

**Novice teachers' experience of support from the Head of  
Department in primary schools**

**by**

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**Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree**

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**in**

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**in the Faculty of Education**

**at the**

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**Supervisor: Dr T.A. OGINA**

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## DECLARATION

I, Avital Ronnieskja Nemaston, declare that the dissertation titled: *Novice teachers experiences of the support from Heads of Departments in primary schools*, which I hereby submit for the degree Master Educationis at the University of Pretoria, is my own work and has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other tertiary institution.



.....

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March 2020

## **ETHICS STATEMENT**

I declare that I obtained the applicable research ethics approval for this dissertation. I observed the ethical conditions stipulated by the Research Ethics committee in terms of the University of Pretoria's Code of Ethics for Researchers and the Policy Guidelines for Responsible Research.

# ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE



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- Compliance with approved research protocol,
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- Informed consent/assent,
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## DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation:

To my Heavenly Father, my way maker, miracle worker and promise keeper. You have known the plans that you have had for me. Plans that would enable me to prosper, plans that would give me a hope and a future all for your glory -Jeremiah 29:11.

To my late grandparents, who were not able to see the fruit of thy labours, however laid a solid foundation for generations to come.

To my loving and supportive parents. You have made endless sacrifices for me to achieve and soar. You are and will always be my inspiration. Your humble beginnings inspired me to dream big and achieve all my dreams and goals. God bless you.

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To the woman of this world who aspire to empower themselves through Education:

*Knowledge is power.*

To all the young girls who dream beyond their current circumstances and know that they too are powerful in their might.

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## ABSTRACT

Novice teachers face a variety of challenges when they enter the teaching profession. They are confronted with the harsh realities of the teaching profession and are expected to cope with immense demands and responsibilities. Heads of Department are responsible for coordinating and providing guidance to novice teachers. However, little is known about the experiences of novice teachers in terms of the support they get from Heads of Department. This study explored novice teachers' experiences of Head of Department support. Purposively sampling was used to select five novice teachers and four Heads of Department from three primary schools situated in the Tshwane South School District. The data were collected using semi-structured interviews and document analysis. The semi-structured interviews were analysed using a thematic data analysis procedure and the documents through content analysis. The findings of the study highlighted similarities in the challenges and the support needs as expressed by the novice teachers and by the Heads of Department. The novice teachers in this study articulated the need for more guidance and mentorship to be provided whereas the Heads of Department stated that due to the demands of the professional task in terms of the multiple roles they play and time constraints, the support they give to the novice teachers is inadequate. The study concluded that both novice teachers and Heads of Department struggled with managing the demands of their profession and novice teachers called for further support and mentorship to be provided on aspects that contributed to their holistic development of teaching abilities and attributes.

**Key Terms:** Novice Teacher, Head of Department, Induction, Mentorship; Collegiality; Professional Development.



## ACRONYMS

DSG	Developmental Support Group
GDE	Gauteng Department of Education
HOD	Head of Department
NAPTOSA	National Professional Teachers Organization of South Africa
NT	Novice Teacher
NTIP	New Teacher Induction Programme
PAM	Personnel Administrative Measures
PD	Professional Development
PGP	Professional Growth Plan
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SGB	School Governing Body
SMT	School Management Team
USA	United States of America

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# **CHAPTER 1: ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY**

## **1.1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

Novice teachers in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century experience a variety of challenges such as conflicting views of their personal beliefs of teaching and the harsh reality of the teaching profession. Added to this are the challenges that many novice teachers experience in their first year of teaching (He & Cooper, 2011). Research shows that as new teachers in the profession, novice teachers need foundational guidance and support within their first year of teaching to excel in their professional development and be successful in their educational initiatives (Salifu & Agbenyega, 2013).

Novice teachers are teachers in their first year of teaching and who are in the process of developing and establishing their teacher identity (Dlani, 2012:11). Being new in the teaching profession, novice teachers experience a variety of challenges and accountability demands as they begin their life-long careers, in addition to coping with professional needs (Casperen & Raaen, 2014). Research conducted in the United States of America (USA) by DeAngelis, Wall and Che (2013) found that within the first year of teaching there is little attention on pre-service preparation, mentoring and support for novice teachers. In many schools, Heads of Department play a vital role in teacher induction as well as the mentoring of novice teachers during the first year of teaching (Bush, Joubert, Kiggundu & Van Rooyen, 2010). According to the Personnel Administrative Measures (PAM), the Head of Department (HOD) is an individual that has the responsibility of ensuring that his/her department is functioning effectively, engaging in class teaching, promoting teaching and learning, assisting in the development of staff training programmes, providing and co-ordinating guidance to inexperienced staff members (novices) and developing goals and objectives for the department and its educators (PAM, 1998). Although Heads of Department are instructed to fulfil their leadership duties and roles in developing teachers, from research conducted by Jaca (2013), it appears that many HODs do not have the proficient skills and competencies to take on their expected roles, therefore this study aimed at investigating the experiences of novice teachers in primary schools and identifying the support they get from their HODs.

A study conducted in an urban South African school found that 54% of novice teachers received little support and expertise in the use of resources for teaching and learning in their first year of teaching (Steyn, 2015). The author (Steyn, 2015) found that novice teachers work in isolation and refrain from sharing classroom practices and experience, which is a

crippling reality for the novice teacher. The ideal situation would be to have structures in place that support continuous professional development of novice teachers in the school environment (Rhodes, 2017). If this is not the case in some schools in South Africa, the query is, how do the remaining 46% of novice teachers survive in their early teaching career in the absence of much-needed support.

The lack of opportunities for support also implies limited interpersonal interaction between novice and more experienced teachers. Frank (2013) emphasises the importance of creating a listening and speaking community in a school to ensure interaction and conducting professional dialogues with other educators in the school (Frank, 2013). Without interaction with colleagues, novice teachers may feel isolated, an issue emerging from the findings of a study conducted by Frank (2013) which implied that novice teachers who are isolated, struggle individually and are unable to cope and solve problems in their practice.

Novice teachers are further confronted by not having a “voice”, “spacing” and “footing” in the profession and established school community. They are labelled as being “liminal entities”, possessing no status, ranking and are subjected to rules and obligations (Peterson, 2017:2). International research done by Tahir *et al.* (2014) on the experiences of novice teachers working in three top performing Malaysian schools, indicated that novice teachers experience challenges related to the use of different teaching techniques subscribed in schools as opposed to what had been taught at the university, leaving these novice teachers feeling frustrated. Other causes of frustration and stress were identified as the management of learners, discipline as well as balancing demanding workloads (Tahir *et al.*, 2014). The study showed that novice teachers are expected to perform, yet guidance is not offered (Tahir *et al.*, 2014). The viewpoint that novice teachers should ‘find themselves’ in the school on their own is a common reality in many schools (Sunde & Ulvik, 2014:287).

Du Plessis (2014) states that the role of the HOD, vital in all educational initiatives, is to drive the quality of teaching and learning, develop educators and provide meaningful mentoring and supervisory leadership for novices and experienced educators. HODs too face various challenges such as leadership, professional development and performance of the expected leadership role.

In a study conducted by Xaba (2011), the School Governing Bodies (SGB) reported that the HODs lack confidence and the ability to perform their duties. Research further shows that the fast-paced tempo in schools, leaves HODs with limited available time to engage in creating



teaching and learning opportunities for novice teachers (Bambi, 2012), which hinders the opportunity for HODs to assist and guide novice teachers. Although there is literature on how HODs support novice teachers through induction and mentoring, little is known about what novice teachers expect from their HODs in fulfilling their roles, the experiences of the novice teachers and the professional relationship with their HODs. The type of support needed by novice teachers under the leadership of their HODs is also under-researched in the South Africa school context.

## **1.2 RESEARCH PROBLEM**

The novice teacher goes through the transition period from student-teacher to formal teacher, receiving the same responsibilities as experienced teachers. Shortcomings in execution of their assigned responsibilities and failure of classroom delivery is then regarded as the novice teacher's fault and perceived as a lack of teaching ability (Confait, 2015). As a result of the perceived shortcomings, novice teachers need support during their first year of teaching to cope with the work that they are expected to do (Hudson, 2012), however many novice teachers are left feeling that they have failed during challenging situations and this results in only the "strongest and determined" novice teachers succeeding (Fantilli & McDougall, 2009:814). Studies highlight the "on-going isolation" that many novice teachers experience and the reluctance to draw on support from experienced teachers and their HODs. Clark (2012) raises the importance of novice teachers working along a network of teachers in order to solve and navigate through educational problems. Novice teachers carry a sense of fear to raise their needs of support from their heads (Fox, Wilson & Deaney, 2011:2), therefore, in order for the needs of novice teachers to be made known, it is necessary to explore their experiences and their views of a professional working relationship with their HODs. This may yield knowledge that could be useful in equipping them with knowledge and skills that leads to developing their professional capacity. The problem this study explored focused on challenges experienced by novice teachers during their first year of teaching and the support or lack thereof received by their Head of Departments.

The unfamiliar teaching environments, curriculum requirements and professional demands further complicate the first-year experiences of a novice teacher. Although literature and the above findings indicates some of the challenges that novice teachers face, there is a gap in the knowledge of the experiences, expectations and support needs of novice teachers in their professional working relationship with their HODs, which calls for further research to be conducted.

### **1.3 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The purpose of this qualitative study is to identify how novice teachers experience support from their HODs, the challenges novice teachers face in their first year of teaching and what roles HODs play in assisting the novice teacher. The current reality in many schools is that most novice teachers do not have trained mentors available. There are few mentorship programmes in place and opportunities for collaboration to assist the professional growth of novice teachers. On the other hand, HODs assume that novice teachers can develop professional expertise on their own (Tahir *et al.*, 2014). Another perspective, as expressed by HODs is that novice teachers are expected to “learn the system”, rules and functions of the school (Sunde & Ulvik, 2014:287). It is vital that the novice teacher is provided with the opportunity to express their daily challenges, struggles and support needs to their HODs to cope with the harsh realities which novice teacher face as they begin their careers. The study further intends to identify novices’ expectations of their professional working relationship with their HODs in assisting them and offering of adequate support. In conducting this study, novice teachers are given the opportunity to voice their highs and lows, identify the type of support they need and explain how HODs can further assist in their professional development.

### **1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

As a novice teacher, experiencing the highs and lows of the first year of teaching, the provision of support offered by an HOD can potentially influence one’s perception of teaching as a profession and the ability to grow as a successful educator. In an ideal school situation, the HOD is supposed to provide adequate support strategies and mentorship opportunities to the novice teacher. However, the current reality in many schools is that most of the novice teachers do not have mentors available to assist with developing teaching practices. This research study aimed at contributing to knowledge on how novice teachers can be supported in developing their careers in the first few years in the profession. Such knowledge may inform the Education Officials, Teacher Training Institutions and Tertiary Institutions, on pre-service training of teachers in terms of curriculum and policies issues. Heads of Department may also benefit from this study by gaining knowledge on leadership and the management of the needs of novice teachers during the mentoring period of novice teachers under their care. The study further aims to yield findings which can inform the novice teachers about the challenges encountered by other novice teachers as well as learning from the commonly shared challenges and those that are unique.

## **1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

Based on the discussion above, the main research question for this study is:

*How do novice teachers experience support provided by Heads of Department?*

The main question necessitated the formation of sub-questions which are:

- What are the challenges that novice teachers face in their first year of teaching?
- What kind of support do novice teachers expect from the HODs?
- What strategies do HODs use to support and assist novice teachers?

In order to answer the research questions, the aims and objectives of the study are outlined below. The study aims to:

- explore the challenges that novice teachers face in their first year of teaching,
- ascertain the type of support expected from the HODs,
- identify strategies used by HODs to support and assist novice teachers.

## **1.6 OVERVIEW OF THE METHODOLOGY**

The next section below presents a brief summary of the research methodology used in this study with detailed information of the research methodology being discussed in Chapter 3 of this dissertation. In this chapter, the researcher discusses the research paradigm which guides the study and the research paradigm used. The sample selected, sampling methods used, data collection methods and ethical considerations are discussed in detail.

The context of study was primary schools located within Tshwane South (6) school districts in Pretoria. A purposive sampling method was used to select the participants. Participants were selected on the basis that they can provide ‘information rich data’ and consisted of qualified teachers irrespective of gender, teaching subject or phase provided that they were in their first year of teaching. In addition, Heads of Department, male or female who teach various subjects and from the different phases in the primary school. One novice teacher and one HOD per school were selected.

Data collection for this study included semi-structured interviews and document analysis. The objective of a semi-structured interview in this study was to obtain the interviewee’s subjective response to a known phenomenon from his/her lived world experience (Datko, 2015). Document analysis, as a data collection method, provides access into human social activity of participants regarding a phenomenon (McCulloch, Cohen, Mamon, & Morrison 2011). In this study, documents such as induction manuals, support guides, mentor

programmes, development support group plans, professional growth plans and other relevant documents were analysed to generate data to enrich the study.

To ensure trustworthiness issues such as credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability were attended to. In addition, ethical considerations were ensured by applying for ethical clearance from the Ethics Committee of the University of Pretoria. Permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to access to the schools and the participants was also obtain. In addition, letters to school principals, invitation letters to participants and consent letters were distributed once ethical clearance and permission had been granted by the Gauteng Department of Education.

## **1.7 DEFINITION OF TERMS**

Definitions of the key concepts and terms used in this research are given in this section, so as to provide the reader with an understanding of what is being researched:

*Novice teachers* are teachers who are in their first year of teaching and who are in the process of developing and establishing their teacher identity (Dlani, 2012).

According to PAM, the *Head of Department* is an individual appointed with the responsibility of ensuring that his or her department is functioning effectively, teach and engage in class teaching, promote teaching and learning, assist in the development of staff training programmes, provide and co-ordinate guidance to inexperienced staff member (novices) and develop goals and objectives for the department and it's educators to achieve (PAM, 1998).

*Personnel Administrative Measures (PAM)*, published by the Minister of Basic Education 12 February 2016, are applicable to all educators in public service, and covers the conditions of service and employment matters related to educators (NAPTOSA, 2019).

*Teacher Professional Development* refers to individual and collective long-term processes which contribute towards the development of a teacher's professional skills through formal and informal experiences (Marcelo, 2009).

*School Management Team (SMT)* comprises individuals who facilitate and manage transformative development in a school. These individuals are appointed by the School Governing Body (SGB) and have the responsibility of evaluating, improving, developing, creating and maintaining a supportive learning environment. The SMT is responsible for daily functioning of the school (Nteseto, 2015).

*Mentoring* is regarded an act, aimed at preparing, empowering and developing mentees in individual learning and development processes (Barkauskaite & Meskauskiene, 2017).

## **1.8 ORGANISATION OF THE CHAPTERS**

**Chapter 1** provides as general overview of the current study which provides insight into the introduction of the study, research problem, purpose of the study and research questions which guides the study and a brief summary of the procedures used to conduct the study is explained. I further provide definitions of key concepts used throughout the study, followed by a summary of Chapter 1.

**Chapter 2** focuses on a review of literature focuses on novice teachers and Head of Departments. The literature is divided into sections which focuses on novice teachers and the challenges they experience, strategies used to support novice teachers, the Head of Department and their roles and responsibilities and challenges faced by Head of Departments in executing their roles and responsibilities. Both international and national literature has been reviewed which supports the above chapter. I also present a developed Conceptual Framework as derived from the review of the literature. The Conceptual Framework integrates both the novice teacher, Head of Department and illustrates the relationship between the Head of Departments and novice teachers.

**Chapter 3** presents the research methodology and research design. Included in this chapter is the research approach and research paradigm which were adopted in the study. The research methods and procedures used in this study is also explained. This chapter concludes with discussing ethical considerations applied in this study, discussing the trustworthiness and providing a summary of the chapter.

**Chapter 4** focuses on the analysis of the data and interpreting the data findings. Qualitative data is interpreted and analysed to make meaning of the data findings and this chapter presents a clear discussion of the data findings.

**Chapter 5** provides conclusions of the findings and suggested recommendations. The first section provides a retrospective summary of the research journey and this is followed by summaries of each theme identified in the study. The next section discusses the delimitations and limitations of the study, followed by a conclusion of the overall study.

## **1.9 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER**

This chapter has provided the background of the study. The problem which informed the study has been introduced as well as the purpose and significance of the study. The main and sub-research questions have been introduced which serves to guide the study. The next chapter presents a critical literature review on international and national literature that informs the study.

## **CHAPTER 2: A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE ON NOVICE TEACHERS AND SUPPORT FROM HEADS OF DEPARTMENT**

### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter focuses on a review of the literature on the diverse experiences and perspectives of novice teachers on the supportive role of the Head of Department in primary schools. The aim of this chapter is to build a conceptual framework, gaining an understanding of how novice teachers have or have not experienced support from their Heads of Department. In this chapter, both international and national journal articles, conferences papers and research reports are analysed to offer a greater understanding of novice teachers, the Heads of Departments and the role that they play in supporting first-year novice teachers as they enter the teaching profession. This chapter begins with a description of the concept of a novice teacher, followed by a discussion on challenges that novice teachers face once they enter the teaching profession. The Heads of Department and their roles as well challenges faced in the execution of their duties are all discussed in the subsequent section. Thereafter, strategies that are used to support novice teachers are presented in the penultimate section of the chapter. Finally, the conceptual framework supporting this research is presented before the chapter concludes with a summary.

### **2.2 THE NOVICE TEACHER**

There are various definitions for the term ‘novice teacher’. In countries such as Scotland and Botswana, a novice teacher is categorised as a ‘probationer’ under probation for a specified time, whereas in Canada, a novice teacher is an individual that is hired permanently by the Education Board; however, the novice teacher has to complete the New Teacher Induction Programme (NTIP) prior to being registered as a qualified teacher (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2017). This regulation also applies in the United States of America and New Zealand (Ntsoane, 2017). Malaysia’s educational regulations specifies that a novice teacher must serve between one and three years as an interim teacher before a formal declaration into the profession is conducted (Goh, Yusuf & Wong, 2017). These definitions indicate that the explanations of a novice vary geographically and institutionally.

In South Africa, a novice teacher is defined as an individual that has recently completed a teaching qualification, graduated at an institution of higher learning and is appointed at a

school for the very first time (Ntsoane, 2017). Diani (2012:14) defines a novice teacher as “a teacher that is in their first year of teaching and who is in the process of developing and establishing their teacher identity”. For the purpose of this study, the definition provided by authors such as Ntsoane (2017) and Diani (2012) are used when referring to the novice teacher.

The first year of teaching for the novice teacher, is observed as a critical and vital year in the career of a teacher. The concept of oneself as a teacher is developed and experiences and knowledge gained have the potential of influencing the professional development of the teacher in the long term (Poom-Valicks, 2014). Due to the nature of the various challenges and accountability demands experienced by novice teachers (Casperen & Raaen, 2014), they need foundational guidance and support within their first year in order to excel in their personal and professional development and educational initiatives (Salifu & Agbenyega, 2013:58). The teaching profession loses 30-50% of its entrants within the first years (Birkland & Feiman-Nemser, 2012). Through supportive tools and strategies, novice teachers can succeed in the profession, which would result in a potential decline in loss of teachers from the profession.

Novice teachers go through five transitional phases during their first year of teaching. The Director of United States Study Center, New Teacher Centre describes these phases as: anticipation (excitement and anxieties during the teaching practice phase), survival (this phase is confronted with pressure to keep up the school dynamics and is a rather overwhelming phase), disillusionment (exhaustion and limited rest is experienced by the novice teacher), rejuvenation (the novice teacher has developed a negative attitude towards teaching and needs a self-retrieval break) and the final phase, reflection (a period for reflection and strategic thinking) as identified by Warmse (2011).

Goh *et al.* (2017:21) maintain that it is important to recognise that within the first three years, a “reality shock”, teaching complexities and rapid transitions are experienced by the novice teacher. Novice teachers further experience judgement on their competencies, performance evaluations and are judged against “traditional desirable characteristics” Goh *et al.* (2017:22). The transition period from student teacher to formal teacher for the novice, is described as “practice shock” which is characterised by the lack of skills to act and control the situations that the individual faces (Casperen & Raaeni, 2014:192) and is often referred to as the novice barely “keeping their head above water” (Fantilli & McDougall, 2009:819). Although the transition period may appear as a minor shift, for the novice, it is



a challenging and stressful period at the start of their career. This calls for valuable support to be provided to novice teachers to ensure that their transition is seamless and meaningful (Nantanga, 2014).

The contexts in which novice teachers work in are diverse as South Africa's educational system is divided into two realities. On one hand, there are top performing schools equipped with educational resources where the academic achievement of the learners is often high. On the other hand, there are schools with limited resources which experience low academic performance. The schools in a category with limited resources at times are also dysfunctional schools, characterised by a poor culture of teaching and learning, which leads to poor learner performance (Chikoko, Naicker & Mthiyane, 2015). Nantanga (2014) supports this by stating that novice teachers encounter contextual differences as the hard-hitting reality of the teaching profession unfolds. In order to cope in diverse teaching contexts, novice teachers are required to have relevant knowledge and skills in content and context knowledge, knowledge of learners as well as pedagogical knowledge (Poom-Valicks, 2014). In relation to this, Birkland and Feiman-Nemser (2003) stress the importance of novice teachers learning skills and approaches that are context focused which can aid and serve as a positive tool in their classrooms and the school community (Nantanga, 2014).

### **2.3 CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED BY NOVICE TEACHERS**

The first years of teaching for novice teachers are described as the most challenging and intense periods of their professional career (Zhukovoa, 2018). Novice teachers experience a reality shock, experience professional expectations, psychological and physiological challenges. Novice teachers further desire to have greater job satisfaction and have a lack of control over their external environment. The support that novice teachers receive influences their feelings and feelings of belonging in the school community. (Korte & Simonsen, 2018). Poor interpersonal relationships formed due to the lack of socialisation structures in schools is experienced by novice teachers which often results in professional isolation (Joiner & Edwards, 2008:44). Steyn (2015) found that novice teachers tend to work in isolation and are not encouraged to share their classroom experiences. Isolation is not ideal for the novice teacher as he/she is attempting to make the transition from university and settle in the school context (Frank, 2013). Frank (2013) emphasises the importance of creating a collaborative community for the novice teacher in a school where they have opportunities to speak about their experiences and adjustment as well as listen to advice and support. The support that

novice teachers receive influences their feelings and feelings of belonging in the school community. Research informs that novice teachers who can identify what kinds of support they receive or do not receive experience a greater sense of self-worth (Korte & Simonsen, 2018:101).

### **2.3.1 Theoretical knowledge, teaching content and practice**

The active role of teachers is crucial for preparing learners to participate in the rapidly changing world (Peterson, 2017); however, ‘newly qualified’ individuals who are in the early stages of their careers, require assistance with meeting the complex demands of the profession (Hayes & Chang, 2017). As the novice teacher embarks on his/her journey through the first year of teaching, the realities of the practice highlight the disparities between theoretical knowledge and without adequate support and assistance, the novice teacher may find it difficult to cope. Novice teachers are trapped between two realities of the curriculum such as the “The-curriculum as planned” and “The curriculum-as-lived-experience” (Kingsley, 2015:13). The curriculum as planned refers to pedagogics, a prescribed curriculum and “mandated school subjects”. The curriculum as-lived relates to experiences encountered when delivering the curriculum, expressions and interactions of teachers (Okyere, 2018:96). As the novice teacher navigates through the first year, he or she is expected to subscribe to the planned curriculum, however is then confronted daily with the curriculum as -lived-experience which narrates their journey.

For the novice, their first year is coupled with the day-to-day challenges in their teaching of the curriculum. What is taught at tertiary institutions for preparing the novice and what the novice is expected to teach often does not correlate with expected academic outcomes (Kingsley, 2015). Saglam and Alan (2018) contend that novice teachers find it challenging to adapt the theory they have learned in pre-service education into their teaching practice because of the diverse teaching settings, the set curriculum, student profiles and school policies to which they must become accustomed. A study which focused on the challenges experienced by Ghanaian novice teachers, found that teacher preparation programmes did not adequately prepare the novice teachers for real tasks that lay ahead as they focused on theoretical knowledge instead of equipping individuals with practical skills to apply to their practice (Boakye & Ampiah, 2017).

A qualitative study was conducted in 15 Turkish schools to investigate the challenges faced by novice teachers. This study, conducted by CakMak (2013), found that individuals in the study identified that there is a major gap in the theoretical knowledge acquired, content

taught at institutions of higher learning and the prescribed content novice teachers are expected to teach in schools. Training received did not adequately prepare them for the difficulties that they encountered during their first year of teaching. Although the novices were knowledgeable on subjects of specialisation and had completed methodology modules as part of their university courses, they acknowledged having little confidence in teaching subject content (CakMak, 2013). Uushona (2018) concurs with this finding and reports that novice teachers in Namibia have expressed the concern that there is no correlation between theoretical knowledge, subject content taught at training institutions and the school curriculum.

