggles encountered by the African students, in particular (Mahabeer, 2020). The argument is that the current education system in South Africa is Eurocentric, it mis-educates the African students, reproduces racist ideology, and produces students who are distanced from their African culture. Furthermore, it forces the African students to adopt Eurocentric values, losing African values in the process (Sesanti, 2019).

In the view of Kgari-Masondo (2020), a curriculum is based on the stories that are taught to students about the past, present, and future. The criticism is that in South Africa the stories that are in the CAPS curriculum are extracted primarily from Western knowledge (Kgari-Masondo, 2020). Therefore, the curriculum in South Africa remains Eurocentric and continues to perpetuate the dominance of the Western and White

privilege (Heleta, 2016). Consequently, it is argued that the curriculum still has stereotypes and prejudices, it patronises Africa and African people, and Africa's history has been marginalised both at basic and tertiary education levels (Heleta, 2016). Angier (2017) also states that the previous and current history curriculums in South Africa were meant to build unity between Black and White people and instil democratic values. However, none of the post-apartheid history curriculums have focused on giving Africans an opportunity to tell their history, after having been denied the opportunity to do so during the apartheid and colonial periods. It is important, therefore, to decolonise the curriculum at both basic education and higher education levels. This is necessary to eradicate the dominance of the West in South African education.

It is argued that Eurocentric education puts Europeans at the centre of the world (Constandius et al., 2015). As a result, Europe has to be decentralised from the education system, particularly in Africa. It should only be centered in European countries. In the view of Constandius et al. (2015), education should begin with the knowledge of the self and then move outwards to the knowledge of the other people of the world. This means that the curriculum in African countries should place Africa and Africans at the centre and Africa should not be placed on the margins in the education system of

African countries, as is currently the case in African countries such as South Africa. Hence, Afrocentrism is needed in order to reposition Africa and African epistemologies at the centre of teaching and learning (Eybers, 2019). Moreover, African centrality is needed to achieve decolonisation at both the basic and higher levels of education in South Africa. Afrocentrism in South Africa is driven mainly by the belief that the youth does not know their history. However, it would be difficult to decentralise Europe from African history

curricula, given the fact that Europe played a central role in world history, particularly, in African history. They colonised Africa, controlled each and every aspect of African life, and influenced and changed the course of history, particularly African history.

In South Africa, there have been calls for African students to learn about the contribution and the roles that were played by their ancestors in the history of South Africa (Fataar, 2018; Tomlinson-Clarke & Clarke, 2016; Zimu-Biyela, 2019). It has been argued that History education currently teaches the history of Europeans in South Africa, with the focus being on the activities of the Europeans in the country. Therefore, African students must be taught to understand that their history is important, and at present that is not the case. The history of Africans is treated as unimportant and not given the prominence it deserves; it is treated as a footnote in the history of the Europeans in South Africa. Consequently, history education in South Africa should tell the stories of people that the students can relate to, be taught in a language that the students can understand, teach about places that the students are familiar with and meet the needs of the students.

The main objective of any curriculum should be to meet the needs of the society it is created for. Therefore, the cultural, intellectual, economic, political and social needs of the society must be catered for in any curriculum. A curriculum in Africa must meet the needs of Africa- we cannot have a curriculum which produces students who are experts in the West. Even though the Department of Education plans to introduce an Afrocentric history curriculum, the thinking of the teachers on Afrocentrism have to be interrogated and taken into consideration because they will be implementing this curriculum.

2.14. Theoretical Framework

Based on the above literature, the following theoretical framework has been developed for this study. This theoretical framework outlines the complexities and ambiguities of the ideas of Afrocentrism. Furthermore, this theoretical framework will assist in understanding the thinking of African history teachers on Afrocentrism and in explaining the reasons behind their thinking, and thus guide this study.

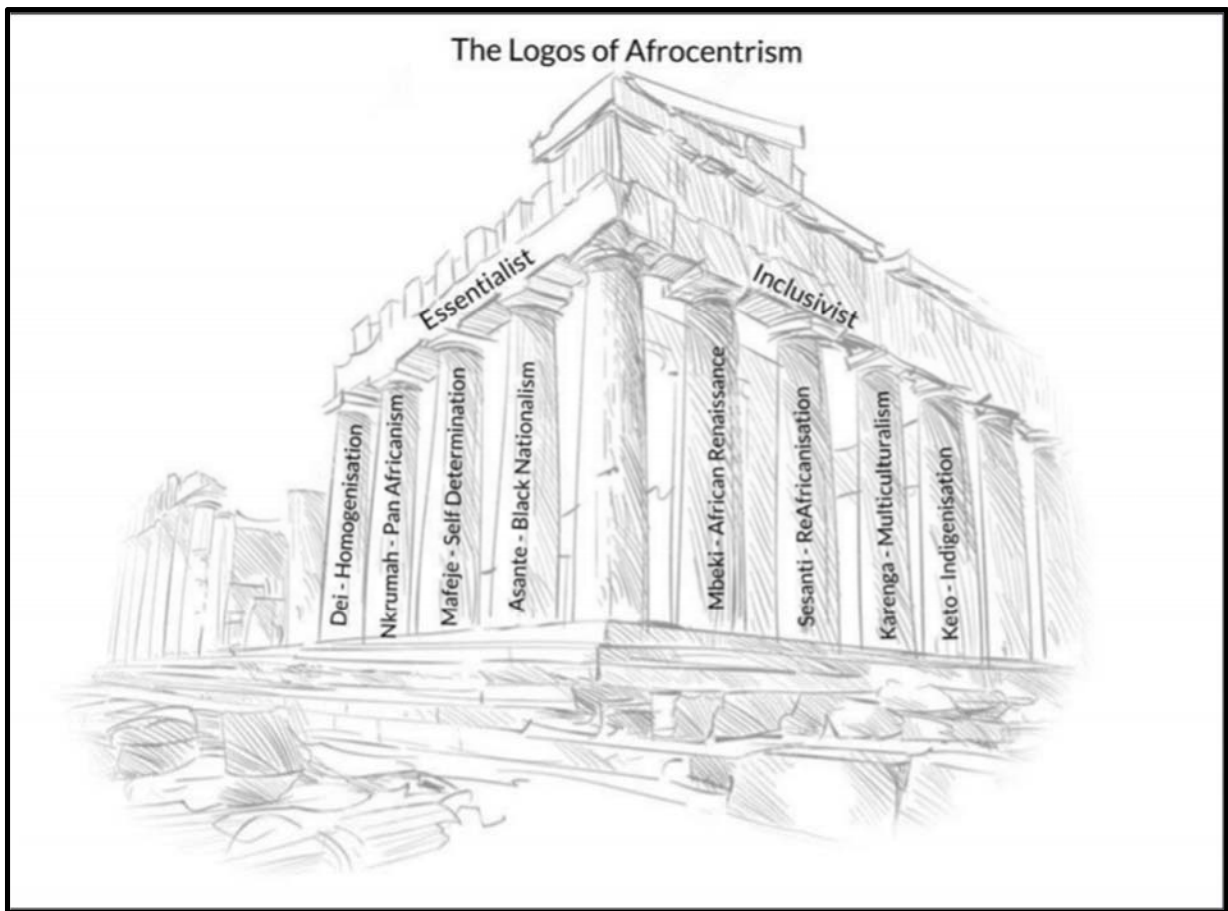


Figure 1: The Logos of Afrocentrism (Pereira, 2022)

Figure 1 above illustrates the complexity of Afrocentrism. Various scholars of Afrocentrism and some Afrocentrism themes are represented in Figure 1. There are various scholars who have argued for Afrocentrism, however, there are different approaches as to how to approach it. Some scholars have an essentialist approach while others prefer an inclusive approach to Afrocentrism. Asante (1988, p. 19) states that Afrocentrism “resembles the blackman [sic], speaks to him, looks like him and wants for him what he wants for himself”. According to this view, Afrocentrism means that the perspective, experiences and history of Black people should be centred. In similar fashion, Nkrumah (1970) advocates for Pan-Africanism which calls for the unity of Black people around the world. Afrocentrism, in this approach, begins with the unity of black people. Dei (1994) argues that the culture, history and perspective of Africans is homogeneous and distinct from other groups of people. Mafeje (2001) argues that Africans who were born and live in other continents, for instance, African Americans, have ceased to be Africans because they are culturally, socially, and historically different from the Africans who were born and live on the African continent. According to this perspective, the people who live in Africa have their own history, culture, perspective, and way of viewing phenomena which is different from the people who live in other parts of the world. A person from Africa cannot view things in the same way as a person from Europe or Asia. Therefore, Afrocentrism in this view, means that the people of Africa should be given the opportunity to provide their perspective of the world.

On the other hand, other Afrocentrists have argued for an inclusive approach. Mbeki (1998) is a well-known advocate of an African Renaissance, the idea that Africans should deal with and overcome its challenges. In his approach, Mbeki (1998) argues for

an inclusive rather than an essentialist African identity. In his speech "I am an African " in 1996, he argues that we all have a shared African history. In this light, Afrocentrism includes everyone, not only Black people. Keto (2001) states that indigenous knowledge has to be resuscitated and that the African people should be able to use this knowledge today. He argues that indigenous knowledge should be given the same position as Western knowledge (Keto, 2001). Karenga (2003) has argued that multiculturalism would be a just approach instead of Eurocentrism, arguing that providing Africans with the opportunity to narrate their perspective and history would lead to multiculturalism. Sesanti (2021) advocates for the decolonisation and reAfricanization of Africa. These processes involve everyone; it is not just an exercise of Africans.

The views of these various Afrocentrists will be used to guide this study. Their arguments will also be used to analyse the thinking of the history teachers on Afrocentrism.

2.15. Conclusion

This chapter provided a review of literature on Afrocentrism. I discussed the concepts and the themes that are related to Afrocentrism. From the above discussion it is evident that the primary objective of Afrocentrism is to challenge Eurocentric historiography. The Afrocentric solution to Eurocentrism entails strengthening the knowledge of Africans, raising awareness about the history of Africa and Africans and restoring the culture of Africans. The Afrocentrist historiography centres Africans and Africa. Afrocentric education supports a pedagogical approach which teaches the learner from their own cultural context and centres their history. Furthermore, from this literature review it is evident that the South African education system has experienced and

continues to experience deep challenges. It is also evident that the government has struggled to find the right history curriculum to teach at schools, despite the various curriculum changes in the post-apartheid period. As a result, some analysts have continued to criticise the history curriculum and categorise it as a Eurocentric curriculum. This has led to the attempts by the government to reform the history curriculum and make it Afrocentric.

There is limited literature that deals with the views of African teachers on Afrocentrism, particularly in the South African context. Very little is known about what African history teachers think about Afrocentrism, particularly in South Africa. Much of the academic research on Afrocentrism is in the American context. This is despite growing calls for an Afrocentric approach to history education in South Africa. This literature review has exposed this gap. Paying attention to the knowledge, thinking and ideas of the teachers is important to ensure the successful implementation of Afrocentric history education. Therefore, this is an important avenue of research that needs to be given attention. This study aimed to fill this gap. In the next chapter the research design and methodology will be outlined.

Chapter 3

Research Design and Methodology

3.1. Introduction

The main ideas and concepts that are related to Afrocentrism were discussed in chapter two. This chapter will outline the research design and methodology that were used to propose answers to the research questions posed in this study. The qualitative research approach and the interpretivist paradigm that was used to understand the thinking of African history teachers on Afrocentrism will be outlined in this chapter. Furthermore, the case study methodology which was used in this study will be explained in detail.

In addition, sampling and population, data collection methods and data analysis are outlined in this chapter. The ethical considerations of this study will also be discussed in this chapter. Finally, issues of trustworthiness, credibility, transferability, and the ethical considerations will be addressed.

3.2. Research Design

Research design refers to the strategy that a researcher uses to propose answers to the research questions that have been posed in their study (Sileyew, 2019). In addition, the research design seeks to connect the research questions, the data, and the data analysis process (Yin, 2014). The research approach and paradigm are important aspects

of the research design. In this study, the qualitative research approach and the interpretivist paradigm have been used to propose answers to this study.

3.3. Qualitative Approach

This is a qualitative study. The qualitative research approach is popular in history education. Mack and Woodsong (2005) and Allan (2020) state that qualitative research seeks to understand phenomena or a given topic from the perspective of the local population it involves. Similarly, this study seeks to understand Afrocentrism from the thinking of African history teachers. According to Mack and Woodsong (2005) and Allan (2020) qualitative research is effective in finding culturally specific evidence about values, opinions, behaviours, thinking, and social contexts of particular populations. Thus, this approach was suitable in understanding the thinking of African history teachers from Makhanda on Afrocentrism. Qualitative research has an ability to provide evidence about how people experience or view a particular issue (Liamputtong, 2020; Mack & Woodsong 2005). Humans, including the African history teachers who participated in this study, have different behaviours, views, beliefs, emotions, opinions, and thinking. Qualitative research is able to focus on and capture the human side of a given issue (Creswell & Poth, 2016; Liamputtong, 2020; Mack & Woodsong, 2005). Additionally, qualitative research is effective in locating impalpable issues such as social norms, and in this case, thinking. Therefore, qualitative research is used to discover trends in thinking, opinions, and views. It is also argued by Bloomberg and Volpe (2012) that qualitative research is practical, rational, interpretive, and rooted in people's lived experiences. The focus of qualitative research is on the participants and their lived experiences, perceptions and thinking.

Hence, this approach was suitable for the purpose of this study, which sought to understand the thinking of African history teachers on Afrocentrism.

Furthermore, qualitative research focuses on constructing data through open ended and conversational communication. Qualitative research aims to construct data about what people think and why they think in the manner that they do (Liamputtong, 2020; Mack & Woodsong 2005). It is meant to capture in-depth insights about a particular phenomenon or topic. In qualitative research, data construction is non-numerical, unlike quantitative research (Liamputtong, 2020; Mack & Woodsong 2005). Instead, the data is more descriptive in qualitative research. In qualitative research, researchers like me are placed at the centre of the data construction and are regarded as an instrument for the construction of the data. Denzin and Lincoln (2008) and Nassaji (2020) state that the selection of a research approach should be based on its suitability to propose answers to the identified research questions. Therefore, qualitative research was the most suitable for this study. The qualitative case study enabled me to gain a deeper insight into the thinking of African history teachers on Afrocentrism.

While qualitative research was identified as the most suitable approach for this study, this approach, like any other, has its advantages and disadvantages. It is, thus, important to discuss the disadvantages of qualitative research for the integrity and transparency of this study. Qualitative research is not objective; it is subjective. This subjectivism is viewed as a problem from the view of quantitative research. Quantitative research equates objectivism to being scientific (Creswell and Poth, 2016; Mack & Woodsong, 2005; Nassaji, 2020). In other words, from a quantitative point of view, any research that is not objective is not scientifically sound. In response to this, Pelzang and

Hutchinson (2017) argue that intercultural research cannot be objective as it is always influenced by the researcher. Pelzang and Hutchinson (2017) further argue that it is better when the role of the researcher is acknowledged and taken into consideration because the researcher is always the primary instrument of the research. Therefore, my role as the researcher was important for the purposes of this study.

In addition to the above, according to Pelzang and Hutchinson (2017) the natural and flexible nature of qualitative research is also regarded as a disadvantage. This is because the variables are not regulated and controlled (Aspers & Corte, 2019; Pelzang & Hutchinson, 2017). In quantitative research the study design is stable from the beginning to the end of the research, which is in stark contrast to the qualitative research approach. However, the purpose of this study was to capture the thinking of history teachers on Afrocentrism in its natural form. It was not the goal of this study to control any variables whatsoever.

Furthermore, Pelzang and Hutchinson (2017) assert that qualitative research is usually criticised for being unable to produce generalisable information. In quantitative research, the findings can be generalised from a sample to an entire population, provided that the sample is representative of the population (Aspers & Corte, 2019; Creswell & Poth, 2016; Mack & Woodsong, 2005). However, in qualitative research the findings are not generalizable and they are not intended to be (Creswell & Poth, 2016; Jackson & Mazzei, 2022; Mack & Woodsong, 2005). This study also did not intend to generalise its findings. Instead, this study aimed to understand the thinking of the history teachers who were participants in this study, in a specific geopolitical setting. Therefore, the main criticisms and disadvantages of qualitative research do not significantly affect the purpose

of this study. The qualitative research approach was the most suitable approach to this study, despite the weaknesses of this approach.

3.4. Interpretative Paradigm and Ontological and Epistemological Assumptions

This qualitative study sits within the interpretative paradigm. This is aligned to the purpose of the study which was to understand the thinking of selected history teachers on Afrocentrism. All researchers have their view of what is knowledge and what is truth. These views direct the researcher's and participants' thinking, beliefs, assumptions about society, and view of the world. This is referred to as a paradigm (Dean, 2018). The majority of qualitative researchers use the interpretive research paradigm. Interpretivists believe that human behaviour, such as thinking, is multi-layered and cannot be understood through pre-determined probabilistic models. Human behaviour depends on the situation and is influenced by various factors. It is also uncontrollable, unlike scientific variables which can be controlled easily. Human behaviour is influenced by various factors and is subjective. Interpretivist researchers believe that humans should be studied in their natural and daily-life environment, which was the case in this study. This is also in line with Afrocentrism which recognizes the cultural nature of the human being. Dean (2018) and Davis and Fisher (2018) argue that the interpretivist paradigm centralises the human meaning-making and knowledge claims.

