Teaching sensitive topics within an Islamic context: A female beginner teacher's autoethnographic account

by

Sadiya Aboo Gani

Student number: 13063210

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

MAGISTER EDUCATIONIS

in the Faculty of Education

at the

UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA

December 2020

Declaration

"I declare that the dissertation/thesis, which I hereby submit for the degree Master of Education 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."

Sadiya Aboo Gani
15 April 2020

Ethical Clearance Certificate

RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE	CLEARANCE NUMBER: **HU 19/11/02**
DEGREE AND PROJECT	MEd
	Teaching sensitive topics within an Islamic context: A female beginner teacher's autoethnographic account
INVESTIGATOR	Ms Sadiya Aboo Gani
DEPARTMENT	Humanities
APPROVAL TO COMMENCE STUDY	06 April 2020
DATE OF CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE	02 November 2020

CHAIRPERSON OF ETHICS COMMITTEE: Prof Funke Omidire

CC   Ms Bronwynne Swarts

                    Dr Yolandi Woest

This Ethics Clearance Certificate should be read in conjunction with the Integrated Declaration Form (D08) which specifies details regarding:
- Compliance with approved research protocol,
- No significant changes,
- Informed consent/assent,
- Adverse experience or undue risk,
- Registered title, and
- Data storage requirements.

Ethics statement

"The author, whose name appears on the title page of this thesis, has obtained, for the research described in this work, the applicable research ethics approval. The author declares that he/she has observed the ethical standards required in terms of the University of Pretoria's *Code ethics for researchers and the Policy guidelines for responsible research.*"

Dedication

I dedicate this research to all my family members, relatives, friends, Muslim females and individuals who are interested to know about this aspect of teaching sensitive topics within the Islamic context. They have all contributed to being a source of motivation for me writing this study – when times were good and during the hardships that I experienced during this phase. However, my study being a success will also mean that I have them to be grateful for throughout my life.

I also dedicate this research study to myself being a central component in this research field so that I can know myself better and completely accept where my strengths and weaknesses lie in my life. I sacrificed my time, effort and ability to reconstruct and remember the previous years of my life for the sake of completing this study. I was constantly motivating myself to complete this study for the sake of the love for it. Moreover, I enjoyed writing every aspect of this research study and learnt a lot from it by reading scholarly articles as well as revisiting previous events and memories of my life.

Finally, I have also acknowledged that in life you cannot allow situations or how people treat you to change who you are. Hence, I will always live by the motto "be the best version of yourself as best you can and all the time". This will lead you to success.

Acknowledgements

I want to express my sincere gratitude to the individuals who enabled me to make this dissertation possible:

- My supervisor, Dr Yolandi Woest, whom I appreciate the assistance, contributions, guidance and motivation during my journey of writing this research study. I thank her for her kindness and knowledge which she had shared with me and therefore contributed to the success of this research study. I also wish to show my gratitude and appreciation towards Dr Yolandi who has been reading the study, correcting it and ensuring it has successfully been submitted.

- My family members and relatives who were participating in the study and continually supporting me and motivating me throughout the process of writing my research study and I am thankful for them for being there as without their source of presence and motivation I would have not been able to complete my M.Ed.

- Lastly and most importantly, I want to pray and show my gratitude to the Almighty for guiding me and giving me the strength to be consistent and dedicated enough to complete this study successfully.

Abstract

The focus of this study was to understand my experiences of teaching sensitive topics in my professional capacity, as a female beginner teacher who has an Islamic upbringing and strong religious views according to which I live. The purpose of this study was to make sense of these personal and professional experiences when teaching sensitive topics as an Islamic beginner female teacher. In so doing this study sought to contribute to body of knowledge about key concepts namely sensitive topics, an Islamic context, female beginner teacher identity and autoethnography as research design. The literature reviewed for this research study was centred around the said key concepts and included scholarly work by Collins (2017), Lowe and Jones (2015), Du Bois (2014), and Anacona (2014). Theoretically, this study was underpinned by an interpretivist epistemological paradigm informed by Berg (2007) and from a conceptual point of view I drew on tenets of both the religion and feminist theory guided by the work of Rambo (1999).

Data was generated in the form of short anecdotal self-reflective narratives spanning over 25 years and encapsulated the gist of my upbringing and later experiences which all influenced the ways in which I have experienced the teaching of sensitive topics as a female beginner teacher female within an Islamic context. Findings were divided into three main themes, namely the Islamic religion, Islam and gender and teaching sensitive topic as a Muslim, female beginner teacher. Findings were refined into relevant subthemes. The gist of the findings revealed that a strict Islamic upbringing contributed largely to the discomfort experienced by a female teacher when teaching topics of a sensitive nature, such as sexual education which is compulsory in the current Life Orientation curriculum. Findings further pointed to the fact that this discomfort can be alleviated through self-talk, engagement with scholarly work and deep thought incited by engagement with sensitive topics. Recommendations were suggested for classroom practice.

Key words: Autoethnography; Beginner teachers; Female; Feminism; Islam; Sensitive topics, Religion

Language editor

<div align="right">

244 Anderson street

Brooklyn

Pretoria

27 November 2020

</div>

To whom it may concern

This letter is to confirm that the dissertation of Sadiya Gani has been edited for language correctness. She submitted six chapters for editing which were completed today. If there are any queries, please email them to the address below.

Sincerely

Prof EA Boomker

Elizabeth A Boomker
Professor Emeritus
BSc (Pret), MSc (Pret), DSc (Pret)
Pr. Nat. Sci.

UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Cell +27 (0)82 955 4035
profeaboomker@live.co.za

List of abbreviations

Med	Master of Education
FBTI	Female beginner teacher identities
US	United States
RPO	Research process onion
F	Fouzia – aunt
A.S	Alai- salam (Islamic greeting)
S.W.T	Subhana-wa-ta'alah (addressing God)
S.A.W	Sallallahualayhiwasallam (addressing the Prophet)
PhD	Philosophy of Doctorate
HoD	Head of Department
CV	Curriculum Vitae
CSE	Comprehensive Sexual Education
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
LO	Life Orientation
CAPS	Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement
PBUH	Peace Be Upon Him (Prophet)

Table of Contents

List of tables

Table	Caption:
Table 2.1	Thematic division of themes within the literature review
Table 3.4	Indicating co-constructors of knowledge and reasons for inclusion
Table 5.1	Table demonstrating the themes and sub-themes emerged from data generated

List of Figures

Figure:	Caption:
Figure 2.6	Model demonstrating theoretical framework
Figure 3.3.1	Diagram demonstrating the research process onion
Figure 3.7.3	Model showing how an auto-ethnography is formed

List of photographs

Photograph number:	Caption
4.1	Baby photo at one years old
4.2	Beginning stages of walking at two years old
4.3	Vacation at the beach
4.4	School photo wearing a headscarf
4.5	Certificate awarded for best behaviour
4.6	Photograph taken in high school
4.7	Sweet sixteen birthday cake
4.8	Wedding invitation

CHAPTER 1 – OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

1.1   Introduction to the chapter

I wish to introduce this study by firstly providing a brief overview about my personal life and teaching context. I am a Muslim female educator, twenty six years old, living in a constricted household where rules of what we should wear, how we should present ourselves, talk, act and respond to people around us is closely monitored. There is no freedom to do as we wish, as my upbringing had certain values and restrictions on what is allowed and what is not. Teaching arrived to me as a calling, I enjoy learning new things and educating others on it. It is and will always be a part of my life. I am currently teaching Life Orientation at a public high school. This is because Life Orientation was a subject that I had majored in at University level. I teach senior phase learners, which are in grade eight-ten, the subject Life Orientation. Initially, this is where the problem about teaching sensitive topics began, and I decided to express my problem by writing this study.