Another research study conducted by Abdurrahman (2016), with 500 Turkish novice teachers on their first-year experiences, noted that the participants felt that their pre-service education had failed to prepare them for the real classroom experience. In addition to the studies described above, novice teachers in Namibian schools informed researches that their experiences during their teaching practice did not provide them with vital skills which could have assisted them in the classroom and help them in managing their classrooms proactively (Nantanga, 2014). Tahir *et al.* (2014) conducted a study on novice teacher experiences at three top performing Malaysian schools. The results indicated that novice teachers in these schools experienced challenges in using different teaching techniques subscribed in schools as opposed to what had been taught at university, leaving these novice teachers feeling frustrated and ill-prepared.

A research study conducted in South Korea on English novice teachers' experiences, found that novice teachers experienced challenges such as having to perform tasks and administrative duties as required as they lacked the necessary knowledge and competency to do so. School leaders did not provide adequate assistance on teaching pedagogy and meetings with Heads of Department were only conducted at the start of each term (Hayes & Chang, 2017:51-52). The findings of the study further indicated that there was limited meaningful participation from HODs in establishing and maintaining a working relationship with these novices. The novice teachers were expected to cope and manage on their own.

Considering that research has shown that there is a disparity between theoretical knowledge, teaching content and practice, in order to address this, universities and schools must re-evaluate their prescribed content and school policies. It is vital that theoretical knowledge and preparation for novice teachers are in accordance with their real-world context.

### **2.3.2 Entering the Professional World of Work**

As the novice teacher enters the professional world of work, he/she may either be accepted into the school community and be supported or on the flip side, begin his/her teaching career in a school community that does not readily accept or support them. Novice teachers immersed in a school community that is supportive and continues to maintain this support, will help the novice to feel connected and rooted in the school. In contrast, novice teachers who experience poor interpersonal relationships due to the lack of socialisation and support structures, experience professional isolation (Joiner & Edwards, 2008).

Research findings indicate that many novice teachers have reported that they are not provided with the opportunity to have a voice or express ideas during subject meetings and curriculum development initiatives, leaving the novice feeling suppressed, possessing no status or rank yet they are subjected to rules and obligations of the school (Peterson, 2017). Exploitation by senior teachers in terms of allocation of the work-load is a common problem and the novice is perceived as a follower, having to abide by the rules of a higher authority (Naicker & Somdut, 2014). This contributes to the professional isolation that many novice teachers experience in school environments which has increasingly become a prominent struggle for many. In addition, novice teachers in South African schools often work in isolation and refrain from sharing classroom experiences (Steyn, 2015). The novice teacher that faces isolation is not provided with opportunities for interaction and professional conversation with other educators and as a result, are often left to struggle in coping and solving problems alone (Frank, 2013).

Such practices are likely to create a professional and school culture that discourages teamwork and collaboration which could have negative effects on the professional relationship between the experienced and novice teachers due to little or no support in the early years of their career. This can lead to the emergence of conflict amongst experienced and novice teachers due to poor social interactions (Ostovar-Nameghi & Sheikahmadi, 2016).

The environmental characteristics and dynamics of a school determines how confident a novice teacher feels in seeking assistance and guidance from colleagues in the school (Kim & Roth, 2011). Frank (2013) emphasises the importance of creating collaborative community for the novice teacher to support them as they make the transition from theory-based university to the practical application of teaching. However, a cry for help made by the novice teacher is viewed as the novice teacher seeking unwanted attention from

fellow colleagues and supervisors (Frank, 2013). This then progresses to the novice teacher not making their needs and support needs made known to authorities and they are ultimately left to cope on their own. Studies highlight the on-going isolation that many novice teachers experience and the reluctance to draw on support from experienced teachers and their HODs (Frank, 2013). Novice teachers often have a sense of fear to raise their needs and support needs with their HODs (Fox *et al.*, 2011), but in some manner, the needs of novice teachers need to be made known to HODs to firstly, ensure a healthy professional working relationship and secondly, with guidance, to assist the novice teacher in acquiring and developing skills needed to excel professionally.

### **2.3.3 Induction Programmes for Novice Teachers in Schools**

Mann (2016:13) defines induction as a comprehensive, coherent and sustained professional development process that is organised and developed by school districts with the aim of training, providing support and assimilating the novice teacher into the school community. Induction is a vital tool that can aid and assist the novice teacher as he/she transitions into his/her new role and school community. Quality induction programmes assist the novice teacher in the transition into the professional world with having the necessary support, gaining expertise knowledge and skills in their roles and responsibilities as a professional educator (Warmse, 2011). Saglam and Alan (2018) view induction as the process whereby novice teachers face the realities of the profession and begin to realise that there could potentially be a contextual mismatch between what they have learnt at university and the direct challenges that they must face and endure. Through induction, novice teachers can gain a deeper understanding of the culture of the school, build confidence and develop their identity. The authors also view induction as a whole process of assisting the novice teacher for the journey that lies ahead.

A research study conducted in Zimbabwe by Manwa, Mukeredzi and Manwa (2016) on novice teachers found that the first year of teaching in Zimbabwean schools was a stressful encounter due to the lack of having an available mentor which could have provided guidance and support. The participants identified experiencing difficulties in adjusting to their new environments and voiced the need and urgency for induction and mentoring programmes specifically designed for novice teachers to be implemented in schools as this could be highly beneficial for the first few months in the school. Authors such as Ingersoll and Strong (2004:208) state that “induction is a vital supportive tool which has the potential to lead to increased job satisfaction and teacher efficacy”. In their research studies, the authors declare

that induction that focuses on instruction, proactive support and supportive school contexts influence and lead to improved instructional practices of novice teachers (Nantanga, 2014).

In 2015, Saglam and Alan (2018) conducted a qualitative study on Turkish novice teachers. Participants had participated in a three-month long induction programme in their schools which provided them with opportunities for discussion and reflection was proved to be beneficial in their long-term professional development. A participant pointed out that “the induction programme helped me to feel competent as I learned about student profiles and the dynamics of the different classes which helped me a lot during my lessons” (Saglam & Alan, 2018:1102). Participants also stated that observation during induction was beneficial as it helped to learn about practical ideas that they could apply in their own classrooms.

In Africa, the concept of induction is a new phenomenon and is often officiated on an informal basis with limited mentorship and guidance from senior management. In Lesotho, induction programmes are described as superficial and focuses mainly on administrative issues in the school. Through research, we are informed that countries such as Zimbabwe have no official policy on novice teacher induction and schools and their HODs are required to work out their own ad hoc arrangements. The perception portrayed is that induction is not an essential component of school policy for quality schooling and teachers (Nantanga, 2014).

According to the Personnel Administrative Measures (PAM) (DoE, 1998), the HOD, as part of the School Management Team, has the responsibility of inducting novice teachers.

The HOD is responsible for providing and coordinating guidance on: (1) the latest ideas on approaches to the subject, method, techniques, evaluation, aids, etc in their field, and effectively conveying these to the staff members concerned, (2) on syllabuses, schemes of work, homework, practical work, remedial work, to inexperienced staff members etc. and (3) on the educational welfare of learners in the department (Ntsoane, 2017:3).

Currently in South Africa, there is no formal policy for inducting novice teachers and each school is expected to induct their own novice teachers based on their preference (Ntsoane, 2017). Poom-Valickis (2014) in a study on novice teacher induction, verified that induction improved the competencies and skills of novice teachers in their study, providing a positive outcome of induction

It seems that without support, novice teachers in schools may find teaching an overwhelming experience. It is important to recognize what novice teachers need when they enter the school

HODs must develop school induction programmes that would best meet the needs of novices.

### **2.3.4 Classroom Management Skills**

Classroom management is regarded as “reactive classroom discipline tactics instead of a suite of proactive research-based skills. It is similarly identified as actions taken by teachers to create an environment that supports and facilitates academic and socio-emotional learning. It seeks to establish and sustain an orderly environment, enhancing students social and morale growth” (Hirsch, 2016:11-12). Classroom management is looked upon as a two-fold process: it ensures order and security and establishes and maintains the classroom environment (Van der Merwe, 2016).

Due to novice teachers only being in the professional world for a short period of time and having very little experience, they often experience challenges such as poor classroom management skills and must deal with the diverse, complex needs of learners. This often leads to immense amounts of anxiety, stress and feelings of inadequacy (Ntsoane, 2017). According to Hirsch (2016), student behaviour and discipline are the second most prominent factors for teachers wanting to leave the profession. Novice teachers are not prepared and equipped with skills to prevent and address challenging learners and poor behaviour in the classroom. There is a need to support novice teachers and provide guidance on classroom management through professional development programmes that provide knowledge on classroom management and guidance on successful classroom management.

Al-Amarat (2011) points out that effective classroom management and mastering order within the classroom is said to be crucial elements in educational processes and a basic requirement for a positive educational outcome. Successful classroom management is therefore dependent on the teacher’s ability to judge behaviour in the classroom and identify problem areas. Managing classrooms has appeared to be a global challenge experienced by many novices. A study conducted in eight Turkish provinces on novice teachers found that 47% of the participants in the study identified managing learners and the dynamics in the classroom challenging and almost half of the participants felt inadequate in their leadership roles and tasks in the classroom (Cozturk & Yildirim, 2013).

### **2.3.5 Support given by Heads of Department**

The South African Employment of Educators Act no 76 of 1998, which includes the Personnel Administrative Measures (PAM, 1998), specifies that the senior teachers, master teachers and Heads of Department all have the responsibility of mentoring and coaching less

experienced teachers and supporting and collaborating with teachers on instructional procedures and individual growth. According to PAM, the Head of Department is an individual appointed to take on the responsibility of ensuring that his/her department is functioning effectively, in addition to teaching and engaging in class teaching, promoting teaching and learning, assisting in the development of staff training programmes, providing support and co-ordinating guidance to inexperienced staff members (novices) and developing goals and objectives for the department and its educators (PAM, 1998).

A qualitative study to understand the challenges that novice teachers encounter as they were classified as transitional teachers was completed in urban Johannesburg schools with ten Foundation Phase novice teachers (Peterson, 2017). Findings emerging from the study found that novice teachers were overwhelmed, unsettled and not fully established in their environments. HODs were not present in regularly providing support, as issue as these teachers emphasised the importance and the need of having continued support from an HOD during their first year of teaching. A participant indicated that her HOD had only visited her classroom to address her challenges after six months of being employed (Peterson, 2017). Casperen and Raaen's (2014) research findings are aligned with the above study where novice teachers were expected to take sole responsibility for their performance and struggled to draw on their own experiences as novice teachers, indicating that no guidance or mentorship had been provided.

To develop the novice teacher, the HOD has the responsibility of identifying the needs of the novice teachers in their schools (Bertram, 2011). HODs have the capacity to contribute to promoting a culture of support for novices and provide a platform for learning and mentoring (Sunde & Ulvik, 2014). This suggests that the role of the HOD can be transformational in the school community in that they can create learning and supportive opportunities for novice teachers.

It appears that novice teachers in schools are least looked upon and are not provided with adequate support in their practices and professional development. Novice teachers are expected to perform, yet not guided on how to do so. The perspective that novices should 'find themselves' in the school is common (Sunde & Ulvik, 2014). Although literature provides knowledge on the challenges that novice teachers face, it does not offer guidance on how these challenges are addressed by the novice teacher with the assistance of their HOD and what kinds of strategies could be implemented to address such challenges.



## **2.4 THE HEAD OF DEPARTMENT**

Heads of Department play a vital role in creating healthy, holistic environments and structures within the teaching and learning context for novice teachers which results in effective educational outcomes (Bush *et al.*, 2010). Public schools in South Africa are managed and led under the leadership of the School Management Team (Jaca, 2013) and Heads of Department are therefore part of the School Management Team (PAM, 1998). The Personnel Administrative Measures (PAM) defines the Head of Department as an individual appointed in the Department having specialised knowledge in subject field, responsible for contributing to the institution in terms of the curriculum implementation, supervision, coordinating, managing teaching and learning, evaluating and administration of a department thus also working with teachers, mentoring, guiding and supporting staff under the individual's leadership (Atebe, 2009). According to PAM, the HOD is also responsible for mentoring and supervising inexperienced staff members (novices) (PAM, 1998).

### **2.4.1 The Roles and Duties of the Head of Department**

The Head of Department's role in a school can be described as a duality of roles as they are required to manage a subject department and perform the daily task of being a classroom teacher (Seobi & Wood 2016). Meristo and Eisenschmidt (2014) state that school leaders such as HODs have the responsibility of creating supportive environments for novice teachers. In order to create and establish such environments, HODs are then required to have skills and competencies that will enable them to execute their roles, duties and be equipped with knowledge on how to perform their roles and duties. In addition, the HOD is expected to lead the Developmental Support Group (DSG), mentor teachers, give support to novice teachers and assist both novices and experienced teachers with their Professional Growth Plans (PGP).

### **2.4.2 The Head of Department as a Manager**

The Head of Department in an organisation serves as a "middle-manager" of sub-units (phase or subject focus) and is a link between the principal and classroom teachers. For Heads of Department to excel in their leadership positions, they are required to continually improve their teaching practices and translate policy intentions into classroom practices. The HOD is therefore required to be knowledgeable on curriculum developments and be competent educators (Du Plessis, 2014:58).

Farah (2013) states that managers are expected to plan, organise, direct, control and evaluate within their unit, therefore according to Kirui and Osman (2012), management focuses on planning, organising, motivating and controlling. A manager is required to ensure that “the ship runs smoothly” in an organisation and that their unit is well managed and led by their leader. The HOD as a manager, has the primary task of developing strategies in-line with the achievements of the school, departmental targets and student outcomes (Maingi, 2015:4). The HOD as a manager is entrusted with the responsibility of delegating, taking responsibility for the functioning of the department as a system in which others participate within the overall school system (Connolly, James & Fertig 2017:505).

Maingi (2015:4) advocates that HODs are required to equip themselves with vital skills which will improve their effectiveness and efficiency in their management and administrative duties. The role of the HOD is to be both a teacher and administrator, executing the prescribed curriculum and serving as a department manager. The management functions of an HOD can be divided into the components of planning, organising, leading and controlling, all of which are discussed below.

#### ***2.4.2.1 Planning***

Planning is viewed as the basic and vital responsibility of a manager. Planning is a tool that is used to establish direction within a department through identification and commitment towards desired goals to be achieved (Alberts, 2016). Planning is tool used for reflecting upon objectives, resources and activities, therefore planning guides the development of plans to achieve goals and objectives and results in one “seeing action steps ahead” (Borole, 2010:14).

#### ***2.4.2.2 Organising***

Organising, as a management function, is defined as creating order through the development of a function and arranging activities, responsibilities and determining relationships within the department (Borole, 2010). Organising also consists of arranging resources and translating departmental plans into actions and allows for an internal structure to be established within a department (Alberts, 2016:34).

#### ***2.4.2.3 Leading***

Leading consists of communicating and motivating individuals to perform desired tasks necessary to achieve departmental goals (Alberts, 2016:35). Leading further consists of providing guidance and modelling desired behaviour. In leading within the department,

the manager is required to provide information on how the department can achieve its set goals (Borole, 2010).

#### **2.4.2.4 Controlling**

Controlling is a systematic and on-going process and involves establishing performance standards based in departmental objectives. Controlling allows for identifying problems and areas in a department which can be improved and enhanced (Alberts, 2016).

### **2.4.3 The Head of Department as an Instructional Leader**

Zvandasara (2016:31) describes leadership as “the ability of an individual to influence another individual or group and lead towards the achievement of a set goal without force or coercion”. Leadership is a multidimensional phenomenon and focuses on long-term growth and knowledge. In South Africa, educational leadership faces tremendous challenges, expectations and external pressures. Due to the competitive socio-economic demands and expectations from government, education systems are vital and instrumental in producing skilled individuals.

Instructional Leadership has become a global phenomenon and scholars view it as a used tool for establishing an effective teaching and learning environment to develop teachers’ practices, student learning. According to Manaseh (2016), instructional leadership focuses on teaching and learning, management of the instructional programme and promotion of a school’s climate. Zvandasara (2016) supports the above by illustrating that this form of leadership task pertains to facilitating instruction, learning, giving direction, purpose and collaboration with teachers, whereas Nkabinde (2012) identifies three elements of instructional leadership such as a focus on instruction, the curriculum and continuous learning. Heads of Department in schools are subject specialists having the leadership task of creating learning opportunities for teachers and learners, providing supervisory professional support, guidance on curriculum execution, assessment and evaluation. Supervisory support can be defined as “employing expert knowledge and experience to oversee, evaluate and coordinate the process of improving teaching and learning” (Simpson, Howard, Peligah & Cann, 2016: 156). The Head of Department, as an instructional leader, is required to provide immediate supervisory for post level 1 teachers (Nkabinde, 2012) and is responsible for facilitating and managing instructional programmes, building on potential strengths of teachers in their department, and as a leader should be fully aware and involved in the classroom activities and the development of staff (Manaseh, 2016).

According to policy guidelines (DBE, 2019), the Head of Department in a school is positioned as an instructional leader with having the duty of assisting teachers in setting and achieving professional and personal goals, monitoring progress, developing classroom instruction and identifying areas of improvement within their department (Seobi & Wood, 2016). Other duties entail defining the purpose of the school, developing goals and strategic implementation, providing educational resources for teachers and learners and coordinating staff developmental activities (Nkabinde, 2012).

Recent studies have shown that HODs experience increasing demands in their roles as instructional leaders. A research study carried out in Tanzania found that HODs in public schools identified their role as an instructional leader as challenging as they lacked the necessary knowledge and skills to carry out their duties; however, 83% of the participants could identify aspects of instructional leadership, yet needed assistance to execute their roles as instructional leaders (Manaseh, 2016). Nkabinde (2012:26) claims that taking up the position, an HOD must be a practising teacher, having full knowledge on classroom teaching and expected educational outcome. For the HOD to be an effective instructional leader, he/she should have full knowledge on the curriculum, pedagogics and delivery thereof.

In addition to the study above, Seobi and Wood (2016) conducted Participatory Action Research with HODs in peri-urban schools in the Eastern Cape. Research findings found that HOD involvement in instructional practices was limited and the HODs had minimal interaction with teachers to provide guidance and support. The HODs further displayed a poor understanding of their roles as instructional leaders and their schools had no sustainable framework for instructional support in the school. Participants also identified that time was a factor that hindered opportunities for meeting with teachers and believed as HODs, they could have a positive influence on teachers if enough time and resources had been available. A research study on HODs in Ghanaian schools, found that 58% of HODs identified instructional leadership to be a challenging role and challenges such as administrative tasks, lack of logistical support affected their supervisory tasks (Simpson *et al.*, 2016).

These challenges are faced by many HODs, therefore before taking on any leadership role, HODs need training on how to perform their roles and tasks effectively. Maingi (2015) supports the notion that training is vital for all HODs prior to stepping into leadership roles and suggests that guidance from an experienced HOD can be instrumental during training. The HOD, as an instructional leader, serves as an intellectual resource for teaching and

learning and is judged on efficiency and effective learner outcomes in the department (Simpson *et al.*, 2016:156).

#### **2.4.4 The Head of Department as a Distributive Leader**

Distributive leadership can be defined as “a collective effort by members of an organisation such as a school, whereby leadership is the responsibility of members in the organisation and tasks are stretched, collaborative and shared among individuals. Collaboration is practiced by Heads of Department, teachers and other school members with the aim of improving school effectiveness, teaching and learning” (Ali, 2015:16). Williams (2011) reports that the concept of distributive leadership is traced back to the 1960s and is viewed as the intellectual capital of the organisation within its members. Williams proposes that all teachers can and must lead, having the potential to contribute towards leadership. This form of leadership practised by school heads requires collective individual participation, interaction and sharing tasks to achieve a set goal.

Many South African schools face leadership crisis characterised by hierarchical and authoritarian leadership depicted in schools (Sibanda, 2018). Williams (2011) contends that due to the complexity of schools, organisational change and development requires distributive forms of leadership. Although this form of leadership is not implemented and practiced in all schools, as a concept it is not widely used and embraced, successful implementation of distributive leadership requires the principal to have a sound understanding of the benefits and the outcomes of sharing responsibilities (Sibanda, 2018:785).

Distributive leadership is purposeful as it “provides relevant development opportunities that will empower educators to develop, improve and expand knowledge and skills required for creating teaching and learning opportunities for a diverse learner population” (Williams, 2011:198). In addition, distributive leadership offers opportunities for teachers as teachers’ skills, knowledge and roles are acknowledged. Teachers are liberated and a culture of collective action, empowerment and shared agency is established. A recent study on school heads’ understanding of distributive leadership found that participants viewed distributive leadership as a tool used to empower their staff. It encouraged collaboration amongst teachers and enhanced student learning (Sibanda, 2018). Williams (2018) believes that school leaders such as HODs should create opportunities for teachers to take on leadership roles thereby encouraging high levels of teacher involvement and professional development.

## **2.5 CHALLENGES FACED BY HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS**

The role of the HOD consists of acting as a teacher and administrator of a department, having a strong presence in the classroom and serving administrative and managerial roles in the department (Atebe, 2009; PAM, 1998). The HOD is required and expected to coordinate the functioning of his/her department, ensure that teachers are professionally developed as well as develop and maintain their skills in the leadership of their leadership positions (Maingi, 2015). HODs too experience various challenges in their leadership roles and departments.

### **2.5.1 Administration and Management of the Department**

Prior to stepping into the role HOD, individuals are required and expected to have been formally trained to take on their new positions; however, this is not a true reflection of the experiences of HODs. Countries such as Singapore and the USA require HODs to complete a basic course prior to stepping into the positions and are then required to continue with developmental courses (Maingi, 2015). Research carried out by Du Plessis (2014) on the roles of HODs identified that HODs received poor preparation to take on their role as HODs coupled by vast administrative demands and crisis management which is consuming limited available time for strategic planning and thinking. Other areas such as the quality of their own teaching suffered due to great workloads and HODs struggled to monitor and evaluate teaching and learning outcomes.

A research study, conducted on the competencies of HODs in Malaysian schools, identified that HODs were competent in interpersonal skills but only attained average scoring in administration of subjects, curriculum development, mentoring, supervision and professional development. Findings of the study further identified that these HODs were unable to explain the curriculum plan to teachers and lacked understanding in how to fulfil their roles (Bak, 2010:24). According to Maingi (2015), HODs are perceived to have full necessary knowledge on subject content and student learning, therefore it is vital that HODs develop their skills and increase their knowledge in order to develop others. Research informs us that the fast-paced tempo in schools, which leaves HODs with limited available time to engage in creating teaching and learning opportunities for novice teachers (Bambi, 2012) hindering the opportunity for HODs to assist and guide novice teachers.

HODs are further challenged in their roles of being an administrator, manager and leader. This is described as the duality of their roles. Conflict of interest arises as the HODs role as a member of the SMT and teacher is often conflicted and questioned. The HOD is expected

to make influential decisions and establish a positive working relationship with team members and professional interaction (Stephenson, 2010:10-19). However, HODs have reported experiencing a lack of confidence from other SGB members in their abilities to perform their duties (Xaba, 2011). This informs us that HODs face challenges in their leadership roles and ability to respond to the demands of the role.

Workload and pressure in the duality of their roles presents a challenge to HODs. A research study carried out in New Zealand found that HODs struggled to manage and balance immense workloads, internal pressures and diverse demands. This often resulted in tensions between HODs and the school head. HODs are faced with expectations to deliver from senior leadership and advocate for teachers within their department (Scott, 2015). An increasing number of studies have identified that HODs experience increased pressures to deliver (Kirui & Osman 2012).

It appears that many HODs do not have the proficient skills and competencies to take on their roles as HODs (Jaca, 2013). The result thus hinders the growth and progression of the overall department and its teachers. Smith (2015) reiterates that the success of staff development and support provided to novice teachers and educators is dependent on the skills and knowledge of the HOD. Therefore, the skills and competencies required by an HOD is vital in contributing to the growth and development of a novice teacher under the leadership of an HOD.

### **2.5.2 Maintaining Harmonious Professional Relationships in the Department**

Maintaining harmonious relationships within departments and the school has shown to be challenging. Recent studies have indicated that there is a continuous struggle to balance working relationships in the departments, managing departmental resources such as teachers and managing curriculum requirements. The department for which an HOD is responsible, is often characterised as diverse, consisting of complex issues, individuals with differences and the need to acknowledge their views and opinions. The HOD must therefore manage these diversities and ensure that professional relationships remain harmonious in achieving the goals and objectives of the department (Maingi, 2015). The ability of a HOD to manage people is key for creating collaboration amongst teachers, the future direction in which the department is headed and developing a sense of collaborative culture within their department (Scott, 2015).

## **2.6 STRATEGIES USED TO SUPPORT NOVICE TEACHERS**

Novice teachers enter the teaching profession and are expected to deliver. However, they are given with limited support and guidance to overcome various challenges they face. The HOD is required to provide support, resources and often share knowledge with novices in their department and under their leadership. School leaders such as HODs are expected to have a sound understanding and be informed of the challenges that novice teachers encounter daily. Through research, we are informed that many novice teachers struggle to identify with their role as a professional educator and that HODs often do not understand the depths of the problems that they experience daily (Warmse, 2011). Tait (2008) state that novice teachers need social and emotional support from HODs, creating a space for them to discuss issues and develop proactive measures to address challenges and issues.