Interpretivists believe that knowledge (epistemology) is subjective (Creswell & Poth, 2016; Dean 2018). Knowledge is socially constructed and is dependent on the mind, history and context. When it comes to defining reality (ontology) interpretivists argue that it is socially constructed (Creswell & Poth, 2016; Dean 2018). Interpretivists believe that reality is dependent on the mind and context. This is in contrast to positivists who believe

that there is a tangible external reality. Therefore, this study was designed according to the interpretivism approach because the thinking on Afrocentrism by the selected history teachers was subjective and socially constructed. This study viewed the participants as experts with regard to their thinking, experiences, and views. Therefore, the focus of this study was on gathering the thinking of the participants as it relates to Afrocentrism in history education.

3.5. Research Methodology

Research methodology seeks to outline the manner in which research is conducted and the research design enacted (Patel & Patel, 2019). Murthy and Bhojanna (2009, p. 32) argue that research methodology is the “systematic method to resolve a research problem through data gathering using various techniques, providing an interpretation of data gathered and drawing conclusions about the research data”. This means that the research methodology explains what data will be constructed, from who, how it will be collected, and how it will be analysed by the researcher. In other words, the research methodology refers to the strategies that guide the study. The research methodology that was used in this study was a case study. Case study methodology was the most suitable methodology to understand the thinking of African history teachers on Afrocentrism.

3.6. Case Study

The methodology of this study is a case study of the thinking about Afrocentrism by African history teachers in Makhanda (previously known as Grahamstown) Quintile 3 schools. There is no single definition of a case study. According to Yin (2018, p. 15), a

case study “investigates phenomena in-depth and within its context”. Rule and John (2011) state that a case study is a detailed investigation of a specific subject in its context. Creswell and Poth (2016) in turn argue that case studies seek to better understand a case. The case could be an individual, a group of people, a phenomenon, behaviour, an event, a geographical area, or a context. **Therefore, because this study focuses on African history teachers in Quintile 3 schools in Makhanda, it can be classified as a case study.**

A case study uses methods such as observations and conversational interviews to enable the researcher and the participants to interact and construct the meaning of the phenomenon that is being studied (Yin, 2018). Therefore, the case study methodology was suitable for the purpose of this study which was to understand the thinking of African history teachers on Afrocentrism. According to Creswell (2014) and Merriam and Tisdell (2016) case study methodology regards context as an important part of understanding phenomena. The thinking, perspectives and meanings that the participants make are dependent on the context. The case study methodology is, therefore, aligned with the Afrocentric theoretical framework and the qualitative approach which emphasises the importance of context when studying participants and which also places emphasis on understanding the thinking of the participants. The case study methodology was thus suitable for the purposes of this study.

3.7. Data Construction Methods

Research methods refer to the specific instruments that were used to construct the data (Beins, 2017). In this study, conversational interviews with the African history teachers were the most suitable methods to construct the data for this study.

3.7.1. Individual Conversational Interviews

While the methodology for this dissertation is a case study the methods employed were individual. An interview is typically a face-to-face conversation between a researcher and a participant, involving a transfer of information to the interviewer (Cresswell, 2009). Individual conversational interviews were used to construct the data in this study. Roulston (2008) states that conversational interviewing is an interviewing approach that enables the researcher to construct verbal data by talking to the participants about a particular topic in a conversational and informal manner. According to Currivan (2008) conversational interviewing is an alternative style of interviewing that enables the researcher to depart from the norms of standard interviews. Conversational interviewing procedures enabled me as the researcher to ask the participants whether they understood the question and to provide the necessary clarity (Currivan, 2008). In standardised interviewing the interpretation of questions is mainly dependent on the participants. Conversational interviews also enabled me as the researcher to provide unscripted feedback to the participants, thus allowing the conversation to take place (Currivan, 2008). In conversational interviews, it is not necessary for the researcher to follow a particular script or interview schedule; instead, the researcher can interact with the participants in a natural way. Advocates of conversational interviewing techniques argue that standardised interviewing can decrease the authenticity of the interview responses and data because it prevents natural conversational interaction from happening (Currivan, 2008). Some interview questions require conversational interaction between the researcher and the participants. The flexibility of conversational interviews

can provide more authentic responses from the participants, allowing them to express themselves freely and as much as they need to.

Unlike other forms of interviewing, conversational interviewing emphasises mundane, everyday conversation with the participants (Roulston, 2008). This serves to create an environment whereby the participants feel free to participate in the interview. It further serves to make the interview environment less hierarchical (Roulston, 2008). This speaks to my study where the goal was to create a friendly environment where the participants were free to express their thinking and understanding of Afrocentrism. According to Roulston (2008), conversational interviews have, for a long time, been used by sociologists and anthropologists in field studies and ethnographies to talk to people in order to collect data. Roulston (2008) further states that this approach to interviewing is popular amongst researchers who use open-ended or unstructured interviews similar to mine. Conversational interviewing corresponded with the overall research design and methodology of this study. Therefore, it was useful and suitable for the purposes of this study. It enabled me to construct data about the thinking of African history teachers on Afrocentrism. There was one conversational interview with each of the participating history teachers.

It is the view of Burman (1994) that the setting of the interview should be comfortable. Therefore, the conversational interviews were conducted at the schools where the teachers were teaching History. This was the most comfortable and convenient setting for me and particularly for the participants because this was a setting with which they were familiar with. The conversational interviews were conducted at a time that was quiet and favourable to the interview process, that is, after school. The times arranged

were not disruptive to the activities of the school. Furthermore, the conversational interviews were conducted in isiXhosa which was the language choice of the participants. This was done to ensure that they were able to express themselves fully without any language limitations. However, code switching did take place from time to time.

3.8. Targeted Population and Site

According to Durrheim (2006), sampling involves selecting a population based on the parameters that have been determined by the aims of the research. The purpose of this research was to understand the thinking of African history teachers on Afrocentrism in Quintile 3 schools in Makhanda. Therefore, the selected sample had to come from a population group with these features. Accordingly, the targeted population were high school African history teachers in Quintile 3 schools. I believe that schools in quintiles three are under-studied as much of the research on history education focuses on schools in Quintiles 4 and 5. Quintile 3 schools were also selected because there are no quantile one and two schools in Makhanda, the selected research site. Quintile 3 schools are mostly dominated by African learners and teachers. **The teachers were asked whether they identified as African or not before proceeding with the conversational interviews, all those who participated confirmed that they identified as African.** African history teachers have been marginalised in academic research spheres; therefore, it is important to capture their thinking at a time of curriculum transformation in history education. The targeted history teachers taught from Grade 10 to 12. The gender and teaching experience of the history teachers did not matter for the purposes of this study. However, the teachers had to be qualified to teach history and had to teach the subject in the FET phase. This enabled me as the researcher to get a more holistic view.

Furthermore, the targeted population all self-identified as Africans and were based in Makhanda in the Eastern Cape. This was particularly important because I believe that schools in the rural areas are rarely studied, with much of the research focusing on schools in urban areas. As the researcher, I aimed to allow the voices of the African history teachers in these rural schools to be heard. In doing so, this study might be beneficial to the education system as a whole because the thinking of African teachers is not usually foregrounded. Furthermore, the Eastern Cape used to be the hub of education for Black people for a long time. Africans from all over the continent used to come and study in the Eastern Cape. The Eastern Cape is, therefore, a province which has a rich history of educating and producing individuals who are regarded by some as heroes and heroines of the African continent. These individuals, including Robert Sobukwe, Julius Nyerere, Kenneth Kaunda, Robert Mugabe, Sir Seretse Khama, Steve Biko, and Nelson Mandela, studied at institutions such as Fort Hare. Some of these leaders were, themselves, Afrocentrists, while others opposed Afrocentrism or some aspects of Afrocentrism. Their ideas were influential to the people of this province and to the struggle against colonialism and apartheid. Therefore, the data that would be found in this province would be rich given its history.

Moreover, Makhanda has recently changed its name from Grahamstown, this was done by the government in consultation with the residents, the residents wanted to have an Afrocentric name and remove the colonial Eurocentric name. There is also an ongoing debate around the name change of Rhodes University which is based in Makhanda, the students and community are calling for a name change for the university to a local and Afrocentric name. Therefore, there is an ongoing debate in Makhanda around the

decolonisation, Eurocentrism and Afrocentrism topics. It was thus a suitable site for this case study. Furthermore, the research site and participants were accessible and thus convenient for me as the researcher.

In this study, the participants needed to be African history teachers, needed to be available and willing to be interviewed about their thinking and most importantly needed to understand Afrocentrism. It was important for the participants to understand the topic being explored, the purpose of this research was to discover that understanding. This allowed the researcher to choose participants who are suitable for the purposes of this study. Therefore, the sample was purposefully selected. The potential participants were approached through recruitment and information letters which were ethically approved. These recruitment and information letters were provided to the potential participants. The aim was to recruit at least six history teachers from six schools in Makhanda to participate in the study. There are six schools in Makhanda that fall under the category of Quintile 3 schools. I aimed to get at least one teacher per school to participate. The sample size of at least six history teachers was deemed sufficient for the qualitative analysis and scale of this research. Furthermore, this sample size enabled me to have in-depth, detailed, and comprehensive data on the thinking of African history teachers on Afrocentrism.

I went to communicate with the school principals of each of the targeted schools to seek permission to conduct the study at their schools. I provided them with information letters from the Eastern Cape Department of Education and consent forms from the University of Pretoria and thoroughly explained the purpose and significance of this study. The principals were very keen to have their schools involved in the study. I was then allowed to communicate with the history teachers in the respective schools who were also

keen to participate; they were provided with information letters and consent forms. The target was FET history teachers and I was able to find one FET history teacher per school. Most of the schools in Quintile 3 are struggling in terms of resources, and this was the case even with teachers as there was a shortage of teachers in the schools that were targeted in this study. Arranging a suitable time to conduct the individual interviews with the teachers was not an easy process given the workload, constraints and other challenges that the teachers experienced. However, we were able to overcome these challenges and conduct the conversational interviews with all the selected African history teachers.

3.9. Data Analysis and Writing Up

The analysis and interpretation of the data was done immediately after the data construction process had been completed. As stated above, the interviews were recorded through an audio recording device. Thereafter, the process of transcription was started. According to Bailey (2008), transcription refers to the process of providing a written account of spoken words. The transcription of the interviews was transcribed verbatim. The interview data was firstly transcribed in the original source language. Thereafter, it was translated into English. This was to ensure that meaning was not lost during interpretation. Transcription software was used to transcribe the interview data. After transcription, the data obtained from the interviews was thematically analysed. Braun and Clarke (2021) and Terry and Hayfield (2021) state that a thematic analysis is a qualitative data analysis method that involves searching through the collected data set to identify and analyse recurring patterns. The recurring patterns are then coded and grouped into themes which are analysed and interpreted by the researcher (Braun & Clarke; 2006).

Various scholars have published guides on how to conduct a thematic analysis (Aronson, 1995; Boyatzis, 1998). As a consequence, there are various different approaches that can be used to conduct a thematic analysis. For this study, I used the six steps method for thematic analysis that has been outlined by Braun and Clarke (2021). This is the most popular and widely used thematic analysis method in qualitative research.

According to Braun and Clarke (2021) the first step for thematic analysis is familiarisation. This is when the researcher gets to know and familiarise themselves with the data. It is important for the researcher to have a thorough overview of the data before it can be analysed (Braun & Clarke; 2006; Terry & Hayfield, 2021). This might involve reading through the transcript or taking notes. The second step is coding the data (Braun & Clarke; 2021). Coding means that sections of the transcribed text, such as phrases or sentences related to the thinking of the teachers on Afrocentrism, will be highlighted and given short labels or codes to describe them. Coding enables the researcher to get an overview of the main points that recur in the data (Braun and Clarke; 2021). The third step involves generating themes from the codes related to the thinking of the history teachers on Afrocentrism (Braun & Clarke; 2021). Once the codes have been created the researcher has to identify patterns in them with themes. Several codes might be combined to form one theme (Braun & Clarke; 2006; Terry & Hayfield, 2021). According to Braun and Clarke (2006), the fourth step is about reviewing the themes. In this step, the researcher has to compare the themes with the data to ensure that the data has been captured correctly and that nothing is missing (Braun & Clarke; 2006). The researcher has to ensure that the generated themes are representative of the data set (Terry & Hayfield, 2021). Step five is about conceptualising and naming the themes (Braun &

Clarke; 2006). The researcher has to name each theme based on its content. Finally, step six is the writing process (Braun & Clarke; 2021). This is when the researcher begins to write up the results from the data analysis.

Notes taken during the individual conversational interviews were also analysed thematically. The thematic analysis method is flexible and can be applied to different research questions, research designs, and sizes of samples (Braun & Clarke; 2006; Terry & Hayfield, 2021). This outlined data analysis approach was appropriate when seeking to understand the participant's thinking on Afrocentrism in school history.

3.10. Trustworthiness, Transferability and Credibility

The trustworthiness of the results is important for qualitative research. Member checking, also known as participant validation, is a technique that is used to ensure the credibility of the results (Birt et al., 2016). During member checking, data or the results are given to the participants for them to check for accuracy and ensure that the data reflects their experiences and views (Birt et al., 2016). This approach was used in this study. I performed a member checking process to ensure that the data recording, transcription, and interpretation were in line with the thinking of the history teachers. Asking the participants to check for accuracy increased the trustworthiness and credibility of the study.

Transferability is about whether the findings of the study can be generalised to another setting or situation (Yin, 2018). This study did not aim to be transferred to another setting. However, it can serve as an example and guide to other researchers who conduct a similar study in another setting. They may be able compare their findings to the findings of this study. Perhaps common characteristics might be discovered. Merriam and Tisdell

(2016) state that in order to promote transferability in qualitative research, the researcher has to provide sufficient details of the setting and the findings. This will ensure that other researchers are able to compare and refer to the findings of the study. This has been done in this study.

3.11. Ethical Considerations

Ethics were given careful consideration in this study. The University of Pretoria research ethics guide was followed thoroughly. First, ethical clearance was obtained from the university with ethics clearance number EDU084/22. Clear information about the study was provided to all the participants. All of the participants involved in this study were asked to give their informed consent as per the University of Pretoria regulations. The audio and fieldnotes from the interviews were used only for the purposes of the research. In addition, the confidentiality of all the participants was maintained at all times. Pseudonyms were provided for the schools and for the participants. Furthermore, the participants were informed that they could withdraw their participation in the research at any point during the course of the research. Efforts were made to create a safe environment in consideration of the coronavirus pandemic. During the interviews, masks were worn at all times and regular sanitising was done to prevent the spread of the virus. Guidelines of both the school and Department of Basic Education on COVID-19 were also strictly adhered to. Before the data construction process began I had to request permission to conduct research in the schools from the Eastern Cape Provincial Department of Basic Education. After permission was granted, I also had to communicate with the Sarah Baartman District Department of Education to inform them of my research and obtain permission to conduct research in their schools, which was granted. The

cooperation and conduct that I received from both provincial and district departments were satisfactory.

3.12. Summary and Conclusion

The purpose of this study was best carried out through a qualitative case study approach. Sampling for this study was purposive. Moreover, conversational interviewing was the most suitable data collection method for this study. This chapter outlined the purpose of this research. Furthermore, the research design and methodology of this study were also outlined and the rationale behind the approach was outlined as well. In addition, this chapter outlined the sample and population, data collection, and data analysis and ethical considerations for this research.

Chapter 4

Presentation of Data: The thinking of African history teachers on Afrocentrism

4.1. Introduction

The purpose of the previous chapter was to explain how this study was conducted and the way the data were analysed. This chapter presents the findings that were generated from the study and the analysis of the data. Chapter 4 presents the responses of the participants in this study to the research questions that were posed. These responses enabled me to propose answers to the research questions that were posed in this study, namely; what is the thinking of African history teachers on Afrocentrism and why do African history teachers think about Afrocentrism the way they do? The responses of the history teachers were analysed individually, and themes were identified from their responses. These themes or trends would be able to help me to understand the thinking of African history on Afrocentrism and the reasons behind that thinking.

4.2. Teacher One: Mr Roqo's Thinking

4.2.1. Role of Age and Education

Mr Roqo was a 62-year-old veteran history teacher. After teaching for more than 30 years at Sinekamva Secondary School, the interior of his classroom is what could be called a traditional everyday classroom design. His classroom was merely filled with history textbooks and past examination papers; there was nothing unique about it. He had attended an historically Black university, the University of Fort Hare, during the apartheid era and did not have any African studies or history related courses at university. Mr Roqo did his teacher training during the pre-1994 era when Afrikaner Nationalism and

the celebration of Whiteness and history as rote learning and fundamental pedagogies were in full swing. In such history courses, Black people appeared on the fringes of history as troublemakers and disruptors to White society. The fact that he was a 62 year-old teacher meant that he was educated and began working as a teacher during the apartheid era. These formative years affected his way of thinking, particularly about this subject.

4.2.2. Eurocentric Lifestyle.

In our critical conversation, Mr Roqo stated:

I do not think African values and beliefs had much of an influence on my upbringing. As a history teacher, and most other history teachers I have come across at my workplace there seem to be not many of us who adhere and conform to African cultural practices. This is due to our [African] history of colonisation. As a colonised people we lost touch with most of our African roots, traditions and other African social norms. And we ended up being coerced to adopt traditional European values and beliefs thus endangering our African roots. European colonisation affected most of our practices, in the form of the languages we now speak, food we eat. The education system tends to be largely Eurocentric and even our worldview and perspectives are largely through [a] European lens. Even in this day and age, as Africans we have not been able to reclaim our traditional African roots as the European way of doing things remains the dominant culture. So, for me it is very difficult to practise Afrocentrism. We are used to the European lifestyle. My early background was already influenced by European values and traditions. So, it becomes difficult to change to something you are not used to.

From the above, it is clear that Mr Roqo thought that as a result of colonisation, which, in his view, included apartheid, he was not raised with African values. Mr Roqo was thus forced to adopt European values and culture. According to him, at home, school, and university, he was exposed to the omnipresence of mostly European influences which dwarfed his Africanness.