By describing sensitive topics from my point of view, I believe it is a topic where, it prepares you for life, your responsibilities and possibilities. It includes an individual holistically. This is where Life Orientation links to me and sensitive topics directly. It engages with sensitive issues such as your "personal, psychological, neuro-cognitive, motor, physical, moral, spiritual, cultural, socio-economical and constitutional levels to meet the demands of the world" (DBE, 2019). The variety of topics explored in this subject, specifically referring to religion and sexual education and the diversity that exists in current times play a major role in peoples' lives. Hence, sensitive topics in the subject Life Orientation does indeed uncover many issues that was arising in my life when teaching.

Therefore, this study focuses specifically on the experiences of teaching sensitive topics, particularly the sensitive topic of sexual education and linking it to the Islamic perspective, which I write from. Due to the religion I follow, I have not been able to express myself effectively when it comes to sensitive topics. This area of my life has been governed by teachings' and experiences gained as I grew up. I wish to explore this topic in greater depth, so that I can understand my experiences better. As a

qualified educator, personally, I still find sensitive topics of religion and sexual education as an extremely uncomfortable topic. This is because the role of gender and religion has played a particularly important and valuable role in my life. It is compulsory for a Muslim female to abide by the specific rules and guidelines that are set in my religion. These rules reflect on specific elements which are directly linked to the gender role. For example, wearing the appropriate dress and being modest in the way I think, speak and behave, brings inner peace and satisfaction in my life. My religion prescribes modesty yet, as an educator, I must teach sensitive topics. This conundrum leaves me with an inner struggle.

When relating gender and religion to teacher identity, it is important to take into consideration the specific sensitivities experienced by Muslim females with reference to sexual education in the classroom. Handley (2010:104) supports this and mentions that "teachers' develop an increasingly active role in educating learners' on sensitive issues such as sexual education, mental health and child protection" (Handley, 2010:104). Moreover, Mchunu (2007:55) strengthen this argument by describing the comments received from a Muslim educator on teaching sexual education saying: "we are uncomfortable because there are issues, we cannot discuss openly. Our religions also become barriers because there are certain aspects we cannot talk about; we cannot go against the principles of our religion" (Mchunu, 2007:55). As a young Muslim girl and specifically in my professional role as a teacher, I relate to this quote mentioned by Mchunu (2007:55). I was taught to adhere to my dress code and use appropriate language when I present myself anywhere in life. As a girl, it is also very important to possess a modest personality, speak wisely and not discuss ideas about sexual education in a public or social arena, specifically at the adolescent stage.

The responsibilities of teachers' are extensive and it is compulsory to ensure that the childrens' lives are always foremost in your consideration, no matter what you are teaching. In addition, children's feelings, background, cognitive abilities and their behaviour and attitudes should be considered before discussing sensitive topics during education. Teachers' are in the position to make knowledge fun and to create opportunities for children to grow and prosper gradually and without stressful situations arising.

Sensitive topics can arise from any teaching situation related to the Life Orientation curriculum. It is therefore important for me to know about and deal with issues regarding sensitive topics. Life Orientation, as a subject has been made compulsory in the South African school curriculum. In this subject it is important for female beginner teachers' to express themselves clearly with regard to topics such as sexual education. As a result, this creates challenges and struggles for Muslim female beginner teachers' as they do not have the necessary experience and expertise to teach this subject. They also have a natural reticence, stemming from their religion, to teaching this topic of sexual education to their learners'. It is essential to understand where the beliefs and the background of a Muslim female originates. In a narrower context, this study will explore *teaching sensitive topics within an Islamic context*: A female beginner teacher's auto-ethnographic account. (I am a Life Orientation teacher).

This chapter will further examine the background and context of the study. Certain essential concepts will be explained and then link directly to terms sensitive topics, Islamic context, female beginner teacher identity and auto-ethnographic account. The focus and purpose of the study is explained, and the research question and subsidiary questions stated thereafter. The rationale and motivation are described in detail and the theoretical framework is explained briefly. Furthermore, a research methodology is presented and the research method used in this study will be clearly defined.

1.2 Background and context of the study

I am a Muslim female beginner teacher and my religion, Islam, influences the way I perform my duties personally and professionally because of specific values, ideas, thoughts and behavioural patterns that have been instilled in me. The Islamic religion is a central part of my life, which colours all my functions in all spheres as I must include my religion in all phases of my life. In my family, complete dedication and devotion towards the religion Islam have been passed from generation to generation. Therefore, this chain cannot be broken. It is consistent and maintained throughout our lives. The chain I describe above refers to the religious beliefs, traditions and values, inherited from my great grandfathers and great grandmothers, which have been followed through until today. It is therefore important for others around me to

know that Islam is a compulsory element in my life, as this is the context in which they should consider both my study and my world.

I introduce the background by firstly positioning myself as a Muslim female. When I was born, a compulsory traditional custom was performed. This was the azhaan[1]being read into my ears. Moreover, a Muslim name which has a significant meaning was given to me. This name is associated with the Arabic language as it is known to be as the language of the religion Islam. My parents have been very protective of me because females in the Muslim religion are considered a 'protective force' for the entire family in a secular world. To support the statement above, Luqmaan (2010) quotes a verse from the Holy Qur'an and Hadith, referring to "the biological differences that mean that men are physically stronger than women" (Luqmaan, 2010). Therefore, men are regarded as the protectors of women and their families.

I began learning about my religion. Islam, and acknowledging it at a young age, when my actions led to parental instruction and the discernment of right and wrong. Although, most of my Islamic knowledge was gained when attending a Muslim school, during the early years of my life. I considered it to be beneficial for my development when I moved from an Islamic environment to the secular world of schooling. However, the ingrained knowledge gained from my religious upbringing has assisted me through the later years of my life when I was required to change schools and later attend university.

Sensitive topics in Islam, particularly pertaining to my immediate household, include the topic of sexual and religious education. This links to the Life Orientation curriculum which is a guideline for me to follow when teaching the learners. It was an uncomfortable topic, which would not be discussed, and was usually frowned upon if it were ever brought up for discussion. Our upbringing instils values of modesty in our behaviour, attitude and actions, as well as reticence towards this topic. Sofie (2001) states that, in Islam, modesty is considered as an important part of faith. There was always a level of respect and mutual understanding, as well as rules, that

[1]Azhaan – Call for prayer

guided the lifestyle in my household. This was especially so in terms of prayer, actions and discipline that each of us in the household were responsible for. As Sheikh (2012) confirms this approach by saying that "the creation of women as taught by Islam is to procreate and to rear new generation" (Sheikh, 2012). By doing this, traditional Islamic families can maintain their households and be responsible for them. I believe that these ingrained rules enabled us to lead a stable, disciplined life where we can practise our religion effectively. This lifestyle also does not leave room to just drift away from our responsibilities.

Zain (2010) claims that "sexual education programmes need to be characterized by cultural sensitivity with regard to the diverse youth that need to obtain this information" (Zain, 2010). He further emphasises that Muslim females' must educate themselves on the topic and become more comfortable with discussions on sexuality. This will assist them to teach this topic to a diverse set of learners' in schools.

The South African Life Orientation CAPS policy

When relating gender and religion in teacher identity to South African teachers', it is important to take South Africa's socio-political and educational history into consideration. The history and politics of South Africa show how "inclusivity and integration links to the issue within the overall context of schooling in South Africa" (Vandeyar, 2010:345). During Apartheid in South Africa, many different races and religions were separated by living in different places, for example, whites, Indians and coloureds.. Thereafter, increasing integration occurred and with post-apartheid came "the new educational reforms which set new and more challenging demands on teachers' which were often in conflict with their beliefs and value systems" (Vandeyar, 2010:346). Due to this, the subject Life Orientation was introduced into the CAPS policy and made compulsory to teach from the year 2005. As a result, teachers' were under pressure to teach certain new and unfamiliar content to learners without their personal religion and gender role being considered.