Ali (2017) parallels the idea that good support measures provided by the HOD aids the novice teacher in feeling welcomed and part of the school community. Therefore, HODs are instructed to gain a deeper understanding of what challenges the novice teacher faces in the school context. HODs serve as a major source of reliance and support, assisting with teaching and learning processes as well as the instructional development of the novice teacher (Ghavifkr & Ibrahim, 2014). Studies conducted in Zanzibar, found that educational policy on the roles of school heads such as HODs in supporting novice teachers has not exhaustively been done (Ali, 2017), calling for more studies to be conducted because school leaders have the responsibility of supporting novice teachers and ensuring that they are professionally developed.

The HODs serves as an immediate supervisor for novice teachers and are tasked with inducting, supervising and promoting staff development within the department (Maingi, 2015). HODs can provide support to novice teachers by providing mentoring, professional development and collaboration, which are discussed below.

### **2.6.1 Mentoring**

Warmse (2011:39) defines mentoring as “a formal and informal relationship between a novice and experienced professional and serves as a vital support tool for an individual”. Mentorship provides guidance and direction. Mentoring is seen as a tool to connect a novice teacher with an experienced teacher, establishing a professional working relationship with the aim of providing professional support and guidance. The novice and experienced teachers work together to improve technique and pedagogical approach. Mentoring is a form of



professional development which boosts the confidence and esteem of the novice and assists the novice teacher in developing strategies for problem solving (Dias-Lacy & Guiguais, 2017). According to Kram's theory, mentoring supports a novice teacher on three levels such as providing vocational, psychosocial and modelling support (Ntsoane, 2017). Fantilli and McDougall (2009) confirm that mentoring the novice teacher is beneficial for their professional growth as it leads to sustained professional development, problem-solving skills, self-reflection, increased confidence and self-esteem and a holistic positive attitude towards teaching.

Meristo and Eisenschmidt's study (2014) on novice teachers' perceptions of school climate and self-efficacy, concluded that within the first five years of teaching, novice teachers are most likely to leave the profession therefore, there is a call of urgency to support novice teachers worldwide. In many countries, the implementation of induction programmes is viewed as a useful tool to assist the novice teacher that enters an unknown school community. A research study conducted in Zimbabwe by Manwa, Mukeredzi and Manwa (2016) on the first -year experiences of novice teachers, revealed that the first year of teaching for the novice teachers were stressful. As no available mentor was allocated to the novice teachers, they experienced difficulties in adjusting to their new environments. The participants in the study called for induction and mentoring programmes to be implemented in the schools to aid novice teachers. It seems that without support, novice teachers may find teaching an overwhelming experience. Mentoring is seen as a core component of induction programmes for novice teachers as it focuses on "the importance of cohesiveness and sense of belonging, which should be established at school" (Meristo & Eisenschmidt, 2014:8), in addition to traditional supervision and observation for novices, which are favoured in the provision of mentorship (Sewall, 2009).

Burke, Aubusson, Schunk, Buchanan and Prescott (2015) consider mentorship a positive tool in providing support to novice teachers. Mentorship is valued by novice teachers since they benefit from instructional as well as emotional and psychological support in the relationship that is established between the mentor and the mentee (Hobson *et al.*, 2009; Richter, Kunter, Ludtke, Klusmann & Anders, 2013). Mentoring also helps the novice teachers position themselves within the school community and helps with managing the demands of their professional roles. A core component of mentoring is the importance of establishing a working relationship with the mentee in this case, the novice teacher. This allows the novice teacher to feel safe and secure in being mentored and guided in their practice. The novice

teacher is most likely to be open and honest with their mentor when their relationship is positively experienced (Hobson *et al.*, 2009).

International research informs that countries such as Finland, Australia, Japan and the USA invest largely in teacher training, induction, mentoring and professional growth programmes for novice teachers; however, in contrast school districts in Mpumalanga found that novice teachers highlighted the need for external support in schools to assist them. Participants in the study identified that support workshops did not accommodate teaching hours and conflicted with work practices (Nkambule & Amsterdam, 2018). This finding illustrates that support interventions were not in-line with novice teachers' expectancies.

Novice teachers, offered professional development and mentorship, are likely to develop and practice classroom pedagogy that liberates their students and themselves (Bickmore, 2013). This suggests that mentorship provides avenues for individual and learner growth. HODs serve as role models for the novice teacher providing guidance on planning, lesson presentation and managing the learners (Blair, 2008). It appears that there is a need to identify what novice teachers require from mentors so that appropriate mentoring strategies can be put in place to develop and assist the novice teacher. Ingersoll identifies that empirical research on induction policy reforms and mentorship have been limited, hence the need for intensive studies to be conducted on how best to support novice teachers (Ingersoll & Smith 2012).

### **2.6.2 Collaborative Work**

Teacher collaborative work can be described as “teachers’ cooperation aimed at achieving the schools’ objectives and the process of sharing obligations and involving teachers in decision making about shared teaching practices” (Shakenova, 2017:35). Educational researchers advocate increasing teachers’ individual and collective competencies for the goal of achieving quality teaching and learning in schools (Steyn, 2017). Collaborative work provides novice teachers with the opportunity to establish working relationships with others and opportunities for shared decision making. Collaborative work ensures that individuals can assist and support each other, offer insight into how to address challenges and journey together through the hardships of teaching (Tait, 2008).

Collaborative learning communities are vital for teacher professional development therefore, schools are called to establish a collaborative culture. Collaboration positively impacts teacher learning as it provides teachers with the opportunity to share ideas, experiences,

resources and provide feedback for reflective teaching practices and support. Research studies have also shown that there is a link between teacher collaboration and student achievement (Shakenova, 2017). Clarke & Kinuthia (2009) suggest that collaboration is used to support novice teachers as it is used to improve instruction and provide support from more experienced teachers. Novices are provided with positive feedback and help develop reflective teaching practices. According to Clarke & Kinuthia, collaborating with other teachers leads to positive educational outcomes. Steyn (2017) conducted a study on teacher collaboration in a South African urban school. The school implemented a collaborative structure in 2011, yielding positive results. Participants in the study identified that they worked better as a team and had consistency in their educational outcomes. Interdependence and collaboration exposed teachers to various teaching approaches and ideas. The participants reported that they experienced professional growth and their own teaching practices improved greatly. Collaboration provided them with professional and personal support, shared goals and visions and improved communication.

Collaborative work is beneficial for novice teachers as it increases teacher efficacy, professional development, learning opportunities, reflection on instructional practices, reduction in workload and a supportive environment (Shakenova, 2017). This shows that through collaboration, novice teachers can lean on support from others, improve their practice and develop professionally.

### **2.6.3 Professional Development**

Professional development refers to “teachers’ professional growth which is a dynamic process of updating and accelerating teachers’ internal professional structure, attributes and development of knowledge, skills, spirit and ideal” (Yunjun, 2016:57). Postholm (2012) describes professional development as the development of how teachers learn to learn and the application of knowledge in practice to support and enhance their practice and student learning. Warmse (2011) suggest that professional development is a tool used for developing and supporting novice teachers.

Novice teachers need to be provided with opportunities for professional development (Tait, 2008) to enhance and improve their skills and abilities. During the first year of teaching, novice teachers are in the process of developing themselves and experiences and knowledge gained is foundational for the direction of their careers. In order to cope during the first year of teaching, it is vital that novice teachers are equipped with relevant knowledge and skills on subject matter, curriculum, knowledge of learners and general principals on teaching and

learning (Poom-Valickis, 2014). This relates to the novice teachers' ability to develop into a subject specialist equipped with skills and knowledge that is influenced and transformed by their pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) and subject content knowledge (SCK). Shulman developed this theory in the 80s which is an "amalgamation of pedagogy and subject content knowledge" (Shing, Saat & Loke, and 2015:40). According to Shulman, "PCK is described as the manner in which teachers present content knowledge and their awareness of learning difficulties faced by students when presenting a specific content. Shulman believes that a teacher can teach with his/her PCK when an understanding of the subject content and reconstruction of the subject content is diverse and meets the learning needs of learners" (Shing *et al.*, 2015:43).

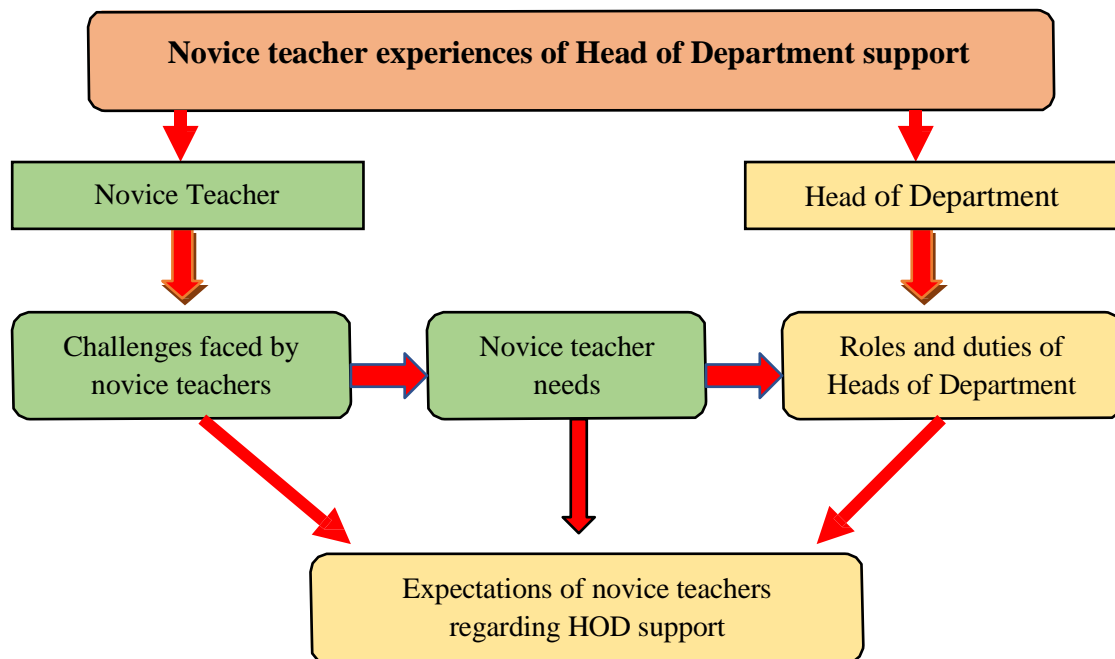
Hirsch (2016) considers that often professional development programmes are based on provider knowledge instead of focusing on the needs of novice teachers. The programmes are heavily packed with theoretical knowledge and therefore, it is important that professional development programmes should focus on increasing teacher expertise to help novice teachers adapt their practices. Programmes are effective when novice teachers receive co-ordinated training, consultation and opportunities for practising their skills and opportunities for reflective and proactive feedback. A study completed by Poom-Valickis (2014) found that professional development programmes resulted in novice teachers having positive experiences and growth during their first year of teaching. The novices were able to cope and had positive views towards their professional development and teaching.

A study conducted by Yunjun (2016) reported that novice teachers struggle to adjust and integrate into teaching and therefore professional development is a tool for supporting and helping the novice in their transitional phase. Through professional development programmes, the novice is equipped with skills and knowledge to improve professional quality. Professional development and teacher identity are linked to the change process of classroom teaching

## **2.7 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

In reviewing literature, various concepts emerged which inform and guide this study. Key emerging concepts consists of: Novice teacher, Head of Department, challenges faced by novice teachers, roles and duties of Heads of Departments. This conceptual framework guides my study in data collection and analysis of data findings.

The concepts are illustrated in the figure below:



**Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework**

The conceptual framework displays the phenomenon of the study, which seeks to identify and understand how novice teachers experience support provided by Heads of Department in primary schools. The arrows used in the framework represent the distinct relationships between the concepts used in the study.

A novice teacher is defined as teacher that is within the first year of his/her teaching (Dlani, 2012:1) and a Head of Department as an individual that provides a leadership role in maintaining and supervising a subject department (PAM, 1998). These are two vital concepts in the proposed study. The novice teacher faces various challenges, which leads to the identification of the needs of novice teachers as depicted by the arrows. The HOD has various roles and duties which he/she is required to perform, as per PAM. The arrows further show that there is an interrelated relationship between the novice teacher and the HOD. The needs of novice teachers are linked to the roles and duties that the HOD ought to perform. The framework further displays expectations of the novice teacher regarding the role of the HOD in providing support to the novice teacher, therefore the framework is informed by the research questions and the review of literature.

## **2.8 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER**

The supportive role of the Head of Department to the novice teacher is critical during the first year of teaching, which is said to be one of the toughest, challenging and foundational periods of one's teaching career. Therefore, continuous support and leadership is needed for novice teachers. The reviewed literature shows that novice teachers are faced with hard-hitting challenges and often are not too sure on how to confront those challenges. Isolation can be a crippling experience, accompanied by instructional and management challenges. HODs are required to take on leadership roles and tasks and schools, yet literature highlights the challenges experienced by the HoDs such as the lack of formal training or mentorship to take on such roles. This can lead to a leadership crisis. Although previous research provides some insights into the challenges that novice teacher's face and the role of HODs in supporting novice teachers, there is a need for continued research on this subject. The following chapter, Chapter 3, describes in detail the methodology followed in the investigation of the phenomenon.

## **CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

In the last chapter, the literature on novice teachers' experiences and the support provided by Heads of Department was reviewed. In this chapter, the research paradigm, and the research approach, design and methods are presented in order to formulate a plan to answer the research question: *How do novice teachers experience support provided by Heads of Department?* This section is followed by the motivation and significance of the selected research approach, design and methods used. Procedures in the data collection, analysis and interpretation of data are discussed. This chapter provides details on trustworthiness of the study as well as ethical approaches used to ensure that all research conducted is done according to and aligned with ethical procedures and standards.

### **3.2 RESEARCH PARADIGM**

Thomas Khan (1962), in an earlier study, described the research paradigm as a philosophical act of thinking and thought process. In a more recent study, Kivunju and Kuyini (2017) state that research paradigm is the researcher's worldview, perspective, school of thought and interpretation of the world in which the researcher is positioned. The research paradigm that underpins the study is Interpretivism.

Interpretivism seeks to understand the nature of individuals in their social and cultural realities. Interpretivism advocates that individual's view of knowledge is socially constructed and further seeks to understand motives, meanings of behaviour and interactions of individuals (Chowdhury, 2014). An advantage of using the interpretivist approach is that the researcher interacts with participants and is aware of inquiry changes between the researcher and subjects of interest. In this study, as I explored how novice teachers experience support from their Head of Departments, I became immersed in the study in order to be able to interpret the lived experiences of the participants (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017).

### **3.3 RESEARCH APPROACH**

The research approach involves exploration, analysis and interpretation of research findings (Creswell, 2012). The study, underpinned by an interpretivist paradigm followed a qualitative approach. Qualitative research is described as exploratory in nature and allows the researcher

to explore data and interpret the research findings (Creswell, 2012). Qualitative research is naturalistic, interactive and humanistic in nature (Creswell, 2012). The researcher is an active participant in the research process and is fully immersed in the context of the study, which is novice teachers' experiences of Head of Department support in primary schools. The subjects of interest are the novice teachers and the natural settings and environment of participants are their classrooms in schools (Campbell, 2014).

Qualitative research approach is also an inductive research approach, researcher aims to explore and derive meaning of the phenomenon under study (Mohajan, 2018:23-24). As the study takes place within a natural setting, I as the researcher was involved in interacting with the participants in the study and investigating their views and perceptions (Mohajan, 2018). I was able to study the lived experiences of the participants who were novice teachers and their HODs in their educational environments (primary schools) and collected data that attempted to answer the research questions.

### **3.4 RESEARCH DESIGN**

Yin (2011:75) defines a research design as a “logical plan” of the “management of your research” and Akhtar (2016:71) also views the research design as a plan, structure and strategy of conditions that guides data collection and analysis. The research design in this qualitative study was a case study as it aligned with the purpose and objectives of the study, which focused on understanding the lived experiences of the participants in the study which was done through investigating cases.

Case study research design focuses on the exploration and comprehensive description of the phenomenon being studied (Starman, 2013). Yin (2002:75) and further describes a case study as a “contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context” whereby a researcher has no control of the phenomenon and context studied. This study sought to understand the perceptions of novice teachers of their experiences of the support provided by the HODs which fitted the characteristic of a case study. One of the characteristics of case study research design is that research conducted is exploratory in nature and provides rich in-depth data. Such studies are often an empirical inquiry of a phenomenon in a real-world context (Maree, 2016).

The advantage of case study research design is that it provides opportunities for innovation in exploring and gaining a deeper understanding of the phenomenon. In this study, I was able to interact with the participants, asking questions to develop an understanding of their lived



experiences. Queiros, Faria, and Almedia (2017) affirms that case studies provide detailed findings and challenges, present theoretical assumptions and provide new meaning and understanding of a study. Gastafsson (2017) also states that a case study permits a researcher to develop high-quality theories and explore theoretical relationships.

Although I used case study design in this study, I acknowledge that case studies have certain limitations such as the accessibility and availability of participants which can hinder the data collection process. Enough allocation time for analysing and interpreting data may not always be possible due to constraints such as the availability of participants and submission deadlines. Furthermore, case study as a research design has been questioned for its insufficient provision of scientific rigour (Crowe, Inder & Porter, 2011), unlike the use of a quantitative design. In addressing these limitations, I scheduled time allocation for data collection and allowed enough time to analyse and interpret the data.

This study is a case investigating novice teachers' experiences of support provided by Heads of Departments. In this case study, I was able to gather in-depth information through active interaction with the participants. Widdowson (2011) states that case study research design is a rich method for investigating and exploring a single or multiple case, which in this study focused on multiple cases such as the experiences of novice teachers and the support given from their HODs aimed at studying support for novice teachers in schools.

### **3.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.5.1 Research Site**

The research site consisted of primary schools located within Tshwane South school districts in Pretoria as this district had many novice teachers. These schools are situated in urban and non-urban areas with varied demography.

#### **3.5.2 Sampling**

In this study, I employed a purposive sampling method. The objective of purposive sampling is to obtain and identify information-rich data. Individuals or cases are identified with a specific research objective and phenomenon of interest (Palinkas, Horwitz, Green, Wisdom, Duan & Hoagwood, 2015). Purposive sampling requires the selection of key informants in the field who can provide information-rich data (Suri, 2011).

This study aimed at identifying how novice teachers experience support provided by Heads of Departments in primary schools. For this reason, the sample selected included three purposively selected primary schools in the Tshwane South School districts, with the help of

the Gauteng Department of Education's District Director. The selected schools were chosen based on the criteria that they had newly-appointed novice teachers and active Heads of Department who were involved with the teachers. The participants consisted of School A: 2 novice teachers and 1 HOD. School B, 1 novice teacher and 1 HOD and School C consisted of 2 novice teachers and 2 HODs. In total, 5 novice teachers and 4 HODs. Although the participants were identified by the District Director, participation in this study was on a voluntarily basis and no participant was forced to participate in the study. Participants received an invitation to participate in the research, which contained information about the research and a consent letter to sign as acceptance. Participants selected to participate in this study consisted of qualified male and female novice teachers irrespective of their teaching subject or phase in which they were teaching. The most important criterion was that they had to be in their first year of teaching, which fits in the definition “novice teacher”, according to Diani (2012:11).

Participants were intentionally selected on the basis that they could provide “information rich data” (Creswell, 2012:206). The use of purposive sampling enabled the researcher to gather information-rich data that contributed to gaining an understanding of how novice teachers experience support from Heads of Department and furthermore, identifying the kinds of challenge that novice teachers face and support strategies employed by Heads of Department to support novice teachers. The participants selected represented individuals from diverse backgrounds and socio-economic demographics and consisted of five novice teachers and four Heads of Department.

### **3.5.3 Data Collection Methods**

The data were collected through two techniques, namely semi-structured interviews as well as document analysis. In this section, the use and application of the two instruments is discussed.

#### ***3.5.3.1 Semi-structured interviews***

Data was generated using semi-structured interview which consisted of interview questions prepared by researcher. The aim of a semi-structured interview is to obtain the interviewee’s subjective response to a known phenomenon from his/her lived world experience (Datko, 2015). The use of semi-structured interviews, guided by an interview schedule (see Appendices F & G), enabled the researcher to collect rich data from participants in a sequence of questions that were asked. Follow-up questions were used during the interview process for further clarity on the responses and to obtain in-depth data. Further questioning

and probing resulted in further understanding of participants and their experiences in their social contexts.

Possible limitations that could have hindered the data collection process consisted of the poor availability of participants to participate in interviews sessions, location of the schools and participants who did not always want to provide full details of their teaching and their experiences. In order to address these limitations, I set dates for interview sessions well in advance accommodating the participants' schedules. In order to access the locations of the schools, I arranged to honour commitments made with my participants and encouraged them to always be present on scheduled interview days. I establish a relationship of trust with my participants by explaining who I was, the purpose of my study and the other formalities of the interviews prior to encouraging with them to share all their experiences.

The interviews were conducted in the classrooms of the novice teachers and the offices and boardrooms of the Heads of Department. Prior to conducting the interviews, I requested that the interviews take place in an environment which was peaceful and accommodated the purpose of the interview, however one Head of Department requested to have her interview conducted in her classroom and this negatively affected the interview due to high noise levels from the surrounding environment. During each interview, there was privacy and a few interruptions such as individuals needing to speak to the HOD or an announcement was made on the intercom during the interview.

Each interview was completed over a period of 30-45 minutes which met the timeframe allowed for the interview, as each participant was informed that the duration of the interviews would only be an hour. Each interview was audio recorded using a voice recorder. In order to ensure that a back-up was in place after each interview, the audio recording was transmitted onto a PC and a hard drive which was in safe keeping and not available for others to listen.

All interviews were conducted in English as explained to the participants prior to conducting the interviews. The home languages of the participants in this study was diverse with some 70% of the participants being first language English speakers and the other 30% of participants were Afrikaans, Zulu and Xhosa-home language speakers; however, they were still able to understand and respond in English during the interviews.

### ***3.5.3.2 Document analysis***

Document analysis is defined as a systematic process in which documents are reviewed analysed and evaluated by a researcher. Data obtained from documents is critically examined and interpreted to derive meaning. In qualitative analysis, the researcher uses document analysis as a means to derive meaning from multiple sources of information and provides valuable supplementary data as information is obtained (Bowen, 2009).

In the study, the researcher asked the participants to provide documents such as induction manuals, support guides, mentor programmes, development support group plans, professional growth plans and other relevant documents that could generate data to enrich the study. The provision of such documents assisted the researcher in extracting and obtaining rich data which could then be used to make comparisons between data findings. Creswell states that documents allow the researcher to acquire words, language of participants and data retrieved from documents is organised and given attention by participants (Creswell, 2012). When viewing documents such as induction manuals, support guides and term plans that could assist with obtaining data, a strict analysis checklist was not used. Although I intended to use document analysis, my experiences in requesting the above documents mentioned varied. Participants in particular schools did not have such documents readily available in their possession, indicating that some schools did not have these crucial documents and other participants allowed me to briefly view the necessary documents that was made available. The lack of such supporting documents contributed to a limitation in my data collection and study.

## **3.5.4 Data Analysis**

The analysis of data entails the process of interpreting and classifying data to understand and make meaning of a phenomenon being studied (Creswell, 2012).

### ***3.5.4.1 Data analysis of interviews***

The analysis of qualitative data allows for new theories regarding a phenomenon studied to be developed such as theories on how novice teachers experience HOD support in primary schools and comparisons between research findings to be made (Flick, 2009). In this study I followed the process of thematic data analysis, a method used to identify, analyse, and develop themes within data (Maree, 2016). Thematic analysis produces trustworthiness and rich findings, which allows for examination of participants in the study (Nowell, Norris, White & Moules, 2017). The researcher verifies and confirms themes by processing the interview transcripts (Burnard, Gill, Stewart, Treasure & Chadwick, 2008), therefore in this study all interview recordings were transcribed verbatim to enable me to

have enough data for developing themes.

Thematic analysis involved a number of steps. Firstly, I familiarised myself with the data by intensively reading the interview transcripts to gain a sound understanding of what the participants were saying. Secondly, I drew up a table which included the responses of the participants according to the questions asked. Thirdly, I developed different codes. The next step was to group codes in order to form categories which was linked to the main and sub-research questions. This then led to the development of themes and sub-themes (Burnand *et al.*, 2008; Crowe *et al.*, 2015).

The next step in thematic analysis was coding. Coding is a qualitative technique used to analyse data. Coding is the process of marking segments of data using symbols and descriptive words. The codes served as markers regarding thoughts about findings and enabled the researcher to make further discoveries in the realities of data and is generated by reading and re-reading interview transcripts (Maree, 2016:116; Oun & Bach, 2014). The researcher made notes of key words, theories and phrases known as open coding. In the completion of this process, codes were grouped, summarised and compared which determined relationships between individual codes and patterns. Categories were then formed which provided further detailed themes with references from interview transcripts (quotes) and a narrative was then formed (Crowe *et al.*, 2011).