In isiXhosa he expressed this as follows: “Sasinyanzelekile ukuba silandele isilungu” (we were forced to follow Western culture). He stated that he felt that these influences were forced through colonisation. He used the isiXhosa term *ingcinezelo* (oppression) to refer to colonisation. This means that in his mind, colonisation subdued African culture and history to the extent that he was not able to follow it and consequently adopted Eurocentric values. Mr Roqo continued by explaining that “ndakhuliswa ngesilungu” (I was raised and socialised in the Eurocentric way of doing things). By his own admission this powerfully affected the manner in which he thought about topics involving Africa and Africans.

Mr Roqo further argued eloquently with a hint of pride that he did not live a life that was aligned with African values and culture. He followed Western culture which had been dominant throughout his life. This affected the way he thought about most things. He mentioned the term colonisation quite often and was very silent on apartheid. It seems as if he saw the two as one continuous system.

It can be concluded that Mr Roqo was a product of the long history of colonialism in Makhanda and the Eastern Cape. Furthermore, it also seems that Mr Roqo had accepted and even embraced the forces that shaped his life and had internalised the Eurocentric system. He saw himself as having no agency in the matter and he clearly felt

comfortable in the European world he inhabited in Africa. Consequently, Mr Roqo continued to live a life of what he called “impilo yasentshona” (a Western lifestyle), despite colonisation and apartheid having ended.

4.2.3. Interconnected Human History

With reference to the History curriculum in South Africa, Mr Roqo explained that he was willing to teach any history as long as it was human history. He explained, “Singabantu sonke” (we are all people regardless of race). He elaborated, explaining, “Akufuneki ukuba sicalucalule xa sifundisa imbali yabantu” (history teachers should not be selective when it comes to the teaching of history). He further added that “Xa isiganeko esithile sibalulekile kunyanzelekile ukuba sifundise ngaso, noba sesaphi na kakade’ (history education should focus on the significance of a particular historical events regardless of the location or people involved).

In his view, in a very liberal non-racial manner, human history is interconnected and, therefore, it would be of little worth to focus on only African history. In other words, he held the view that it would be unacceptable to separate humans based on whether they are African or Europeans, because their history is, to his way of thinking, intertwined. This means, according to Mr Roqo, that the historical events that occurred in Europe have had an impact on Africa vice versa. Therefore, trying to separate groups of people and events in the History curriculum along racial or geo-political lines would be unwise. Mr Roqo’s focus was on what could be referred to as “world history” rather than narrow nationalistic history. He viewed history as an intertwined set of experiences involving all humans without distinction and thus needed to be taught in that way.

4.2.4. Eurocentric Perspective

When it came to the current CAPS History curriculum, Mr Roqo disagreed with the view that the document was wholly Eurocentric. He argued, “I would say it is a bit of both, where the Eurocentric curriculum is the foundation.” He explained his thinking by saying “Zivezwe kakuhle zombimbini kodwa ke isisekelo sayo sesasentshona” (both European and African topics were covered but the foundation or perspective of the content was Eurocentric). From Mr Roqo’s perspective, the History curriculum was divided equally into both European and African topics. He, therefore, disagreed with the view that the topics in the CAPS History curriculum were mostly about European history. Rather, he argued that both European and African history had been represented appropriately.

This thinking demonstrates that he did not have a problem with regard to the content in the CAPS History curriculum. However, it is also evident that he thought that all the topics in the CAPS History curriculum were written from a European perspective. This was revealed through his thinking that although the topics in the History curriculum might be equally divided into African and European history, Europe was the foundation of the curriculum. He explained this by saying “Isisekelo sesasentshona” (the CAPS curriculum was founded on a Eurocentric perspective). He, therefore, agreed with the idea that African history was mostly written by Europeans from their perspective, something that, at face value he, and considering his way of living, he was not wholly uncomfortable with.

4.2.5. Recognising and Affirming African History

According to Mr Roqo, Afrocentrism was about recognising and affirming African history, but seemingly in the Eurocentric structure familiar to and embraced by him. Mr

Roqo made it clear that he understood that for a long time African history was not recognised, that is, from the time that he was at school and university up to his early years as a history teacher. Therefore, in his opinion, Afrocentrism would provide history teachers with the opportunity to assert and affirm African history. In this regard, he explained that “Kubalulekile ukuba siyiveze kwaye sigxininise kwi mvelaphi yama Afrika xa sifundisayo” (it is important to recognise and affirm African history in history education). Mr Roqo further argued that through Afrocentrism learners would be given the opportunity to engage with African history and be appreciative of it. This would enable them to recognise the roles that have been played by African people in the past. He elaborated on this by saying, “Lento ye Afrocentrism ingabanceda abantu abatsha ukuba bakwazi ukuyithanda, bayicule imbali yase Afrika. Ingabanceda ukuba bazinikile kuyo” (Afrocentrism could help the youth to love and be more appreciative of African history). He continued, “ngoba xa sithetha inyani abantu abatsha bangoku abazimiselanga ekufundeni nge mbali yase Afrika. Abazimiselanga ntweni tuu” (if we were to be honest, young people do not show an interest in learning about African history). This revealed much about the thinking of Mr Roqo, namely that he believed that young people today are not interested in learning about the history of Africa and Africans. Although he saw potential and a necessity for Afrocentrism, he ambiguously believed that, like him, young people in Africa were not interested in their own history.

However, it seems as if Mr Roqo believed that the young people in contemporary Africa were not interested in African history by choice, but that they chose to be interested in Western culture and abandon Africanness. By contrast, he believed that he did not follow Western culture by choice but was forced to do so through colonisation. He thought

that young people in contemporary South Africa lacked knowledge of themselves and had lost their ways. Mr Roqo further argued that young people in the contemporary world were more interested in the West than in Africa; they wanted to adopt, in what can be seen as a neo-colonial manner, the cultures and ways of doing things from the West. However, although he has stated that he followed a Western lifestyle, like the young people in contemporary South Africa, he did not seem to think that he has lost his ways or lacked knowledge of himself. He seemed to believe that it was only the young people who were guilty of such ideas. However, in a contradictory and ambiguous manner, Mr Roqo thought that Afrocentrism could affirm Africa to the young people and cause them to reverse their Western-orientated outlook. He elaborated on this thinking by saying,

Izobancedisa ukuba bazazi, bayazi ukuba lubalulekile uhlanga lwabo njengama Afrika, nembali yabo ibalulekile. Izobancedisa ukuba bayazi ukuba asiswelanga kwaye asixhomekekanga entshonga tuu (Afrocentrism would help young people to realise that their race matters as Africans, their past also matters and thus they do not need to rely on the west for anything).

4.2.6. European History is Important

With reference to his teaching and the learning taking place and the interpretation of the CAPS History curriculum, Mr Roqo made it clear that he thought that European history was regarded as more significant than African history; therefore, he focused more on this history in his classes. His reasons for this are explained as follows:

Le yasentshona imbali yeyona ithathelwa phezulu ngabantu. Ikhathalelwe kakhulu. Xa usazi yona uthathwa njengomntu onolwazi ofundileyo. Ixatyisiwe kunale yase Afrika. Ngoko ke nam ndigxininisa kakhulu kuyo xa ndifundisayo

(European history is held in high regard by most people. People are very interested in it. When you know it you are regarded as a person who has knowledge and who is educated. It is held in higher regard than African history. Therefore, I also place more emphasis on it when I teach).

He continued,

I think we should focus on our African history but also we need to bear in mind that times have changed. We are now in the 21st century, we live in a globalised world. We travel a lot, so I guess it helps to know about other people's cultures as it makes it easier to be conscious with strangers.

He used this argument to rationalise his thinking about Afrocentrism. It is clear that Mr Roqo did not oppose the idea of centring Africa and Africans in History classrooms; however, he also thought that learners needed to be prepared for interacting and understanding the history of other people in the world. He elaborated by stating, "Coming to our township schools where you hardly find any White people, so if we just focus on Afrocentrism it would be like limiting our learners. Unfortunately, in the world that we live in we need White people". Mr Roqo thought that a completely African-centred curriculum would prepare African children to interact only with Africans and that they would be unable to relate to others. He argued that this would be a disadvantage to the African youth as they would become inward-looking, myopic, and removed from the global world and they would be educated in a one-dimensional manner, on Africa, which would only be to their disadvantage.

4.2.7. Concluding Summary

Mr Roqo clearly thought that Afrocentrism would help people to recognise and affirm African history. Therefore, it would be beneficial to African children. However, he also believed that the idea of Afrocentrism in history should be approached in a careful manner given the fact that the world had become more interconnected. Therefore, his thinking was ambiguous and contradictory but leaned towards inclusivism in that he seemed to be trying to accommodate both the African and Eurocentric perspectives when it came to the History curriculum and not focus radically on the African perspective. He argued for an inclusivist History curriculum, rather than a radically, African-centred one.

4.3. Teacher Two: Mr Qula's Thinking

4.3.1. Role of Age, Symbols, and Representations

Mr Qula was a 25-year-old history teacher who had been teaching for more than two years at Zanelizwe High School. As a 25-year-old, **Mr Qula could be categorised as a "born free", meaning that he was born after the end of the apartheid era in South Africa.** Therefore, he would have had different experiences from those people who grew up and were educated during the apartheid era. This could have also influenced the manner in which he thought.

In his classroom there was a picture of a flag which he claimed represented Africa and the people of Africa. He also had pictures featuring various prominent African male leaders, including Oliver Tambo, Thomas Sankara, and African American activist Martin Luther King, pasted on the walls of his classroom. The symbols and representations that I saw in Mr Qula's classroom gave me insight into his thinking. He seemed to be attempting to promote Africa through the flag that he had in his classroom. By stating that

the flag represented Africa and its people, he admitted that the flag was not merely for decoration purposes, it had a deeper meaning. The flag also showed his identification with Africa and by hanging it in his classroom, he seemed to be attempting to influence others, particularly his learners, to also identify with Africa.

The posters of OR Tambo, Thomas Sankara, and Martin Luther King also provided insight into Mr Qula's thinking. These were not ordinary people- they are what could be regarded as heroes, particularly to some Black people. He only had posters of these Black male leaders on his walls; there were no White leaders. This may indicate that he had been influenced mostly by Black leaders. The posters of these people may also indicate that he identified with some of their values and thinking. Furthermore, by having these pictures in his classroom, he may have been attempting to promote these Black leaders and their values to other people, particularly to his learners. Having posters of Tambo, Sankara and King hanging on the walls daily allowed Mr Qula and his learners to frequently encounter, connect and think about them.

4.3.2. Education and Personal Choice

Mr Qula mentioned that education and personal choice were also factors that influenced his thinking. He explained:

I won't lie. I went to a school that had many resources [and] that taught us all sorts of history and I have been in so many spaces where I can speak about the things I have learned from European history but I have also gone out of my way to learn about our own [African] history. It's very beneficial and obviously coming from that privileged space of knowing all sorts of history hence it is very important because you are going to be in

different spaces and see that what you have learned is very beneficial not just from a single perspective but [from] all sorts of people.

Mr Qula stated that he had been exposed to different types of history. This could be because he grew up in the post-1994 period and was thus not exposed to the nationalist apartheid History curriculum. Mr Qula also seemed to be proud that he was exposed to different and multiple perspectives of history, rather than a single perspective. He seemed to believe that being exposed to different histories was a “privilege” and that was beneficial.

He also mentioned that he was drawn to African history rather than European history at school, although he was exposed to both during his school years. In other words, of all the histories that he had been exposed to at school under the curriculum he had studied, Mr Qula made a personal decision to follow African history.

Mr Qula attended an historically White university, Rhodes University. He stated that he took a course that focused on African studies at university. The fact that he was exposed to African-centred courses at university may have exposed him to various African leaders, such as those whose posters had been hung on the walls of his classroom, and thus their values. This could have also influenced the manner in which he thought about Africa and African people.

4.3.3. Importance of African history

Mr Qula argued that Africans had compromised on many things, thus they should not make any compromises when it came to their history and culture. He expressed these thoughts by saying, “Abantu abamnyama bayekelela kwizinto ezininzi. Kodwa akufunekanga ukuba bayekelele nakwi kwimbali nencubeko yabo.” (Black people have

compromised on many things. They should not compromise when it comes to their History). This demonstrates that he saw African history and culture as important.

Mr Qula further argued that African children needed to be exposed to African history and culture before they could be exposed to the history and culture of other groups in the world. He thought that African history and culture should take priority. However, he also did not dismiss the learning of the history and culture of non-Africans; he merely thought that it should take a secondary position. In other words, the learning of history should begin from local African histories before moving onto world history.

Mr Qula thought that Africans had a great deal of history which could be regarded as significant, and that Africans had made very important contributions to the history of the world. He expressed his thinking in this regard by saying:

I am totally against the notion that our people have not made any important contributions to the world. That is because for a long time our history has been ignored. Look at the generation of today; they do not even know about the history of black liberation fighters like Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, and so on. They do not know how we got to have our current constitution. This is because the youth are clueless of their past. We have a rich history as Africans. It's just that we were colonised. Colonisation affected us badly, including destroying our cultural norms. So, we must teach our own history, not European history. On that note, we can be proud to be Africans.

It is evident that Mr Qula thought that Africans had a rich history but due to centuries of colonisation and Eurocentrism their history had been neglected and treated as if it was non-existent. Mr Qula emphasised that young people in contemporary South Africa did not know about their history and past.

4.3.4. Eurocentrism in the History Curriculum

With regard to the history curriculum in South Africa, Mr Qula expressed the view that the current CAPS History curriculum was Eurocentric. He argued:

The history that we learn or rather the history we teach in our schools is mostly history that was created by Europeans to teach people of Africa which is bad instead of us teaching a discourse from our own perspective and how it has impacted us now we teaching about history that is coming from that side but it has impacted us badly so there's going to be a little bias in the content that we teach.

It is evident that Mr Qula thought that the history taught in the South African CAPS History curriculum was Eurocentric, that is, the history in the curriculum was written by Europeans and thus was presented from a European point of view.

He articulated this thinking by saying, “Imbali yethu ibhablwe ngabelungu” (the history of Africans has been written by White people). He further argued that this Eurocentrism had negative effects on the African people. He elaborated and said “Lento yokuba imbali yethu ibhalwe ngabanye abantu isichaphazela kakubi” (the fact that our history has been written by other people affects us negatively). To his way of thinking, it would have been better if the history of Africans was written by Africans themselves, instead of non-Africans. This also demonstrates that Mr Qula believed that there was bias in the current CAPS History curriculum because it was not written by what he would regard as Africans. Furthermore, Mr Qula placed emphasis on the perspective from which history was written rather than on the content in the curriculum.

4.3.5. Celebration of African History

According to Mr Qula, Afrocentrism is about a continuous celebration of African history. In this regard, he proclaimed, “iAfrocentrism ithetha ngento yokubhiyozela imbali yase Afrika ngamaxesha onke. Kufuneka abantu babhiyoze kuba bengama Afrika” (Afrocentrism means that Africans must celebrate African history and their Africanness at all times). He continued by passionately pointing out that Afrocentrism means that Africans get the opportunity to celebrate not only themselves, but their ancestors as well, saying, “Kufuneka sibhiyozele nezinyanya zethu kuba silapha nje kungenxa yabo” (We must celebrate our ancestors as well because it is because of them that we are here). It is evident that, according to Mr Qula, Afrocentrism in history education would mean that young people would be taught about the kind of history that celebrates the past of African people. He felt that the history in the current CAPS curriculum made it seem as if African people had nothing to celebrate, because most of it was a dark and painful history. He elaborated:

Imvelaphi yethu ifundiswa engathi akhonto intle enobhiyozelwa, kuvezwe imvelaphi embi ebuhlungu ngezinto ezenzeka eAfrika nakubantu abanmnyama (Our history is represented as if there is nothing beautiful to celebrate, only the history of painful events that were happening in Africa and to Black people has been shown).

However, according to Mr Qula, Africans have much to celebrate and there is a great deal of valuable and honourable history to be learnt from African people. Afrocentrism would provide them with the opportunity to celebrate that history. He further argued that African history was important and valuable history for Africans. He argued that in the current curriculum African history was regarded as less important compared to

the history of other non-African groups. He believed that African history should not even be equated with the history of those he regarded as non-Africans, particularly to Africans themselves. It should rather be regarded as the most important history. The centring of African history through an Afrocentric history curriculum would express that importance. For Mr Qula, African history should be prioritised for Africans, then the history of those he regarded as non-African should follow. He felt that African history was not celebrated enough in the CAPS document. Consequently, he raised issues about representation, arguing that Africans must be represented in a positive manner in the History curriculum.

4.3.6. Impact of Afrocentrism to African Learners

Mr Qula stated that in his limited years of teaching history he realised that the majority of the African children did not know much about their heritage. He supported this observation by explaining:

I feel that it [Afrocentrism] should be taught in schools not just in history classes but in other disciplines as well. This is going to help the next generation know about our African culture, traditions and belief systems. We can't be learning about other people's histories while we are failing to embrace our own rich history. In our schools we teach learners about the French Revolution, the Cold War, and other significant memories of history, which as Africans we can't relate to because it is not about us Africans. Introducing Afrocentrism in our schools will help reaffirm our position in the world as Africans, as an African knowing your roots through Afrocentrism you can go anywhere in the world with the confidence that you are African, you are proud of your heritage and you are not ashamed to embrace your African roots.