The subject Life Orientation is often regarded by society in general as an easy subject which merely requires general knowledge. However, I feel that it is more than that. Teaching the subject Life Orientation has made me realise that it requires

specific skills, knowledge and attitudes to effectively teach this subject. Rooth (2011) defines Life Orientation as a subject which is the study of the self in relation to others and to society (Rooth, 2011). While agreeing with this statement, I would define Life Orientation as a complicated subject which involves the self, other people and society, all with various opinions, thoughts and behaviour patterns.

Furthermore, Jacobs (2015) state that "Life Orientation is a holistic subject involving the emotional, physical, mental and spiritual aspects of life that develops learners' on all levels". In addition, Life Orientation is a compulsory subject in the South African schooling system. It guides learners' towards maintaining their personal and social wellbeing while learning all the topics in the curriculum. Some of these topics include the environment, responsible citizenship, physical activity, sexual education, religion and guidance towards career choices. The South African Life Orientation CAPS policy also includes techniques to acquire knowledge, skills and values which are worth learning and practising. Hence, the curriculum aims to ensure that children acquire and apply their knowledge and skills in ways which are meaningful to their own lives. From a teaching perspective, some topics in the Life Orientation CAPS policy may be considered as sensitive for teachers as transmitters of knowledge. Topics such as sexual education or religion, may be sensitive areas for teacher's due to personal factors that constrain them in the workplace.

The Life Orientation CAPS policy seems to promote teachers who have an open mind and effective training for all religions, particularly if you are capable and willing to teach the subject. Jarvis (2009:131) supports this statement and claims that the Life Orientation CAPS policy "requires teachers to adopt to multi-religious approach to sexual education and religion education topics when presenting themselves in the classroom" (Jarvis, 2009:131). This can present severe challenges for teachers who do not have sufficient training or extensive knowledge of the religious diversity of learners in South African classrooms. The subject can also be simple and effective for teachers who can adjust and administer a positive, open minded and knowledgeable approach in their teaching methods in the classroom.

The essential elements that constitute the role of gender and religion in relation to sensitive topics cannot be separated from my role as a teacher. Thus, when I focus my study on the subject Life Orientation and teaching sensitive topics, it also shows how it impacts on my gender and religion.

Life Orientation CAPS policy with sexuality education as a component

According to DBE (2019) the core aim of sexuality education in the Life Orientation CAPS policy is to empower learners to build an understanding on the concepts, values, content and attitude around sexuality, sexual behaviour, as well as leading safe and healthy lives" (DBE, 2019). This is done to ensure that learners are prepared and can make appropriate choices when it comes to social demands, and to make them responsible enough to make the best of their life experiences.

Moreover, the curriculum is comprehensive enough to address real world challenges and enable learners to face day-to-day challenges they may experience. However, the curriculum also has a variety of issues and pedagogical concerns since the introduction of the subject Life Orientation 20 years ago. This is evident when Tamir (1988) claims that "Life Orientation is a subject which outlines the framework for teachers' knowledge consisting of 6 major categories which must be improved upon" (Tamir, 1988). These include, "liberal education, personal performance, subject matter, general pedagogy, subject matter specific pedagogy and foundations of the teaching profession, especially at the preservice stage" (Tamir, 1988). Tamir (1988) further emphasises that "the outcomes of these courses are reported in terms of the students perceptions of the knowledge and training that was acquired" (Tamir, 1988).

To situate my study of sexual education in a broader context of the Life Orientation curriculum, I use the following statement by Grossman (1990) that is mentioned early in his scholarly work and states that "Human beings are complex and have their own history, background experiences, emotions, knowledge and goals. He further states that we have our own sense of information and can take our own actions, based on our own instincts" (Grossman, 1990). Having said this, he portrays how the teaching process and teachers knowledge when teaching sexual education in Life Orientation

can be diverse especially when referring to the specified curriculum of sexual education in the subject Life Orientation. He further mentions a very important aspect pertaining to pedagogical content knowledge by mentioning that "knowledge, beliefs, attitudes and values as well as a myriad of constructs are now used to reduce, yet still communicate this complexity" (Grossman, 1990).

The Life Orientation CAPS policy is "based on principles which acknowledges the lives of learners, teachers' and society" (DBE, 2019). Although, many people may be subjective about this because of the complexity of specific topics, such as sexual education. DBE (2019) also mentions how "efforts are made to provide the content and context of each grade and show progression by moving from simple to complex" (DBE, 2019). This makes it a bigger struggle to cope with for some teachers' who cannot transmit knowledge which is regarded as sensitive for them.

In addition, during the 1960's, DBE (2019) mentions the theory of "multiple-intelligences who defined intelligence and rated people as intelligent only if they had logical, mathematical and linguistic abilities" (DBE, 2019). Therefore, the introduction of the Life Orientation curriculum has made people recognise the diversity of knowledge systems which attach meaning to the world we live in. Furthermore, "the South African Education Policy Act (Act No 27 of 1996) was taken as the beginning point in dealing with religion and sexuality education in the subject Life Orientation" (DBE, 2019). Moreover, in the context of the South African Life Orientation curriculum, "sensitive topics such as religion and sexuality education are necessary in order to educate multi-religious societies" (DBE, 2019). This is the only way in which individuals can be part of the broader community and use their own identities with those of others.

1.3 Clarification of concepts

1.3.1 Sensitive topics

The term "sensitive topics refers to an issue which must be dealt with" (Collins, 2017). This topic may be the cause of a disagreement between people; of making people upset or angry; or one which may cause harm. Lowe and Jones (2015) suggest that "sensitive topics must be topics which are carefully discussed and

develop critical consciousness with" (Lowe & Jones, 2015). For this study, I agree with the definition of Collins (2017), whereby she states that sensitive topics deal mainly with emotions which arise from disagreement and which make people upset or angry and can thus cause harm.

1.3.2 Islamic context

Ahmed (2010) says that "Islam means making one's religion and faith God's (Allah's) alone" (Ahmed, 2010). Islam is the religion I ascribe to. An Islamic context is described by Peter (2014) as "an effort to make personal and social life to conform with God's guidance" (Peter, 2014). It means a total commitment to a specific religion, Islam. The Muslim philosopher Ibn Arabi exclaimed: "A Muslim is a person who has dedicated his worship exclusively to God (Allah) and one who obeys the commandments" (Ahmed, 2010:1). Muslims are the people who follow the Islamic religion. In this study, I will use the definition of Islam given by Ahmed (2010) as I am a Muslim and dedicate my worship and beliefs to Allah alone.

1.3.3 Female beginner teacher identity

A female beginner teacher can be "defined as a newly qualified (female) teacher who has been teaching less than a total of three completed school years" (Forbes, 2016:1).However, according to Denzel (2018) "a female beginner teacher is defined as a registered female teacher, who is generally in their first 2 years of teaching" (Denzel, 2018). In this study, I will include the gender of females throughout my study. I will use the definition of Forbes (2016) where he defines female beginner teachers' as a newly qualified female teacher who has three or less than a total of three completed school years.

Black (2008) describes teacher identity as "how teacher's define themselves, with regard to their personal and cultural characteristics which affect the classroom and learning environment" (Black, 2008). I agree that the teacher identity of an individual affects their performance in the classroom and determines the learning environment. Teacher identity includes both personal and cultural characteristics which form part of my study. Both personal and cultural elements must be fostered to make a person develop holistically. Thus, human nature is bound by the influencing practise of an individual's belief which defines one's values and attitudes.