#### ***3.5.4.2 Data analysis of Interviews***

Qualitative interview data analysis refers to “methods by which the interviewer directs the interviewee to answer specific research questions which leads to large amounts of detailed and data” (Fernandez, 2018: 1-2. Texts in the interviews can be analysed by use of a thematic analysis. In this process, the researcher looks for recurring patterns in the texts and themes, providing detailed interpretation of data. The researcher is active in the interpretation of data and developed codes to represent identified themes (Fernandez, 2018). All data obtained and coded from the interview transcripts has been used in the presentation of the data which is seen in the chapter to follow.

#### ***3.5.4.3 Data analysis of documents***

In this qualitative study, document analysis was done through content analysis. Content analysis is defined as “subjective and interpretative analysis that is a systematic technique used to compress a large amount of text into fewer categories using rules of coding” (Maree, 2016:111). Data is presented in the form of words and themes which enables interpretation

of results (Bengtsson, 2016). By conducting content analysis in this study, data obtained was systematically processed and interpreted using codes that make sense of interpretations. In this study, the researcher did not subscribe to a strict schedule for document analysis. Some of the participants whose schools had developed the relevant documentation allowed me to view the documents but did not submit it to be analysed as part of the data.

Zhang and Wildemath (2009) describe content analysis process as:

- *Interpretation of data:* All data had to be written in texts and interview transcripts much be analysed to reveal information on individuals' behaviour and thoughts. All interview transcripts were transcribed to assist the analyzation process.
- *Define the Unit of Analysis:* This refers to the basic unit of texts to be classified also known as coding. The coding unit is defined and individual themes. Data obtained were divided into themes and coloured codes.
- *Development of categories and coding scheme on a sample of text:* This derives from data, previous studies and theories and leads to the formation of categories.
- *Testing coding scheme on a sample of text:* A sample of the data was coded, and the coding had to be consistent through an inter-coded agreement. A sample of the data will be coded to conduct a test for accuracy.
- *Code all the text:* Codes needed to be checked repeatedly for the emergence of new themes and categories which leads to codes as the data will progress during the process. Throughout the analysis process, coded will constantly be checked.
- *Assess your coding consistency:* After all data has been coded, another check needed to take place to ensure the consistency of coding.
- *Draw conclusions form coded data:* This was done to make sense of themes and categories identified. Inferences and presentation of reconstructions of meanings is derived from data, relationships and patterns are identified and categories are tested.

The documents that were collected for analysis followed the analysis process described above.

### **3.6 THE TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE STUDY**

Trustworthiness is a qualitative criterion used to support an argument that proposes that a researcher's argument is "worth paying attention to" and is based on certain evaluations (Elo *et al.*, 2014:2) such as credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability.

Credibility refers to the truth of research findings and is used to establish if research findings derived from participants are correctly interpreted based on the views of participants (Elo *et al.*, 2014). Credibility can be achieved by prolonged engagement, observation, member checking and triangulation (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). Interaction with the participants took place over a period of six weeks. During data collection, I interacted with the participants and took observation notes in my research diary which supported the interpretation and presentation of the data findings. The interview transcripts were taken back to the participants to confirm the accuracy of the data (member checking) and there was also a debriefing session with the participants after each interview session.

Transferability poses that further trends may occur in the phenomenon of study and relies on the reasoning that research findings may be generalised (Elo *et al.*, 2014). Transferability can be achieved through the provision of descriptive data on the findings of behaviour and experiences of participants (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). To make the research findings transferable, I have provided full and a detailed account of participants, the settings and research context as well as the research design. The sample of selected participants met the criteria for selection, such as individuals were novice teachers and the Heads of Departments who provided mentorship and support to the novice teachers in their schools.

Dependability is the overall stability of the data over a period and relates to conditional differences (Elo *et al.*, 2014). Korstjens and Moser (2018) assert that dependability can be achieved by providing reflective thoughts that are noted, doing an audit trail, proper sampling and providing notes on new findings. Although there may be a change in the data collected over a period of time as the data collection process occurs, I documented all findings, changes and implementation of the entire research process to ensure that findings are dependable, providing detailed accounts thereof.

Confirmability refers to the extent to which the research findings can be confirmed by other researchers in the field and establishes the interpretation of the findings (Elo *et al.*, 2014). The process follows the same guidelines as dependability. The researcher in this study ensured that all data such as interview transcripts and document analysis were analysed and interpreted, changes and implementation of the design and research process was done to ensure that the findings are dependable, providing detailed accounts thereof.

### **3.7 ETHICAL ISSUES**

The concept 'Ethics' is defined as the act of "doing good" and the avoidance of performing acts that may serve harm (Aluwihare-Samaranyanke, 2012:65). Ethics is guided by principles and guidelines to protect individuals such as research participants with the goal of minimizing potential harm, increase integrity and the protection of participants and a researcher (Aluwihare-Samaranyanke, 2012). The researcher intended to gather information data on the phenomenon of study which required research participants to give accounts of their personal experiences. As such a relationship of trust had to be established between the researcher and participants.

The research study was guided by ethical considerations namely obtaining ethical clearance from the Ethics Committee of the University of Pretoria to conduct the research (see Appendix A). Once the ethics approval was granted, I requested permission from the Gauteng Department of Education (see Appendix B) and the principals of the selected schools (see Appendix D). Once permissions were granted by the Gauteng Department of Education (see Appendix D), I sent invitations to potential participants namely novice teachers and Heads of Department from various schools. The letter of informed concept explained the purpose and objectives of the study, confidentiality, protection of participants and time allocation for interviews (see Appendices E & F).

Ethical issues such as informed consent, voluntary participation, ensuring and maintaining confidentiality and privacy of participants, remaining professional and respectful towards participants and assuring participants that withdrawal from the study is permitted with no formal obligations were taken into consideration when conducting this qualitative research study. The nature of the study did not present any limitations on the participants' freedom to withdraw and no participant was manipulated or pressured to participate in the study.

### **3.8 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER**

In this chapter, the researcher described in detail the qualitative research approach, methodology and case-study design used to investigate experiences of novice teachers' support provided by Heads of Department. The case-study research design was guided by and interpretivist paradigm. The research methodology which described the research site, sampling methods, sample and data collections methods were explained. The data analysis in this study was explained by means of a thematic analysis using content analysis and document analysis was explained in detail.



The ethical concerns used in this study was outlined. Chapter 4 will explain the research findings discussed in detail and relate the findings to relevant literature on novice teachers and Heads of Department.

## CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, the research methodology was discussed presenting the methods used for the data collection and data analysis. This chapter presents the research findings and discussions in an attempt to answer the main research question: *How do novice teachers experience support provided by Heads of Department?* The findings are presented in themes and sub-themes that emerged from the data collected through semi-structured interviews and document analysis. Direct quotations from the participants are included as evidence of the research findings. The findings of this study are compared with the literature on the topic for similarity and differences.

Nine participants from three different schools in the Tshwane South school district were involved in the study. From the three schools, three Intermediate Phase novice teachers and two Foundation Phase novice teachers were interviewed, and two Foundation Phase and one Intermediate Phase and one senior Head of Department were interviewed. To ensure confidentiality, as per ethical considerations, code names were assigned to each participant. In the data presentation, the novice teachers are referred to as NC 1 to NC 5 and the Heads of Department as HOD 1 to HOD 4.

### 4.2 BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

A biographical table containing information of the participants has been provided and is presented in Table 4.1 below:

**Table 4.1: Biographical information of the participants**

Participant	School	Race & Gender	Age	Position	Teaching Grade	Teaching Subjects
Novice teacher 1	School A	White Female	24	Novice teacher	Grade 5 Intermediate Phase	English and Life Skills
Novice teacher 2	School A	African Male	24	Novice teacher	Grade 5 Intermediate Phase	Social Science and creative arts
Novice	School B	Coloured	24	Novice	Grade 1	English, Maths

<b>Participant</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Race &amp; Gender</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Teaching Grade</b>	<b>Teaching Subjects</b>
teacher 3		Female		teacher	Foundation Phase	and Life Skills
Novice teacher 4	School C	African Female	24	Novice teacher	Grade 4,5,6,7 Intermediate and Senior Phase	Sepedi
Novice teacher 5	<i>School C</i>	White Female	26	Novice teacher	Grade 0	English, Maths and Life skills
HOD 1	School A	Indian Female	46-50	HOD	Grade 4-7 Intermediate and Senior Primary	Afrikaans, Economic and Management Science and Social Science
HOD 2	School B	Coloured Female	46	HOD	Grade 0 & 1 Foundation Phase	English, Maths and Life Skills
HOD 3	School C	White Female	30-33	HOD	Intermediate and Senior Phase	Languages
HOD 4	<i>School C</i>	White Female	41	HOD	Grade 0 & 1 Foundation Phase	English, Maths and Life skills

The information presented in Table 4.1 illustrates the range of participants. The information was obtained using interview questions as a biographical data collection instrument. The table characterises the participants according to the categories listed. A wide range of participants was interviewed, however most of the participants interviewed were female teachers with only one male teacher. The age of the participants ranged from 24-50. Two teachers were from the Foundation Phase teaching English, Mathematics and Life skills, while the remaining three teachers were from the Intermediate Phase teaching a range of subjects. Two HODs were from the Foundation Phase and two from the Intermediate Phase.

### **4.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

In this section, the research questions which guided the interviews and study are aligned with the interview questions for the novice teacher and the Head of Department – see Tables 4.2 and 4.3.

**Table 4.2: Alignment of research questions and interview questions for novice teachers**

<b>Research Question</b>	<b>Interview Questions</b>
<i>Main Research Question</i> How do novice teachers experience support provided by Heads of Department?	
<i>Sub-Research Questions</i>	<i>Interview Questions</i>
<i>Sub-question 1</i> What are the challenges that novice teachers face during their first year of teaching?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Please tell me about the challenges that you experienced during your first months of teaching.</li> <li>• What challenges are you still experiencing being a novice teacher?</li> <li>• What are the causes of these challenges?</li> <li>• What kind of support did you not get from the Head of Department?</li> </ul>
<i>Sub-Question 2</i> What kind of support do novice teachers expect from the HODs?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Please tell me about the help you needed during your first months of being a teacher.</li> <li>• What kind of support do you still need from your Head of Department?</li> <li>• Please tell me the kind of support you expect from the Head of Department.</li> </ul>
<i>Sub-question 3</i> What strategies do HODs use to support and assist novice teachers?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What kinds of strategies does your Head of Department use to provide support or assist you?</li> <li>• What kind of support did you get from the Head of Department?</li> </ul>

**Table 4.3: Alignment of research and interview questions for Heads of Department**

<b>Research Question</b>	<b>Interview Questions</b>
<i>Main Research Question</i> How do novice teachers experience support provided by Heads of Department?	
<i>Sub-Research Questions</i>	<i>Interview Questions</i>
<i>Sub-question 1</i> What are the challenges that novice teachers face during their first year of teaching?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What kinds of challenges do novice teachers in your department experience?</li> <li>• What are the causes of these challenges?</li> <li>• What kind of support are you not able to give novice teachers?</li> <li>• What strategies do you use to provide support or assist novice teachers in your Department?</li> </ul>
<i>Sub-Question 2</i> What kind of support do novice teachers expect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Please tell me the kinds of support you think that novice teachers expect from you as the</li> </ul>

<b>Research Question</b>	<b>Interview Questions</b>
from the HODs?	Head of Department. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What kind of support do you think novice teachers need during their first months of teaching?</li> </ul>
<i>Sub-question 3</i> What strategies do HODs use to support and assist novice teachers?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Please tell me about the help you give to novice teachers.</li> <li>• What kinds of assistance do you provide to the novice teacher who faces the identified challenges?</li> <li>• Please tell me about the support that you give to the novice teacher.</li> </ul>

#### 4.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS, THEMES AND SUB-THEMES

The following table, Table 4.4, aligns the themes and sub-themes with the research's sub-questions.

**Table 4.4: Themes and sub-themes aligned with research sub-questions**

<b>Research Questions</b>	<b>Themes and Sub-Themes</b>
<i>Sub-question 1</i> What are the challenges that novice teachers face during their first year of teaching?	Theme 1: The challenges experienced by novice teachers Sub-Themes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Challenges with managing curriculum delivery</li> <li>• Challenges in managing learner discipline</li> <li>• Challenges with managing time</li> <li>• Challenges with self-management</li> <li>• Challenges in identifying learning and language barriers</li> <li>• Challenges with parental engagement</li> </ul>
<i>Sub-Question 2</i> What kind of support do novice teachers expect from the HODs?	Theme 2: The kinds of support needed by novice teachers Sub-Themes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Managing curriculum delivery</li> <li>• Support with managing learners</li> <li>• Support with self-management</li> <li>• Support with professional development</li> <li>• Support with administration duties</li> <li>• Support with communication</li> <li>• External support</li> </ul>

Research Questions	Themes and Sub-Themes
<p><i>Sub-question 3</i>            What strategies do HODs use to support and assist novice teachers?</p>	<p>Theme 3:            Strategies used to support and assist novice teachers            Sub-Theme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Induction and mentoring</li> <li>• Observation and feedback</li> <li>• Collegial support</li> <li>• Professional development training</li> <li>• Identifying learning and language barriers</li> </ul>

Table 4.4 indicates the themes and sub-themes emerging from the analysis of data from the interview questions aligned in Table 4.2.

## 4.5 RESEARCH FINDINGS

In this section, the research findings emerging from the analysis are presented in themes and sub-themes. The participants' responses as data, were reviewed and analysed and comparisons were made with literature linked to the themes. A summary is given at the end of each theme. In conducting the interviews and analysing documents, the researcher sought to obtain knowledge on how novice teachers receive are supported by the Heads of Department. The research further investigated the kinds of challenges experienced by novice teachers, the kinds of support novice teachers expected from their HODs and strategies HODs used to provide support and assist novice teachers. The themes and sub-themes emerging from the analysis processes are discussed in the following sub-sections.

### 4.5.1 Theme 1: The Challenges experienced by Novice Teachers

One of the aims of this study was to explore the challenges experienced by novice teachers. Novice teachers and their HODs were asked what kinds of challenges novice teachers experienced and what were the causes of these challenges. The responses of the participants indicated that novice teachers experience a variety of challenges. The following sub-themes present a detailed discussion of the challenges faced by the novice teachers during their first year of teaching.

#### 4.5.1.1 Sub-theme 1: Challenges with managing curriculum delivery

A novice teacher is faced with the daunting task of curriculum interpretation and curriculum implementation. The CAPS documents support novice teachers in that the general aims of the curriculum are specified, the content is divided into four terms and the content and teaching

plans are specified week-by-week (DBE, 2011). However, novice teachers feel they are not prepared for the transition from the theory learned as a student to the practical needed as a teacher:

*... with regards to daily planning and the CAPS and your ATP's, your annual teaching plan and how they should all correlate... I did not know how to manage the workload okay along and combined with teaching and to prioritise like stuff (NT 1).*

*... the transition was quite overwhelming because there are certain things that you don't do as a student teacher that you have to do as an official teacher (NT 2)*

*During my first months of teaching, it is completely different from the practical that you get. So, you have to put what you have learnt from theory into practice. So, when I was studying, we didn't like go out to schools or be in the classroom environment (NT 3).*

Lesson planning constitutes a vital component of teaching and it is the responsibility of the novice teaching to do this. Lesson planning serves as a tool used to guide the teacher in the manner in which they will deliver the lesson and serve as a “roadmap or framework used to plan and conduct a lesson” (Bin-Hardy & Abdulsafi, 2018:266). Students respond well to an organised lesson, therefore essential components of lesson planning consist of teaching objectives, warming up activities, techniques and procedures used to achieve to objectives and assessment (Bin-Hardy & Abdulsafi, 2018:266).

Azhar and Kayani (2016:212) acknowledge that many novice teachers struggle with lesson planning and lesson delivery as there are many aspects to take into account. Initially, the novice learner may not possess the relevant pedagogic and subject-related knowledge nor the ability to gauge the class's ability, learning styles or preferred method of delivery. Azhar and Kayani (2016) suggest that successful lesson planning is achieved by reflecting on previous lessons presented and identifying areas which can be improved. However, it is important for a novice teacher to master all the skills related to lesson planning, taking into account the purpose of the lesson or expected learning outcomes, the substances of the lesson or subject matter, understanding and skills, the methods of the lesson or strategies used to ensure learning and finally, the evaluation of the lesson or students' learning (Azhar & Kayani (2016:213).

*The help I needed was to understand the prep and how, and what they expect from me, how to teach it ... the amount of work. So definitely, the workload. So, it was marking books and doing these assessments and prepping for these assessments and the workload was a big adjustment. (NT 5)*

*So, for us as new teachers, support and guidance is needed as to how to do the planning. Like I said, I am practical, so you give it to me in terms of instruction. I need an example (NT 4).*

*Let's say when setting up assessments, the way they should be constructed, what should be, like the types of questions like Blooms Taxonomy. There's a certain way you have to add things to uhm your assessments like a picture uhm (NT 1).*

The HODs in this study confirmed that novice teachers struggled with preparing for lessons and assessments and they needed guidance and support on preparing for the lessons and assessments.

*The paperwork. I think all of them struggle with that and the prepping of books, Grade 1, 2 and 3, they all struggle. With Grade 3s, it is the amount of marking (HOD 4).*

*I think with my novice. She feels very overwhelmed. Most of the other teachers only teach one grade and they might teach EMS, SS just for Grade 7, whereas Ms \*\*\*\* teaches Grades 4,5,6 and 7. That means she is setting up 30 assessments per term. 30 different ones for all the grades, so I think with her the admin and the paperwork is so much more than for an average teacher so, for her that's a challenge (HOD 3).*

For the novice teachers in this study, it seems that they did not receive the necessary guidance on how to complete their lesson planning. During pre-service training, novice teachers prepare a limited number of lessons presented during teaching practice but seem unprepared for what is expected at schools, which is why novice teacher induction and training programmes are valuable in assisting the novice learner integrate into the culture of the school.

Bin-Hardy and Abdulsafi (2018) emphasise that any novice teacher induction or training programme requires inclusion of support on lesson preparation. The Head of Department's role in enabling novice teachers to develop lesson plans for teaching their classes is that of Instructional Leadership. According to policy guidelines from the Personnel Administrative



Measure (Department of Education), the Head of Department as an instructional leader has the duty of managing the curriculum, monitoring lesson plans and co-ordinating goal setting (Nkabinde, 2012). Nkabinde (2012) further explains that HODs as Instructional Leaders must be knowledgeable about the curriculum, teaching content, instruction and assessment. HODs are expected to assist novice teachers with improving instruction and provide constructive evaluation, focusing on improving a teacher's instruction (Seobi & Wood, 2016).

The findings from this study concurs with those of Seobi and Wood (2012) in that participants confirmed that HOD involvement in planning and guiding on lesson plans and assessments was limited and planning was viewed as a task-orientated approach instead of working with teachers to improve planning and instruction. Nkabinde (2012) asserts that HODs must be active in discussing and providing guidance on instructional issues such as lesson planning, teaching, supporting and working collectively with teachers on planning and executing the curriculum and providing effective instruction.

#### ***4.5.1.2 Sub-theme 2: Challenges in managing learner discipline***

Classroom discipline is a way for teachers to manage the day-to-day running of the class. The teacher uses discipline to ensure that routine is maintained and that all learners are in a safe environment, conducive to learning. Discipline is an element of classroom management and it is context dependant. The context of the school may influence the behaviour of the learners in the classroom and discipline in general. The sign of a disciplined classroom is where effective teaching and learning takes place, learners are motivated, engaged and cooperate with the teacher to achieve a common goal. Research (Sanchez-Solarle, 2019) affirms that many novice teachers struggle with managing stressful situations such as maintaining order and discipline in a classroom.

In this study, managing learner discipline was a problem experienced by the novice teachers. There are various factors that influence learner discipline such as behaviour, conduct, overcrowding maintaining the rules, lack of communication and socio-economic issues.

*Firstly, I would say I struggled with discipline. And I think I know why I struggled with discipline because learners feel that I am too young to tell them what to do (NT 2).*

It appears there are no boundaries have been set between the novice teacher and the learners which also suggest a school culture with weak values such as respect for the teacher regardless of age and experience. It seems as though the learners did not abide with the

schools' code of conduct regarding consequences on discipline and in addition, learners seemed to disregard the authority of the novice teacher by being a young teacher.

The HODs had to take responsibility for the discipline in cases where the novice teachers were unable to cope.

*Discipline also takes a lot of my time especially with the teachers that struggle a lot with discipline, then you are sorting out discipline issues because the teachers send the kids here (HOD 4).*

*Emotional, the newly appointed educator struggles with her learners. When they do the school readiness at the beginning of the year, she observes from that is learners have behavioural problems and she does not know how to face those problems (HOD 2).*

Findings in this study seems to indicate that novice teachers do not receive adequate training on how to maintain discipline in line with the school's code of conduct. Novice teachers together with their learners ought to create their own set of classroom rules as this could provide learners with opportunities to voice their opinions on rules and work together as a class community to maintain order and feel a sense of responsibility towards modelling individual positive behaviour in the classroom. This is the duty of the HOD to coordinate and manage and ensure that it is part of the induction and training programme designed for novice teachers. Overcrowding in classrooms is a challenge found in many South African schools. The pupil-teacher ratio, which is the average number of pupils per teacher in primary schools, should be 25:1, however, in the past it has been as high as 44.54:1. This makes teaching very challenging for the novice teacher particularly as a productive learning environment is not ensured.

*With the 54 learners that I have in my class, it's not always possible to get to each and every child (NT 3).*

Overcrowding in the classroom is a challenge that was integrated with managing learner discipline, as indicated in the following quotations from the HODs.

*Uhm, the large classrooms. The grade ones are overcrowded. We've got 54 learners per class which I feel is an injustice to the little ones. There you really cannot give individual attention to those learners. The overcrowding like I have said, the huge in- take and then the learner ratio, the language barriers (HOD 2).*

Due to overcrowded classrooms, as well as other factors such as pupil-teacher ratio and language barriers, learners are unable to participate in class activities. “The learning environment must support learners’ motivation to participate in group activities or learning activities” (Marias, 2016:2-3). Schools must therefore ensure that proper planning is in place to maintain controlled classroom environments (Mamela, 2013) and ensure effective teaching and learning. The above responses imply that the pupil-teacher ratio in the classrooms of the schools involved in this study are beyond the standard ratio and it therefore influences learner behaviour and the ability of the teacher to control the learners.

The huge numbers in the classroom means that there are learners with diverse needs. It seems unrealistic to expect the novice teacher to be able to address all the behavioural and emotional problems and then addressed all individual learning needs.

*... there’s about 13 learners that needs support out of the 54 (NT 3).*

The findings indicate that the novice teachers are unable to meet the individual learning needs of the learners and address the learners’ emotional and behavioural problems. Learners are not able to receive individual attention due to the novice teacher being unable to cope with learner discipline demands. This results in the loss of valuable teaching time and added stress on the novice teacher’s time management, as reported by the HODs.

*It is a bit difficult for the educators to really give individual attention and with some of them, especially the Afrikaans learners, there are a lot of problems, behavioural, emotional and social that you can really see that those kids need more attention (HOD 2).*

This may be a result of the novice teacher not being equipped with skills to address such situations. Through training, novice teachers will be equipped with necessary skills which will assist them in identifying learning barriers.

Socio-economic challenges were also identified and are linked to the challenge of managing learner discipline. A novice teacher in this study identified that socio-economic backgrounds played a role in learner behaviour. The participant said:

*Definitely discipline (shakes head). I would say that sometimes it’s not you as a teacher, but also their family background and so forth .... Where learners come from, they don’t teach them how to respect adults or teachers (NT 2).*

The responses of the participants imply that parents do not fully understand the schools code of conduct which outlines protocol for disciplinary problems. The responses suggest that the school and the parents do not have a common agreement of how to discipline learners:

*In terms of discipline and managing classes, parents are saying we are harsh with the child and we are not (HOD 4).*

There is a possibility of a lack of communication between the school and the parents regarding discipline issues. It appears that the responsibility of disciplining learners should be a shared one between home and school. The school and home environment contribute to developing the behaviour of the learner in terms of values and how learners should conduct themselves appropriately within a classroom setting.

However, on the positive side, some novice teachers were well-prepared to cope with their classes and had developed a strategy for dealing with a large number of learners in their classes:

*I am strict, very strict, but also flexible and I have routine, it sounds like I got this all together, but I don't. I'm strict and there's a fine line between being friendly, trying to engage and help because that manifests in your class. If that is not there then nothing is going to work ... it will reveal in the way your learner's books look like, how the marks feature, everything so I'm strict (NT 1).*

*I started in this school, I told the children my rules and I just followed through with consistency. Never budging so at the start, it was very difficult, but they did adjust (NT 5).*

In this study, my view is that the ability of a teacher to manage his/her class effectively determines whether the teacher will succeed or just merely survive in the classroom. Although the Department of Education had implemented policies on learner discipline, schools in South Africa continue to face challenges that relate to learner discipline. South African schools, according to Section 8 of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996, are required to have school-based policies and learners' code of conduct in place; however, due to the learners coming from different backgrounds such as dysfunctional home contexts, troubled environments and challenging social interactions, mannerisms, attitudes and disruptive behaviours of the learners makes the management of discipline in the classroom a daunting task.