It is evident based on the above stated that Mr Qula thinks that African learners do not know about their history and he blames this on the manner in which history has been placed in the curriculum and taught, through what he calls Eurocentric lenses. According to him, Afrocentrism would have a positive impact on the African learners given that they would learn about their heritage and history. He continues to explain his thinking:

You also find a lot of Black South Africans especially who are hopelessly clueless about our African history. So, I believe it would be most beneficial for our schools and universities to introduce Afrocentrism as part of their curriculum. There's lots about Africa. In subjects such as the arts, economics, geography etc a lot can be applied and learned about Africa if we apply our minds correctly. If you look at the social issues facing most Black South Africans today, for instance the major drug problem, it stems from homes that have lost their connection with our African roots. We never had such problems in the past because we knew who we were, now our youth is lost because we do not know who we are, our identity and our history.

Mr Qula extends his thinking even further by arguing that the various challenges such as drug abuse that the young people were experiencing in Africa is as a result of a lack of knowledge of their history and heritage. He thinks that young people in South Africa do not know themselves and thus are a lost generation. He suggests that Afrocentrism would play an important role in remedying this situation. Mr Qula further states that Afrocentrism should be extended to other disciplines as well, not just history education. He also argues that it is important for learners to be taught a history that they can be able to relate to.

4.3.7. Afrocentrism does not mean Being Anti-White

Mr Qula was at pains to point out that being Afrocentric does not mean that one is anti-white or does not want anything to do with Europe. To Mr Qula's way of thinking, there are usually negative sentiments expressed against people who are Afrocentric. He supported this thinking by saying that "abantu abazithandayo izinto zase Afrika nabazingcayo badla ngojongwa kakubi" (there is usually hostility towards people who are interested in African history and who are proud to be African). This was because of the perception that being pro-African meant being anti-White. He further added that an Afrocentric curriculum would most likely be rejected by most non-African people because they would view it as discriminating against or even isolating them. In other words, introducing an Afrocentric curriculum in a diverse country such as South Africa would be a challenge, it would be controversial, according to Mr Qula.

4.3.8. Concluding Summary

Mr Qula placed importance on African history. He thinks that it would be beneficial for Africans to learn about their history given that, according to him, they do not know about it. He further thought that African history deserves to be celebrated rather than in the negative evident in the current CAPS History curriculum. His thinking was ambiguous and contradictory. He had a strong leaning towards radical Afrocentrism. However, Mr Qula also leant towards inclusivism in his thinking about Afrocentrism because he did not completely reject teaching and learning about the history of other groups in the world. However, he preferred that African history should take priority. In essence, he embraced both African and Eurocentric perspectives, as long as the African perspective was prioritised and foregrounded.

4.4. Teacher Three: Ms Qama's Thinking

4.4.1. Role of Age, Representations, and Education

Ms Qama was a 42-year-old teacher who had been teaching history for more than 10 years at Khulani Secondary School. As a scholar, she had attended school during the apartheid era when the National Party's apartheid curriculum was taught at schools. This could have had a huge impact on the manner in which she thought. In her classroom she had various student projects that were displayed as in a typical traditional classroom. She also had a large handmade art project which stood at the centre of the other projects. Ms Qama explained that it represented diversity and multiculturalism. This provided an insight into her thinking, namely that she was a person who supported ideas of multiculturalism and diversity and that, by displaying such a project in her classroom, she was attempting to promote the ideas of diversity and multiculturalism to her history learners. The art projects that were displayed in her classroom were not meaningless as they provided insight into her thinking.

Ms Qama revealed that she thought that education had influenced the manner in which she thought. She elaborated on this point, saying "Imfundo eyafika nabelungu yatshintsha indlela ebesifundiswa ngazo phambi kokufika kwabo" (Western education has changed the manner in which Africans were taught in the pre-colonial era). She further explained that "Abelungu beza nohlobo lwabo lwefundo basifundisa into zabo basenza sacinga njengabo" (Europeans brought their type of education to Africa and used it to make Africans to think the same way they did). This reveals that Ms Qama believed that if it was not for Western education her thinking would be different from what it currently was. In addition, Ms Qama asserted that there were similarities between the

Western lifestyle and African cultures; hence, she was able to strike a balance between the cultures. Ms Qama also disclosed that she grew up in a home that practised and taught her African culture and values. She explains, “Sakhuliswa thina ngesintu. Ekhaya babesifundisa indlela yokwenza izinto yabantu abamnyama. Sasiwenza amasiko nezithethe zasekhaye zonke” (We were raised through African culture. At home we were taught how to do things the African way. We used to practise all of our African traditions).

This implies that she had been exposed to both African and Western culture simultaneously and had to adjust both cultures throughout her life.

However, Ms Qama insisted that the Western ideas that she was taught at school were more powerful than the ideas that she was taught at home. She confirmed that she regarded what was taught at school more important than what was taught at home. According to Ms Qama, at school she was taught to believe that African culture and values were backward and uninteresting. This reveals the struggle that Ms Qama experienced while attempting to negotiate living with African values at home while being taught Western values at school. It reveals the struggle of having a European-centred curriculum in Africa.

4.4.2. Dominance of the Eurocentric Perspective

According to Ms Qama’s way of thinking, the History curriculum in South Africa had been influenced by both European and African perspectives. However, she contended that the European perspective was more dominant than the African perspective. She elaborated:

There are both perspectives in our History curriculum. But the European view has become more dominant than the African view. We are teaching a European view of our

history; the African view is just little. After apartheid the government tried to include Africans in the curriculum, but that was not enough. European people always try to maintain their power and control in everything. They make you look as if you are in control while they are the ones influencing you behind.

This suggests that Ms Qama believed that the post-apartheid government had not succeeded in their attempt to include the African perspective in the History curriculum. Instead, the European perspective has remained dominant and accepted. Ms Qama also held the view that the current CAPS History curriculum was not completely Eurocentric because it included the perspective of African people. However, in her view, the African narrative is not as dominant as it should be. Ms Qama further asserted that the fact that the European perspective has remained dominant could be due to the power and influence that Eurocentrism has over Africa. The above demonstrates that Ms Qama thought that the current CAPS History curriculum was dominated by the Eurocentric perspective.

However, Ms Qama did not agree with the thinking that the topics covered in the current CAPS History curriculum focused on Europe. She stated, “The topics are covering the entire world. It covers many societies around the world. Topics of the Africans, Asians, Americans and Europeans are all there. So we cannot say it only covers European content”.

In other words, she believed that both African and international history were presented in the curriculum, even though it was presented from a Eurocentric perspective. Ms Qama added:

The Europeans are represented in Asian history, they are represented in American history and they are represented in African history. We cannot learn about the history of these other people without the presence of the Europeans. We are learning more about the history of Europeans in America, Asia and Africa.

She insisted that “soloko bekhona abelungu” (there’s always a European presence). This indicates that Ms Qama thought that the Eurocentric perspective had maintained its dominant presence in the history of people all around the world and continued to do so.

4.4.3. Knowing African History

Ms Qama revealed that she did not have sufficient knowledge of the term Afrocentrism, however, she thought that it had to do with learning more about African history. She expanded on this point saying:

I have never come across the concept of Afrocentrism but I have always thought of why we are not learning more about African history. It is something I will support and suggest that we learn more about African history. Basically we as Africans need to know our roots, we need to know who we are, we need to know everything that pertains to us as Africans.

As a history teacher, Ms Qama thought that Afrocentrism meant that African history needed to be given more attention. She believed that Africans in general did not know much about their history and were not learning about their history as much as they should. She further asserted that this should not be the case. Consequently, she revealed that she would be in support of learning more about African history at schools. This demonstrates that Ms Qama, in her experience as a history teacher, thought that the

current CAPS History curriculum had assisted in teaching African history adequately but there was still a huge marginalisation of African history in the curriculum.

Ms Qama also argued:

Afrocentrism as part of any curriculum will help in educating all people about the values and beliefs of African people. Remember as blacks, we are the majority in South Africa. Therefore, others will be in a better position to understand us. Another problem is we do not support each other as Africans, Afrocentrism can help to bring some form of social cohesion among Africans. If we unite as Africans we can achieve anything, our culture is important because it reminds us of who we are and where we come from.

According to Ms Qama, Afrocentrism could help to educate other groups that might identify as non-African in South Africa about African culture and thus help in resolving the race issues that are facing this country as a result of its colonial past. Ms

Qama further added that Afrocentrism would help to bring social cohesion, even amongst the Africans themselves. This implies that Ms Qama thought that Afrocentrism was not only meant for Africans but also for other people who might identify as non-African.

4.4.4. Balanced History Curriculum

Ms Qama expressed the idea that the History curriculum in South Africa should be balanced to ensure that the history of the various groups in the country were all covered. From her perspective as a history teacher, the current History curriculum was dominated by certain groups while others are still being marginalised. She argued that “kufuneka kubekho icurriculum ekwaziyo ukufundisa ngembali yethu sonke apha eSouth Africa.

Kuba ngoku kukho abantu abangekhoyo kulecurriculum, babekelwe bucala” (we need to have a curriculum that covers the history of all people living in South Africa, because now there are some people who are excluded from the curriculum). According to Ms Qama, there was a need to create a History curriculum from which all the groups in South Africa could learn about themselves- a balanced history curriculum. She further explained, “Kubalulekile ukuba wonke umntu olapha akwazi ukufundiswa ngembali yakhe. Kungabikho abantu abathile abakhathalelweyo ukogqitha abanye” (It is important for all people in this country to learn and know about their history. There should be no groups that are prioritised over others). She was of the view that there should be no dominant group featured in the History curriculum. According to her, Afrocentrism would enable those who were regarded as Africans to be more dominant in the History curriculum than those who did not identify as African.

For Ms Qama, it was important to accommodate and include all people in the History curriculum. Ms Qama also revealed that she thought that being oriented towards African people in the History curriculum could be perceived as “reverse racism”, rather than as an attempt to reverse the impact of racism on the African people. Although Ms Qama thought that an Afrocentric curriculum would be beneficial to African learners, she also thinks that the history curriculum should be balanced so that it becomes beneficial to all learners, even those who did not identify as African. Ms Qama elaborated saying, “Ewe yona ndiyayixhasa lento yeAfrocentrism kodwa mayingabachaphazeli kakubi abanye abantu abangengawo amaAfrika” (I support the idea of Afrocentrism as long as it was not at the expense of other people who did not identify as African). Ms Qama further

added that the idea of having an Afrocentric curriculum might work better in an African country that was less diverse than South Africa. This demonstrates her inclusive thinking.

4.4.5. Importance of Pre-colonial Africa

Ms Qama spoke about the need to recognise the history of Africa prior to contact with Europeans. She stated:

I think [that] much of African history has been seen as connected to Europeans all the time. But we did have our own things before the

Europeans came to Africa. That is the kind of history that we need to tell to the young people of Africa. It is important for them to know about what was happening in Africa at that time.

In her view, pre-colonial African history has not been given much attention. She argued that this is the history that should be taught, particularly to the youth. Ms Qama believed that Africans were not aware of the history of Africa before contact with the Europeans. Again, she placed emphasis on the need to separate Africa from Europe. Ms Qama used the IsiXhosa word *emandulo* to refer to the pre-colonial period in Africa. She revealed that she thought that learning about the history of Africa would help young people to learn not only about Africa but also about themselves. Moreover, Ms Qama expressed the opinion that pre-colonial African history would be interesting for both Africans and those who did not identify as African in South Africa. She indicated that “everyone wants to know about what was happening in Africa during that time. It is interesting to learn about all those interesting stories of Africa... There’s no politics involved in that one”. Ms Qama thought that pre-colonial African history was apolitical and would thus be accommodating to all groups in South Africa.

4.4.6. Concluding Summary

Ms Qama supported the idea of learning more about African history. However, she argued that there should also be an attempt to accommodate other groups within South Africa who did not identify as African. She was of the view that history education should include everyone and not focus on one particular group at the expense of others.

Ms

Qama also agreed that the current CAPS History curriculum had been narrated from a Eurocentric perspective. She further stated that teaching pre-colonial African history would be preferable because she considered it to be less political than the current history which is taught and that it would be interesting for all the people of South Africa. Although her thinking possessed some characteristics of essentialism, Ms Qama also leaned more towards inclusivism in her thinking because she believed that the History curriculum should accommodate everyone in South Africa. This means that her thinking on Afrocentrism was nuanced, complex, and understated.

4.5. Teacher Four: Ms Guqa's Thinking

4.5.1. Age and Representation

Ms Guqa was a 29 years-old teacher who had been teaching for approximately five years at Bantu High School. She can be classified as a young person who grew up in the democratic period in South Africa. Having taught for 5 years meant Ms Guqa had only been exposed to the CAPS History curriculum. These factors could have affected the manner in which she thought about this subject. A black and white map of Africa hung on her classroom wall, which, she claimed, symbolised African unity and Blackness. Based on this flag and her claims about what it represented, it is evident that Ms Guqa

believed in ideas of African unity and Black pride. Furthermore, by posting this flag in her classroom it is clear that she wanted to promote such ideas, particularly to her history learners.

4.5.2. Upbringing and Education

Ms Guqa revealed that her upbringing and the school she had attended played an important role in shaping her thinking. She explained, “I learned about African history beginning at home. But mostly I got the knowledge from school. I was both exposed to European history and African history. So, I took a more interest in African history, it was my own choice to do so.” She disclosed that at home she was taught about African history. She expressed this by saying, “Ekhaya sasifundiswa kakhulu ngembali yase Afrika” (we were taught a lot about African history at home). She further disclosed that she was exposed to both European and African history at school. This could have been because she grew up during the post-apartheid period in South Africa when the apartheid National Party History curriculum was no longer in place. However, Ms Guqa explained that despite having been exposed to both European and African history, she became more drawn to African history. This could have been because she was African and could relate more easily to African history than non-African history. Ms Guqa also revealed that she attended an historically White university where she took courses that were centred on African history at university level. These factors played an important role in shaping Ms Guqa’s thinking.

4.5.3. Eurocentric History curriculum

When it comes to the History curriculum, Ms Guqa thought that the current CAPS History curriculum was Eurocentric. She argued:

I can say as a history teacher, African history is behind and European history is dominant. As much as we teach our learners about African history, European history and values have always been dominating. We as Africans did not write most of our history, it was orally passed down from one generation to another. The earliest written history about Africa was written by Europeans, and we take from those who came before who also absorbed Eurocentric perspectives of African history. As such we do not have much control and direction of what is taught and not taught in our schools.

Ms Guqa's belief was that European history and the European perspective of history has dominated the South African history curriculum. She argued that most of the history was written by Europeans and in that way Europeans have been able to advance their agenda. In other words, the European perspective of history became dominant because the history of Africans was written by them. She further expressed:

Most of the history that we teach our learners concentrates on European culture and values which I as an African feel is unfair on our part because this shows us as Africans [that] we are still brainwashed. We are still under the influence of European cultural practices and values brought on from the time of slavery and colonisation. I think if we do not change even the next generation will inherit what we also have inherited, an African history written from the perspectives of Europeans. We must start admiring our own African values and culture.

Ms Guqa also believed that the Eurocentric history education had "brainwashed" Africans and caused them to adopt the European way of doing things and forsake their African ways of living. According to Ms Guqa, Eurocentric history has affected the older

generation and the young people in contemporary South Africa. It is also evident that Ms Guqa felt that there needed to be a change to the Eurocentric History curriculum so that the next generation would not be taught through it.

4.5.4. African Perspective

Ms Guqa thought that Afrocentrism was about promoting the African perspective of history and the world. She explains:

Afrocentrism is teaching African history, teaching any sort of knowledge or education from an African perspective. Basically I would say teaching about things from our perspective, discourse that's not coming [from] outside or in places such as Europe. It's discourse that's coming from us [Africans], from our point of view.

According to Ms Guqa, Africans had not been given the opportunity to tell history from their own experiences. Most of the history that they learnt was written by White European scholars, according to her thinking. As a result, the experiences of the African people had been marginalised. She asserted that “Sinyanzelwe ukuba sifunde ngezimvo zabelungu” (Africans were forced to accept the narrative of Europeans about African history). Ms Guqa was of the view that Africans should be provided with the opportunity to narrate history from their own perspective. In her thinking, the experiences and thus perspectives of Africans and Europeans were not the same.

Ms Guqa further argued that as a result of the influences of Eurocentrism, mostly through colonialism, the African perspective had been regarded as unimportant. She stated that “Izimvo zama Afrika ngokwenzekayo zithathelwa phantsi ungathi azibalulekanga, ezibalulekileyo zezasentshona” (The African view about the past is not regarded as important, only the Western view is regarded as important). According to

Mas Guqa, not only was the African perspective regarded as unimportant, but it is also regarded as unnecessary. She proclaimed that “Okwenzekayo kubantu base Africa, nendlela ababona ngayo izinto nabaziva ngayo akuthathelwa ngqalelo, azinamsebenzi” (The experiences of Africans, their perspective of the world, is regarded as unnecessary). She further contended that “what happens to Africans and what comes out of an African is not regarded as important. The marginalisation of Africans has been normalised”. She believed that there had been a continued suppression of the experiences and perspectives of the African people and this, according to her, had been done through Eurocentrism. Given the above, Ms Guqa thus believed that an Afrocentric curriculum was needed to give Africans the opportunity to tell history from their own perspective.

4.5.5. Impact of Afrocentrism

Ms Guqa also spoke about the possible impact of Afrocentrism in South Africa. She explained that it would be beneficial to the students if they could be taught content that was relatable to them in some form. This means that she believed that teaching the history of Africans was necessary but that this aspect was missing in the current CAPS History curriculum. Therefore, the Afrocentric History curriculum, according to Ms Guqa, would enable the teaching of African heritage in South African schools. Furthermore, Ms Guqa argued that teaching African children about their history would boost their confidence. She explained that Afrocentric history would show learners that African people are capable of making great contributions in the world. Ms Guqa further contended that the current history curriculum showed learners the contributions of other groups but neglected the contributions of Africans. According to her, the current CAPS History curriculum portrayed African people as weak people who can be easily conquered,

colonised, and victimised, while showing other groups, particularly Europeans, as conquerors and victors. This negatively impacted the thinking of the learners about Africans. She thus argued that if we could have an African-centred History curriculum which narrates history from the perspective of Africans then that would improve the confidence of African learners.