1.3.4 Analytic auto-ethnographic account

An analytic auto-ethnography is described as "an approach to research and writing that seeks to describe and systematically analyse personal experience" (Ellis et al, 2011). However, Bochner (1984) claims that "an auto-ethnography gains personal characteristics from personal experiences, traditional experiences, different beliefs and inequalities which may promote transformation that guide for a better life" (Bochner, 1984). In this study, I will use the definition by Ellis et al (2011), as I believe that an analytic auto-ethnographic study describes and systematically analyses personal experience in a specific context. I will share my personal auto-ethnographic account, which is thus a retelling of my experiences on a personal and professional level with regards to sensitive topics.

1.4 Focus and purpose of the study

The focus of this study is to understand my experiences of teaching sensitive topics in my professional capacity, as a female beginner teacher who has an Islamic upbringing and strong religious views according to which I live. The purpose of this study is to make sense of these personal and professional experiences gained when teaching sensitive topics as an Islamic beginner female teacher. In so doing this study will contribute to body of knowledge about this subject.

1.5 Research questions

This research study was driven by the primary research question, followed by 4 subsidiary questions namely:

Primary research question

- How did I, as a female Muslim beginner teacher, experience the teaching of sensitive topics within an Islamic perspective?

Subsidiary research questions

- Why did I experience this in such a manner?
- What is the nature of the tradition that shaped my identity, orientation and beliefs as a female Muslim?

- What are the expectations of the LO curriculum, as stipulated in CAPS?
- What are the typical challenges novice teacher's might experience in relation to the teaching of LO?

1.6   Rationale and motivation

The motivation and basis of the study are included the personal justification, professional justification, conceptual justification and scholarly justification which follow.

1.6.1 Personal justification

As mentioned in the introduction of the study, I developed an interest in writing about a specific religion, Islam, and the influences it has on female beginner teachers' in teaching Life Orientation because I am a Muslim and experienced difficulties teaching certain topics in this subject. This study is important to me as I can learn from various opinions and develop a mindset which will make me a devoted leader in my religion. I also wish to be a quality transmitter of knowledge in the workplace. This research topic fits into my life as a central component of my being, as every phase of my life revolves around my religion, Islam. I have undertaken this study because once, during my practical training, I personally experienced teaching Life Orientation content knowledge of sexual education to a grade 9 class. As a Muslim female beginner teacher, I did not feel comfortable teaching sexuality to a class of fourty four learner's as I found I could not express myself freely and respond to particular demands set by the learners. It disturbed me deeply. I was a beginner Muslim teacher at that time. Being confronted with the sexual education topic and presenting it to a class of teenagers for the first time was embarrassing and shameful for me.

I was not ready and professionally not experienced enough to be confronted with this dilemma. The discussion on my experiences are elaborated upon in chapter 4 of this study. Furthermore, growing up as a Muslim girl to talk openly about sex is frowned upon and not done. Knowledge on sex education had to be gained through self-teaching, or modestly spoken about during strictly private interactions with a friend or Islamic teacher at a religious institution called a [2]Madrasahs. There are many female

---

[2]Madrasahs can be explained as "a college for Islamic instruction" (Rassol 2015:95).

beginner teachers who may not follow the religion Islam in the way I do. They may thus have a different solution or approach to this specific problem of teaching sex education to learners. Being able to write down my journey through a life which has created this perception about teaching sexual education to a diverse set of learners, is an extremely interesting exercise.

1.6.2 Professional justification

This research study will help me improve my performance as a teacher and my reaction when faced with teaching a sensitive topic like this. The way I express myself and respond to certain situations or issues in the classroom, with regards to religious beliefs and discussion of sexual education topics, will be improved and correctly dealt with. I wish to be able to adopt a positive attitude in the classroom when it comes to different learners from different religions. In addition, I also want to make sure that I am ready to discuss the topic and use an open channel of communication with the learners when I teach sexual education so that quality education can take place.

For effective teaching of diverse cultures in a classroom I will need to adjust my attitude and values, as well as how I approach learners and discussions. The best attitude and approach is also necessary for effective learning to take place. As a result, this could also lead to an improved version of myself. Continued growth through learning different ways of living life and communicating will come from a diverse set of learners contributions. Therefore, encountering a diverse set of learners' in a classroom will also promote a positive impact in my life professionally. Negative influences can be modified through insight and attention to the different contributions and experiences in the classroom.

However, I can also improve professionally by gathering my various feelings, thoughts and ideas through my own writing. This will enable me to identify what really works for me and what does not. This is important as I will be able to identify why I am too constricted in the secular world. This study will help me find a solution on how to deal with my fears, and problems with different beliefs, which are currently limiting my performance. It will also serve as informative feedback so that I can improve my female beginner teacher identity. I will also be able to identify areas of growth and to implement positive change.

1.6.3 Conceptual justification

The key concepts in my study include sensitive topics, Islamic context, female beginner teacher identity and analytic auto-ethnographic account. I am interested in focusing on these specific concepts. I want to know about the sensitive topics and what they mean in detail, how they influence my religion, Islam, and what it does to my personal religion. I also want to describe how my personal experiences relate to the concepts mentioned above.

Muslim females are treated differently from males. Men are permitted to do certain things such as express themselves in an authoritative manner regarding certain topics, such as sexual education. This is difficult for a Muslim female to do, especially in the classroom. I therefore want to examine how these key concepts affect my gender. In addition, an analytic auto-ethnography is important as I need to describe my personal experiences and relate them to my research study.

1.6.4 Scholarly justification

Elias (2019) suggests that one needs to "develop systematic concepts about the topic and then gather meanings for them, which are first broken down and explained and thereafter it can lead to a clearer understanding in order to develop a meaningful study" (Elias 2019). Sensitive topics remain difficult areas which need further study to assist teachers' who deal with them. Akhtar (2011) puts forward the notion that "sensitive topic teaching to many practitioners at the school fails to take into account the fact that issues such as personal responsibility, the management of feelings and relationships, the development of self-esteem and qualities such as caring and sensitivity to others occupy a key place in many approaches to teaching about sexual education" (Akhtar 2011). Therefore, the transmitters of knowledge as well as the receivers of knowledge need to be prepared and have a positive attitude towards both the teaching and learning of this topic. Morris (2012) suggests that, for Muslims, further research should be done in "Islamic ideals relating to sexual behaviour which should be divided into 3 aspects namely, the sexual, sacral and the social" (Morris, 2012). Morris (2012) also wrote that it is in this way that "the gaps that exist in any society between its ideals and its practises will be filled" (Morris, 2012).

Knowing more about the Islamic context on a scholarly level is important as the concept of an Islamic context includes the ways in which Islamic teaching's prohibit shaving or picking hairs, and wearing short dresses even at a young age (Qasim, 2007). Majah (2007) also mentions that "Muslim women are prohibited from using public baths or swimming pools in order not to expose herself to evil inferences (Majah, 2007). Research argues that "to develop and implement an adequate understanding of the Islamic context and their elements, a construction of ideas and information must be identified and challenged" (Green, 2003).

Female beginner teacher identity as a scholarly research subject is an important concept as this study focuses on myself, as a Muslim female who is in conflict due to the identify shifts that took place in my life. Mohammed (2009) asserts that "Identity can be divided into smaller components. It has so much to do with how one views oneself, for example one's self definition, and it has to do with how one is perceived by others" (Mohammed, 2009). Basically, the ideal female beginner teacher identity will depend on the individual themselves. Yusuf (2013) asserts that further research must be done in Islam that has "blinded its female followers due to the glamour of western civilisation" (Yusuf, 2013). Furthermore, he states that they are "overawed by this great idol, they worship it, approach it and stand before it humbly with downcast eyes accepting western principles" (Yusuf, 2013). This also affects their modesty levels in speech, habits and dress code which causes female identity shifts.