Other factors that influence learner behaviour and discipline such as socio-economic conditions, poor parental involvement and social influences also influences learner conduct in the classroom. Some learners are emotionally disordered do not respond well to discipline and therefore, novice teachers need to manage discipline in the classroom in a positive manner that builds the esteem of learners (Mamela, 2013).

#### ***4.5.1.3 Sub-theme 3: Challenges with managing time***

The findings also suggest that novice teachers struggle to prioritise activities or do not receive guidance on how to do so. It seems that novice teachers are not taught during pre-service training on managing their time efficiently and on entering the teaching profession, are daunted by the many tasks required of them.

Time management is an essential and a universal component of a school organisation. Time management affects a teacher's ability to be effective and produce a set objective such as academic results, therefore novice teachers need to have good time management skills in order to be productive and effective (Khan, Tahir, Ishefaq & Kan, 2016).

*Like with time management, obviously if you have never been a teacher, you don't know how to manage your time ...you have to prioritise your time with the activities so that you do it correctly because otherwise you place unnecessary pressure on yourself feeling like you need to finish all of this because I want to be a step ahead (NT 1).*

Time management represents skills, techniques and tools needed to manage time when tasks must be completed:

*...but time management is something extremely important in teaching and it starts from the moment you begin but you have to keep in consideration everything. You have to be a certain time at school especially if you are on duty, staff meetings. In your class, it is all about time management. You have to finish a certain amount of work according to CAPS etc in this period. If you don't finish you need to plan how will I manage to finish it. Time management is something that happens from the time that you get up (NT 1).*

In this study, an HOD confirmed that due to the lack of available time, she was unable to develop novice teachers as effectively as she should. The participants said:

*Time. Time is very little. Sometimes I wish I could just have a month to go visit classes just to develop them so that you know in 20 years from now, they will be master*

*teachers (HOD 1).*

It appears that although the HODs may have immense knowledge on developing novice teachers, they are restricted by the demands of their own time and the roles that they have to fulfil as Head of Department to develop the novice teacher.

#### **4.5.1.4 Sub-theme 4: Challenges with self-management**

Self-Management refers to “methods, skills and strategies by which individuals can effectively direct their activities towards the achievement of objectives. Self-management is viewed as an educative process and outcomes” (Omisakan & Ncama, 2011:1734). The novice teachers in this study reported that they struggled with managing time effectively coupled with managing and prioritising activities and tasks required of them;

*I still find it challenging catching up with the work. I think when I'm used to it and have experience, catching up of work will stop (NT 4).*

The above responses imply that novice teachers initially need more guidance on how to make use of their time in order to complete all activities and tasks. It is possible that during pre-service training, novice teachers were not taught self-management in terms of how to plan and manage their time and as a result, are not entirely equipped with such skills and in addition, are unaware of the huge work load.

However, one novice teacher used reflection as a tool for self-management:

*What I do on a daily basis is that I have a “think-pair-share” journal. I think to myself okay, what did go well today? I do this when I get home. I ask “what worked today? What didn't work today? ”and then I usually write down how can I go forth with getting better or keeping things the same for the next day so with that, I usually then speak to my colleagues or with my parents, anyone that could help ... the reflection really helps me every day (NT 1).*

The HOD reported on how he/she views novice teachers' experience with regard to the daily demands of their profession:

*The novice teachers underestimate the amount of work that is required. They underestimate the quality of work that needs to be handed in (HOD 1).*

Literature also confirms that when a novice teacher enters the profession, they are dealt a reality shock coupled with teaching and administrative demands. Novice teachers

experience extensive workloads, a lack of support and pressurised environments inside and outside the classroom (Botha & Rens, 2018). Furthermore, novice teachers are expected to balance their huge workloads and effectively manage administrative tasks in the process of self-management (Ahles, 2015). The ability to manage oneself relates to self-efficacy which is described as “the teacher’s belief in his/her own capacity to organise and execute courses of action required to successfully accommodate a specific task in a particular context” (Ahles, 2015:20). Ahles (2015) further believes that induction helps to improve a teacher’s self-efficacy as they navigate through the first year of teaching.

#### ***4.5.1.5 Sub-theme 5: Challenges in identifying learning and language barriers***

In a large classroom populated with learners presenting diverse needs, it is vital to look at their holistic needs, which would include their learning skills, their learning experience and progress in basic attainments as well as their emotional needs. The novice teachers expressed that it was difficult to identify learners that had learning barriers and backlogs. Zwane and Malale (2018) founds that teachers were not trained in inclusive education and as a result, were not taught how to identify learners experiencing barriers to learning.

*... coping with learners that have those learning barriers. Sometimes they come and you don’t really know exactly what is wrong or where the child is or battling with (NT 3)*

*I am not confident with spotting if this child has this learning barrier or this child learning barrier (NT 5).*

The findings of this study suggest that novice teachers are not equipped with skills to be able to identify learners who may have learning barriers or who are challenged academically. It seems that novice teachers are not provided with techniques and skills on how to identify and address such issues during pre-service training. The findings suggest that there is a gap in terms of pre-service training on knowledge and skills that could enable novice teachers to firstly identify and then manage the learning barriers and the needs of academically challenged learners.

Identifying learners who were not meeting the required academic standards was a problem not only for novice teachers but for HODs as well:

*Uhm.... Okay so grade 1 is particularly difficult with regards to retention because for a child, it is the first year of formal schooling’ ..... ‘I think my teachers often struggle with addressing backlogs. Children act out because they are not coping*

*academically and if we are not addressing it, they are going to keep acting out (HOD 4).*

Mkhuma, Maseko and Thale (2014) reported that many novice teachers struggle with identifying learning barriers amongst learners. This is a result of novice teachers not receiving training and being equipped with skills to identify learner barriers as found in their study. However, Du Toit (1997), suggests that observation is the basic skill that teachers should master in order to identify learners with barriers to learning successfully. Mkhuma *et al.* (2014) further stated that novice teachers in their study depended on test scores as a tool to identify learners with learning barriers. Although tests scores from assessments such as Formative Summative Assessments used to test learner progression are readily available, these tests are not sufficient in assisting the novice teacher when they have to identify learning barriers as experienced by learners. Learners may obtain high scores; however, this does not always reveal backlogs or emotional challenges which permits academic achievements. It is my opinion that the ability of a teacher to identify learners with learning barriers is a vital step towards providing valuable support to such learners.

#### ***4.5.1.6 Sub-theme 6: Challenges with parental engagement***

Parental engagement and involvement links parents and teachers in providing comprehensive learner support and academic achievement. One of the first steps of having active parental involvement requires a teacher to establish a relationship of trust and of mutual respect. This is obtained when both parties value the contribution of the other and there is collaboration for the success of the student involved.

In this study, a novice teacher expressed her challenge with dealing with the lack of parental involvement and interest when it came to the learners.

*I'd say often parents are not involved when it comes to working with the child, like one- one-one (NT 3).*

*Parents. Like we must call in the parents for learners that are struggling, but then there are those that don't come, but then it's difficult because I can't send them for extra support (NT 3).*

The findings from the participant indicate that there is a lack of partnership between the parents and the novice teacher in the development of their children. It appears that the novice teachers expect parents to be interested in the education of their children and the absence of parental involvement hinders the novice teacher's ability to make progress with the learner



regarding the learner's development. It seems the lack of parental involvement may have negative effect on the learner's academic development. There are educational and emotional benefits when teachers and parents work collectively together to support a learner, therefore the novice teacher plays a vital role in building and advocating for parental engagement and involvement (Boyd, 2015).

Contrary to this, Maluleke (2014) conducted a study on teacher perceptions of parental involvement in Limpopo schools and findings in the study indicated that as children became older, there was a decline of 50% in parental involvement. This was particularly found amongst parents that were grouped according to economically challenged, less educated and minority families in the school community margin. Maluleke (2014) further identified that parents often did not understand the importance of having daily conversation, supervision, monitoring and how this contributed to higher academic achievements.

#### **4.5.2 Theme 2: The Kinds of Support needed by Novice Teachers**

Another aim of this study was to identify the kinds of support needed by novice teachers. The participants in this study were asked about the type of support novice teachers needed during their first year of teaching. Novice teachers provided insight into the kinds of support that novice teachers needed supported by HODs.

The following sub-themes present detailed discussion of the kind of support needed by novice teachers:

##### ***4.5.2.1 Sub-theme 1: Managing curriculum delivery***

Lesson planning requires a variety of skills ranging from curriculum interpretation and curriculum implementation to developing a year plan, which is only developed through experience. Poor planning and teaching of the lessons could lead to poor assessment tasks.

Novice teachers can achieve successful lesson planning through evaluating previously presented lessons. Novice teachers are required to plan lessons incorporating students' different learning abilities, prescribed lesson content and achieving lesson outcomes (Azhar & Kayani, 2016:211-212). Lesson planning and preparation serves as a vital component of pedagogical reasoning of teachers and therefore, developing a lesson plan, guides a novice teacher through the teaching of their lessons. Through careful lesson preparation, the teacher can motivate students, prepare lessons that meets the needs of unique individual differences and evaluate activities to improve their teaching skills (Ball, Knobloch & Hops, 2007:57).

The author states that effective teaching is the result of a well-planned, organised and presented lessons derived from a well-structured lesson plan.

Instructional activities such as lesson planning assists teachers in linking the curriculum to student learning (Ball *et al.*, 2007).

The novice teachers in this study confirmed that they find it challenging to manage the demands of the curriculum such as lesson planning and they needed guidance and support in preparing for the lessons.

*The help I needed was to understand the prep and what they expect from me, how to teach it. Uhm .... how they teach it, what their routine was during the day (NT 5).*

*The admin with regards to daily planning and uhm the CAPS and uhm your ATP's, your annual teaching plan and how they should all correlate uhm that was definitely a challenge (NT 1).*

For the novice teachers in this study, it seems that they did not receive the necessary training on how to complete their lesson planning taking into account the curriculum and the detailed planning for the year and each term. The pre-service training of novice teachers does not seem to be rigorous in practical planning that needs to be done before teaching. The findings of this study suggest that there is a second level of training needed for the novice teachers to acquire the practical skills required in teaching. These findings suggest a gap in the pre-service training in terms of what is expected in planning for a lesson.

Apart from the preparation of lesson plans, the novice teachers suggested that in managing the curriculum, all admin, planning and structures should be done before the beginning of the teaching period.

*To me it feels like I would have appreciated an outline, not necessarily being bombarded with now but an outline why this is etc in the beginning, like what is coming, why you must do these. Then they teach you how to do it. It was a bit overwhelming. There wasn't like a nice flow of things (NT 1).*

*They need us to explain the structures that are in place. What is expected of them, give them a heads up of what is going to be expected of them. Go into their classes and see what is lacking etc (NT 3).*

The responses of the participants imply that the novice teachers needed to know what is expected of them in the school context prior to the start of the school year, so that they

are better prepared for teaching. The findings further suggest a haphazard and lack of proper planning on curriculum delivery. The experienced teachers may have an unwritten routine of managing the demands of the curriculum delivery which is not known or shared with the novice teachers. The lack of clear expectation may be a cause of frustration for the novice teacher if not well managed.

The HODs reported that they were aware that novice teaching finds it challenging to manage the demands of the curriculum such as lesson planning and they needed guidance and support in preparing for the lessons, as pre-service training had not really prepared them:

*Practical experience. They lack the practical experience and I think the practical experience more than others. If they knew what was coming, it would make things easier. Practical experience leads into how to present a lesson, how to do a creative writing lesson, how to do a reading comprehension lesson (HOD 3).*

Both the HODs and novices in this study identified that support was needed on teaching instruction and lesson presentation. The novice teachers' responses indicate the support that was offered with teaching instruction and lesson presentation during the first weeks of the school term:

*... it's the class visit, and I get the chance to go and view how other teachers teach and there was this other lady that came to observe me, give tips and tell me (NT 3).*

*So, my HOD was in the first two weeks and she was teaching alongside me in the first weeks. She was teaching and I was observing. And then second week, I would teach a little bit, but she was there helping me and guiding me and then the third week I think she would teach first then she would just pop in here and there (NT 5).*

This support was collaborated by HODs:

*I show them how to set their lesson plans. Every step of the way, I call them into my office, and I show them what to do (HOD 1).*

*We go into the classrooms and see what they are doing, if they are really doing or have a need in a specific area such as reading, phonics, how to present it, mathematics, working with groups (HOD 2).*

*We do class visits and then uhm we do observation on what they are doing in the class. We give them pointers and assists them in a specific area (HOD 2).*

The above quotations suggest that HODs made use of lesson observation as a tool to be able to identify areas in which novice teachers could make improvements on. This enabled the HODs to give guidance on how novice teachers could improve their teaching skills. These findings also suggest that HODs used team teaching as a supportive tool and that they also had the opportunity to observe lessons in other classes. This implies that from lesson observation the novices were able to gain more experience and knowledge on teaching.

Another area of support identified in this study is administrative work. The participants talked of guidance that was needed with administrative work and teaching instruction. Their responses are as follows:

*So, for us as new teachers, support and guidance is needed as to how to do admin work. Like I said, I am practical, so you give it to me in terms of instruction. I need an example, Let's see in terms of admin and such, Sometimes, in terms of admin, you get given a paper with instructions. Then you aren't physically guided on how to go about filling in those forms or especially for myself in terms let's say leave (NT 6).*

The quotation presented above indicates that the participant had not received the necessary guidance and support with administrative work that relates to lesson plan which is part of teaching and those practical examples were not given on how to complete such tasks during pre-service training.

Although literature informs of the advantages of lesson planning, many novice teachers struggle with lesson planning, instructional implementation and executing lesson plans. A research study confirmed that lesson planning had various complexities, particularly as novice teachers expressed having a lack of knowledge and skills required to develop purposeful lesson plans. Observing, questioning, associating and communicating theories were challenging, linking teaching activities and developing sequential teaching activities into lessons plans were also challenging (Widiati, Suryati & Hayati2018). Another study conducted on novice teachers' experiences with lesson planning found that novice teachers viewed lesson planning as a mental process and expressed that they needed to relearn or reconceptualise content in order to decide what content was important to be presented in a lesson and others viewed lesson planning as a "just-in-time" planning activity (Ball *et al.*, 2007:60).

In order to address challenges associated with lesson planning, the Head of Department is required to serve as an Instructional Leader, aiding and guidance to novice teachers on such tasks. The roles of HODs are crucial and these expert individuals are responsible for ensuring that the country's educational goals are achieved by providing required manpower resources. The Head of Department's role as an Instructional Leader is to focus on teaching and learning activities in the classroom, teaching content, how content is taught and align instruction with the goals and objectives of the school.

The HOD is responsible for supervision, staff development and curriculum development. Novice teachers need assistance from instructional experts such as the HOD. In a study, HODs confirmed that they only spent 11% of their time on providing instructional guidance such as lesson planning to novice teachers in their departments (Donkor& Asante, 2016). Countries such as the Netherlands have implemented Lesson Study as part of the professional development of novice teachers. Lesson study originates from Japan and focuses on students and student learning. Teachers collaborate on topics, plans and observation takes place and teachers predict and reflect on teaching approaches (Coenders & Verhoef, 2019:218).

#### ***4.5.2.2 Sub-theme 2: Support with managing learners***

Shamina and Mumthas (2018) explain that teachers experience a great degree of expectancy when it comes to managing learners in a manner that enables learners to achieve a maximum benefit from their schooling, particularly as schools are expected to create and provide a safely orderly environment for learners. When novice teachers enter the classroom, they are confronted with the responsibility of having to manage and discipline learners. Viteckova, Prochazka, Sulkova and Melkova, (2017) view discipline as a child's ability to comply with school or social rules, cooperating with a teacher to achieve goals and participate in a positive social environment therefore, early on in their careers, novice teachers must develop procedures and mechanisms to exercise and maintain discipline, considered a component of classroom management, in a classroom. In this study, managing learner discipline was another area with which novice teachers needed support. In this study, discipline included learner behaviour and conduct. Novice teachers confirmed that discipline was a challenge. .

The participants were asked what kinds of support are needed:

*I definitely needed a lot of assistance with uhm the discipline. Support with our big behaviour problems (NT 5).*

*I need help with discipline. I know that is something that every year, it's the same thing (NT 4).*

*I am still struggling with discipline .... I used different strategies for different classes. It depends on who you are trying to discipline (NT 2).*

The findings in this study suggest that learner discipline is a common problem experienced by participants in this study. The findings imply that there could be weakness in the implementation of the school code of conduct as well as discipline strategies to address learner discipline. It is also possible that the culture of the schools involved in this study lacked certain values that support good interpersonal relationships. There is also an issue of expectations, what the novice teachers expects of the learners may not be what the learners display and vice-versa. This misunderstanding may manifest as misbehaviour or ill-discipline.

Shamina and Mumthas (2018) maintain that novice teachers must be prepared and trained to manage student behaviour and be exposed to classroom management content to assist with learner discipline. Shamina and Mumthas (2018) further recommends that a focus must be placed on preparing novice teachers for dealing with learner discipline. Novice teachers should be encouraged to use effective instructional practices to eliminate disruptive learner behaviour. HODs concur with this and acknowledge that novice teachers are challenged and thus need guidance:

*First- and second-year teachers tend to struggle with discipline uhm and so they need someone to show them the route (HOD 4).*

*Uhm another thing in discipline. It is challenging, for them it is difficult to walk in and be confronted with the discipline especially with the Grade 7's. They are difficult and uhm yes. We have assertive discipline training (HOD 3).*

The goal of the novice teacher should be to create a classroom environment where learners feel free, encouraged and understand the value of education, therefore the novice teacher must establish a positive, supportive and caring relationship with his/her students.

#### **4.5.2.3 Sub-theme 3: Support with self-management**

As previously reported, novice teachers struggled with managing their time effectively with all the demands of the profession.

*You need to take it slow, figure out what is important for today and for tomorrow, that's what I did first. If it's something that can only be in for tomorrow or Friday or next week then you leave it and take one thing at a time and not try to take everything at one time (NT 1).*

However, one novice teacher found that establishing a routine with her class, helped maintain her self-management:

*my children know that the week is similar, from Monday to Friday. We have routine so once they are out of that, it is difficult to get them back in (NT 3).*

HODs realise that time-management is a challenge; however, it is vitally important that novice teachers are guided in understanding what is expected of them during the school year:

*I should start with time management. They have a lot of admin. Uhm, they have very little time (HOD 3).*

It seems that the novice teachers struggle with time management and balancing task with available time. It is possible that support is needed in time management skills to enable the novice teachers to use time effectively. The ability to manage one's time effectively is a common challenge experienced by many novice teachers. Research identifies that a teacher's self-efficacy is linked to their abilities to complete tasks as required. Self-efficacy refers to one's belief and abilities to organise and execute courses of action to achieve set goals and objectives. One's self-efficacy is influenced by individual behaviours such as individual expectations or beliefs that one is capable to perform necessary activities. A novice teacher's conviction of their own effectiveness influences how they cope when having to complete tasks and is influenced by their level of motivation and ability to persevere through tasks (Munshi, 2018).

#### **4.5.2.4 Sub-theme 4: Support with professional development**

Literature informs that both nationally and internationally, the education sector has seen an increasing rate of novice teachers leaving the profession thus there has been a great focus on implementing strategies to retain novice teachers (Warmse & Valles, 2018, 2018). When a novice teacher enters the profession, he/she is required to have relevant knowledge and

skills on teaching subjects, their working context and the curriculum. For this to happen, they should be exposed to professional competencies through professional development.

Findings of this study show that novice teachers need to be provided with support through induction and orientation. The novice teachers confirmed that this was important to assimilate into the school community and identified that mentorship was a tool used as part of their professional development, particularly with mentors to whom the novice teachers could relate:

*I have an awesome HOD. She is very flexible, but she is also a very good. I learn a lot from her. She is a good mentor and I have never felt, well I have had pressure from different sides, but I have never felt that she has put me under more pressure* (NT 1).

*We can work with one-on-one or with us as Grade 1 teachers uhm... that would work better* (NT 3).

*She always encourages me to do good and when I did something good, she gives the praises and she doesn't mind if you call her. Whether its weekend, anytime as long as she's available* (NT 4).

*Every Thursday, we had new teacher training where she would teach me, guide me on how things that I do in class or teach in lessons* (NT 5).

Mentoring is another effective tool used to professionally develop novice teachers. Mentoring leads to improved teaching practices and enhances communication and professional competence. Literature identifies that mentoring enables novice teachers to view themselves as part of the larger school community (Bresnahan, 2011). When a novice teacher is mentored, they experience less feelings of isolation and are exposed to resources that contribute to their professional growth, confidence and esteem. Mentoring is a partnership between a novice teacher and an experienced teacher providing guidance, support and counselling. Successful mentorship programmes encompass mentor selection and suitable pairing, mentoring strategies and mentor preparation. The mentee must be supportive, approachable, non-judgemental and skilled in his/her specialisation. Pogodzinski (2013) recommends that effective mentoring must relate to knowledge and skills in relation to experience, practice and teaching that enables to the novice teacher to grow. Novice teachers learn best in a teaching community whereby collaboration takes places with experienced educators and learning through daily experiences (Munshi, 2018).



The HODs played an active mentorship role and identified the various forms of professional development, reflected in the following responses:

*They must get an orientation. I can give you a copy of my orientation page that I do with my teachers and I usually do the orientation. I must tell you that I don't believe in throwing people in the deep end because I can tell you, your first year of teaching is the worst year in your teaching career. You need so much of support because let me tell you people leave this profession because of it. We are losing teachers (HOD 1).*

*Okay the induction part is very important for the novice teachers and for them to learn the rules. So, they need someone that works hand in hand with them. Take them through what is expected of them (HOD 2).*

It appears that the HODs view orientation and induction as a crucial tool used to assimilate the novice teacher into the school community and is part of their professional development. Novice teachers need support and with the aid of orientation and induction, they can make the transition from university to the teaching profession.

Professional development can take place through various developmental activities such as induction and mentoring. The induction process for the novice teacher consists of assimilating the novice teacher into the school community by providing an introductory process and a support system as the novice teacher adapts and assimilates into the school community (Warmse & Valles, 2018). Brody and Hadar (2015) define induction as transitioning from learning to practice and is a socialisation process whereby novice teachers are integrated into the professional community. The authors identify that is an organised and structured programme that provides support to novice teachers and leads to high job satisfaction, commitment, self-efficacy and improved instructional practices (Brody & Hadar, 2015). An induction programme must include well educated and equipped mentors, a curriculum that provides structured support for novice teacher, a focus on instruction and opportunities for collaboration with colleagues and must be an on-going process (Brody & Hadar, 2015).

The HODs and novice suggested that feedback and communication is needed in order to support the novice teacher, as reflected in the following responses:

*They want regular communication; they require regular feedback. I think a lot of them want acknowledgement on what they have done, most people do (HOD 4).*

*Guidance and yes like I said. When I was starting out at a school, I think you would want someone that's open, willing and friendly, approachable. That is important and expected. Also, not just to understand your professional, but also your personal life (HOD 3).*

The findings in this sub-theme suggest that novice teachers need feedback and acknowledgement for their work, an important factor for developing the novice teacher. The novice teacher also needs to be in a supportive environment that is open to their needs and offers opportunity for professional development.

Professional development is viewed from different lenses. Bautista and Ortega believe professional development is an in-service education or mechanism that enhances teachers' knowledge and instructional practices and creates areas for change in teacher beliefs and attitude. Others believe that professional development focuses on teachers learning and transforms new knowledge into practice. It is a complex process that requires the cognitive and emotional involvement of teachers individually and collectively coupled with the willingness to change" (Bautista & Ortega, 2015:243).

Professional development has a great influence and impact on teacher learning. This support provides all teachers with active learning experiences and with opportunities to transform their classroom through acquired knowledge and skills, therefore it is important that novice teachers are exposed to learning that enables them to keep up with the demands of the curriculum (Munshi, 2018). Bresnahan (2011) affirms that all teachers require professional development throughout their careers and that effective professional development programmes have basic principles of adult learning paralleled with themes of learning empowerment.

#### ***4.5.2.5 Sub-theme 5: Support with administration duties***

Botha and Rens (2018) found that novice teachers expressed feelings of being overwhelmed by all their administrative duties that had to be completed daily. They further denote that administrative work is not confined to classroom and teaching, but consists of extracurricular activities, maintaining communication with parents and stakeholders in the school (Botha & Rens, 2018). Novice teachers in this study identified that they were not able to complete departmental forms nor were they able to identify a process that had to be followed when completing such forms:

*I did not know how to do that. I did not know how to do any of the Departments papers*

*or papers that you have to fill in for all the children (NT 5).*

*Let's see. In terms of admin and such, sometimes, in terms of admin, you get given a paper with instructions. Then you aren't physically guided on how to go about filling in those forms or especially for myself in terms let's say leave (NT 3).*

The response of participant indicates that there is lack with the induction process on how to complete the required administrative work. There is a possibility that an assumption exist that novice teachers know what to do in terms of admin work. Such skills are school-based and not part of pre-service training.