Ms Guqa also thought that teaching an African-centred history would increase both the interest of learners in the subject and their academic performance. Ms Guqa revealed that she thought that the learners were more interested when they were taught about the history of Hintsa, Shaka, Moshoeshe, and so on. The learners in her classes wanted to learn about this history. She further revealed that her Grade 10 learners had a high pass rate because the focus at that level was on African-related topics. In her view, African learners lost interest when they were taught about the history of places beyond Africa and that did not discuss African people. As a result, their performance on these topics was also low. She elaborated, saying:

When we move to European history our learners always ask why we are learning about European history and not African history, they do not even pay much attention to European history, even to South African colonialism history. I have found that our learners pay more attention when we focus on African history. They are not interested in learning about the French revolution, [or] Spanish revolution because it does not resonate with them.

She, therefore, thought that an Afrocentric curriculum would increase the interest of young people in the subject.

4.5.6. Importance of African History

Ms Guqa indicated that the idea that Africans did not have any significant history was an idea that was concocted by the advocates of Eurocentrism to continue with the manipulation and oppression of Africans. She rejected the idea that Africans did not have any significant history and strongly argued that Africans had a lot of history that is worth learning about. She explained that “they are obviously saying that for their own benefit because they do not care about Africans. It is a sort of brainwashing. They don't want us to learn about our own history because they want to use us”. She thought that the view that Africans do not have any significant history to learn about was meant to discredit African history and prevent Africans from learning about their history. According to Ms Guqa, Africans have a great deal of history that is significant and worthy of being taught in schools. In addition, she stated the importance of pre-colonial African history:

Africa did have history before meeting with the Europeans and being colonised. A lot was happening in this continent during that period. That history exists. It was recorded in many different ways. It was recorded on rocks and stones. It was recorded in the natural environment. And it was passed down from generation to generation orally.

She believed that the history of pre-colonial Africa was not included enough in the current History curriculum because it was regarded as unimportant. Ms Guqa further argued that due to the influences of Eurocentrism, the African ways of recording and preserving history were untrustworthy and unreliable compared to the European ways of recording history.

She further argued that the History curriculum in South Africa should not only be African-centred in terms of the perspective but also in terms of content. She stated:

There's no space for the histories of non-Africans, because of the amount of important history that we (Africans) have. If we attempt to include other people's history, then we would be denying Africans from learning about their history. Africa is a large continent; so much has happened in this place. All that needs to be covered. There's no space for others.

Thus Ms Guqa was of the view that an Afrocentric History curriculum should cover only content that related to Africa. Topics that were not related to Africa were irrelevant in her view. Ms Guqa thought that any historical event that affected Africa and Africans in any way was related to Africa, even if it happened in other parts of the world. In other words, if there was a historical event which did not impact Africa and Africans in some way, then it should not be covered in the History curriculum, regardless of how significant it might be. This meant that to her way of thinking, other people's history should be only taught if it is important to or affects Africa's history. Ms Guqa mentioned that in her experience of studying history education, most non-African groups did not learn about African history, hence there was continued racism against Africans and ignorance about Africa. Ms Guqa questioned why, if Europeans did not learn about Africa, we as Africans, should learn about them. She strongly supported the view that Africans should focus on African history and not the history of those who do not identify as African.

4.5.7. Curriculum Changes

Ms Guqa revealed that she was not aware that the government was planning on changing the current CAPS History curriculum to introduce a new Afrocentric History curriculum. However, she stated that if such a plan was in place she would be in full

support of it. According to her, there was an urgent need to change the current CAPS History curriculum to focus on Africa and African children.

4.5.8. Concluding Summary

Ms Guqa believed that African history had been marginalised in the current CAPS History curriculum and that it was Eurocentric, having been written by Europeans. Ms Guqa supported the idea of having an Afrocentric history curriculum. However, she felt that an Afrocentric History curriculum should only focus on African history because this is the most important history for Africans. Her thinking can be classified as leaning towards essentialism because in her opinion there should only be a focus on African history, rather than on non-African history. However, her thinking was complex because, in some instances, she hinted at inclusivist thinking although she still believed that it should be dominated by an African perspective.

4.6. Teacher Five: Ms Zula's Thinking

4.6.1. Role of Age and Education

Another veteran history teacher, Ms Zula who was 51 years old and had been teaching for more than 20 years at Vukani High School. Her age indicates that she grew up and studied during the apartheid period. The education that she received under the apartheid government, which promoted racism, White supremacy and discrimination against Black people might have influenced the manner in which she thought. Her age also indicated that she grew up in the period of when African nationalism was popular and was spread by Africanist leaders such as Steve Biko, Robert Sobukwe, and organisations such as the Black Consciousness Movement. Such Africanist or Afrocentric

ideas, which were spread throughout the country including in schools, might have influenced the thinking of Ms Zula. She had a traditional everyday classroom interior. There were no photographs, art or any symbols posted on the walls of her classroom. This could be because she did not want to bombard her history learners with too much visual information or distract them during their lessons.

In terms of her studies, Ms Zula revealed that she had attended the University of Fort Hare, which is classified as an historically Black university. The University of Fort Hare was a popular education institution amongst radical Black scholars and leaders. Most of the leading Afrocentric or Africanist scholars and leaders in Africa such as Robert Sobukwe and Julius Nyerere studied at the University of Fort Hare. Their ideas were influential on most people who studied at the university, which Ms Zula attended. Ms Zula also disclosed that she did not take any courses that were related to African history at university level. This was because there were no such courses available at that time, according to her knowledge. This meant that she was not exposed to African-centred education in both her basic and tertiary education. It could also mean that she might, therefore, have been exposed to a mostly Eurocentric education during her basic and tertiary education years. These different factors and experiences might have played an important role in shaping and influencing the thinking of Ms Zula.

4.6.2. Eurocentric History Curriculum

Concerning the History curriculum, Ms Zula asserted that the current CAPS History curriculum in South Africa was “mostly from a European perspective”. She elaborated on this saying, “We use their perspective. We only make use of textbooks, what we primarily do and say is primarily from these textbooks which are not really focused on African

culture or themes of Afrocentrism. Our education system is modelled after the European education system; we can blame colonialism for that.” Ms Zula thought that the CAPS History curriculum was written from a Eurocentric perspective, rather than an African perspective. She further stated that Africans had accepted the perspective of Europeans and relied on it. She made an example of the CAPS History textbooks and said that they are used as the primary source for teaching history, but they did not teach African culture or focus on African themes. Moreover, in her view, the entire education system in South Africa was modelled on a European, rather than an African education system and, argued Eurocentrism was a result of South Africa’s colonial past. In other words, Ms Zula thought that the effects of colonialism in South Africa’s education have not been addressed adequately.

4.6.3. Afrocentrism is a Response to Eurocentrism

On the other hand, Ms Zula explained that she thought that Afrocentrism was a response by Africans to Eurocentrism. She contended:

Europeans had always put forth their own beliefs, values, norms, ideas and philosophies at the forefront. They were able to spread these ideas throughout the whole world, oftentimes these actions were detrimental to other cultures existing outside of Europe. Seeing this gross misrepresentation, Africans sought to come forth with their own contributions in terms of the representation of their culture.

This demonstrates that Ms Zula held the view that Eurocentrism had been dominant and had placed other perspectives of the world on the periphery. She affirmed that “Afrocentrism is the Eurocentric version of Africans.

Eurocentrism promotes European values while Afrocentrism promotes African values". According to her "iAfrocentrism le yindlela esiziphindisela ngayo kwi Eurocentrism" (Afrocentrism is a way for Africans to fight back and resist Eurocentrism). In other words, for Ms Zula, Afrocentrism was formed by Africans to challenge Eurocentrism.

She further contended that Afrocentrism was also meant to correct the wrong doings of Eurocentrism. This implied that she saw Afrocentrism as a legitimate and suitable vehicle through which the impact of colonialism could be addressed in Africa. Ms Zula further expressed the view:

In the past, there was little to no accessible knowledge of African culture to the world. Most of what the rest of the world knew and understood about African culture came from the writings of European men and was often full of bias and grossly distasteful representation. So Afrocentrism is about putting forth the ideas, philosophies, values, and belief systems of Africans in a more appropriate manner. It is about restoring and affirming the dignity and true identity of Africans. It is about the practice of African culture, and what Africans believe in and so forth.

This demonstrates that Ms Zula thought that Eurocentrism had misrepresented Africa and Africans. However, she saw Afrocentrism as the solution to this misrepresentation. Given the above statements, Ms Zula emphasised that it was necessary for the history of all groups in the world to be recorded and taught correctly.

4.6.4. Preference to Teach African history

When it came to the topics in the History curriculum, Ms Zula indicated that she preferred to teach African rather than non-African history. She expressed the opinion that

“Ungase ndihlale ndifundisa ngembali yase Afrika kunokuba ndifundise ngembali yezinye izizwe”, (I wish I could regularly teach African history instead of the history of non-Africans). Ms Zula further explained, “I can relate to African history better than Chinese history, Indian history, or even European history, even though I was n taught European [history] all my life. Therefore, I think I teach African history better because I can relate to it”. In her experiences as a teacher, Ms Zula said that it is easier for her to teach African history because she can relate to it more than non-African history. She also explained that despite being exposed to European history most of her life, she felt that she could still not relate to it as much as she did to African history.

Having been exposed to European more than African history, Ms Zula also revealed that she, therefore, had a strong knowledge of European history. She elaborated:

Ngamanye amaxesha andizazi izinto ezithile ezibalulekileyo zembali ezazisenzeka eAfrika okanye abantu abathile ababalulekileyo eAfrika kuba zange ndafundiswa ngabo. Kodwa abasentshona bona ndiyabazi kakhulu kuba kusoloko kuthethwa ngabo qho (Sometimes I don't have knowledge of certain important historical events that happened in Africa or certain important figures in African history because I have never been taught about them. But I know a lot about important figures and events from the West because people always talk about them).

In other words, Ms Zula admitted that she did not have a strong knowledge of African history, even though she preferred to teach it. This could be because Ms Zula was exposed to European history both during her basic and tertiary education as she had

attended school during the apartheid period. She believed that she was more of an expert in European history topics rather than African topics. This implies that exposure to Eurocentric history has an impact even on the history teachers. It affected their knowledge and thus their pedagogy.

In addition, Ms Zula contended that, in her experience, the History learners related better to African-related rather than non-African related topics in the CAPS curriculum, thus leading to a higher performance on African-related topics. She stated, “Our children want to know about Makhanda because they live in Makhanda; this is their history. They can see it and live it on a daily basis. Their elders tell them stories about that history, so they want to learn about it - even at school.” In her view, the learners identified more with African history than with non-African history.

4.6.5. Knowing the Self First

Ms Zula also compared African history with non-African history in terms of their importance to African learners. She argued that we have to prepare our young people to be able to communicate and interact with the rest of the world, however, she emphasised that the only way for them to do so properly was if they knew themselves, stating, “Kubalulekile ukuba abantu abatsha bazazi, ukuze bazokwazi ukudibana nabanye abantu bakwezinye indawo” (it is important for African people to know themselves so that they are able to interact with others). According to Ms Zula, Afrocentrism would help young people to know their roots, be proud of where they came from, and thus be able to interact with others properly. She drew from the ideas of Black Consciousness and argued that African people “should know their worth”. However, in her opinion, this could only happen if their history was taught to them properly. It is evident that she viewed African history as

more important than non-African history. She believed that when learners have a strong knowledge of their history and thus themselves, they can be in a better position to communicate with people from other cultures around the world.

4.6.6. Importance of Pre-Colonial Africa and Homogeneity

Ms Zula raised the importance of pre-colonial African history, insisting that it was important for history education in Africa to place an emphasis on what was happening in Africa before African contact with the Europeans. She explained that the Eurocentric perspective of history presents precolonial Africa as if it was a dark place with no history or civilisation. However, Ms Zula asserted that Africa was flourishing even before contact with the Europeans. She elaborated and stated:

There's a lot of history in Africa, I think our history as Africans is or rather begins with the colonisation of Africans which is not true. Our history is more than just our colonisation. I think we have to move away from the belief that our history started with our colonisation. For example, even when we learn about the histories of Shaka Zulu and others. Our history always goes back to colonisers. We have to teach our kids about African culture before colonisation, how the people lived, [and] not always about how the settlers colonised us. We must not solely focus on the colonisation part but focus on Africa as a whole.

She argued that Africa has a great deal of history and that history does not begin with its contact with the West. She further argued that African children need to be taught African history before contact with European history. She believed that pre-colonial African history would provide a better picture of Africa and Africans.

Ms Zula also supported the idea that Africa is homogeneous in terms of history and culture. She stated:

We have to look back at the history of Africa. The scramble for Africa divided Africa into different colonies. For example, South Africa was made of colonies like the Cape Colony, the Natal colony and so forth, so we must ask ourselves how we came to have these colonies. Before the colonisation of Africa, Africa was a single entity with no defined political borders. But because of the new rules that came with the colonisation of Africa we must realise that before European domination we were a single entity. As Africans we are one, a person from Zimbabwe is still the same as a black person from South Africa, we share the same ancestor. Black South Africans were divided across tribal lines by the apartheid government.

According to her, Africans are one people with a shared history and culture and thus perspective. She blamed European colonisation for the divisions that exist in contemporary Africa.

4.6.7. Curriculum Changes

When it came to curriculum changes, Ms Zula supported the idea of introducing an Afrocentric History curriculum in South Africa. Ms Zula stated:

I have no idea of the newly proposed History curriculum. I have heard prior from a friend and I think it is a very good move because I remember being in high school and we learnt a lot about the French revolution, industrialization, and a lot of European history so I think it good that they introduce Afrocentrism within our curriculum because it is important for our kids to learn about their own history.

She thought that there was a lot of European history in the current CAPS History curriculum and thus Afrocentrism would improve the situation.

4.6.8. Concluding Summary

Ms Zula strongly argued for an African-centred History curriculum. She raised the importance of having an Afrocentric curriculum in South Africa and stated that the current CAPS History curriculum was problematic due to its Eurocentric nature. She further argued that only an Afrocentric History curriculum would help the African youth to interact with other non-African people in the world. Therefore, Ms Zula can be classified as embracing essentialist thinking. However, her thinking was nuanced and contradictory because in some instances she possessed inclusivist thinking.

4.7. Teacher Six: Ms Jangwe's Thinking

4.7.1. Role of Age and Representation

At Sinekamva Secondary School there was Ms Jangwe, a 34 years old history teacher who had been teaching for over ten years. She revealed that she was born towards the end of the apartheid period and thus attended school under the democratic period in South Africa. She had a bookshelf in her classroom that held a collection of books that were written by mostly African authors. She explained that she lent these books to her learners provided that they wrote a report about what they learned from them. She encouraged the learners to read more books by African authors. This tells us that Ms Jangwe was interested in and influenced by ideas that were African-centred and promoted the perspectives of Africans. Moreover, by providing such books to her learners

and encouraging them to read them, she was attempting to influence or encourage them to learn more about Africa.

4.7.2. Eurocentric CAPS Curriculum

Ms Jangwe, thought that the current CAPS history curriculum was Eurocentric. In her view, the knowledge that is taught in the curriculum comes from Europe rather than Africa. According to Ms Jangwe the knowledge of Africans about Africa and about themselves is not included in the current CAPS History curriculum. She explained, “What Africans know about themselves is not promoted in the history books. But we are told about what Europeans think about us as Africans and about our history.” Ms Jangwe thought that indigenous knowledge about African history was excluded from the current History curriculum. She elaborated, saying, “Abantu base Afrika banolwazi lwabo nge Afrika kodwa sixelelwa ngolwazi lwabamhlophe” (The Eurocentric perspective about African history is promoted in history education even though Africans have their own perspective).

In other words, the European perspective of African history is placed at the centre of the current CAPS History curriculum.

Ms Jangwe further asserted that “Our history curriculum is mostly Eurocentric; it is mostly in the perspectives of Europeans. It is no help at all because it promotes European values”. It is evident, therefore, that Ms Jangwe believed that the values of Africans are not included in the CAPS History curriculum and, the African way of doing things and living is not promoted. Instead, it promotes European values. She thought that the Eurocentric nature of the CAPS curriculum was not beneficial to Africans.

4.7.3. Promoting the African Perspective

Ms Jangwe also argued that the history that is taught to Africans about Africa and the world is not entirely factual. It is rather a history that narrates the perspective of those who have been dominant in the world. She further asserted that Africans had been forced to accept the narratives of the former colonial masters. Ms Jangwe believed that the colonialists had the power to force the colonised to accept their narrative of history, and the colonised simply could not refuse to do so. In her view, the history that is taught in the current curriculum has been inherited from the colonial perspective of history. Ms Jangwe thus thought that since that African people had been liberated from the bondages of colonialism, they should also tell their side of history from their own experiences. Ms Jangwe explained, “Ezinye izizwe zikwazile ukuzibhalela eyazo imbali ngokhoke nathi masiyeke sizibhalele imbali yethu ngokwethu” (non-African groups have been given the opportunity to tell their side of history. Therefore, we must also be afforded the same opportunity as Africans”. She placed an emphasis on the importance of having Africans narrating their history themselves. Ms Jangwe stated that she did not like the idea of having a history that had been written by someone else who was not African. In her view, Africans should be allowed to write their own history.