An analytic auto-ethnography as a scholarly research design is important in this study because it gathers data which will lead to the conclusion of my study. Furthermore, it is a detailed self-reflective narrative about myself and my teacher identity. Herbert (2005) explained in detail how the words 'auto', 'ethno' and 'graphy' are linked together from an autobiographic and ethnographic point of view (Herbert, 2005). The concept of "an auto-ethnography is both a process and product" (Adams, 2011). By making use of an auto-ethnography as a research method, I challenge certain statements in the literature, as I believe some of the findings do not comply with the ideal traditional values and rituals that each Islamic family may believe in. Hence, further research in this field is important, as people may not be aware of the

content of sensitive topics and may misunderstand the actual meaning of what is taught in classrooms.

1.7 Theoretical Framework

I have employed the theoretical framework in my research study. These concepts incorporated in this section have a direct link with the topic of my study and present a logical flow in relation to my research study. The important factors in this section include: Third World Feminism and Islamic education as the central components in my theoretical framework. This is discussed in detail in chapter 2 of my research study.

1.8 Research Methodology

For this study, the research methodology involved a qualitative approach (Ferguson, 2012). I have incorporated an "Interpretivist epistemological stance because Interpretivism emphasizes the ability of an individual to draw conclusions by themselves" (Maree, 2016:60). Therefore, "interpretivism focuses on human beings and their individual views on how they see the world" (Maree, 2016:60). The research design in my research constitute an analytic auto-ethnography. An analytic auto-ethnographic study aims to portray "an individual's way of life in their naturalistic setting" (Creswell, 2007). When writing this study, I spent most of my time observing and recollecting moments of my journey through life. This was also done with the help of my co-constructors of knowledge. To assist me in generating data, I wrote a series of self-reflective narratives highlighting my experiences with the concept of sensitive topics within an Islamic context.

Quality measures that were included in my research were trustworthiness, confirmability, authenticity, transferability and verisimilitude (Mortensen, 2016). This makes my research data valuable, realistic and goal orientated will help me reach an effective conclusion at the end of my research. The co-constructors of knowledge in my study were asked to write letters of verisimilitude to corroborate my memories. In this regard, I adhered to ethical principles as described by Murphy (2007), who proposes confidentiality and anonymity, Kaiser (2009) who refers to informed consent and Mapedzahama (2017) who focuses on protecting participants from harm.

1.9 Outline of the study

Chapter 1 is an introduction to the study and an overview of the research process. It describes the contextual background, outlines the focus and purpose of the study and states the rationale of the study, research question and subsidiary questions. There is an overview of the theoretical framework used in this study, and a brief research methodology of the study is outlined.

Chapter 2 consists of an overview of the existing literature related to all the key concepts included in my study. The theoretical framework appropriate for my study is also presented in this chapter.

Chapter 3 describes the research methodology and focuses on the research design and approaches used in the study. Chapter 3 also includes the quality criteria and ethical considerations used.

Chapter 4 includes my own personal self-reflective narratives.

Chapter 5 deals with the data interpretation and analysis, the themes and sub-themes that emerged in my study and the limitations of the analytic auto-ethnography as a research design. The data generated from my co-constructors of knowledge is also acknowledged when analysing the data. The main findings of the self-reflective narratives described in Chapter 4 are presented in this chapter.

Chapter 6 provides an overall summary of the study. Conclusions derived from my study are stated. My study's contribution is mentioned in this chapter as well as the detailed recommendations and implications for theory research and future practise is presented.

1.10 Summary of Chapter1

In the introductory paragraph, I provide a brief overview and the background to the study. The focus and purpose of the study are highlighted in this chapter. The primary research question is followed by four subsidiary questions guiding my study. The key concepts of my study include, sensitive topics, female beginner teacher

identity, Islamic context and analytic auto-ethnographic account, are clarified. The rationale includes a personal, professional, conceptual and scholarly motivation. Furthermore, an overview of the theoretical framework is summarised and the research methodology, which includes a brief explanation about the data generated, data analysis, ethical considerations and quality criteria of the study, follows. In the next chapter, Chapter 2, various scholarly works by different authors will be analysed and discussed.

CHAPTER 2 – LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction to the chapter

This chapter will focus on the similarities and differences between my study and other relevant studies in terms of the focus of the primary research question and subsidiary questions. A theoretical framework, presenting Third World feminism, a model guiding the study and Islamic education is prevalent in this chapter. In order to conduct a literature review, it is important to "develop a research idea" (Catherine and Mark, 2016:335), and to combine what is already known about a subject in order to assist one in "identifying knowledge gaps and acknowledging how your research could contribute to further understanding" (Catherine & Mark, 2016:335).

Anastasiadis, Rajan and Winchester (2018) claim that "a literature review will enable one to develop a hypothesis and to frame the research question" (Anastasiadis, Rajan & Winchester, 2008). They further state that "once you have carried out a piece of research, a literature review is also crucial for evaluating your data and determining their relevance to your research study" (Anastasiadis, Rajan & Winchester, 2018). Research data without a context derived from a literature review cannot be understood or convey any meaning to the study. A literature review can enable research from other sources to support and collaborate the results and compare the results that differ, "enabling the researcher to position the research" (Anastasiadis, Rajan & Winchester, 2018). This will contribute to the relevance of my research and present the potential impact from other sources on my own study.

2.2 Conducting a literature review

The first step before writing a literature review is to acknowledge what a literature review is. According to Andrew and Richard (2012), "a literature review is defined as a summary of previous research on a topic" (Andrew & Richard, 2012). The literature review "surveys scholarly articles, books and other sources relevant to my particular research topic" (Andrew & Richard, 2012). Therefore, when presenting a literature review, it will also inform myself as the researcher of the "influential researchers and research groups in the field" (LeCompte et al, 2013:124). Their opinions about what is said on the topic will also be provided. The literature review must be a "legitimate

and publishable scholarly document" (LeCompte et al, 2013:124). In this way, it makes sense to both the researcher and the reader reviewing the literature document.

A literature review cannot contain faulty sources of information. Cooper and Light (2012) suggest that reviews of literature "must be classified according to five characteristics namely: focus, goal, perspective, coverage and organization" (Cooper & Light, 2012). This means that reviews of literature can differ from each other depending on the application to the research topic. However, to be meaningful, they must all possess the five characteristics stated above. The literature review must be able to "distinguish what has been done and what needs to be done, identify relationships between ideas in the variety of sources and relate the ideas or the topic of the study to appropriate theories that apply to the study" (Light & Pillemer, 2016).

2.3 Themes and sub-themes evident in my literature review

Jones (2017) claims that "finding common themes in your review enables you to read, and organize your work into categories" and further states that the different categories in the themes must relate to one another in order to attain a logical flow in the literature review (Jones, 2017). I have divided my literature review into themes and sub themes to ensure a logical flow. Greg (2012:7) states that "subthemes identify underlying ideas, patterns and assumptions, which focus on a specific context or idea which has a direct link to the themes" (Greg, 2012:7). The thematic division for this study is presented below, in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1: Thematic division of themes and sub-themes within the literature review

THEMES	SUB-THEMES
2.3.1 An Islamic context	2.3.1.1 The nature of Islamic traditions
	2.3.1.2 Shahadah (declaration of faith)
	2.3.1.3 Prayer (Salat)
	2.3.1.4 Sawm (fasting)
	2.3.1.5 Charity (zakat)
	2.3.1.6 Hajj (pilgrimage to Mecca)