In addition, specific skills are required and the demands of written reports are context based. Prior knowledge and skills from pre-service training seems not to have prepared the novice teachers adequately for the expected paperwork. The HODs suggested that novice teachers need support with learner assessments and marking. The findings revealed that novice teachers were not equipped with skills on how to perform such tasks:

*How to mark while you teach in the sense of that you are not sitting and marking because then you are not teaching. That's your afternoon job in your teaching, being able to walk around with a pen and giving corrections while they are making the mistake, then you don't have to go back and redo everything (HOD 4).*

*I think basic things like setting up an exam paper. Like how to fill in a register (HOD 3).*

The findings of the study also suggest that novice lack basic skills such as being able to construct an exam paper effectively. HODs complete pre- and post-moderation to identify problem areas in examination papers.

*Let's say when setting up assessments, the way they should be constructed, what should be, like the types of questions like Blooms Taxonomy. There's a certain way you must add things to uhm your assessments like a picture uhm (NT 1).*

The HODs in this study suggested that novices should master the skill of formative assessment, in this case marking during the lesson to give immediate feedback to the learners. Apart from providing immediate feedback, marking during the lesson is also perceived as effective strategy for the use of teaching time and also managing learner discipline. It also gives the teacher the opportunity to interact with the learners one-on-one. It appears that the skill of setting examinations needs to be developed during in-service training. As novice

teachers do not receive training on how to set up an examination paper, it becomes a challenge for them.

Research conducted by Metin (2018) indicates that novice teachers tend to struggle with preparing and implementing assessments tasks. The author found that novice teachers struggled to determine the different levels students were at academically and how to plan according to the needs of each learner. The teachers were unable to give performance tasks aligned with the requirements of the curriculum since they were not adequately trained on assessing learners and preparing rubrics for assessments (Metin, 2018).

Pogodzinski (2013) asserts that teachers experience great workloads and are expected to complete administration tasks outside the classroom. As a result, the novice teachers take on more roles than that of teaching, which adds additional responsibilities and overwhelms them as they navigate through work demands. The author found that 51% of novice teachers identified that they had no time for planning and preparing for lessons.

#### ***4.5.2.6 Sub-theme 6: Support with communication***

The role of a teacher is multi-faceted and that guidance on how to perform the different roles is crucial. The ability to communicate with learners is important in establishing positive learner-teacher relationships. Communication for a novice teacher is a vital tool that can be used to increase student motivation and establish positive learner-teacher relationships. Han and Tosten (2010) believe that novice teachers are required to model behaviour that is positive, welcoming and sensitive to the needs of learners in the classroom. The authors (Han & Tosten, 2010) suggest that novice teacher experience difficulties with engaging, connecting and communicating effectively with learners in the classroom during their first year of teaching. Communication has a great effect on the classroom environment, therefore the authors state that the teacher must open channels of communication verbally and non-verbally. The teacher who displays positive verbal and non-verbal communication skills, encourages learning, critical thinking among learners and strengthens student and teacher relations.

A novice teacher in this study identified that support that is needed with student- teacher communication:

*I needed a lot of support as to how to speak to children as they say you are an “all in one”, a mother, everything (NT 3).*

Communication is an important element that helps a teacher to grow and develop relationships within the school community (Ashar *et al.*, 2018). This means that developing open communication between teachers and parents is essential for the education of the learner. Literature shows that many novice teachers struggle with effectively communicating within the school community, informing that they are not equipped with the necessary skills and are not exposed to instruction that helps develop their communication skills (Lemmer, 2012) and schools must provide novice teachers with guidance and support on improving and enhancing communication especially with regards to communicating with parents. Humphrey-Taylor (2015) also suggest that novice teachers who have developed communication skills do engage positively with parents and involve parents in the education of their children.

*Doing this and that, parents evening, the formalities you have to follow when you do that* (NT 1).

*Uhhh support I think it's important with difficult parents* (NT 5).

Communication with parents is essential for establishing a parent teacher relationship. In the study, the participants indicated that support was needed with communicating with parents:

*Uhm they need help with how to address parents, therapy meetings, definitely. I think our first- and second-year teachers never meet with parents alone and especially when it comes to the end of the year and you are discussing retention* (HOD 4).

The above quotations suggest that there are certain formalities that are expected in the relationship between the teachers and the parents. Such knowledge and skills may be context specific and the novice teachers may depend on the support given by more experience teachers.

Parental involvement is crucial for the holistic development of learners. Elements of parental involvement consists of the level of commitment of parents support and the level of parental activities and participation. Parental involvement further consists of school-based involvement, home-based involvement and leads to improved teacher-parent relationships and parents having confidence in the teacher (Humphrey-Taylor, 2015). Studies shows that high levels of parental involvement in a child's academics and well- being yields positive levels of learner academic achievement and social-emotional competence (Menon, 2013).

Novice teachers therefore need to be mentored in developing such skills.

#### ***4.5.2.7 Sub-theme 7: External support***

Teachers are valuable resources within a country's educational system. As the novice teacher navigates through the first year of teaching, in-service training is crucial and is an on-going process throughout the educational life of a teacher. In-service training refers to activities that contributes to the professional growth and qualifications of a teacher and consists of workshops, courses, lectures, study circles, discussions, study groups and practical demonstrations. Training is an essential tool used to grow and develop skills for novice teachers and increases diversity at all levels of instruction. Training equips teachers with knowledge and skills to enhance their professional life. Literature suggests that training contributes positively to classroom instruction, teacher attitudes and is linked to school effectiveness (Rahman *et al.*, 2011).

*I was also at a beginner teachers' course where they also talked about classroom management and those type of things (NT 1).*

*Every Thursday, we had new teacher training where she would teach me, guide me on how things that I do in class or teach in lessons right through to the admin things (NT 5)*

The responses of the participants suggest that training is provided both internally and externally. This could be a possibility that due to HODs having limited available time to train and mentor novice teachers, the HODs seek external supportive strategies

*Then we have internal and external training, so I am the facilitating from the SMT side (HOD 3).*

*Yes, I really try to send my novice on courses, give training, the department official comes in and checks everything and provides (HOD 3).*

The HODs do encourage and motivate their novice teachers to attend however, this is not confirmed. It is likely that the novice teachers in this study need to be exposed to secondary sources of professional development.

Nkambule (2018) express that all teachers in South Africa are required to participate in training workshops with specialised office-based educators from districts and circuit officers, however contrary to this, research informs that training and workshops do not deliver to the expectations of teachers as they tend to follow a 'one size fits all; approach. Facilitators are

not always well-informed on curriculum matters and district officers lacked first-hand experience to support educators in dealing with post-1994 transformation and challenges.

### **4.5.3 Theme 3: Strategies used to support and assist Novice Teachers**

In this study, the HODs and novice teachers identified what kinds of strategies were used to provide support to novice teachers. The following sub-theme presents detailed discussions of the strategies that were used:

#### ***4.5.3.1 Sub-theme 1: Induction and Mentoring***

Induction and mentoring are valuable tools used to assist novice teachers when they enter the professional world of work and may continue to be a part of their careers as they develop their professional expertise and identities. Induction programmes are specifically designed to help novice teachers adjust to the school culture and engage in active mentoring with experienced education specialists (Eisenschmidt & Oder, 2018). The participants reported that HODs used induction and mentoring as a tool to provide support:

*We had induction during the first week of school with the School Management Team which our HODs were also are part of it. They would lay out what were their expectations, what we should and should not do. They sat with us, but they couldn't go through everything. That is where the HOD came in to physically assist us. We could ask and get assistance from them (NT 3).*

*During the induction, they basically told us about the policy of the school. They showed us the school, they told us what to expect from the learners and the kinds of learners that would be in our classes and what kinds of parents we would deal with'.....So basically, during those one-on-one support sessions .....They would basically tell you the things that you need to develop as a teacher (NT 2).*

Gordan (2019:26) asserts that the goal of induction is to provide novice teachers with on-going assistance, develop and enhance novice teacher effectiveness, assist, and support and help meet the needs of novice teachers until they have established themselves professionally. Sikma (2019) believes that induction provides novice teachers with additional training and socialisation into the school community. Induction can be formal and informal. Studies (Sikma, 2019) confirms that informal induction takes place with novice teachers interacting regularly with other teachers, establishing relationships. This enables individual socialisation to take place and provides opportunities for novice teachers to gain valuable advice and guidance through daily conversation with other

teachers (Sikma, 2019).

Curry, Webb and Lathram (2010) suggests induction is beneficial if there is a mentor from the same subject specialisation of that of the novice teachers, common planning with other teachers takes place and novice teachers are part of an external network of teachers which can provide further support and assistance. Findings from a study conducted by Curry *et al.*, (2010), found that novice teachers experienced a sense of belonging when they felt part of the school community and culture which led to the novice teachers performing well during their first year of teaching. For induction to be effective for novice teachers, school administrators must support the goals of the induction programmes and foster active dialogue between provided mentors and novice teachers. Programmes that are well planned, structured and integrate diverse elements yield positive results and meet the needs of novice teachers (Curry *et al.*, 2010).

In addition to an induction programme, HODs were active in providing mentorship, aware that this is an important supportive tool used to provide support for the novice teachers. The responses of the participants indicate that the HODs were aware of some of the needs of the novice teachers and have intervention plans available to develop the newly appointed teachers.

*Okay what I like to do is to coach them and then mentoring them is also very important' (HOD 4).*

*Like I said, one-one mentoring. We have the mentorship group. I make it a point to talk to my teachers. I have a moderation tool which I take and discuss with them in terms of deadlines. I give assessment planning for the whole term (HOD 1).*

The mentoring sessions provided the novice teachers with opportunities to identify areas which can facilitate growth and improvements. Mentoring is part of a professional development strategy and is defined as a process which enables and encourages continuous learning, growth and creativity. Mentoring is viewed as the transferring of knowledge and is a human relation activity which aims to empower an individual with knowledge, skills and develop professional competence (Gordan, 2019). Mentoring is an approach implemented to reduce challenges, improving teaching and provide needed support. It consists of aiding teachers with access to resources such as working with experienced teachers and opportunities for effective collaboration. (Roehrig, Bohn, Turner & Pressly, 2008). Mentoring programmes are vital supportive tools for novice teachers, however



these programmes must be carefully planned and developed taking into consideration the support structure that will grow and develop a novice teacher. Mentoring should further provide novice teachers with aids that orientates novice teachers into the school community and provide strategies that will assist novice teachers when they are faced with challenges in the classroom. There are various benefits associated with mentoring novice teachers, such as it improves the professional growth and development of novice teachers, it allows for recommended practices to be shared amongst a network, supporting novice teachers, skills and expertise are developed. According to research findings, novice teachers who receive mentoring, teach better and their learners yield better educational outcomes.

For effective mentoring to take place, mentoring programmes need to have experienced and knowledgeable mentors and facilitators. The role of a mentor is diverse and multi-faceted. Mentors are helpers, advocates for mentees and role models. Mentors are experienced teachers who can develop and guide novice teachers as they journey towards achieving set goals and objectives. Mentors are proactive and play an active role in professional development activities and educate themselves on effective mentoring practices. Mentors must therefore exhibit compassion, honesty, communicate well and provide proactive feedback (Gordan, 2019).

#### ***4.5.3.2 Sub-theme 2: Observation and feedback***

Communication is a dynamic process that may have positive and negative outcomes (Gordan, 2019). As the novice teacher navigates through the first year of teaching, guidance and feedback that is communicated to the teacher is crucial for their growth and development. Feedback is an important element of assessing. Researchers consider feedback as information provided by an agent on aspects of performance, understanding, perspective and thought on how a task has been delivered or how an activity has been completed (Brown, Harris and Harnett, 2012). In this study, a novice teacher confirmed that discussion and feedback was a tool used by the HOD to assist the novice teacher:

*... she has been in my class twice so what she usually does is that she fits in a lesson and then she will give me feedback on how she saw worked and what she saw that didn't work (NT1).*

The response of the novice teacher confirms that communication is vital between the HOD and the novice teacher. It seems that having active communication between the HOD and novice teacher assist the novice teacher with day-to-day activities. The response of the participant implies that an HOD that can communicate well with a novice teacher, assists with their development and grow.

In this study, I suggest that the validity of feedback is dependent on interpersonal relationships and psychological issues related to self-disclosure, trust and the role of feedback must be continuous, serve to enhance learning, growth and encourage persistence.

*We do class visits and then we do observation on what they are doing in the class. We giving them pointers and assist them in a specific area, if we see there is a need in how they present ... (HOD 2).*

*And then I have checklists, I check their files often, documentation needs to be in a certain time, I give them feedback (HOD 3).*

McFadzien (2015) is of the opinion that effective feedback is descriptive, time appropriate, suited to meet the needs of an individual and provides strategies to improve task delivery. Feedback is thus crucial to teaching and learning and identifies areas for improvement and has strategies to achieve set goals. Norlin (2014) explains that feedback can be a success if there are clear set goals to deliver feedback. Ahea, Ahea. & Rahman (2016) indicating that feedback is a crucial approach to enhance novice teacher learning. To increase effectiveness, feedback must consist of active dialogue rather than information transmission. This allows for discussion to take place between a HOD and a novice teacher, improving novice teacher experiences. Norlin (2014) identifies four task levels of feedback such as: feedback can be used for improvements in task delivery, it is used to assist a learning process, and feedback can be personal (self-evaluation aligned) and persona feedback related to a task such as general praise.

#### ***4.5.3.3 Sub-theme 3: Collegial support***

Novice teachers engage in professional relationships with colleagues in the school community both informally and professionally. Through this process, novice teachers become part of subgroups in the school and work together with colleagues, receiving support, resources and guidance on instruction and professional practices. Literature identifies that each novice teacher will connect uniquely with a support network and interact regularly, yielding positive educational results (Pogodzinski, 2013). Collegial support provides novice

teachers with additional support systems and assimilates novice teachers into a professional learning community, promoting professional development and improves teaching instruction. Through collegial exchange, novice teachers work together with experienced teachers, developing and growing their professional skills. Collegial support contributes to personal, social, emotional growth and supports socio-cultural, individual and institutional growth (Brody & Hagar, 2015).

The novice teachers in this study confirmed that collegial support was a strategy HODs used to provide additional support. Their responses reflected:

*When we have our meetings, we sit together as a phase. So, they as a collective sit together and assist us because one HOD may not see something in that way, but then the other can come and assist us with that so, they usually have an agenda which we follow for our meetings. They also assist us in terms of that week or month, like they provide a planner. There is a lot of workshops and opportunities that we get (NT 4).*

*Not only do I speak to my HOD. I speak to other HODs at school and they give me advice ... I'm talking about a community in the school (NT 1).*

It is likely that due to the huge work demands experienced by HODs, they make use of collective and collegial support to assist and support novice teachers. This implies that teachers and HODs have different skills and knowledge which novice teachers can benefit from and develop during their first year of teaching. HODs using various kinds of collegial support as it serves as a tool to further provide support to novice teachers.

*I think schools should make it mandatory that a first -year teacher should be with a senior teacher for a month before they start teaching. It should be a departmental thing (HOD 1).*

*We have a buddy for each teacher in the team (NT 4).*

Collegial support leads to high levels of school improvement and provides novice teachers with opportunities to collaborate with other colleagues in the school community, leading to professional growth and development. By providing the novice teacher with collegial support, the novice teacher and experienced teachers are brought together to reinforce competence and confident of the novice teacher. The novice teacher is supported as he/she copes with uncertainties and complexities of teaching (Shah, 2012). The author believes that

by providing the novice teacher with collegial support, a collegial community is created that operates on high levels of motivation, innovation and enthusiasm.

#### **4.5.3.4 Sub-theme 4: Professional development training**

The participants in this study confirmed that professional training was a strategy used to provide support to the novice teachers: The participants responses stated:

*We have weekly meetings as well so we will then discuss the weeks prep, what are we going to do, what is expected. She also gives each term a different approach for assessments so, we are getting additional weekly training (NT 5).*

It appears that the practical training of novice teachers takes place in-service because some novice teachers still struggle with classroom management and administration work which are hands-on and cannot be done theoretically outside the school context. The guidance and guidelines needed by the novice teachers is expected to be a well- structured system in the schools. The oversight of such a demand for developing novice teachers is the added load on the responsibilities of the HODs. This is evident in the findings that show that novice teachers need weekly and yearly training to progress in their first year of teaching.

Novice teachers should acquire and develop different skills and techniques that they can apply to their teaching instruction. The different approaches and skills development can be enriching for the newly appointed teacher.

*We have internal and external training ... externally like at NAPTOSA or any type of training they have and then I organise for the teachers to go .... a remedial reading training programme that NAPTOSA .... first additional language teachers support ... discipline training ... DOE training ... assertive discipline training. I have training with all my teachers after school (HOD 3).*

*We are in partnership with the University of Pretoria which presents workshops. So, then they will also attend (HOD 2).*

*We have a lot of training on classroom management, policy, so that they can refer to that. We do training on support files. We will sit with the novice teacher and show her where she has gone wrong and help her with the paperwork (HOD 4).*

High quality professional development focuses on subject matter aligned with a teacher's specialisation. It further provides novice teachers with active learning opportunities and opportunities for engagement, exploration, reflection and discussion (Bautista & Ortega-Ruiz, 2015).

#### **4.5.3.5 Sub-theme 5: Identifying learning and language barriers**

This sub-theme speaks to the ability of the novice teacher being able to identify learning and language barriers. A novice teacher in this study stated that she required knowledge from a senior teacher on how to identify learning and language barriers. The responses are as follows:

*And also coping with learners that have those learning barriers Sometimes they come, and you don't really know exactly what is wrong or what the child is or battling with. In terms of that, it is always nice to get extra support from the HOD because I know she's been teaching for many years, so those things are the major things that I still need support with (NT 3)*

*I will just always say, the more training we have on identifying barriers, the better. The more information I get or reading material, she gives me or assistance, the more comfortable I get when seeing a child struggling with something, then I can say okay I need this is that (NT 5.)*

From the responses of the participants, it seems that novice teachers need skills and knowledge to be able to identify learners who experience learning and language barriers. The finding suggests that there may be a gap in the training given to novice teachers to help with identifying learners who experiences learning barriers.

## **4.6 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER**

In this chapter, the research findings emerging from the data were presented through the representation of themes and sub-themes. Quotations used were those of the participants, recorded verbatim and supported with the literature. The challenges experienced by novice teachers were with managing curriculum delivery, managing learner discipline, managing time as well as self-management. As novice teachers had not had specific pre-service training, they found difficulty in identifying learning and language barriers. Finally, challenges with communication and parental engagement were identified. Novice teachers reported that they needed support in all these areas and as such certain strategies were in place to assist and support them in their first year of teaching. These strategies included an induction programme, on-going mentoring, observation and feedback, collegial support and continuous professional development. In the next chapter, the summary of the findings is given, and conclusions are drawn and recommendations offered.

## **CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

This research aimed at investigating novice teacher's experiences of HOD support during their first year of teaching. The study also examined the challenges experienced as well as the support and strategies offered. As a reminder for the reader, the research questions are repeated as a point of reference. The main research question was:

*How do novice teachers experience support provided by Heads of Department?*

With the following sub-questions:

- What are the challenges that novice teachers face in their first year of teaching?
- What kind of support do novice teachers expect from the HODs?
- What strategies do HODs use to support and assist novice teachers?

This chapter begins with a brief reflection of my research journey followed by summary of the results obtained from the findings of the research provided in the previous chapter. In this chapter, I also bring the study to a conclusion and offer recommendations from the findings of the study. The limitations and delimitations of this study are also discussed.

### **5.2 REFLECTIONS OF THE RESEARCH JOURNEY**

My research journey began in January 2018. The first phase of my research consisted of identifying a preliminary research topic which was worthy of being studied and could answer the research questions that were developed. Literature both nationally and internationally was reviewed and analysed. This led to developing the main research question and sub-research questions. The research proposal was written over a period of 8 months and in October 2020, I presented my research proposal to my Head Department and other academics in the format of a defence which served as an examination. In January 2019, I applied for Ethical Clearance from the University of Pretoria's Ethics Committee. I received Ethics Clearance in March 2019 and then requested permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to access participants in public schools. The criterion for selection was novice teachers and Heads of Departments in primary schools. This was a systematic process; however, I was granted permission from the Department in July 2019 with a list of where the novice teachers had been placed in the Tshwane South and North school district. The next step was to gain permission from the principals of these schools to work with their novice teachers and HODs.

I was only able to enter the schools during the third term, which temporarily halted my research process. Thankfully, I received immediate permission from the principals, identified participants and began with the interviews. I concluded my interviews over a period of a month and a half. The next process was to analyse the data and this took place over a period of two months. Unfortunately, I was not able to submit my dissertation by the required date and requested for an extension from my Head of Department. I was granted this and successfully be submitting my dissertation in March 2020.

### **5.3 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

The following sections presents the three main findings that emerged in the study to answer the research questions listed above.

#### **5.3.1 The Challenges Experienced by Novice Teachers**

The findings of this study show that novice teachers encounter a variety of challenges. Challenges identified by novice teachers and HODs showed that novice teachers were not equipped with some of the skills which could assist them with identifying learning barriers among learners, suggesting that there is a gap in pre-service training. Learner discipline was a common challenge experienced by all novice teachers in the current study. Various factors influenced learner conduct in this study. Time management was identified as another challenge for the novices and the HODs. The novice teachers identified that they had not been taught how to manage their time effectively while the HoDs lacked time to mentor the novice teachers in managing the demands of the profession.

Another factor that influenced learner conduct was the high pupil-teacher ratio resulting in overcrowded classrooms in which the novice teacher is expected to teach, yet also manage those learners. This resulted in novice teachers not being able to meet each learner's individual learning needs. Parental engagement and involvement were other challenges experienced by novice teachers which affected learner academic achievement. This suggests that there is a poor partnership between novice teachers, parents and the school community. Coupled with this, novice teachers struggled with delivery the prescribed curriculum and instruction. They needed guidance on how to complete tasks, preparing and planning for lessons. Managing workloads, demands and expectations was stressful for novice teachers in this study. They lacked the ability to plan accordingly and manage their time effectively. Prioritising activities was a great challenge for the novice teachers in this study.

### **5.3.2 The Kinds of Support needed by Novice Teachers**

Findings of this theme inform that pre-service training does not sufficiently provide guidance and skills needed by novice teachers to complete tasks. There is a gap in content and skills taught during training and what novice teachers are expected to do. This suggests that second level training in form of in-service training is needed by novice teachers to complete tasks. Novice teachers struggled to set up lesson plans reflecting a lack of guidance on how to do so. Internal and collegial support provided to novice teachers were helpful supportive aids. Effective communication was essential in maintaining student-teacher and parent-teacher relationships. Induction and orientation yielded positive results with the novice teachers in this study.

It seems that there may be a barrier in content and skills taught during training and that which novice teachers are expected to do. The novice teachers struggled with lesson planning and reported that they needed guidance on how to do so in order to deliver a well-structured lesson. The novice teachers in this study viewed internal and collegial support provided as a positive supportive tool which assisted them during their first few months of teaching. Guidance on how to complete administrative tasks was limited which left the novice teachers to discover how to complete tasks on their own.

Effective communication was essential in maintaining student-teacher and parent-teacher relationships. The novice teachers had an expectancy that parents of their learners would be more involved in their children's academics; however, this was not experienced. Induction and orientation yielded positive results with the novice teachers in this study as it assisted them as they assimilated into the school community. Although this was viewed as a supportive measure, the novice teachers did not have continual and comprehensive feedback from HODs which may have assisted them as they developed their skills and obtained new knowledge. Professional development with the partnership with external sources of support also yielded positive results with the novice teachers as this enabled them to receive additional training from education specialists.

### **5.3.3 Strategies used to support and assist Novice Teachers**

This study explored the strategies used to support novice teachers. The findings showed that induction and mentoring were tools often used to provide support and assist novice teachers. The HODs were active in providing and facilitating the mentoring of the novice teachers as they may have been aware of the needs of the novice teachers. In this study, it was found that the professional development training of the novice teachers took place internally within the



school, which placed extra demands on the HODs due to the immense workload of the HODs. The novice teachers in this study needed continuous training.

The HODs were expected to spend a considerable amount of time developing novice teachers. Although the novice teachers were exposed to a varied approach to assessments at times it may have been overwhelming for them to grasp the approaches which added more stress. The novice teachers also received additional support from their colleagues which enabled them to build support networks and relationships and gain additional knowledge and skills. The participants in this study confirmed that they had good communication between their HODs, and this was very important for novice teachers and assisted their growth. The novice teachers also needed guidance on identifying learners with learning barriers which suggest that there may have been a gap in preservice training.