4.7.4. Importance of Pre-colonial African History

Ms Jangwe blamed colonisation for disrupting African history. She argued:

I personally disagree with that notion or the idea that our African people have not contributed enough, or their history is not important enough as compared to for example European history. Remember we were overpowered, our development was interrupted, our platform to prove ourselves was taken away from us. There's this idea that we do not

have something better to bring to the table because we were oppressed. For example, before the colonisation of Africa, Africans lived according to their own norms and values, we had our own belief systems, we had our own systems of trade and commerce, we had our own systems of governance, we believed that the land should be shared equally by everyone. Europeans brought with them their own systems and forced them on us.

Ms Jangwe was of the view that Africans had their own way of doing things before colonisation. However, their lives were disrupted by colonisation and Africans were forced to shift from their culture. Thus, they were no longer able to develop and contribute to the world as they would have had it not been for colonisation. According to her, Africans would have played an even better role in world history had it not been for colonisation.

She still thought that despite colonisation, Africans did have history that was worthy of being taught at schools. Ms Jangwe also raised the importance of precolonial African history. She stated that Africa was doing well during that period and was on its own path of growth and development. Ms Jangwe further contended that colonisation disrupted the flourishing of Africa as it was in precolonial times.

4.7.5. Interconnected Human History

With regard to a relevant history curriculum in South Africa, Ms Jangwe rejected the idea of teaching only African history at schools. She explained,

The reason why we teach history is for us to learn from the experiences of other people in the world. So that we do not end up making the same mistakes that they did. We want to learn from others, we want to learn from their history.

She further elaborated, saying, “Xa sifuna iAfrika ikhule, iphumelele kufuneka sifunde nakwabanye abaphumeleleyo sibone ukuba benzenjani bona embalini yabo” (If

we want Africa to grow and develop, we must learn from those who are developed so that we can see what they did in their history to get to where they are now). Therefore, according to Ms Jangwe, it was not advisable for Africa to only teach African history at schools, as promoted by some Afrocentric scholars. She held the belief that there is a need to learn from the experiences of other people around the world. Moreover, according to Ms Jangwe, the purpose of learning history in Africa was for development and growth. She thought that we needed to learn from other people in the world who were more developed than those in Africa. She held the opinion that Africa was less developed in certain areas of life.

In addition to this, Ms Jangwe argued that:

Africa is not an island; it cannot develop on its own without other people. That is why we have to learn about the cultures and the history of other people around the world and not only be African-centred. And also, African history is connected to the history of other people. For example, we have Africans living in America, we have Africans living in Europe. So there is that interconnected history around all of us as human beings.

According to Ms Jangwe, humans were connected in terms of their history; they have a shared history. Therefore, it was not entirely advisable to have a completely Afrocentric History curriculum.

4.7.6. Curriculum Changes

With reference to the proposed History curriculum changes, Ms Jangwe stated that she was not aware that the Department of Basic Education was planning on changing the current CAPS History curriculum to introduce an Afrocentric curriculum. She explained,

“No. Not really. I have no information about the government's attempt to make the history curriculum more Afrocentric. But I support such a notion, maybe it can unite us and help us to realise our dream of being a rainbow nation”. Ms Jangwe thus supported the idea of introducing an Afrocentric History curriculum but only if it included other people in South Africa who did not identify as non-African too. She maintained that the History curriculum should help in building a “rainbow nation”.

4.7.7. Concluding Summary

Ms Jangwe supported the idea of having a History curriculum which narrated history from a dominant perspective of Africans. However, she did not want a history curriculum which exclusively covered the African content. She stated that the History curriculum should take into consideration the interconnectedness of human history and not try to divide people. Ms Jangwe's thinking can be classified as leaning towards inclusivism because she advocated for an approach to history education which accommodates both Africans and those who do not identify as African. However, there are some ideas of essentialism that she supported, as shown above. Therefore, her thinking was contradictory and ambiguous.

4.7.8. Conclusion

In conclusion, this study aimed to understand the thinking of African history teachers on Afrocentrism and the reasons for their thinking. In essence, the findings in this study demonstrate that the thinking of the African history teachers on Afrocentrism is not clean and neat. Instead it is filled with contradictions, ambiguities and nuanced. Moreover, although the history teachers might be leaning more towards a particular perspective of Afrocentrism, they do possess characteristics of the opposite perspective

in their thinking. The thinking of the African history teachers will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.

Chapter 5

Discussion of Data and Conclusion

5.1. Introduction

The purpose of this study was to understand the thinking of African history teachers on Afrocentrism as it relates to history education in South Africa and sought to understand the reasons behind the thinking of the selected African history teachers. The findings were presented in detail in Chapter 4 of this study. Therefore, the purpose of this chapter is to analyse and discuss the findings from the analysis as presented in Chapter 4 using the theoretical framework and literature of Afrocentrism.

Furthermore, this chapter sought to propose answers to my research questions on what the thinking of the selected African history teachers on Afrocentrism was and what the reasons behind their thinking were. The findings as discussed in chapter four of this study enabled me to understand the thinking of the African history teachers on Afrocentrism in the Makhanda area.

In addition to the above, this chapter sought to provide a reflection based on the personal and professional experiences that I had while conducting this study. Moreover, the contributions that this study has made, and its limitations are outlined. And finally, recommendations stemming from this study will be made and a conclusion is provided.

5.2. Teacher Thinking on and Knowledge of Afrocentrism

As discussed in the previous chapters, Afrocentrism states that Africa and Africans must be placed at the centre of the History curriculum (Asante, 1991). This means that

the role, experiences and contributions of Africa and Africans must be recognised in history education. The majority (Mr Roqo, Mr Qula, Ms Zula, Ms Jangwe, Ms Qama, and Ms Guqa) of the history teachers in this study displayed a good understanding of the theoretical tenets of Afrocentrism and its purpose. This is similar to the teachers in Manley (1994) who were aware about Afrocentrism and its purpose. This observation is important, especially in the South African context where ideas such Black Consciousness, Pan Africanism and other radical ideas that are related to Afrocentrism have been silent in most spaces due to the rise and domination of less radical ideas such as multiculturalism. Mpofu (2019) referred to these ideas as “rainbowism” and argues that they were introduced and spread in South Africa in the advent of democracy in 1994. These ideas were meant to promote sameness and unity in what was now the “new South Africa”. The “old” ideas, such as Afrocentrism, which promoted recognised differences were meant to be discarded and forgotten about. However, it seemed as if the majority of the history teachers in this study kept these ideas alive at the back of their minds. This could be because they related more to these ideas than they did to the ideas of “rainbowism”. In fact, Mpofu (2019) argued that there has been disillusionment in South Africa with the ideas of “rainbowism”.

Furthermore, the teachers, for the most part, indicated that they support the ideas of Afrocentrism. Most of them (Mr Qula, Ms Zula, Ms Jangwe, Ms Qama, and Ms Guqa) argued that history education in South Africa needed to be reviewed so that the history curriculum is made more Afrocentric. These findings are similar to Akua (2020) who found that teachers and parents in the US supported Afrocentric values and standards. This is because they stated that they did not want African learners to be marginalised in any way.

Similarly, Mr Roqo, Ms Qula, Ms Zula, Ms Jangwe, Ms Qama, and Ms Guqa, argued that they would not support any history curriculum which would marginalise African learners; they wanted one which would recognise them.

The findings in this study indicate the African history teachers who participated had a range of understandings but supported the basic tenets of Afrocentrism as it relates to history education. Bakhtin (1981) argued that it was important to acknowledge that society is complex, in other words, there are cases of agreements and order, while there are also cases of disagreement and disorder. This seemed to be the case when it came to the thinking of the participants in this study. There was ambiguity within themselves and amongst each other.

During the conversational interviews with the African history teachers in Makhanda, there was a fluidity and pragmatism when it came to their thinking, sometimes geared towards a Eurocentric history curriculum and sometimes geared towards a multicultural inclusive history curriculum. Meaning that they had a tendency to support a history curriculum that catered for all cultures and their histories in South Africa. This is contrary to Shapiro (2019) who found that teachers [and parents] in the US city of New York mostly supported Afrocentric schools because they believed that the schools and thus the curriculum in that area were deeply and permanently segregated, as such Africans were predominantly turning towards an alternative approach, which was Afrocentrism. Moreover, Shapiro (2019) found that there was an overwhelming demand among African teachers, parents and learners for an alternative to integration and multiculturalism due to the above stated reasons.

Despite their fluid and complex thinking, analysis of the data indicated that predominantly the thinking of the African history teachers (Mr Qula, Ms Zula, Ms Jangwe, Ms Qama and Ms Guqa) was geared towards an Afrocentric history curriculum. While at some point some African history teacher's thinking attempted to negotiate between Eurocentrism and Afrocentrism by suggesting multiculturalism or even a fusion between Afrocentrism and Eurocentrism (Mr Roqo). However, there seemed to be an ambiguous and contradictory dilemma in the thinking of some of the African history teachers (Ms Qama, Mr Roqo, Ms Guqa) when it came to discarding Eurocentrism over Afrocentrism, Eurocentrism is all that they have come to know, they have thus been socialised into it and accepted it and have become comfortable with it. Afrocentrism on the other hand, although they were familiar with the idea, seemed to be known to them, but not in practice. This may have been because they had been exposed to a Eurocentric perspective in history almost all their careers as history teachers and even outside of the teaching environment as learners and students in the society of Makhanda. Viljoen and Van Der Walt (2003) referred to this not as fluidity in thinking but as confusion over the educational identity of South Africa, they argued that South Africans were not sure about whether to have an Africanised (Afrocentric) or shared (multicultural) educational identity. This seemed to be the case with the African history teachers in this study.

Predominantly, the African history teachers were not sure about what Afrocentrism would look like in practice of history education and this made their thinking to be, at first, doubtful about the introduction of an Afrocentric history curriculum. This might have been the main cause of their fluidity, which Viljoen and Van der Walt (2003) referred to as confusion. However, as the conversational interviews continued and their thinking

became further examined, their thinking began shifting to be more geared towards Afrocentrism, over Eurocentrism and multiculturalism in the history curriculum. This could be explained that they possibly for the first time could speak about it in an open and supporting setting. For instance, Mr Roqo seemed to dismiss the idea of Afrocentrism, at first, in favour of maintaining Eurocentrism, which he admitted was embedded in the current CAPS History curriculum in South Africa. However, as the conversational interviews continued he began to change his thinking in favour of Afrocentrism. This demonstrates that again, for the most part, the thinking of some of the African history teachers tended to be fluid. It is thus difficult to fixate their thinking into either Essentialism or Inclusivism as it relates to Afrocentrism. The thinking of the African history teachers at times changed from a fixed mindset to a fluid mindset and from a fluid mindset to a fixed mindset. In other words, the thinking of the African history teachers in some instances became Essentialist and in other instances became Inclusivist as their thinking fluctuated and seemed contradictory and ambiguous at times.

5.3. Thinking on Eurocentrism in the current history curriculum

The majority of the history teachers (Mr Roqo, Mr Qula, Ms Zula, Ms Jangwe, Ms Qama and Ms Guqa) agreed with the view that the current CAPS History curriculum in South Africa was Eurocentric in outlook. They argued that the history that was taught at schools was written from the perspective of Europeans. Moreover, some of the teachers (Mr Qula, Ms Zula, Ms Jangwe, Ms Qama and Ms Guqa) stated that they thought that the entire education system in South Africa was modelled from a European education system, rather than from African education systems. In other words, in this system, it was not only history education that was viewed as Eurocentric by the African history teachers in this

case study, but the entire education system. These findings are supported by Mudaly (2018) who found that mathematics teachers who participated in his study believed that the curriculum in South Africa devalued and decentred the African people. Mr Roqo, Mr Qula, Ms Zula, Ms Jangwe, Ms Qama and Ms Guqa further explained that this was as a result of South Africa's colonial past. This can be further explained by Mahabeer (2018, p. 3) who contended that "South Africans continue to perpetuate Westernised Eurocentric approaches to the education system and the curriculum, which registers deep concern. A rethink and reconstruction of the curriculum is needed". Similarly, in the thoughts of the majority of the African history teachers, European history and the European perspective of history had dominated the South African CAPS History curriculum. Support for their thinking came from Bailey (2017, p. 2) who admitted that in CAPS History "European events are certainly prioritised over other African, Asian or South American events". Likewise, Sesanti (2019) also agreed that the CAPS History curriculum in South Africa was Eurocentric, it spread European values to African learners.

5.4. Relationship between the Eurocentric Content of the CAPS Curriculum and learner Performance

The findings in this study indicated that Mr Qula, Ms Zula, Ms Jangwe, Ms Qama and Ms Guqa strongly believed that there was a mutual relationship between the content that was taught in History under the CAPS and the academic performance of the students. The above mentioned history teachers thought that African students performed better academically when it came to topics that had to do with Africa and Africans, rather than on topics that were non-African or Eurocentric. Ms Zula and Mr Qula provided their learner performance results in order to support their thinking on this matter. The findings that they

pointed out are similar to the findings in various other studies such as Irvine (1990) that were conducted amongst African American students in the US. Irvine (1990), Manley (1994) and Ringstaff (2023) found that African American teachers in Afrocentric schools had positive attitudes towards an Afrocentric curriculum because they believed that African American students performed better when they taught in schools that used an Afrocentric curriculum. Moreover, studies in the US demonstrated that African American students struggled academically with the traditional United States curriculum which was deemed to be Eurocentric (Irvine, 1990; Manley, 1994 & Ringstaff, 2023).

However, the performance of the African American learners improved once they enrolled in schools that were Afrocentric in their curriculum (Irvine, 1990; Manley, 1994 & Ringstaff, 2023). This was because in the Afrocentric schools the African American students were now exposed to topics that were relatable to them and their culture (Irvine, 1990; Manley, 1994 & Ringstaff, 2023). Mr Qula, Ms Zula, Ms Jangwe, Ms Qama and Ms Guqa also held this thinking, namely; that African students would perform better academically if they were to be given the opportunity to learn about history topics that were relatable to them and that were presented from an Afrocentric perspective. Support for this thinking came from Banks (1998) who also stated that topics that were relevant to learners can motivate them to learn. Furthermore, studies in the US demonstrated that African American students became more enthusiastic about their schoolwork in schools where an Afrocentric curriculum was practised (Manley, 1994). This is also similar to the thinking of Mr Qula, Ms Zula, Ms Jangwe, Ms Qama and Ms Guqa that students showed more interest when they were being taught about topics that involved Africa and Africans. In other words, African students tend to show low interest towards Eurocentric history.

As demonstrated in the previous chapter, most of the history teachers (Mr Qula, Ms Zula, Ms Jangwe, Ms Qama and Ms Guqa) argued that the majority of the young people in South Africa do not know their history. This, they argued, was because they had been exposed mostly to the Eurocentric perspective of history, as per CAPS History curriculum. These findings are also supported by other studies such as Gordon (2015). These studies, which I draw on because of the paucity of literature from South Africa on this matter, found that African American learners did not know about their African history and this thus affected their academic performance (Gordon, 2015). Some history teachers in this study held similar Afrocentric thinking; that African learners in South Africa did not know their African history. This has thus caused the African history teachers to support the idea of introducing an Afrocentric history curriculum.

The thinking of the history teachers on the relationship between the content and learner performance is in line with certain Afrocentric theories. However, such findings have never been made in the South African context. As demonstrated throughout this study, particularly in chapter two, most of the studies on Afrocentrism have been conducted in the United States and this study fills this gap.

5.5. Education, Age, Colonial History, Name Changes, Teaching Experience, as Factors Shaping the Thinking of the African History Teachers on Afrocentrism

There were a variety of factors that shaped the thinking of the African history teachers on Afrocentrism. Blazevic (2016) argued that education developed in individuals a perspective of looking at life. This means that education is one of the most important factors that influence a person's thinking. This was confirmed by the African history teachers in this study.

Firstly, the findings in this study show that education, both their basic and tertiary education, played a key role in shaping the thinking of the African history teachers on Afrocentrism. Some of the teachers (Mr Roqo and Ms Qama) indicated that they were not taught any African related content at university level. The focus was on mostly Eurocentric content, historiography, and theories, while Afrocentric content was marginalised or silenced. This speaks to Sharma (2005) who showed that teachers were taught to meet the learning needs of the dominant culture in their society. Kallaway (2015) informed us that in the case of apartheid in South Africa, the dominant culture was the Afrikaner nationalist culture. Moreover, Kallaway (2015) argued that teachers that trained from the 1950s were forced to learn the Christian National Education which was used to spread the ideas of the dominant culture at that time. This has thus influenced the thinking of, for example, Mr Roqo, who seems, for the most part, to think that the dominance of the European perspective in the history curriculum should be left unchallenged. It has also influenced the thinking of the other teachers including Mr Qula who reasoned that due to being exposed to mostly Eurocentric education he, in a reactionary manner, recognised the need to learn about African history. Thus Asante (1991) argued that what we teach (curriculum) matters, this is because it influences people's perspectives of life and even way of living, as it seemed to have been the case with the above history teachers.

Furthermore, the findings in this study demonstrated that people who have been exposed to mostly Eurocentric education could be Afrocentric. The teachers in this study, such as Mr Qula, have been exposed to Eurocentrism but despite that were able to revise, at least partially, their outlook towards Afrocentrism. This has been the case in the context of the US as well, where individuals such as Asante who were exposed to Eurocentric

education in the US, were able to shift from that and become Afrocentric. This is contrary to Manley (1994) who argued that to be Afrocentric, one must have been exposed to Afrocentric education all their lives. This points to the complexity of thinking on Afrocentrism in general but also to that of the teachers in this study who were flexible and could change.