2.3.2 Gender and teacher identity within an Islamic context	2.3.2.1 The role of the female in an Islamic context
	2.3.2.2 Female teachers
	2.3.2.3 Female beginner teachers
	2.3.2.4 Teacher identity
	2.3.2.5 Female beginner teacher identities
	2.3.2.6 Personal identity formation in relation to the LO curriculum
	2.3.2.7 Professional identity formation in relation to the LO curriculum
2.3.3 Personal identity formation in relation to the LO curriculum	2.3.3.1 Life Orientation teacher identity in relation to speech, thoughts and actions
	2.3.3.2 "I'm a woman before I'm an LO teacher" (Sikes & Everington, 2003)
	2.3.3.3 Muslims and Sex Education
	2.3.3.4 Monitoring and support mechanisms for teaching Life Orientation
2.3.4 Professional identity formation relation to the LO curriculum	2.3.4.1 Perceptions of principals and Life orientation teachers
	2.3.4.2 Readiness towards the implementation of the curriculum
	2.3.4.3 Non-violent pedagogical approach to teacher development for Life Orientation
	2.3.4.4 Innovative pedagogies for Life Orientation
	2.3.4.5 Life Orientation teachers career development
2.3.5 The relationship between the personal and professional values for Life Orientation educators'	Professional individual identity elaborated on in paragraph format
2.3.6 The relationship between gender and teaching	2.3.6.1 Teachers perceptions of female teacher's and male teacher's within traditional gender roles
	2.3.6.2 Teachers competencies and factors affecting the performance of female teachers
	2.3.6.3 The role of female teachers in activating effective teaching skills
	2.3.6.4 Gender in the teaching profession
	2.3.6.5 Teaching style differences between male and female teachers
2.3.7 Dealing with sensitive topics in the classroom from an Islamic perspective	2.3.7.1 Comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) in South African schools
	2.3.7.2 Life Orientation linked to the Islamic context

	2.3.7.3 Teaching sensitive topics
	2.3.7.4 Relationship between teaching sensitive topics and an Islamic perspective
2.3.8 Life Orientation in the CAPS curriculum	2.3.8.1 Origin of the subject
	2.3.8.2 Grades 8-10 Life Orientation Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (Senior Phase)
	2.3.8.3 Overview of the learning topics in Life Orientation

2.3.1 An Islamic context

2.3.1.1The nature of Islamic traditions

Research by scholars in the last decade mentions the different Muslim groups stating that "there are two major groups in the Muslim community which results from an early dispute to Muhammed's leadership. These are known to be the Sunnis, which consists of 85% Muslims and the Shafee group which exist in many parts of the world" (Husseini, 2015). In addition, the Shafee group is a school of thought in Islamic Jurisprudence. The traditional faith of Islam reveals that "Islam has originated in the seventh century with the prophet Muhammed and his revelation revealed in the Holy Qur'an" (Esposito, 2012).

However, the main challenge in the modern Muslim faith within the five pillars of Islam, in the 21st century, is to "understand the common religious heritage" (Esposito, 2012). This implies that not only as individuals, but whole communities, as believers of the Islamic faith, face problems in the modern world and have a common goal they would like to achieve, which is peace and justice worldwide. Joseph (2020) emphasises that "Islam placed a high value on education as faith spread among diverse people and Muslim education became an important indicator through which a universal and social order was formed" (Joseph, 2020). Early Muslim education began in mosques where the Qur'an had been discussed and where religious sciences were taught to interested Muslims'. Studies in the "21st century show that "Islam is the fastest growing religion in the world" (Ahmed, 2012:21).

Before exploring the nature of Islamic traditions in depth, the concept of the word "Islamic" needs to be explained. Islamic is an "Arabic term simply meaning to submit

ones will to the will of God" (Cahroo, 2019). This implies "doing anything and everything in a specific way which confirms to the religion Islam" (Cahroo, 2019). "Islamic, derived from the word Islam, implies a monotheistic religion that teaches that there is only one divine being and one supreme creator of the universe" (Cahroo, 2019). Muslims all around the world believe that Islam can be practised by anyone at any time and in every place. The total obedience and guidance in life which Muslims follow, is defined as their devotion and total submission to God (Cahroo, 2019).

Internationally, the Islamic tradition has a wide variety of approaches to "understand the origin of God, the universe we live in and the nature of humanity" (Samodeen, 2019). According to Muslim scholars, "Muslim traditions require specialised training, societal participation, questions about the nature of humanity, and the cultivation of character through recitation in Arabic, Persian and other vernacular languages used in the Islamic community" (Samodeen, 2019).

For example, in Saudi Arabia, Islamic traditions are defined as "cultural practises that are common to historically Islamic people" (Chongkian, 2018). The greater the Islamic religion in International countries is, the greater the Islamic empires are (Chongkian, 2018). According to Haddow (2017) "the early forms of Muslim traditions influenced and attained much from the Egyptian, Turkey, Malay, Morocco and Somali traditions" (Haddow, 2017). However, all of these countries differ with regard to the application and implementation of their Islamic beliefs and are, in their own way, unique.

Moreover, "Islamic traditions Internationally and nationally require different devotional practises to increase their taqwa[3] and discipline", as well as their attitude and behaviour towards others" (Faheema, 2017). Islamic traditions relate to the "five pillars of Islam as their focus for ritual practises from the initial stages of their lives" (Samodeen, 2019). According to Faheema (2017), the five pillars of Islam are "based on the Quran and were given during the Interpretations by the ulama[4] in the first three centuries of Islam" (Faheena, 2017). "The five pillars are namely, shahadah (declaration of faith), salat (prayer), sawm (fasting), zakat (charity) and hajj

[3]Taqwa – God consciousness

[4]Ulama – Religious leader in a Islamic institution

(pilgrimage to mecca)" (Faheema, 2017). The following description below will be used to explain each of the pillars of Islam.

2.3.1.2 Shahadah (declaration of faith)

The Shahadah as a declaration states that "there is no God except Allah alone" (Samodeen, 2019). Allah is one God and the prophet Muhammed is the messenger of Allah. The Shahadah can "be recited when a person chooses to convert to Islam" (Samodeen, 2019). The word Shahadah also "reflects the fundamental beliefs of Islam" (Samodeen, 2019). "Recitation in Arabic from the Holy Qur'an is read as a declaration of faith in the Islamic religion" (Samodeen, 2019). In addition, the rationale for Shahadah is used as a "verbal expression of one's conviction about the oneness of Allah" (Qur'an, 2:283). Therefore, the importance of Shahadah is to announce and embrace the entry into Islam by pronouncing an individual's belief through Shahadah and practising it through the other four pillars of Islam.

2.3.1.3 Salat (prayer)

"Salat originates from the Arabic language meaning prayer" (Faheema, 2017) in the Islamic context. There are specific routines that must be observed when conducting this prayer. This prayer must be read, using the Arabic language, from the Holy Qur'an. The prayer can "only be conducted after the azhaan[5] has been recited at the Mosque" (Faheema, 2017) and must be read five times a day while kneeling facing towards Mecca. The rationale for Salat which is the second pillar of Islam, is to ensure abstinence from indecency and the forbidden (Qur'an, 29:45) as well as promote the cultivation of a sense of identity among Muslims through a spirit of togetherness that is nurtured among them as they pray together five times a day. As a result, this is how Muslims cultivate a socio-religious identity for themselves which may influence their thinking or perception with regards to various issues (Faheema, 2017).

2.3.1.4 Sawm (fasting)

Fasting is done during the month of Ramadaan. Muslim people follow the Islamic calendar. Ramadaan is the 9th month on the Islamic calendar. During this month, a Muslim may not eat or drink any form of liquids while the sun is out. Thus, they open

---

[5]Athaan – Recitation for call for prayer

their fast during sunrise, and break their fast when the moon is out, which is during sunset. Muslims fast for a period of thirty days. Following the month of fasting, they celebrate the holy occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr. The rationale for Sawm, which is the third pillar of Islam, is to enable them to have a feeling of the suffering by those who cannot afford to feed themselves. Therefore, "the purpose of fasting is to make them conscious of Allah as they feel for the poor" (Qur'an, 2:183). In conclusion, this shapes the orientation of a Muslim individual.