#### **5.4 LIMITATIONS AND DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

Limitations of a study refers to “potential weaknesses or factors that are beyond a researcher’s control” (Simon, 2011:2). The process of gaining permission from the Department of Education was time consuming because the researcher had to approach the selected schools and request permission to conduct the research study. The process of obtaining permission from the schools and the availability of the participants delayed the commencement of the data collection process. Transcribing the interviews and the process of data-analysis was a lengthy process. Due to time constraints, the researcher was not able to interview more participants which could have contributed valuable sources of data to the study. The original sample consisted of six schools and between 12-20 participants. Although the number of the participants involved decreased, the responses of the interviewed participants in this study contained data which answered the research question.

The data collection method was semi-structured interviews and I intended to use document analysis, however some participants did not have supporting documents and manuals available for me to view whilst other participants had supporting documents and manual, but this was not extensive and did not provide me with necessary data that would enhance my findings. I did not do observations of the support that the HoD gave to the novice teachers, I asked the participants to provide examples on how the HODs would give them support and guidance.

Delimitations are characteristics that limit the scope and define the boundaries of your study which is set by the researcher (Simon, 2011). This study involved primary school teachers who were in their first year of teaching and their Heads of Department. The selected schools

are in the Tshwane South School District. Teachers who had been teaching for more than a year, were not included in this study. Secondary school teachers were also excluded in this study. There is a possibility of other teachers supporting novice teachers in their schools, but such teachers were not interviewed. Literature on teachers who taught for more than one year was not reviewed nor literature on expert teachers as literature focused on novice teachers with a teaching experience of one year or less and the roles of Heads of Department.

## **5.5 CONCLUSIONS**

The aim of this study was to identify how novice teachers receive support from their Heads of Departments. By interviewing the participants, the researcher gained an understanding on the various challenges that both novice teachers and HODs face daily, the kinds of support that novice teachers expected from their HODs and the kinds of strategies HODs used to support novice teachers. The findings of the novice teachers and HODs were similar indicating that experiences were similar and challenges were common for both. Novice teachers face various challenges as they navigate through the first year of teaching. Although HODs are expected to support and mentor novice teachers, they are not always able to assist them as needed due high level of professional demands and pressures. The findings further suggest that the support given to novice teachers is valuable and novice teachers depend greatly on their HODs to guide them through their first year of teaching.

## **5.6 RECOMMENDATIONS**

The researcher recommends that:

- Tertiary Institutions adapt their curricula to holistically train and equip student teachers with skills and knowledge which they can use when they enter the professional world of work. Institutions facilitating teacher training must relook and reconstruct their curricula to meet the needs of novice teachers when they enter the professional world of work.
- School based in-service training should focus on consistently and rigorously training novice teachers on learning barriers which learners experience which will enable them to identify learners who need special academic support.
- Novice teachers need regular and consistent training on learner discipline through mentoring and coaching. The ability of a novice teacher to manage learner discipline is a skill which can be developed overtime with the correct training and guidance from learner discipline specialists.

- Heads of Department can work together with novice teachers to construct a time management schedule that enables a novice teacher to work accordingly with set deadlines, plan and maintain a healthy working balance.
- Heads of Department should provide novice teachers with internal and external resources which can enhance their knowledge on preparing lessons and delivering the prescribed curriculum.
- School Management Team should mentor novice teachers about establishing and t strengthening parent-teacher communication and relationships as measure to support learner achievement.
- Heads of departments should continuously supervise and provide constructive feedback to novice teachers as this can build their confidence and assist with their professional development.

## **5.7 A FINAL WORD**

Like many novice teachers have concluded, the first months of teaching are said to be the most challenging period in a teacher's career. Having been in the position of a novice teacher, I have realised that the amount of support received as early as day one or the lack of support thereof is vital for the successful development of one's teaching career. Undertaking this research study, has in many ways paved the way for my novice year and the interactions with the various participants has enabled me to receive valuable guidance which has assisted me as I am navigating through this period in my career. Unlike many other novice teachers, I have been particularly blessed to work in a school environment that has been mentoring me over the last two years as I worked firstly as an assistant teacher at the school whilst completing my Master's degree and now as a full-time teacher. Stepping into my new role has enabled me to thrive and having been inducted into my new role has certainly eased a lot of anxieties and stresses.

The current reality is that not many novice teachers receive support and guidance during their first year of teaching. Induction and professional development are lacking and the professional needs of novice teachers are not being met. Although literature does examine and identify the needs of novice teachers, schools, researchers and educational specialists ought to develop induction, mentoring and professional development programmes which are suited to develop each individual, guide them through professional competencies, expectancies and prepare them to teach the diverse range learners in their care and thus ensure effective teaching and learning.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix A: Letter to the Gauteng Department of Education



Department of Education Management and Policy Studies  
Faculty of Education  
University of Pretoria  
Pretoria 0002

District Director Office  
Gumani Makatuni  
7<sup>th</sup> Floor, 6 Hollard Building  
Main & Simmonds Street  
Johannesburg

Dear District Director

Letter of request for allocation of novice teachers in Tshwane North and South School  
Districts.

Dear District Director

My Name is Avital Nemaston and I am currently a master's student in the Faculty of Education Management, Law and Policy at the University of Pretoria. I have been granted ethical clearance from the University and my reference is EM 19/02/01.

My qualitative research study is on "Novice teachers experiences of Head of Department support in primary schools". The main participants in my study focuses on novice teachers who are defined as newly qualified teachers that have been in the profession for less than one year and Heads of Departments of the novice teachers. The study aims to examine and identify how do novice teachers experience support received from their Heads of Departments in their professional working relationship and critically examine the challenges that novice teachers face during their first year of teaching and examine the active role that Heads of Departments play in supporting such teachers.

Participation in this study is done on a voluntary basis. If permission is granted, data will



be collected through audio taped interviews which will be transcribed strictly for analytic purposes. Interview sessions will be conducted for one hour and will only take place after school hours at school or a venue that is convenient for the participant. Information obtained from interviews will be used strictly for academic purposes, individual identification will be protected, data will only be accessed by myself and supervisor and will be regarded as highly confidential and anonymous. All information collected will be safely stored.

Due to the nature of this study, I would like to request for your assistance to help me identify where novice teachers in Tshwane North and South primary schools have been allocated. By providing this information, I will be able to contact principals, providing them with invitation and consent letters for the participants identified.

Thank you in advance for providing the necessary information. It is highly appreciated.

Please feel free to contact should you need more details.

Cell: 0823 313 4709

Email: [avital.nemaston@gmail.com](mailto:avital.nemaston@gmail.com)

Yours Sincerely

Avital Nemaston

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Avital Nemaston', written in a cursive style.

Appendix B: Approval from the Gauteng Department of Education



**GAUTENG PROVINCE**  
 Department: Education  
 REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

8/4/4/1/2

**GDE RESEARCH APPROVAL LETTER**

Date:	03 June 2019
Validity of Research Approval:	04 February 2019 – 30 September 2019 2019/56
Name of Researcher:	Nemaston A.R
Address of Researcher:	68 Forest Weaver Stellanie Street Willow Park manor Pretoria, 0184
Telephone Number:	082 313 4709
Email address:	avital.nemaston@gmail.com
Research Topic:	Novice teachers experiences of head of Department support in primary schools.
Type of qualification	Masters
Number and type of schools:	Five to Six Primary Schools
District/s/HO	Tshwane North and Tshwane South

**Re: Approval In Respect of Request to Conduct Research**

This letter serves to indicate that approval is hereby granted to the above-mentioned researcher to proceed with research in respect of the study indicated above. The onus rests with the researcher to negotiate appropriate and relevant time schedules with the school/s and/or offices involved to conduct the research. A separate copy of this letter must be presented to both the School (both Principal and SGB) and the District/Head Office Senior Manager confirming that permission has been granted for the research to be conducted.

The following conditions apply to GDE research. The researcher may proceed with the above study subject to the conditions listed below being met. Approval may be withdrawn should any of the conditions listed below be flouted:

*[Handwritten signature and date: 03/06/2019]*

*Making education a societal priority*

**Office of the Director: Education Research and Knowledge Management**  
 7<sup>th</sup> Floor, 17 Simmonds Street, Johannesburg, 2001  
 Tel: (011) 355 0488  
 Email: Faith.Tshabalala@gauteng.gov.za  
 Website: www.education.gpg.gov.za

above study subject to the conditions listed below being met. Approval may be withdrawn should any of the conditions listed below be flouted:

1. The District/Head Office Senior Manager/s concerned must be presented with a copy of this letter that would indicate that the said researcher/s has/have been granted permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct the research study
2. The District/Head Office Senior Manager/s must be approached separately, and in writing, for permission to involve District/Head Office Officials in the project.
3. A copy of this letter must be forwarded to the school principal and the chairperson of the School Governing Body (SGB) that would indicate that the researcher/s have been granted permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct the research study.
4. A letter / document that outline the purpose of the research and the anticipated outcomes of such research must be made available to the principals, SGBs and District/Head Office Senior Managers of the schools and districts/offices concerned, respectively.
5. The Researcher will make every effort obtain the goodwill and co-operation of all the GDE officials, principals, and chairpersons of the SGBs, teachers and learners involved. Persons who offer their co-operation will not receive additional remuneration from the Department while those that opt not to participate will not be penalised in any way.
6. Research may only be conducted after school hours so that the normal school programme is not interrupted. The Principal (if at a school) and/or Director (if at a district/head office) must be consulted about an appropriate time when the researcher/s may carry out their research at the sites that they manage.
7. Research may only commence from the second week of February and must be concluded before the beginning of the last quarter of the academic year. If incomplete, an amended Research Approval letter may be requested to conduct research in the following year.
8. Items 6 and 7 will not apply to any research effort being undertaken on behalf of the GDE. Such research will have been commissioned and be paid for by the Gauteng Department of Education.
9. It is the researcher's responsibility to obtain written parental consent of all learners that are expected to participate in the study.
10. The researcher is responsible for supplying and utilising his/her own research resources, such as stationery, photocopies, transport, faxes and telephones and should not depend on the goodwill of the institutions and/or the offices visited for supplying such resources.
11. The names of the GDE officials, schools, principals, parents, teachers and learners that participate in the study may not appear in the research report without the written consent of each of these individuals and/or organisations.
12. On completion of the study the researcher/s must supply the Director: Knowledge Management & Research with one Hard Cover bound and an electronic copy of the research.
13. The researcher may be expected to provide short presentations on the purpose, findings and recommendations of his/her research to both GDE officials and the schools concerned.
14. Should the researcher have been involved with research at a school and/or a district/head office level, the Director concerned must also be supplied with a brief summary of the purpose, findings and recommendations of the research study.

The Gauteng Department of Education wishes you well in this important undertaking and looks forward to examining the findings of your research study.

Kind regards



Mr Gumani Mukatuni  
Acting Director: Education Research and Knowledge Management

DATE: 03/06/2019

2

Making education a societal priority

**Office of the Director: Education Research and Knowledge Management**

7<sup>th</sup> Floor, 17 Simmonds Street, Johannesburg, 2001

Tel: (011) 355 0488

Email: Faith.Tshabalala@gauteng.gov.za

Website: www.education.gpg.gov.za

Scanned with CamScanner

## Appendix C: Letter to the Principal Requesting Permission



Department of Education Management & Policy Studies  
Faculty of Education  
University of  
Pretoria 0002

Dear Principal

I am currently enrolled for my MEd. in Education, Management, Law and Policy studies (2019) in the Faculty of Education at the University of Pretoria. As per requirement of the tertiary institution in order to obtain this degree, as a student I have to conduct a research study and develop a written thesis on the study of interest. My study is aimed at conducting a qualitative research study on novice teachers experiences of Head of Department support in primary schools under the supervision of Dr T.A. Ogina. The study has been approved by the Ethics Committee of the University of Pretoria under the reference: **EM 19/02/01**

The study aims to examine and identify how do novice teachers experience support received from their Heads of Departments in their professional working relationship and critically examine the challenges that novice teachers face during their first year of teaching and the active duty that Heads of Departments have in supporting such teachers.

The purpose of this letter is to request formal permission to be granted to conduct this study in your school, working along with selected novice teachers and their Heads of Departments in the school. Each participant will receive a letter to inform them about the research that will be conducted, and employee participation is voluntary. If permission is granted, data will be collected through audio taped interviews which will be transcribed strictly for analytic purposes. Interview sessions will be conducted for one hour and will only take place after school hours at school or a venue that is convenient for the participants. I have attached a copy of the interview schedules for your information. Information obtained from

interviews will be used strictly for academic purposes and will be accessed by myself and supervisor and will be regarded as anonymous.

Permission granted to conduct this study in your school is voluntary and neither the school nor your identity will be identifiable in any report. Participants will have the right to withdraw at any time during the research process and no obligations will be made. If you have any questions regarding this study, please do not hesitate to make contact either with me or my supervisor as per details provided.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information

Kind regards

Name of student: Ms Avital Nemaston

Cell: 0823134709

e-mail: [avital.nemaston@gmail.com](mailto:avital.nemaston@gmail.com)

Signature of student:

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Supervisor: Dr Teresa Ogina

Department of Education

Management & Policy Studies.

Groenkloof Campus, University of

Pretoria [Tel: 012- 4202445](tel:012-4202445)

e-mail: [Teresa.ogina@up.ac.za](mailto:Teresa.ogina@up.ac.za)

Signature of Supervisor:

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## Appendix D: Letter to the Participants Requesting Permission



Department of Education Management & Policy Studies

Faculty of Education

University of

Pretoria 0002

Dear Participant

I am currently enrolled for my MEd. in Education, Management, Law and Policy studies (2019) in the Faculty of Education at the University of Pretoria. As per requirement of the tertiary institution in order to obtain this degree, as a student I have to conduct a research study and develop a written thesis on the study of interest. My study is aimed at conducting a qualitative research study on novice teachers experiences of Head of Department support in primary schools under the supervision of Dr T.A. Ogina. The study has been approved by the Ethics Committee of the University of Pretoria under the reference: **EM 19/02/01**

The study aims to examine and identify how do novice teachers experience support received from their Heads of Departments in their professional working relationship and critically examine the challenges that novice teachers face during their first year of teaching and the active duty that Heads of Departments have in supporting such teachers.

I would like to request that you participate in my study. If you agree to participate, you will be interviewed on this topic. Participation in this study is done on a voluntary basis. If permission is granted, data will be collected through audio taped interviews which will be transcribed strictly for analytic purposes. Interview sessions will be conducted for one hour and will only take place after school hours at school or a venue that is convenient for the participant. I have attached a copy of the interview schedules for your information. Information obtained from interviews will be used strictly for academic purposes, individual identification will be protected, and data will be accessed by myself and supervisor and will be regarded as highly confidential and anonymous. All information collected will be safely stored.

Permission granted to conduct this study in you school is voluntary and neither the school nor your identity will identifiable in any report. Participants will have the right to withdraw

at any time during the research process and no obligations will be made. If you have any questions regarding this study, please do not hesitate to make contact either with me or my supervisor as per details provided.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information

Kind regards

Name of student: Ms Avital Nemaston

Cell: 0823134709

e-mail: [avital.nemaston@gmail.com](mailto:avital.nemaston@gmail.com)

Signature of student:

---

Supervisor: Dr Teresa Ogina

Department of Education

Management & Policy Studies.

Groenkloof Campus, University of

Pretoria [Tel: 012- 4202445](tel:012-4202445)

e-mail: [Teresa.ogina@up.ac.za](mailto:Teresa.ogina@up.ac.za)

Signature of Supervisor:

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## Appendix E: Informed Consent from Principal

### Consent Form

I, \_\_\_\_\_, the Principal of \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ agree/ do not agree to allow Ms Nemaston to conduct a research study in the school.  
The topic of research being: novice teachers' experiences of Head of Department support in  
primary schools.

I confirm that I have been informed about the nature of the research study with the  
researcher (name of student) \_\_\_\_\_ under  
the supervision of Prof./Dr/Mr/Mrs \_\_\_\_\_ in the  
Department of Education Management and Policy Studies at the University of Pretoria.

I understand that employees of the school, specifically novice teachers and their Heads of  
Departments will be interviewed on the topic approximately for one hour and at time that  
is convenient for the participants, Interviews will only take place after school hours and  
refrain from affecting the school operations. All interviews conducted will be audio taped. I  
also grant Ms Nemaston access to induction manuals, teacher support guidelines, mentor  
programmes, development support group plans, professional growth plans and other  
relevant documentation that will assist the researcher to generate rich data.

I understand that the researcher subscribes to the following principals:

- Voluntary Participation: in research, implying that the participants might withdraw from the research at any time.
- *Informed consent*, meaning that research participants must at all times be fully informed about the research process and purposes, and must give consent to their participation in the research.
- *Safety in participation*; put differently, that the human respondents should not be placed at risk or harm of any kind e.g., research with young children.
- *Privacy*, meaning that the *confidentiality* and *anonymity* of human respondents should be protected at all times.
- *Trust*, which implies that human respondents will not be respondent to any acts of deception or betrayal in the research process or its published outcomes.

• Signature of Principal: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## Appendix F: Informed Consent from Participants

### Consent Form

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (your name), agree / do not agree to take part in the research project titled: Novice teachers' experiences of Head of Department support in primary schools. I understand that I will be interviewed about this topic for approximately one hour at a venue and time that will suit me, but that will not interfere with school activities or teaching time. The interview will be audio taped.

I understand that my responses to the interview questions will be analysed by the researcher, and that the role of the researcher will remain objective and non-invasive.

I understand that the researcher subscribes to the following principals:

- *Voluntary Participation*: in research, implying that the participants might withdraw from the research at any time.
- *Informed consent*, meaning that research participants must at all times be fully informed about the research process and purposes, and must give consent to their participation in the research.
- *Safety in participation*; put differently, that the human respondents should not be placed at risk or harm of any kind e.g., research with young children.
- *Privacy*, meaning that the *confidentiality* and *anonymity* of human respondents should be protected at all times.
- *Trust*, which implies that human respondents will not be respondent to any acts of deception or betrayal in the research process or its published outcomes.

Signature of Participant: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_

## Appendix G: Interview Protocol/Schedule - Novice Teacher



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA  
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA  
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA Faculty of Education

**Topic:** *Novice teachers' experiences of Head of Department support in primary schools*

*Interview Schedule for novice teachers*

The main research questions

*How do novice teachers experience support provided by Head of Department?*

Research sub-questions

- What are the challenges that novice teachers face in their first year of teaching?
- What kind of support do novice teachers expect from the HODs?
- What strategies do HODs use to support and assist novice teachers?

Time of interview:		Duration:	
Date:		Place:	
Interviewer:		Male/Female:	
Confidentiality/ Anonymity in dissemination			

Interview Questions

- Please tell me about yourself.
- Please tell me about the help you needed during your first months of being a teacher.
- What kind of support did you get from your Head of Department?
- What kind of support do you still need from your Head of Department?
- Please tell me about the challenges that you experienced during your first months of teaching.
- What challenges are you still experiencing being a novice teacher?
- What are the causes of these challenges?
- What kinds assistance do you get from the Head of Department to address the identified challenges?
- Please tell me the kind of support you expect from the Head of Department.
- What kind of support did you get from the Head of Department?

- What kind of support did you not get from the Head of Department?
- What kinds of strategies do your Head of Department use to provide support or assist you?
- Is there anything else that you would like to share with me about support in your first year of teaching?

## Appendix H: Interview Protocol/Schedule - Head of Department



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA  
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA  
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA Faculty of Education

*Topic: Novice teachers' experiences of Head of Department support in primary schools*

*Interview Schedule for Heads of Department*

The main research questions

*How do novice teachers experience support provided by Head of Departments?*

Research sub-questions

- What are the challenges that novice teachers face in their first year of teaching?
- What kind of support do novice teachers expect from the HODs?
- What strategies do HODs use to support and assist novice teachers?

Time of interview:		Duration:	
Date:		Place:	
Interviewer:		Male/Female:	
Confidentiality/ Anonymity in dissemination			

Interview Questions

- Please tell me about yourself.
- What kind of support do you think novice teachers need during their first months of teaching?
- Please tell me about the help you give to novice teachers.
- What kinds of challenges do novice teachers in your department experience?
- What are the causes of these challenges?
- What kinds of assistance do you provide to the novice teacher who faces the identified challenges?
- Please tell me the kinds of support you think that novice teachers expect from you as the Head of Department.
- Please tell me about the support that you give to the novice teacher.

- What kind of support are you not able to give novice teachers?
- What strategies do you use to provide support or assist novice teachers in your Department?
- Is there anything further that you would like to share regarding supporting novice teachers?

## Appendix I: Interview Transcript (One Transcript)

### Novice Teacher 5 (NT5)

August

*Interviewer:* Good Day Ma'am. Thank you so much for taking the time to see me today. As I have explained, I am a student from the University of Pretoria and I am doing a research study on novice teachers experiences of HOD support. Ma'am, do you give consent for me to record this interview? Like I have said, your identity and the school's identity will remain strictly confidential. You may refrain from answering a question and you may also ask questions.

*Participant 9:* Yes, I do thanks.

*Interviewer (Question 1):* Please tell me about yourself.

*Participant 9:* About myself? (laughs). So, this is my first year of being a teacher. I studied through Unisa. Before I started working here, I was also a student teacher. Uhm... It was a big adjustment for me because I came from an Afrikaans school and this is an English school so it was a bit of a adjustment and then further I didn't start studying straight after school about 4 years a gap year and then only I started and yes I am here and I am very happy.

*Interviewer:* And during those 4 years, what were you doing?

*Participant 9:* I was... I took a gap year and then I went to Italy. I had family there and then I stayed with them. And then when I came back, I was working at a pre-school and an aftercare. I never studied because I did not know what I wanted to do and then I was working with children and then I knew that's what I wanted to do.

*Interviewer:* Are you happy in this profession?

*Participant 9:* Yes, very much.

*Interviewer (Question 2):* Please tell me about the help you needed during your first months of being a teacher.

*Participant 9:* Here? Oh my goodness... The help I need was to under the prep and how, and what they expect from me, how to teach it. Uhm ... how they teach it, what their routine was during the day. They had a timetable saying this time for English, Maths and Life Skills, but I didn't know how to incorporate it. I definitely needed a lot of assistance with uhm the discipline because I came in the middle of the year so it was... I don't know what happened with the previous teacher but there was no discipline, so that was really hard for me.

*Interviewer:* And how did you handle that one Ma'am, coming in the middle of the year?

*Participant 9:* it was extremely difficult, but I was excited because I had my first class. I am a teacher now and I can do what I want, so I was up for the challenges, but as soon as they... I started in this school, I told the children my rules and I just followed through with consistency. Never budging so at the start, it was very difficult, but they did adjust. The did seem to follow my rules,

they seemed to settle down, but it was a difficult group. The adjustments they had to go through the year and the teachers they had, there was never a balance for them.

*Interviewer:* Okay, yes. Anything else that you need help with during our first year of teaching?

*Participant 9:* Uhm ... definitely understanding the school. So, when they have meetings or when they needed your file, any admin sent down to the office, I did not know how to do that. I did not know how to do any of the Departments papers or papers that you have to fill in for all the children, That I needed assistance with. I needed assistance with admin. Admin was the big one. I think admin is the biggest one ... shewww. Now I can't remember.

*Interviewer:* No problem, we can always come back to that.

*Participant 9:* I will have to think abit.

*Interviewer:* No problem.

*Interviewer 9 (Question 3):* What kind of support did you get from your Head of Department?

*Participant 9:* So my HOD was in the first two weeks, she was teaching along side me, so the first weeks, She was teaching and I was observing. And then second week, I would teach a little bit, but she was there helping me and guiding me and then the third week I think she would teach first then she would just pop in here and there and uhm.... then that was just to settle down and then further than that, every Thursday, we had new teacher straining where she would teach me, guide me on how things that I do in class or teach in lessons uhm ... right through to the admin things. Uhm ... the Departmental things, school admin, how to do it. The procedures to follow uhm... Then obviously she did help me with behaviour. We had problem children. Whenever I did not know how to handle it anymore, she would step in and help me. She would give a lot of guidance on uhm.... to spot learning barriers. She organises the training for us and yes.

*Interviewer:* And how did you find that? Was it helpful?

*Participant 9:* Very, I loved it because I feel like she has so much knowledge. I did not how too... In my first year, I am not confident with spotting oh this child has this learning barrier or this child learning barrier, so the more information I get or reading material, she gives me or assistance, the more comfortable I get when seeing a child struggling with something, then I can say okay I need this is that.

*Interviewer:* Great, thank you Ma'am.

*Interviewer (Question 4):* What kind of support do you still need from your Head of Department?

*Participant 9:* Uhm... There's really not an area where I feel she's bad in uhm... I will just always say, the more training we have on identifying barriers, the better. Uhm.... Yes, but as I say, she is giving us support with that, but I wouldn't complain.

*Interviewer:* And in the school in terms of overall support, have they also supported you?