The analysis of data in this study shows that teachers, such as Mr Qula, who were younger and thus able to access studies that are African centred post-1994 were more conscious and informed on issues involving African people. Moreover, the findings in this study indicated that education in South Africa had been viewed mostly as tending to be Eurocentric. This is the case with both the pre and post-apartheid education, as demonstrated by the thinking of the teachers in this study. Heleta (2016) and Fataar (2018) concur with these findings as they also argued that the education in South Africa, both basic and higher, was still greatly Eurocentric and thus needs to be decolonised. Similar to Qula, Heleta (2016) and Fataar (2018) have argued that African centred perspectives to education needed to be included in South African education. In addition, Maluleka and Rampoupi (2022, p. 65) argued that the school History curriculum, which the PGCE-History students participating in this study studied at school, “continues to undermine indigenous ways of knowing and being” and must go “beyond inclusion”. Furthermore, these “marginalised intellectual projects must form part of the nervous system of a decolonised school history (sic) curriculum” (Maluleka & Rampoupi, 2022, p. 78). However, this would not necessarily be a simplistic process.

Moreover, the findings in this study indicated that the participating history teachers had not been trained to deal with the African learners in an Afrocentric manner and to

meet their needs, especially teachers that were trained under the apartheid system such as Mr Roqo and Ms Zula. In other words, the older teachers (Mr Roqo and Ms Zula), who were trained under apartheid, seemed to be less conscious about African issues as advocated by Afrocentrism. While the younger teachers (Mr Qula and Ms Guqa), on the other hand, tended to be more aware but not necessarily equipped. This could be because the older teachers were educated during the apartheid era, which taught them to never care about African issues. Tibbitts and Weldon (2017) concur with this as they argued that apartheid education entrenched ideas of White superiority and Black inferiority. Wassermann (2017) also stated that apartheid history curriculum emphasised ideas of White superiority and Black inferiority, thus placing Blacks on the fringes of history education. Moreover, Wassermann (2017: 60) argued that, through the apartheid history curriculum, the Black people were socialised into “a world of subservience and subjugation”, which would create a mindset amongst many up to the present. In other words, those who were taught under apartheid education, such as Mr Roqo and Ms Zula, were made to believe that African matters were inferior and thus less important. Wassermann (2017) further argued that African figures such as Nelson Mandela and Sobukwe, and organisations that represented Africans such as the ANC and Pan African Congress (PAC) were presented in a negative manner, while on the other hand, Europeans were presented in a positive light. This could thus explain why Mr Roqo, as an example, still believed that European history was worth more than African history. This is what he was socialised to believe and had to internalise by means of education throughout his life. In contrast, the younger teachers grew up in the post-apartheid era, when attention was, to a certain extent, placed on African matters as advocated by

Afrocentrism. In other words, the younger generation were educated in an era when apartheid anti-African socialisation had been challenged but not necessarily eradicated. This has thus affected the thinking of these African teachers and created a gap between the younger and older generations.

Another factor that seems to have influenced the thinking of the African history teachers would be the long and deep colonial history of Makhanda, where their schools are based. Giliomee and Mbenga (2007) trace the long history of colonisation in the Eastern Cape. They state that some of the Xhosa people in this area wanted to integrate with the Europeans, share and exchange resources with them (Giliomee and Mbenga, 2007). This is the similar inclusivist approach used by Roqo who prefers to have both European and African cultures coexisting. In other words, the deep historical past is still at play in many cases in contemporary historical thinking.

The name of the town was changed from Grahamstown to Makhanda in 2018 because most members of the community of this town, especially African members, wanted a name that was more Afrocentric for their town, rather than “Grahamstown”, which they regarded as a colonial name (Irvine et.al, 2021). There is also an ongoing debate to change the name of Rhodes University which is based in Makhanda to a more Afrocentric name, some students at the university and some members of the community argue that “Rhodes” is a colonial name (Irvine et.al, 2021). Thus, there are a lot of attempts from some members of the community of Makhanda to have African history and heritage recognised. Consequently, this thinking might have had a profound impact on the thinking of the African history teachers who are in the maelstrom of local history working towards becoming more Afrocentric.

In this regard, the data also shows that, in most instances, the history teachers (Mr Roqo and Ms Qama) who were older tended to be more inclusivist and open minded in their thinking on Afrocentrism and how it relates to society at large. They seemed to be more considerate and willing to accommodate other historical perspectives, they did not want to be confined to either Eurocentric or Afrocentric perspectives, they wanted to be multiple rather than binary. This could be explained by Tibbitts and Weldon (2017) who argue that education was used to legitimise apartheid and colonial domination. Thus in the minds of those educated under this system such as Roqo and Qama, Eurocentrism is legitimate and must be maintained. Hence, Mudaly (2018) argues that there needs to be a process where the minds, referring to mathematics teachers but this could equally be applied to history teachers, get decolonised as this process did not take place post-1994 in South Africa. On the other hand, in most instances, the younger history teachers (Mr Qula and Ms Guqa) who were educated post-1994 tended to be more essentialist and radical in their thinking on Afrocentrism. Meaning that they were not willing to accept Eurocentric, as the older teachers, instead they were willing to challenge it, this could be that they were not entirely socialised into Eurocentrism as their older colleagues because apartheid had ended.

Related to the above, teaching experience played an important role in the thinking of the history teachers on Afrocentrism. In most instances, the teachers who had more teaching experience (Mr Roqo and Ms Zula) tended to be more inclusivist and open minded in their thinking on Afrocentrism. The less experienced history teachers who were educated in post-apartheid South Africa were more willing to change the curriculum and focus on an African centred history. This demonstrates the sense of disillusionment and

dissatisfaction that particularly young black South Africans have over the current political system (Reed, 2020).

Reed (2020) further states that it has been mostly the young people in South Africa who have been calling for the structures that uphold Eurocentrism and white domination to be deconstructed because of the negative impact that they have had on African societies. Moreover, the idea of introducing an Afrocentric curriculum in basic education may stem from the demand for the decolonisation of higher education which was led by young people all over South African universities and colleges (Fataar, 2018). This further demonstrates that perhaps there is a hunger from young teachers as those who participated in this study for Afrocentrism and thus an Afrocentric history curriculum may resonate with them and even fulfil their needs.

There is thus a relationship between age, teaching experience, educational training as history teachers and the thinking of the African history teachers on Afrocentrism. This thinking is contrary to Manley (1994) who found in the US that there was no significant relationship between years of teaching experience and teachers' perceptions of the African centred curriculum. It is clear therefore, that this is different in the South African context, because there is a huge difference in the thinking on Afrocentrism between those with more experience compared to those teachers with less experience.

5.6. Afrocentrism Should Accommodate Other Histories

The statements made by most (Mr Qula, Ms Zula, Ms Jangwe, Ms Qama and Ms Guqa) of the history teachers on Afrocentrism being a vehicle to unite all groups in South Africa shows that most of them don't see Afrocentrism as a way to separate. Instead they

saw it as a way of promoting inclusivity. This is in line with the thinking by Moses (2015) who argued that Afrocentric education is meant to create equality between different cultures and their people. Moreover, the majority of the history teachers (Mr Qula, Ms Zula, Ms Jangwe, Ms Qama and Ms Guqa) were not interested in having a history curriculum that was exclusive and accessible only to African learners. However, they want a curriculum that will include the experiences and perspectives of Africans. Meaning that they are against the practice of having one group dominate the narrative in the history curriculum as is currently the case, according to the majority of the history teachers in this study. The main concern of Mr Qula, Ms Zula, Ms Jangwe, Ms Qama, and Ms Guqa, was the European hegemony and the Eurocentric gaze in the CAPS History curriculum in South Africa. Thus, Early et al. (1994) assures that Afrocentrism aims to systematically challenge this hegemony. Therefore, the above African history teachers supported this aim as they were also opposed to hegemony in the history curriculum.

In addition, the majority of the history teachers (Mr Qula, Ms Zula, Ms Jangwe, Ms Qama, and Ms Guqa) spoke about the need for a balanced history curriculum. For instance, Mr Qula and Ms Jangwe, recognised that there are people who do not identify themselves or are identified by the state as African in South Africa, and proposed that such people also needed to be catered for in any curriculum reforms in an inclusivist manner. They further asserted that the goal of Afrocentrism should be to provide balance in the unbalanced CAPS History curriculum of South Africa.

The thinking of the majority of the history teachers (Mr Roqo, Ms Zula, Ms Jangwe, Ms Qama, and Ms Guqa) was that although African history and perspective should be centred in the history curriculum, they still wanted other cultures and non-African history,

although who these are were not clearly qualified, to be included in the curriculum. These views are contrary to those expressed by leading Afrocentric scholars such as Dei (1994), Mazama (2001) and Asante (2002) who argue that Afrocentrism should strictly cater for and accommodate Africans, whom they regarded the ones who had been marginalised and thus were in most need of being cater for.

Moreover, for the teachers, the general view was that a strictly Afrocentric curriculum would not be suitable in preparing African youth for the modern world which was interconnected and multicultural. Unlike Dei (1994), Mazama (2001) and Asante (2002) amongst others, who did not support multicultural curriculum and rather argued for an exclusively Afrocentric curriculum geared towards African learners. Mr Roqo, Ms Zula, Ms Jangwe, Ms Qama, and Ms Guqa proposed that an Afrocentric curriculum should try to be inclusive and not exclude others.

This is divergent from the essentialist perspective of some Afrocentrists such as Dei (1994) and Asante (2002) who argue that African learners should focus solely on African history. Mr Roqo, Ms Zula, Ms Jangwe, Ms Qama, and, Ms Guqa, instead advocate for an inclusivist approach where other cultures are included in the history curriculum. This is similar to the findings in Watson (2015) who found that teachers in the US were in favour of an inclusive curriculum rather than one that focused solely on African American history. The teachers in Watson's (2015) study argued that a curriculum that was meaningful and relevant to all students, African and non-African, was desirable. This is the same thinking expressed by the majority of the history teachers in this study. Unlike the essentialist thinking of certain proponents of Afrocentrism, their thinking is that history education should not be specific to a particular race. This perspective is also similar to

Sobukwe (1960, as cited in Lebakeng, 2018) who stated that he was willing to accept other groups as long as they also accepted Africans, and accepted, in the South African context, the dominance of Africans as the majority.

5.7. Importance of African history

Another important theme which emerged from the findings was the importance of African history. Despite the fluidity and even contradictions of their thinking on Afrocentrism, Mr Qula, Ms Zula, Ms Jangwe, Ms Qama, and Ms Guqa, agreed that African history should take centrality in the curriculum of South Africa, or any African country for that matter. Sesanti (2019) supports this view as he argues that African culture should be taught in Africa as an act of African renaissance. Moreover, this view is supported by Maluleka and Rampoupi (2022, p. 65) who argued that indigenous [African] history should go “beyond inclusion” in the curriculum. Maluleka and Rampoupi (2022, p. 65) asserted that indigenous [African] history which has been marginalised “must form part of the nervous system of a decolonised school history (sic) curriculum”.

The exception amongst the teachers was Roqo who argued that there should be coexistence between African and European history. However, according to Mr Qula, Ms Zula, Ms Jangwe, Ms Qama, and, Ms Guqa, African learners should be able to see themselves and relate to the curriculum that is taught to them in history. This view is supported by Moses (2015) who argues that African must see themselves as active participants in history and not be placed on the sidelines, as is the case with the Eurocentric history curriculum.

Moreover, Mr Qula, Ms Zula, Ms Jangwe, Ms Qama, and, Ms Guqa, argued that there was so much more to African history than was presented in the current CAPS

History curriculum. They further argued that Africans have contributed and played a much bigger role in history than has been recognised by the Eurocentric perspective. Asante (1991) concurs with this perspective as he argues that the role of Africans in history has been deliberately hidden in an attempt to favour the role of the Europeans. For the most part, Mr Qula, Ms Zula, Ms Jangwe, Ms Qama, and, Ms Guqa, argued that history curriculum planners should not only incorporate African history and perspective in the history curriculum but should centre it. The current practice of placing African history in the periphery implies that it is viewed as inadequate and deficient. This is similar to Asante (2016) who has advocated for the centring of Africans in the curriculum.

Mr Qula, Ms Zula, Ms Jangwe, Ms Qama, and Ms Guqa, seemed to be proud of their African history heritage and argued that it was worthy of being recognised and taught in schools. It would seem bizarre for them not to place importance on African history, given the fact that they are Africans or identify as such. The thinking from the above stated African history teachers was that if African learners are being taught about ancient Rome and ancient Greece, they should also be taught about Ethiopia and Mapungubwe civilisations. That history is equally important. This view is similar to Asante (1980), Diop & Cook (2012) and Will (1996) who argued that civilisation began in Africa and, therefore, the history of ancient African civilisations should be centred in history education. Historically, it has been outsiders who regarded African history as insignificant and placed it on the periphery. Similarly, Afrocentric thinkers including Asante (1980), Will (1996), Diop and Cook (2012) have also strived to dispel the notion that African history is not important or worthy of being part of school curriculum. However, on the contrary, Mr Roqo

viewed European history, based on his biography, as being more important and thus worthier of being taught at schools than African history.

Afrocentric scholars have argued that Afrocentrism provides an alternative for existing Eurocentric history curriculums (Asante, 1991). The majority of the African history teachers in this study, support the thinking of providing an alternative narrative on African history, one that will humanise and glorify the continent of Africa, its people and the role that they have played in the world.

Giliomee and Mbenga (2007) categorise African history as follows: pre-colonial era, European settlement, frontier wars and African nationalism, industrialization, segregation, apartheid and democracy. Similar to Sesanti (2018) and Mazama (2001), Ms Zula and Ms Jangwe, have emphasised the importance of pre-colonial African history, they stated that Africa has a history of great advances, civilisations and empires. Therefore, this history, according to Ms Zula and Ms Jangwe, needed to be told. This is similar to Ndlovu (2018) who argued that African centred in content, decolonial in spirit, and will pay particular attention to Africa's long pre-colonial past by drawing on African philosophical traditions as well as its material culture, orality, and language as sources of historical knowledge.

According to Ms Zula and Ms Jangwe, the Afrocentric curriculum should demonstrate that African history did not begin during colonisation and slavery, instead, there was a lot of history in Africa before that. Teaching pre-colonial African history in schools will influence young people to revere Africa and be proud of their African identity, something that young people in modern Africa lack, according to the two history teachers. In the thinking of the African history teachers, it is important for the African learners to see

themselves portrayed in a positive manner in the history curriculum rather than as mere objects or subjects. This is because they believed that students internalise what they are taught at school and get affected by it in their lives as has happened under apartheid. Langa et.al. (2021) support this view by stating that Africans who studied history at school during apartheid were so traumatised by it to the extent that they did not want their children to take history today. Similar to the Afrocentric theory, most of the history teachers argued that Afrocentric history could reverse the psychological damages that have been caused by colonialism and Eurocentrism.

However, Mr Roqo, Ms Guqa, Ms Zula and Ms Qama presented a different view from the dominant thinking of the Afrocentrism by stating that there should not be only a focus on African history but there should be other topics that are non-African in curriculum, as long as they are presented from an African perspective. The latter point is key, in other words whatever is taught the gaze should be Afrocentric. This shows that most of the history teachers wanted a holistic inclusivist approach to history education, rather than an essentialist approach which only aims to focus on African history. Furthermore, some Afrocentrism proponents including Dei (1994), Keto (2001), Mazama (2001), Asante (2002), Karenga (2012), Chawane (2016) and Sesanti (2021) believe that African history should centre because it is more important than other histories. They argue this because they believe that everything originated in Africa and from Africans and thus Africans are more important than others (Dei, 1994; Keto, 2001; Mazama, 2001; Asante, 2002; Karenga, 2012; Chawane, 2016; Sesanti, 2021).

In contrast, Mr Roqo, Ms Guqa, Ms Zula and Ms Qama, do not hold similar thinking. They argue that African history should be centred because it has been neglected for a

long time due to colonisation. They also think that African history should centre in South Africa because it is an African country, therefore, it does not make sense to centre any other history. To them, centering African history is about fairness rather than dominance. Moreover, they do not argue for the centering of African history because they believe that it is superior and more important than others. Similarly, Keto (2001) argued that there should not be a perspective that is made to dominate others. This thus brings me to the next discussion about the history teacher's thinking on the African perspective.

5.8. Centrality of the African perspective

Banks (2015) found that African Americans supported the idea of incorporating African history in the curriculum. However, they were not supportive of examining history from the perspective of African people. The situation is different in the South African context. The bulk of the history teachers who took part in this study made it clear that the African perspective was important. History should be narrated from the point of view of the Africans themselves. The history teachers thought that European voices were currently much louder than African voices in the history curriculum. The Afrocentrism theory argues that the African perspective must be centred and not marginalised in history education (Asante, 2000). This aligns with the thinking of the bulk of African history teachers in this study. Dei (1994) argues that the Eurocentric perspective has caused African learners to think that Africa is primitive, savage and inferior who had no history before European contact. Most of the history teachers expressed similar thinking by arguing that African history has been presented from their contact with the Europeans and thus is presented from a Eurocentric perspective.

Dei (1994) further argues that if African learners remain in the current Eurocentric curriculum then run the risk of never knowing themselves and their true history. Most of the history teachers expressed similar thinking by arguing that the young people today do not know their history and heritage and have been exposed more to the Western culture rather than African culture. Watson (2015) also found that African American teachers were opposed to a curriculum that is Eurocentric. The teachers in Watson's (2015) study argued that the Eurocentric perspective incorrectly portrays the experiences of other groups and promotes their own. Similarly, the majority of the history teachers in this study were of the thinking that European hegemony in the history curriculum should be challenged.