2.3.1.5 Zakat (Charity)

Every year a Muslim is required to redistribute wealth and make the poor use the wealth for themselves. A percentage of 0.5% of their wealth is usually allowed to be given. This only takes place if a person is of the working class and can afford to give out money, after feeding their families. "This is often given as a welfare package for others" (Qur'an, 9:60). In this way, the people in communities who are in need are taken care of.

2.3.1.6 Hajj (Pilgrimage to Mecca)

The Pilgrimage to Mecca is compulsory for a Muslim, if they have the means to do it. Therefore, the rationale for this is not only to provide Muslims with a purpose of crowning their religious practise with experience, but to feel the peace and purest place of worship on earth (Qur'an, 2:197).

Hajj is the 12th or last month on the Muslim calendar. This pilgrimage takes four weeks to complete. There are many processes involved. One of which is visiting the Kabah[6] – a black stone in Saudi Arabia. During this period of Hajj, a Muslim must have no financial accounts owed to anybody and before departing on this journey must ask for forgiveness from anyone they may have hurt. At the end of this journey, when returning home, a Muslim has his hair shaven off as an indication that the Pilgrimage of Hajj is complete.

---

[6]Kabah – a black stone in Saudi Arabia

2.3.2 Beginner teacher identity within an Islamic context

2.3.2.1 The role of the female in an Islamic context

The concept of gender in Islam refers to the male and female connotation which also prescribes the way the individual will have to live. Fadlallah (2015) speaks about the "coalition between men and women in faith in Islam" (Fadlallah, 2015). The important fact he places emphasis on is "reaffirmation from the Holy Quran which encourages females to be involved in all areas of social and political life, in opposition to the traditional beliefs where females in Islam are only allowed to devote their lives to being mothers and wives, which does not fulfil many females lives in the Islamic religion" (Fadlallah, 2015).This is supported by Lamrabet (2016) when she describes "how men and women must be given equal footing in the religion Islam" (Lamrabet, 2016). She also states that the Islamic religion "has an impact on both genders as traditions concern women in the same way as the men" (Lamrabet, 2016).

In middle eastern countries such as Saudi Arabia, "laws enforce a specific form of guidelines by implementing gender segregation rules amongst the Islamic community" (Bell and Shaikhouni, 2017). They also state that "females must adhere to strict dress codes and cannot communicate with unrelated men" (Bell & Shaikhouni, 2017). Women "have to travel, work or access any healthcare facility provided whereby it is compulsory for them to possess a written permission form accompanied by a male guardian" (Bell & Shaikhouni, 2017).

Female rights in "Saudi Arabia have been limited as laws require females to seek permission for various decisions and actions which extends to the ban on women driving" (Kajee, 2018). However, he argues that the "new modern societal standards which introduce females having equal rights just as men by participating in the society to maintain equality of gender in the religion Islam" (Kajee, 2018). One of the latest developments, which addresses the inequality, includes allowing females to obtain a driver's licence. In this way, "females are allowed to gain a sense of having a choice of independent movement" (Kajee, 2018).

The main element in *gender importance in Islam* reflects how "gender roles manifest themselves as males and females are allocated different rights for different Islamic traditions" (Ikram, 2016). However, in most Muslim countries such as Saudi Arabia, Doha and Somali, "females are restricted from practising certain rights by law which

hampers their development" (Ikram, 2016). Recently the rapper Nicki Minaj cancelled a scheduled performance in Saudi Arabia in support for the rights of females in the community (Carolyn, 2019). However, according to Carolyn (2019) "despite Saudi Arabia trying to limit the restrictions in the arts sector, the issues of Nicki Minaj's revealing outfits and explicit lyrics would remain an issue in the kingdom" (Carolyn, 2019).

2.3.2.2 Female teachers

Ben et al (2011:18) claim that "female teachers decisions on wearing of [7]hijab (headscarf) in physical education lessons in a multicultural, multifaith city is bound by socio-cultural factors" (Ben et al, 2011:18). Therefore, "In order to fulfil Islamic requirements for body modesty is where differences in values, attitude and behaviour can lead to incompatibility with body cultures in physical education for many Muslim female teachers and learners" (Flintoff et al, 2008). Flintoff et al (2008) further says that: "Parental withdrawals of Muslim girls from participation were made on claims of learning environments not meeting religious requirements" (Flintoff et al, 2008). Hence, it is essential, for both the teacher and the learner who are Muslim females, to be modest and adhere to the dress code in the learning and teaching environments.

Campbell (2000:283) states that "the attitudes of teachers, from the Islamic religion, towards sexual education create a negative impact" (Campbell, 2000:283). This is caused by the "teachers' attitude towards the content being presented and her contributions towards the subject" (Campbell, 2000:283). He further states that "many female teachers from diverse communities experience difficulties with teaching Life Orientation topics on sexuality because of their cultures" (Campbell, 2000:283). Some teachers have also expressed their reservations towards "young teachers' identities on sexuality and on the concept of perceived irresponsible behaviour and view it as an immediate threat which is infrequently acknowledged" (Flintoff et al, 2008).

---

[7]Hijab:"Hijab is described as a head covering worn in public by Muslim women". It is a traditional covering for the hair and neck" (Ahmed 2010:94).

Furthermore, Sumsion (2002) states that "teachers identities are not only constricted from technical and emotional aspects of teaching for example, classroom management or subject knowledge but also as a result of interaction between the personal experiences of teachers and the social, religious and institutional environment which they function on a daily basis" (Sumsion, 2002).These experiences affect Muslim females considerably as they become part of their life, and many of them gain unique life experiences. Due to the diverse environments that they function in daily, young Muslim teachers may be influenced negatively and find it difficult to adapt.

In addition, the teacher identity of a Muslim female is directly related to her Islamic way of life and its routines. It creates a challenge for Muslim female teachers if they "find that their learners, and colleagues expect them to be puritanical and prudish with regards to issues of sex, and behaviour, such as going to pubs and nightclubs, which has sexual potential such as picking up partners" (Sikes & Everington, 2003:394). This is because many of the teachers, particularly Muslim female beginner teachers, are unskilled and thus unable to fulfil this task of teaching learners' sensitive topics such as sexual education from the Life Orientation curriculum. To conclude this argument, I use the following quote by Qasim (2007) who mentions that "Islam enjoins modesty in women in their utterance, appearance and their behaviour in society (Qasim, 2007).

Therefore, "many Muslim female teachers express themselves by mentioning the sensitivities they feel while teaching sexual education" (Lamote & Engels, 2010:10). Muslim female beginner educators are not comfortable and thus unable to teach sexual education to learners who have already been exposed to sexual discussions. Muslim females are brought up in a situation where talking about sex openly is frowned upon. Silver (2014) shows how Muslim female beginner teachers relate to teaching sexual education by quoting the words: "We are a peaceful nation with harmony" (Silver, 2014) , therefore "such things are difficult for us to express to the learners'" (Silver, 2014). These statements demonstrate how the religion Islam promotes tranquillity and respect amongst one another. This is reflected not only in a female's dress code, but also in the manner in which she speaks, thinks, reacts and behaves.

2.3.2.3 Female beginner teachers

Globally, female beginner teachers have different experiences regarding gender and religion and their teacher identity and professional development are also affected differently. Klassen and Chiu (2010:745) explain "how beginner teachers gather much more lower classroom management and self-efficacy" (Klassen and Chiu, 2010:745). They describe the manner in which "international beginner teachers struggle to balance the influence that gender and religion have on teacher identity" (Klassen & Chiu, 2010:745).