*Participant 9:* Oh yes, in our foundation phase, there are 3 HODs and even the though the HODs are not as involved with our Grade, they are still with our foundation phase meetings, gatherings.

They involve us in every little decision or big decision so yes, it is definitely there.

*Interviewer:* Thank you Ma'am

*Interviewer (Question 5):* Please tell me about the challenges that you experienced during your first months of teaching.

*Participant 9:* Okay, so the most difficult challenge I had was definitely language. I came from an Afrikaans school and teaching in English was a big adjustment even though my studies were in English, it was different speaking the language every single day.

*Interviewer:* No worries, you do speak English very well.

*Participant 9:* It's practice. And then the other challenge I had was ...I'm not sure if I can mention this, but, was...

*Interviewer:* No worries, everything mentioned here is strictly confidential.

*Participant 9:* Okay, is uhm ... at the previous school, we were allowed to talk about Christianity. We were allowed to read out of the bible but here because here are all types of religions, I am not allowed to do that, so that was an adjustment. So, teaching children sometimes, it's a little bit difficult. It's difficult to teach them what is right or wrong because you cannot take it to religion, you cannot make examples or even teaching them morals uhm, you have to be careful not to relate it to any kind of religion, so that was also a challenge for me.

*Interviewer:* Ma'am in your class, how do you find it having kids from different backgrounds and religions?

*Participant 9:* It's never bothered me or I have never felt that ... they will tell me, teacher you are peach and I am brown. I was more... walking in I thought that you have to tread lightly, but now I don't feel uncomfortable with anything. I haven't had an experience where uhm I pushed a cultural boundary or did something that was wrong in the parent's eyes, not that I know of. So, it hasn't been difficult for me at all. Uhm cultural I have experienced no challenges at all.

*Interviewer:* Thank you Ma'am. Any other challenges?

*Participant 9:* Uhm ... its' always a challenge just to find your feet, to be comfortable. Uhm ... you know, not making friends, but become confident enough to have a conversation so that's always a challenge, I think.

*Interviewer:* And in terms of that, where are you now?

*Participant 9:* Oh no, now it is sorted. I'm not the new teacher now anymore, now I am part of the group so uhm so and then.... Other challenges, the amount of work. So definitely, the workload. So, it was marking books and doing these assessments and prepping for these assessments and the workload was a big adjustment. I think in my first weeks, I was crying a lot because it felt like every single day, I had to take work home, but now its normal. You do your planning, work around your things. Some weeks, I don't take things home, some weekends I do, some weekends I don't. It's a lot better.



*Interviewer:* And what do you do to relax at the end of the day?

*Participant 9:* Oh, it depends on when its assessments, then I stress, when we not doing assessments, then I am calm. Uhhh ... to relax, I like to take a nap. I need that and then I must say I am a garden person. I like to sit in my garden and then I would do anything, sometimes I just sit there. And then I don't have a lot of time, food needs to be made for dinner. I'm married, I need to take care of the other person.

*Interviewer (Question 6):* What challenges are you still experiencing being a novice teacher?

*Interviewer (Question 7):* What are the causes of these challenges?

*Participant 9:* Workload I would say, when I was an assistant, I helping with everything, but I never knew what was going on behind the scenes. What the requirements were from the Department and the curriculum was so, I wasn't... because studies I was I knew, I was, I was taught about the curriculum and then during my practical, I was never taught on how t do forms that expected of you and what sort of things is expected. And then finding my feel in the school, is just because I am an introvert, so it takes me a while to warm up to someone uhm....discipline is because I wasn't the teacher at the start of the year, so there never any form of stability in class so that was why the discipline.. I mean 3 types of discipline is hard to follow. It's really a difficult class, it was stressful. The language was that I never spoke enough English. I can't remember the others.

*Interviewer:* No problem Ma'am. Thank you, Ma'am.

*Interviewer (Question 8):* What kinds assistance do you get from the Head of Department to address the identified challenges?

*Participant 9:* Uhhh... so, okay with the discipline, she helped me to implement a reward system in class so like my extreme behaviour children, she dealt with. They were either sent to her office or she would contact the parents, but just in general, she assisted me to get a nice reward system in class so that the children can follow that. Uhm ... Finding my feet in the school, being an extrovert, she called me to everything uhm. she never made me feel shy or in our meetings she would uhm involve me in everything and admin, that's why we also had the new teachers training, everything so that she could assist me with that. Uhm...

*Interviewer:* And Ma'am sorry to go back, did you receive any form of induction or mentoring?

*Participant 9:* Yes, I did definitely.

*Interviewer:* Can you tell me more about that?

*Participant 9:* So uhm my Grade leader was like my mentor. She also popped in or helped me when I wasn't sure how to do this. Introduce this in the class if it wasn't used or a new concept in maths. She was my mentor and still is my mentor so yes, there was mentorship.

*Interviewer:* And how did you experience that?

*Participant 9:* Ohh lovely, they are all so nice especially my Grade leader. There is never anything that's too much for her to do, so that is lovely. Especially now that its my first year, I could not

have had it better.

*Interviewer:* Thank you Ma'am. That's very important.

*Interviewer (Question 9):* Please tell me the kind of support you expect from the Head of Department.

*Participant 9:* Uhhh ... support I think it's important with difficult parents. Oh, my word! I was at first afraid of them.

*Interviewer:* How has your experiences been thus far?

*Participant 9:* So far it's been fine, nothing too bad, but if I listen to other teachers and what they go through, I don't know what I would do. She does make herself available when we do parent afternoons. She also gives times when we can book her, to sit with us if we are meeting with a difficult parent then she comes to your class and she the meeting with you and the parent. Support with our big behaviour problems. We do have that from here because being alone in the class when they are disruptive, it gets exhausting and you just don't know what to do anymore. So, then I expect support from her there. Uhm.... Definitely being involved. uhm with our Grade. Just to know what's going on, keeping up to date with everything. I feel like our Grade is so much different from all the others.

*Interviewer:* And Ma'am when you reach that point that you are at your widths end, what do you seeing that there's no assistant in the class?

*Participant 9:* I don't know. Sometimes it differs. Sometimes I will let them have time out, that's if I have a little bit more patience inside of me, but when I am at my ends, I don't know what to do any longer, I send them down to my HODs office or I will let them sit 10 minutes in another class. Just for them to cool down. For me to cool down. You also learn how to read your children so uhm... some of my behaviours, I know now, they just need to go run quickly, two times around the field then they perfectly fine. So, it depends on the child. Uhm.... yes, it depends on the child.

*Interviewer:* I have worked in a Grade 0 class as well and sometimes you need to breathe.

*Participant 9:*Laughs.. That's how I felt today. And everybody wants to speak at the same time, and they want to ask you questions. Like today, was a difficult one.

*Interviewer (Question 10):* What kind of support did you get from the Head of Department?

Participant provided answered questions through previous questions.

*Interviewer (Question 11):* What kind of support did you not get from the Head of Department?

*Participant 9:* Uhm... Honestly, I can't think of anything, Its an honest answer. I can't think there's been a lack of support. If I know what a few months ago, if I compare now to my previous school, I felt like I was walking into a totally new job. Here, because this was so different from what I was use too. The support made it easy because they did take it day by day with me. They didn't just through me into the deep side. I don't think there was a lack of support.

*Interviewer:* Ma'am, can you maybe, if you can, tell me about your previous school, how different

is it from the school you are at now.

*Participant 9:* I felt like uhm... support for children with learning barriers at my previous school, I want to say wasn't as popular there as it is here. So, there the mindset was just like, "no, he is just being naughty or he will grow out of it". It wasn't things that was of major concern and then as well with m the different uhm teaching resources and also the different ways of teaching. I almost felt like we only did art with my previous school which is also good because it is fine moto skills and you are talking, there is language development during art and creativity, but it wasn't like focusing on subjects specifically so, when I came to this school, it felt like oh my word, what did I learn at the previous school for 4 years of my life, I don't know what I did because it was so different, but not in a bad way. Not at all. Once I started here, I actually felt like I am teacher now. I'm not just like a day care teacher, just letting them paint or play in the sandpit. I am actually teaching them things. I love what I do, I love the. Like if I can compare the first term, with now, just to see the differences in body images and their fine motor, knowledge. My children that's going to speech therapies, I can. I had a little girl in the beginning of the year, she came to school and could not understand or speak one word of English. Nothing so, she was demonstrating things to me and I did not understand what she was expecting, but now we can sit and have a full conversation. For me that is very cool, I love that. I love knowing that we read stories and then I ask them to retell the story and then their vocabulary grew bigger and bigger. Speech therapy is the biggest reason, but not just that. As I say as well, with body images...

*Interviewer:* Aww that's so lovely to hear and to see as well. Good for you on that.

*Interviewer (Question 12) What kinds of strategies do your Head of Department use to provide support or assist you?*

*Participant 9:* Okay, so I did say she does she gives us weekly training uhm... we have a weekly meeting as well so we will then discuss the weeks prep, what are we going to do, what is expected. She also give us since this term we are following a different approach as well just for assessments so, we are getting additional weekly training with that just on. So that all three of us assess the same way so that the one isn't more lenient or strict just so that we assess the same way.

*Interviewer:* Yes, thank you Ma'am

*Interviewer (Question 13): Is there anything else that you would like to share with me about support in your first year of teaching?*

*Participant 9:* Uhhh I think being a first- year teacher, I think that is the most special year. You lay down your creativity and you are the boss of your environment now, not in a bad way uhm, but that's where you give 200% every single day. As there years go on, I think It might decrease. Every day is different. There are days that are better, there are days that are not so good but yes my experiences as a first year teacher, I could have not had a better one even though I did have my own challenges like with the language, the support given from my HOD and the school made it feel

like I had it good. I think it's a bit harder for other people, but I did have it there.

*Interviewer:* Ma'am, how many kids are in your class?

*Participant 9:* 21. Last year it was 25. But this year is nice, but evens 4 children makes a massive difference.

*Interviewer:* Definitely.

#### *Conclusion*

Ma'am, thank you so much for taking the time to share your story with me. As I have said, your identity and the schools will be protected at all times. Everything we have discussed is just for research purposes. Should I need to do a follow up interview, will you be willing to participate.

*Participant 9:* Yes, of course. Thank you.

## Appendix J: Sampling of Coding Table

<p><b>HOD 3</b></p> <p>Uhm... okay. I am going to speak in terms of Ms *****. <b>The first day when they arrive, I have a standard from, with basic processes of the school like I explained to you.</b> Uhm register, playground duty uhm...the kids moving from one class to another. Exam procedures. It's a very comprehensive document that I have set up over the years. Uhm so we do that one the first day, I give them their files and then on a weekly basis, I meet with Ms *****. <b>We have a meeting that's minted. We discuss everything.</b> Last week for instance, we discussed how to complete subject interventions forms. So, <b>I normally look at what is lacking and then we address it in the meeting. Then we have internal and external training so I am the facilitating from the SMT side.</b> Externally we like at NAPTOSA or any type of training they have and then I organise for the teachers to go</p>	<p><b>The first day when they arrive, I have a standard from, with basic processes of the school like I explained to you.</b>(HOD 3)</p> <p><b>We have a meeting that's minted. We discuss everything.</b>(HOD3)</p> <p><b>I normally look at what is lacking and then we address it in the meeting. Then we have internal and external training so I am the facilitating from the SMT side.</b>(HOD 3)</p>	<p>Novice teacher orientation</p> <p>Weekly staff meetings</p> <p>Providing internal and external training</p>	<p>Assistance with novice teacher orientation</p> <p>Assisting staff meetings</p> <p>Assisting with training of novice teachers</p>
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<p>and then we have that externally. We have like one that Ms *** she's going to a remedial reading training programme that NAPTOSA has organised. Uhm we went to SOSE'S, first additional language teachers support. She has gone to the discipline training, so there's so many additional external things. She attends all the DOE training with Mr*** from the Department so yes internally not every week, every once a month, <b><i>I have training with all my teachers after school.</i></b> We did Barrots Taxonomy, so the following week for instance, we have internally and externally training. Things that I feel struggle with. We did things like how to do a writing exercise for instance and we comprehensively go through it. Although again, teachers have extra murals, teachers are busy and now you are cutting into that we is also unfair but with the languages with all my new teachers we have discipline training. <b>We have assertive discipline training</b> presented by Beth McBride, an amazing lady. She comes in and</p>	<p><b>I have training with all my teachers after school.</b>(HOD 3)</p> <p><b>We have assertive discipline training</b>(HOD 3)</p>	<p>Providing internal and external training</p> <p>Providing training in discipline</p>	<p>Assisting with training of novice teachers</p>
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<p>support us. She has a group session with them and then she comes in for individual observation so, she observes and she gives them feedback. With Ms*** I have had to ask Beth to come back again, she is really struggling with discipline so Beth is coming back on the 19<sup>th</sup>. She will work on the internal structures. That's the basics because she has found it very challenging and then we get Beth to support her. So that's in terms of training. Weekly meetings uhm, she has a flip file with all her documentation. There's post moderation and pre-moderation uhm which all her assessments are checked. She has book control. Every term she gives me a set of books then I moderate and give reports on that. Then she has had a class visit this year and she receives feedback on that. She has a second IQMS as we the IQMS for performance so, that's coming up which is not to criticise or anything but in the visits we identify which areas needs supports for the following year. For example, I find it really</p>	<p>Weekly meetings uhm, she has a flip file with all her documentation. There's post moderation and pre-moderation uhm which all her assessments are checked.(HOD 3)</p> <p>Then she has had a class visit this year and she receives feedback on that.(HOD 3)</p>	<p>Moderation</p>	<p>Assisting with discipline training</p> <p>Assisting with administrative duties</p>
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<p>challenging to get her to put up posters uhm I have asked her to write Sepedi words and then the assistants can type if out for her and make flash cards. So, I am busy with that at the moment. We ordered posters that arrived this week because another challenge with Sepedi is that we can't posters, so you have your English and Afrikaans lacks resources. We can't evens find an oxford dictionary with Sepedi so, I have been looking for suppliers. So, there are so many limitations that also hinders he. But the media centre has been helping me with assisting her to set up a reading corner. With her, I have seen that time management is a problem so I am taking it slowly even though its 8 months into the year, we take it bit for bit because in the beginning because I would say "do this and this and this" and nothing would happen. I had to systematically break it down. Uhm... some just jump in and others need more support so, with her I am taking it one step at a time. Like now we are busy with flashcards and then</p>	<p>I had to systematically break it down. Uhm... some just jump in and others need more</p>	<p>General support</p>	
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<p>with flash cards there's also parts of speech. The idea is for when it's setup, she will use that to teach. She will get examples underneath and then the kids can come and take a card and match the correct part of speech etc...So I have to try and think ahead for her. They have given quit a lot of examples at her first additional language training, but as I say, it is not an overnight thing. It takes a while, but then obviously with how to read and write and those type of things, we are in the process of doing courses. One of the booklets that I have compiled is a thick booklet for her, so with her I am just taking it slowly. Some of the parents quite difficult with her this year. Uhm... because we had quit a big turnover in foundation phase, so we had a meeting with the parents, I was present as well. She had an opportunity to explain what her expectations from the kids are, what does she want, and it made things easier. And then I have checklists, I check their files often, documentation needs to be in</p>	<p>support so, with her I am taking it one step at a time. (HOD 3)</p>		<p>Providing support and guidance</p>
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a certain time, I give them feedback uhm....  
yes.. she also has observations in experienced  
teachers' classrooms. I got Bev coming in.  
She sat with her as well. So yes. You must ask  
me if there's anything else?

**HOD 2**

Okay, so I am with the Grade R and Grade 1  
educators. So, the Grade R HOD was also  
new, it was also a challenge for me because I  
did not really know and understand what was  
going on, but seeing that I also had training,  
attending workshops on what is happening in  
a Grade R class, I understood much better on  
what type of support to give the educators, the  
teachers practitioners and what is needed in  
their classrooms like the morning and  
afternoon ring, subjects which they are  
presenting. With the Grade 1 teachers, the  
newly appointed ones, we also give support.  
We go into the classrooms, see what they are  
doing, if they are really or have a need in a  
specific area such as reading, phonics, how to

Grade 1 teachers, the newly appointed ones,  
we also give support. We go into the

Providing  
guidance on  
teaching practice

<p>present it as mathematics, working with groups, getting to know the learners because in the beginning you first do your baseline and then you also see.. Well they will come and ask, “Ma’am how do you present a lesson on a specific area”.</p> <p>Like we said, we do class visits and then uhmmm we do observation on what they are doing in the class. We giving them pointers and assists them in a specific area, so if we see there is a need in how they present the phonics and how to help the learners with word building from the phonics and then introduction to their emergent reading. That’s how we also help them.</p>	<p>classrooms, see what they are doing, if they are really or have a need in a specific area such as reading, phonics, how to present it as mathematics, working with groups, getting to know the learners because in the beginning you first do your baseline and then you also see..(HOD 2)</p> <p>we do class visits and then uhmmm we do observation on what they are doing in the class. We giving them pointers and assists them in a specific area,(HOD 2)</p>	<p>Providing lesson observation and feedback</p>	<p>Assisting with classroom teaching</p>
<p><b>HOD 1</b></p> <p>Okay I do the orientation. Then I go and make sure each section like book control, file control is in order. <i>I show them how to set their lesson plans.</i> Every step of the way, I call them into my office and I show them what</p>	<p>Okay I do the orientation. Then I go and make sure each section like book control, file</p>	<p>Providing orientation</p>	

<p>to do. There is a senior teacher that will help them. I need my teachers to sit with me show that I show and teach them the right way the first time. I don't give the short cut way of learning things. I give them one-on-one, I provide them with a buddy system. I then make sure that they are aware of the fact that they can come to me because there are a lot of things that's due, so before its do they come to me. Like I said, you can teach a skill, but you cannot teach an attitude. How we as HODs talk to our teachers is very important, how we make them realise their worth and help with the phase that they are going through and I make sure I watch over my teachers. If their files are not right, I call them in and we work together. If their tests are not moderated, they show me. I work with the policy.</p> <p><b>NT 4</b></p> <p><i>During my first months of teaching, it is completely different from the practical that</i></p>	<p>control is in order. I show them how to set their lesson plans. Every step of the way, I call them into my office and I show them what to do. There is a senior teacher that will help them. I need my teachers to sit with me show that I show and teach them the right way the first time.(HOD 1)</p> <p>I provide them with a buddy system. I then make sure that they are aware of the fact that they can come to me because there are a lot of things that's due, so before its do they come to me. (HOD 1)</p> <p>I make sure I watch over my teachers. If their files are not right, I call them in and we work together. If their tests are not moderated, they show me. I work with the policy.(HOD 1)</p> <p>I needed a lot of support as to how to speak to children as they say you are an "all in one", a mother, everything. While there's teaching, there are maybe children that get hurt or needs to be attended too and in terms of content,</p>	<p>Providing support from more experienced teachers</p> <p>Providing a support base/system</p> <p>Observation</p>	<p>Assisting in orientating novice teachers</p> <p>Assistance in performing tasks</p> <p>Assisting with support groups</p> <p>Providing guidance</p>
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<p>you get. So, you have to put what you have learnt from theory into practice. So, when I was studying, we didn't like go out to schools or be in the classroom environment. So, I needed a lot of support as to how to speak to children as they say you are an "all in one", a mother, everything. While there's teaching, there are maybe children that get hurt or needs to be attended too and in terms of content, keeping up with the curriculum, what the department wants, like things by the end of this week, I had to make sure that I did that. With the 54 learners that I have in my class, it's not always possible to get to each and every child. Getting support from my neighbours, other teaches in Grade 1 with more experience, is things that I have to do on a daily basis because there's things that I don't know and then I just have to clarify with them. So, every day is a new challenge, like nothing is the same. So, I still have to continue to go to them to ask for support and they don't</p>	<p>keeping up with the curriculum, what the department wants(NT4)</p> <p>The help I needed was to understand the prep and how, and what they expect from me, how to teach it. Uhhmm...how they teach it, what their routine was during the day.(NT 5)</p> <p>I definitely needed a lot of assistance with uhm the discipline(NT 5)</p>	<p>Communicating with students</p>	<p>Assistance is student-teacher communication</p>
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<p>hesitate. We actually work nicely together here, as a group.</p> <p><b>NT 5</b></p> <p>Here? Oh my goodness... <i>The help I needed was to understand the prep and how, and what they expect from me, how to teach it. Uhhmm....how they teach it, what their routine was during the day.</i> They had a timetable saying this time for English, Maths and Life Skills, but I didn't know how to incorporate it. <i>I definitely needed a lot of assistance with uhm the discipline</i> because I came in the middle of the year so it was... I don't know what happened with the previous teacher but there was no discipline, so that was really hard for me.</p> <p><i>It was extremely difficult,</i> but I was excited because I had my first class. I am a teacher now and I can do what I want, so I was up for the challenges, but as soon as they... I started in this school, I told the children my rules and I just followed through with consistency. Never budging so at the start it was very</p>	<p><i>I did not know how to do that. I did not know how to do any of the Departments papers or papers that you have to fill in for all the children, That I needed assistance with. I needed assistance with admin. Admin was the big one.</i>(NT 5)</p> <p><i>I struggled with.... errrrr need to do something, I realised and I'm under pressure, so you tend to forget.</i> (NT 4)</p>	<p>Understanding lesson preparation and execution</p> <p>Managing learner discipline</p>	<p>Assistance in preparing and understanding lesson content</p> <p>Assistance with learner discipline</p>
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<p>difficult, but they did adjust. The did seem to follow my rules, they seemed to settle down, but it was a difficult group. The adjustments they had to go through the year and the teachers they had, there was never a balance for them.</p> <p>definitely understanding the school. So, when they have meetings or when they needed your file, any admin sent down to the office, I did not know how to do that. I did not know how to do any of the Departments papers or papers that you have to fill in for all the children, That I needed assistance with. I needed assistance with admin. Admin was the big one. I think admin is the biggest one shewww.</p> <p>Now I can't remember.</p> <p><b>NT 4</b></p> <p><i>Yoh! It's tough because when I first started as a teacher, when I first got to the school, children want to test you. Test your patience, they test your skills, everything. They want to</i></p>	<p>I did not need much help as I had experience and I knew what was happening in class(NT 2)</p> <p>Okay, the transition was quite uhmmm overwhelming because there are certain things that you don't do as a student teacher that you have to do as an official teacher. For instance, taking the register every day, making sure that the learners are in class every morning(NT 2)</p>	<p>Managing administration</p> <p>Transitioning from student teacher to novice teacher</p>	<p>Assistance with administration</p>
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<p>see your weak points. That one thing they can always use so that they can disrupt the class. I think what can help when especially with a new teacher, they hire a new teacher at the school is, they give you the written document that lists the expectations and what you need to do up until this time until you get use to the working environment. Because I struggled with... errrrr need to do something, I realised and I'm under pressure, so you tend to forget. You write them down but, you don't have time to go and check.</p> <p><b>NT 2</b></p> <p>Uhhh....like I said. I have been working as a student teacher for years, so I did not need much help as I had experience and I knew what was happening in class. I've been in class for 4 years as a student teacher. Every day in class I got the experience, I understood what was happening, so there isn't much help that I needed.</p> <p>Okay, the transition was quite uhmmm overwhelming because there are certain</p>	<p>Uhm.... and with regards to admin, admin is quite uhm.... A vital shock. It's something that no one prepared us for and I'm speaking just on behalf of myself. The admin with regards to daily planning and uhm the CAPS and uhm your ATP's, your annual teaching plan and how they should all correlate uhm that was definitely a challenge and then all the small things in-between, taking in forms, doing this and that, parents evening, the formalities you have to follow when you do that, the slips you need to get, the support</p>	<p>Managing administration</p>	<p>Assistance with administration</p>
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<p>things that you don't do as a student teacher that you have to do as an official teacher. For instance, taking the register every day, making sure that the learners are in class every morning. As a student teacher those things you don't do them. You just get in class, you do your lesson. You are not concerned of whose outside and whose inside.</p> <p><b>NT 1</b></p> <p>So.. uhm... Obviously they do prepare you for when you come, what type of learners you will work with , the environment but, you cannot be prepared for a learner or a setting because each class is different. The kids are not the same in my class as what they would be in another class, so that you really can't be prepared for. With regards to help, obviously they give you guidelines from management and what you should do or not do just from the years of their experience. Uhm.....and with regards to admin, admin is quite uhm.... A vital shock.It's something that no one</p>	<p>forms or learners who are on border failure. So it's just.. It's a lot of administration as a proof what you are doing, where you are and....(NT 1)</p>		
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<p><i>prepared us for and I'm speaking just on behalf of myself.</i> The admin with regards to daily planning and uhm the CAPS and uhm your ATP's, your annual teaching plan and how they should all correlate uhm that was definitely a challenge and then all the small things in-between, taking in forms, doing this and that, parents evening, the formalities you have to follow when you do that, the slips you need to get, the support forms or learners who are on border failure. So it's just.. It's a lot of administration as a proof what you are doing, where you are and.....</p>		<p>Managing the requirements of the curriculum</p>	<p>Assistance with managing the curriculum</p>
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