The thinking from Mr Roqo, Ms Guqa, Ms Zula, Ms Jangwe, Ms Qula and Ms Qama was that the current history curriculum is Eurocentric. They, for the most part, argued that this needs to be reformed with speed so that African learners can be exposed to a curriculum that is not Eurocentric in nature. This thus demonstrates that the thinking of the history teachers towards the current history curriculum is negative. They do not think that the CAPS History curriculum is the relevant and appropriate curriculum for the learners in contemporary South Africa. This view is also supported by the Ministerial Task Team which thus proposed reforms to the CAPS History curriculum to be Afrocentric (Ndlovu et.al, 2018). Moreover, Bantwini (2010) argues that the manner in which teachers think about their subject affects the manner in which they teach in the classroom. Meaning that the negative thinking of the history teachers towards the current CAPS History curriculum could affect their pedagogy.

Banks (2015) found that African Americans were against a strictly Eurocentric or strictly Afrocentric curriculum. Instead they preferred a curriculum that promoted a diversity of perspectives, rather than a curriculum promoting one perspective (Banks, 1998). In other words, the respondents in the study by Banks (2015) did not think that teaching history from a strictly Afrocentric perspective would benefit students. On the other hand, Ms Guqa, Ms Zula, Ms Jangwe, Mr Qula and Ms Qama seemed to support the idea of having a history curriculum that strictly promoted the African perspective, as long as such a curriculum would be created in such a manner that would be beneficial to other groups who identify or are identified by others as non-African in South Africa. Moreover, they expressed that they think that an Afrocentric perspective would be beneficial to all different groups in South Africa and not only just African students. In essence, the thinking of the majority of the African history teachers is that the perspective of Africans should not be just incorporated alongside other perspectives in the history curriculum, rather, it should centre and dominate. This is similar thinking expressed by Asante (2000), Chukwuokolo (2009), and Chawane (2016) who argued that multiculturalism could only be achieved through Afrocentrism.

Furthermore, the findings show that the thinking of Ms Guqa, Ms Zula, Ms Jangwe, Mr Qula and Ms Qama is that multiperspectivity or a diversity of perspectives would continue to silence the African perspective. In their thinking, a relevant history curriculum for an African country like South Africa should have the African perspective being dominant compared to other perspectives. In essence, according to them, decolonising the history curriculum, which entails eradicating Eurocentrism and introducing multiperspectivity, is not enough. Instead, they thought that “Afrocentrising” the history

curriculum is preferable. “Africocentrising” the curriculum in this case entails making the curriculum completely African. The thinking of most of the history teachers was that an Afrocentric history curriculum would prepare and enable African learners to deal with African problems in an African way. In other words, they thought that the education system in an African country should not produce graduates who are experts in the West or any other perspective, rather, they should be experts in the African perspective. The primacy of Africa is central according to the thinking of the African history teachers in this case study.

In addition to this, the majority of the African history teachers in this study argued that African learners have their own distinct culture or style of learning. They maintained that the current learning system which is in place in South Africa is a Western system rather than an African system. According to their thinking of them, Africans have a distinct style of learning, an African style of learning. Africans had their own education systems before the introduction of European education systems. In their thinking, the current system was brought and imposed on Africans by the West during the colonial period. This thus indicates that the African history teachers believe in the idea of placing cultural context and catering for the cultural needs of the learners in the curriculum. Given the fact that South Africa is a country with the majority of the learners being African, Mr Roqo, Ms Guqa, Ms Zula, Ms Jangwe, Mr Qula and Ms Qama thought that primacy should be given the African cultural context and style of learning. Clarke (1991) has also argued that Africans should not be reliant on the Eurocentric education system and curriculum, instead, they should have their own systems based on their context. Another advocate of Afrocentrism, Asante (1988) argues that African learners should be taught from their

cultural perspective. However, the thinking of the Africa history teachers is contrary to that expressed by the critics of Afrocentrism who have stated that the curriculum should not be dictated by culture such as Lefkowitz (1992) and Appiah (1998).

5.9. Impact of Afrocentrism

Dei (2006) states that African students are disadvantaged through the Eurocentric history curriculum because it does not deal with the impact of colonialism. This thinking is also held by the African history teachers in this study. Mr Roqo, Ms Guqa, Ms Zula, Ms Jangwe, Mr Qula and Ms Qama also argued that a curriculum which would fix the damages caused by colonialism should be implemented in South Africa. Their view was that the current curriculum was not doing enough to remedy the impact of colonialism, particularly on the African population. The teachers' thinking on the curriculum aligns with the Afrocentrism theory. Dei (2006) suggests that a curriculum which centres and accurately narrates the role of Africans in the world would be central in fixing the damages caused by colonialism. According to the history teachers, the current history curriculum propagates colonialism instead of challenging it. This is the same view held by various Afrocentric scholars (Asante, 1988). Watson (2015) also found that African American teachers supported the view that Afrocentric education should encourage mutual respect amongst different racial groups in the United States. The same thinking has been expressed by most of the history teachers in this study.

However, this thinking is contrary to Banks (2015) who found that African Americans preferred a curriculum that would focus on preparing students for citizenship roles, rather than a curriculum that would deal with the past. Most of the history teachers thought that dealing with the past was important, particularly in the South African context.

They thus thought that an Afrocentric curriculum would be more suitable in assisting South Africa in dealing with its dark and painful past. In other words, their view was that a history curriculum has a more important role to play than to just prepare young people for citizenship roles. It should also play a role in fixing issues of the past and uniting the citizens of the country. This thinking might come from the fact that the history teachers recognise that South Africa is a country that is still dealing with the effects of colonialism and apartheid and thus still needs to find its path as a nation. The African history teachers, for the most part, thus thought that, to deal with South Africa's colonial and apartheid past, the Africans who were colonised need to be remedied first and Afrocentrism would play an important role in such. In other words, the remedying of Africans cannot be done through a Eurocentric curriculum.

Moreover, Banks (2015), amongst others, contends that a curriculum should not focus on empowering young people and boosting their confidence through teaching them about the accomplishments of their ancestors. Instead it should focus on providing the learners with facts and skills (Banks, 2015). Mr Roqo, Ms Guqa, Ms Zula, Ms Jangwe, Mr Qula, and, Ms Qama, stated that they thought it was important for the history curriculum to teach the learners about their heritage as they did not know it. In turn, this would boost their confidence and cause them to be able to interact with other people in the world. According to them, confidence and attitude would help the learners to become better and more responsible citizens, but they must first learn that whatever they have today is as a result of the contributions that were made by their ancestors. In other words, centering the African students in the curriculum would allow them to know themselves and be confident, thus enabling them to catch up and compete with learners from other cultures.

At present, the history curriculum does not enable African learners to compete with learners from other cultures because it does not centre them, they are constantly learning about others instead of themselves and are thus falling behind. In the thinking of Ms Guqa, Ms Zula, Ms Jangwe, Mr Qula and Ms Qama, African learners are being limited and disadvantaged by the Eurocentric history curriculum that dominates in South Africa. According to Dwarko (2007) history plays an important role by assisting nations to understand the positions that they belong to and “reassure their hopes of the future based on the past”. Cobbold and Oppong (2010) contend that “the cultural identity of nations is inherent in the history of every nation since it highlights the origins of nations and provides future direction”. Thus according to the thinking of the above stated African history teachers, the direction of an African nation like South Africa cannot be navigated through a European centred history curriculum.

5.10. Support for an Afrocentric curriculum

Most of the African history teachers in this case study expressed support towards the establishment of a new and Afrocentric history curriculum in South Africa. This is given to their thinking that the current curriculum is Eurocentric in nature. The thinking of the African history teachers towards the proposed history curriculum reforms by the Ministerial Task Team was extremely positive. Some of the history teachers (Mr Roqo and Ms Zula) held the thinking that an Afrocentric history curriculum that caters for the contemporary world order of interconnectedness and inclusiveness should be taken into consideration when introducing an Afrocentric curriculum. In other words, there were some teachers who were inclusivist in their approach to Afrocentrism while others were essentialist on this theme. The essentialist history teachers on this theme (Mr Qula, Ms

Guqa, Ms Qama, Ms Jangwe) argued that a completely Afrocentric curriculum should be introduced in South Africa. A completely Afrocentric history curriculum would entail focusing on only African history and African related matters and removing all other non-African history, that is history that does not relate to Africa and Africans, from the curriculum. Despite their divergent thinking on the best approach towards an Afrocentric history curriculum, it is evident that there is support from the history teachers for an Afrocentric history curriculum. Thus, their thinking is aligned to the Ministerial Task Team Report, which proposed these reforms by stating that the current CAPS History curriculum should be reformed and a new Afrocentric history curriculum introduced.

Moreover, the majority of the African history teachers in this study argued that the history curriculum should cater for the learner's culture and heritage. African culture and heritage were regarded as important factors in the development of such a curriculum. In this regard, Offorma (2016) states that "the essence of education is to transmit the cultural heritage of a society to the younger generation of the society". Afrocentric scholars believe that there is a distinct African culture (Mamdani, 1999). They further argue that this culture should be taught to African learners (Asante, 1991; Giddings, 2001). Most of the African history teachers seemed to adopt this thinking, hence, they expressed that the education system, particularly history education, was a way for transmitting the culture and heritage of the Africans to learners. The learners, according to the history teachers who favoured such thinking, had lost this culture and heritage. Therefore, they argued that Afrocentrism would be able to fix this situation of lost history and heritage among the African youth. Culture, African culture in particular, seemed to be extremely important to the African history teachers. The idea of having a curriculum that is centred around African

culture seemed to be attractive to the majority of the African history teachers. Therefore, one of the reasons influencing their support for the introduction of an Afrocentric history curriculum was because it promised to focus on African culture.

At this juncture, it is necessary to point out that Afrocentrism has encountered a significant amount of criticism from scholars (Schlesinger, 1991; Lefkowitz, 1992; & Appiah, 1998). Critics have described Afrocentric history as invented history and classified it as unreliable (Schlesinger, 1991; Lefkowitz, 1992; & Appiah, 1998). They have thus rejected any attempts to introduce an Afrocentric history curriculum in the United States. We have seen the same criticism and rejection of an Afrocentric history curriculum in the case of South Africa (Van Eeden & Warnich, 2018). However, most of the African history teachers in this case study have expressed different thinking, which was in support of the proposed curriculum reforms as proposed by the Ministerial Task Team. The teachers have argued that an Afrocentric history curriculum would be beneficial to all South Africans and that it would not lead to further divisions and contests, as suggested by some critics. In their thinking, there is a need for an Afrocentric history curriculum in South Africa. Both African and non-African learners would know that all cultures have made contributions to world history. Moreover, learners being exposed to the history of different people and their perspectives would be more comfortable in accepting and embracing those differences. In essence, the thinking of the African history teachers, for the most part, is that an Afrocentric history curriculum would celebrate the perspectives of many cultures in South Africa but the gaze would be an African one.

However, it is important to note that although most of the African history teachers in this case study supported the idea of an Afrocentric history curriculum, some of them

(Mr Roqo and Ms Zula) were very cautious in doing so. They emphasised that an Afrocentric curriculum, should it be introduced, should be beneficial to all South Africans and not geared towards a certain group of people alone. The subtext of their fears is probably one of a new kind of domination mirroring the apartheid past.

5.11. Summary of the findings in relation to the posed research questions

The research questions that were posed in this study are, namely; What is the thinking of African history teachers on Afrocentrism? and Why do African history teachers think about Afrocentrism the way they do? In summary, the findings in this study indicate that the African history teachers in this study had their own understanding of what the concept of Afrocentrism was and that they provided a variety of conceptualisations of the concept of Afrocentrism. However, fundamentally, the conceptualisations that they provided on Afrocentrism were quite similar. Moreover, the findings demonstrate that the African history teachers also understood what the main purposes of Afrocentrism were, namely that African history and perspective should be centralised. However, there were various thoughts on the purpose of Afrocentrism, with some history teachers supporting the goals of Afrocentrism while some teachers disagreed with them.

The findings further demonstrate that the thinking of the African history teachers on Afrocentrism is filled with contradictions and ambiguities, in some instances they take an inclusivist thinking while in some instances they take essentialist thinking. Furthermore, the findings indicate that there are a variety of factors that have contributed to their thinking. These factors include family background, political climate, education, age, level of experience, lifestyle and personal choices. In addition, the findings in this

study demonstrate that the history teachers think that the current CAPS curriculum is Eurocentric and thus support the idea of introducing an Afrocentric history curriculum.

5.12. Personal and Professional Reflections on the Study

Personally, the study was a deeply worthwhile and humbling experience both on a personal and professional level. Reading about and engaging with Afrocentrism was an enriching experience. Before this study I was not truly aware about this concept of Afrocentrism. During the course of this study, I read as much as I could in order to understand the complex and ambiguous concept of Afrocentrism from the perspective of various scholars. Furthermore, it was such a great experience going to the Eastern Cape, in Makhanda, and conducting the study. My skills as a researcher and as a person were developed extensively during the course of this study. I had to learn how to manage my time and how to set my priorities, given the amount of work that was required by this study.

This study enabled me to gain a lot of valuable insight and knowledge about this topic. It provided me with the opportunity to meet and engage with African history teachers and understand their diverse, ambiguous and even contradictory thinking on Afrocentrism. It was a privilege to have face to face conversational interviews with the African history teachers, whom I strongly believe understand the education system better than anyone and whom I regard as having an invaluable amount of knowledge, as especially as it pertains to history education in South Africa. The thinking expressed by the African history teachers in this study allowed me as the researcher to negotiate the difficult ground where theory and reality meet. Most importantly, this study has helped me to understand history education better as a history teacher. During the course of this

study, I read extensively about history education. I now understand the history curriculums and the purpose of history education much better than I did previously. I also learnt quite a lot about history education and about teaching itself from the history teachers that I interviewed.

Moreover, through this study I got the opportunity to learn from my supervisor. The knowledge, support and guidance that I received throughout this study from my supervisor will forever be invaluable and cherished.

5.13. Contributions of the Study

This study is important because it sought to bring to light the thinking of African history teachers on Afrocentrism and the reasons behind their thinking. Through this study, the thinking of African history teachers on Afrocentrism was explored. Previously, the thinking of African history teachers was neglected by both scholars and curriculum developers in history education. However, this study has sought to close that gap. Furthermore, this study has demonstrated that the thinking of the African history teachers is important in curriculum development given that they are the ones responsible for the implementation of the curriculum. By bringing to light the thinking of African history teachers this study contributes to the development of the history curriculum and history education in South Africa. Moreover, this study will also contribute to the growing body of studies in the field of history education research and will serve as a guide to other scholars who would like to conduct research of a similar nature.

5.14. Limitations of the Study

One of the limitations of this study is that it focused on participants in only one location, Makhanda. This is a limitation because the findings that have been constructed from this study cannot be generalised to other locations and schools. Thus, this further means that the thinking of the African history teachers in this study cannot be generalised or viewed as the thinking of the majority of teachers in South Africa. This study only provides a picture and not the totality of the thinking of African history teachers on Afrocentrism. Moreover, this study relied on only conversational interviews for data construction, this meant that the data that was constructed was limited. Perhaps, it would have been more enriching to use more than one data construction method in this study.

5.15. Recommendations

Firstly, I would strongly recommend that a similar study should be conducted using a much larger sample than was used in this study across the country. In my view, this would help to understand the thinking of African history teachers better. This is necessary because of the possibility that a new history curriculum with an Afrocentric curriculum may be implemented in the near future. I would further recommend that both qualitative and quantitative approaches should be used to seek to understand the complex thinking of African history teachers on Afrocentrism and the reasons behind their thinking. Furthermore, as demonstrated throughout this study, the majority of research on Afrocentrism in the USA, therefore, future research is needed given the limited literature on Afrocentrism in the South African context. This would help us to understand Afrocentrism better.

Secondly, based on the findings of this study, it is evident that the African history teachers have got a valuable contribution to make when it comes to the history curriculum in South Africa. I would thus recommend that they should be included and their thinking taken into consideration whenever there are proposed changes to the curriculum. After all they are the ones who are meant to implement the curriculum in the classroom. In my view, this would ensure that the thinking of the history teachers and the curriculum are aligned, thus leading to better implementation in the classroom. Moreover, all the African history teachers in this study indicated that they were not aware that there were proposed curriculum changes. This means that there was no consultation at all with them by the DBE. This points to a blatant disregard of teachers as stakeholders in the education sector.

I further recommend that curriculum developers in history education should begin to take the thinking of teachers, especially in history education, seriously. Because if the thinking of the history teachers and the curriculum are not aligned then the purpose of the curriculum will not be achieved. Furthermore, given the above information, I would further recommend that the DBE should ensure that teachers are trained thoroughly and prepared for the implementation of the new history curriculum, should it be implemented. They should not just send it to schools and expect that history teachers will know what to do. The training of the history teachers would also play a vital role in helping to align their thinking to the new curriculum.

5.16. Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to understand the thinking of African history teachers on Afrocentrism and the reasons behind their thinking. This was done through

a case study of African history teachers in Makhanda. The participants in the study indicated that their thinking on Afrocentrism was fluid and ambiguous. Moreover, the participants in this study indicated that there were various factors that contributed to their thinking towards Afrocentrism. This thus confirms that there is no one way of understanding Afrocentrism and that Afrocentrism is a very complex concept.

Therefore, introducing an Afrocentric history curriculum in South Africa would have to be approached in a careful and calculated manner. This study contributes to the larger body of research because it brings to light the thinking of the African history teachers, which oftentimes has been overlooked. Therefore, there needs to be more research that seeks to understand the thinking of teachers, especially on Afrocentrism given that this is the proposed curriculum for the future of the South African education system.

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Vuyo Jack

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