2.3.2.4 Teacher identity

Beijaard et al (2016) confirm that "teacher identity consists of three sub-identities. They are the teacher as a subject matter expert, the pedagogical expert, and didactical expert" (Beijaard et al, 2006). These types of sub-identities affirm the role and situatedness that teachers find themselves under. For example, if a teacher cannot master the subject they are teaching and cannot cope with the required content knowledge that must be taught, both the pedagogical and didactical elements will result in failure. Hence, in my argument, I aim to point the factor that if the teacher identity is not suitable for a certain subject, all other elements cannot be combined to make teaching and learning successful. To introduce the term teacher identity further, I provide the following quote from Walker and Milton (2008) who explains how a young female teacher, who expresses how her personality determined her teacher identity by saying:

"I think it's my personality. Because I'm never formal. Whatever situation when I come and find that they are playing, I play with them. I try always to adjust to their levels" (Walker & Milton, 2008).

The term 'teacher identity' can be seen as "the way in which teachers see themselves as, in terms of the conditions of work in mind and relating it to their emotionalism, professionalism and political status" (Hamachek, 2016). The definition above by Hamachek (2016) is supported by the statement that becoming a teacher "occurs in the interactions between teachers' beliefs and values and the educational context in which they find themselves" (Hamachek, 2016). Therefore, "teachers identities are created and recreated over time and influenced by an array of factors" (Hamachek, 2016).

However, an old source by Hartshorne (1999:17), reveals that "with the development of skills for the in-situation handing of identity experiences, it can produce positive effects for teachers identities" (Hartshorne, 1999:17). This brings forward the idea that teacher's periods for practical learning constitute the most challenging and personal demanding elements of a program.

2.3.2.5 Female beginner teacher identities

According to Mdletshe (2010:2) "the religion that teachers believe in can either facilitate or constrict teacher workplace learning and their professional growth" (Mdletshe, 2010:2). He also states that "a Muslim teacher can either fulfil the duty as a teacher successfully or is limited by their modest actions" (Mdletshe, 2010:2). Their backgrounds, religious devotions and religious teachings affect their performance. The "different beliefs, traditions, teaching experience and types of environments the teachers function on during a daily basis" (Mdletshe, 2010:5) affect their comfort and openness when teaching the subject Life Orientation.

Beginner teacher identities are affected by many factors including the technical and emotional aspects of teaching, as well as personal experiences, and the environment where they work. Social and religious factors can play a defining role for some teachers (Sumsion, 2002:16). Olsen (2010), in the definition of teacher identity, claims is to "portray the concept of teacher identities being more complex than just managing a classroom on a day to day basis" (Olsen, 2010).

Therefore, "not only does the curriculum content affect teachers' abilities to transmit knowledge, but the fact that personal upbringing, the social environment that one may interact in and religious duties also play a role in our professional roles in the school context" (Sumsion, 2002:16). This affects performance of teachers in the classroom.

Teachers identities can be described as "multiple, unstable and continually shifting" (Smit & Fritz, 2008:97). Teachers often pose the following questions to themselves, "who am I as a teacher?" "who do I want to become?" and "who am I at this moment?" (Henry, 2016:293). Teachers who are still in early service practise in the school often experience a lot of tension. This is usually because "newly qualified teachers have issues concerning gender and religion during the early phases of their

teaching careers. This hampers their performance and their identities at the same time" (Henry, 2016:293). Mathews et al (2006) claim that "The perceptions by others of Muslim female beginner teachers regarding sexual education influence their teaching by their self-efficacy too".

They also state that female beginner teachers' need to be more self-confident and more willing to teach the content of sexual education (Mathews et al, 2006). Sikes and Everington (2011:394) suggest that "the implications of having religious attributions of modesty and dress code influence Muslim teachers' sense of self and self-esteem when performing in the workplace" (Sikes & Everington, 2011:394). There is thus a direct effect on a Muslim teacher's identity when teaching sensitive topics, such as sexual education, in the classroom. The classroom involves the teacher as a facilitator of knowledge and learners who accept and understand the knowledge you are giving. Hence, the classroom situation may affect either the Muslim female beginner teacher or the learners present through the content presented or the ideas and arguments arising. It is also true that "what we look like, what we wear, say important things about who we are, how we see ourselves and how we want others to see us" (Sikes & Everington, 2003:400). This means that appearance is an important indicator of a Muslim individual's identity. Women should make sure that their clothing does not reveal the shape of their bodies and that their clothing is not transparent.

Many Muslim female teachers face negative experiences both personally and with their learners. These affect their teacher identity and their practise, as they are "unable to teach their subject as they would wish" (Sikes & Everington, 2003:394). However, Smit and Fritz (2008:100), state that "female beginner teachers have the opportunity for professional development due to being exposed to teaching in different environments and with different religions present" (Smit&Fritz,2008:100).

These 2 statements by Sikes and Everington (2003:394) and Smit and Fritz (2008:100) may be different for different people due to their religious and gender differences as well as personal opinions. In other words, many educators teaching methodologies and content of a particular subject will be different because of their background and other personal factors.

2.3.3 Personal identity formation in relation to the LO curriculum

The personal identity formation in relation to the Life Orientation curriculum can be described in the different categories below:

2.3.3.1 Life Orientation teacher identity in relation to speech, thoughts and actions

The Islamic religion incorporates "humility and modesty as high levels of value" (Mohammed, 1999). According to Mohammed (1999) these elements illustrate how if the principle of the concepts mentioned above are not adhered to in any context, it is considered to be haram[8] (not prohibited) in the religion Islam.

Therefore, when teaching the subject Life Orientation, in relation to personal teacher identity formation, actions such as "vulgar words, lewd speech, watching or looking at intimate acts on pictures or the television, listening to obscene songs, casual meetings between men and women and using any form of physical or verbal connotation to convey meaning to an idea or content being discussed is not allowed as prescribed by Islamic teachings" (Al-Qaradawi, 1995:28).

It is therefore important to protect your modesty in the Islamic religion and take self-disciplinary steps to ensure that a Muslim female observes and acts according to the prescribed scripture and boundaries in Islam, not matter what context they find themselves in. Hence, when teaching the subject Life Orientation and when linking it to female teachers, it is important to consider that Modesty is so central to Islam that the Prophet (PBUH)[9] said:

> "*Every deen (way of life) has an innate character*
> *The character of Islam is modesty*" (Al-Muwatta, 1990:57)

2.3.3.2 "I'm a woman before I'm an LO teacher" (Sikes & Everington, 2003:397)

According to Sikes and Everington, (2003), he describes "how gender can have a negative implication for their relationship with learners and their abilities to therefore teacher Life Orientation would differ" (Sikes & Everington, 2003). In addition, this

---

[8] Haram – not prohibited or allowed to do

[9] PBUH – Peace be upon him

affects their personal self, self-esteem, their capabilities and their performance in the workplace.

Furthermore, "I'm a woman before I'm an LO teacher" (Sikes & Everington, 2003) clearly stipulates that when teaching Life Orientation, specifically when teaching the sensitive topic of sexual or religious education, "values and attitudes of those female teachers must be taken into account" (Sikes & Everington, 2003). I agree with this statement, because studies suggest that "many female beginner teachers experience tension early in their career when taking the social role of teaching religious and sexual education and the identity of a personal, individual teacher" (Hanson & Herrington, 1976; Lacey, 1977; Sikes et al., 1985).

2.3.3.3. Muslims and Sex Education

Life Orientation includes Sex Education which must be incorporated into the curriculum as one of the topics that must be taught to learners in South Africa (CAPS, 2013). This is with the specific aim of transmitting knowledge which will be beneficial for learners and their personal and social well-being – one of the important components in the Life Orientation curriculum.

However, when relating Muslims and Sex Education, Noibi (1993:47) suggests that "there has been several attempts to clarify a Muslim female's position on sexual education in Islamic teachings of sexuality" (Noibi, 1993:47). Therefore, it is clear to argue my point that some Muslims may not argue to teach the topic of sexual education in their classrooms. Although, Noibi (1993:47) further argues that "it is the kind of sexual education that is being offered at schools which is a problem because the content is perceived as contravening Islamic principles" (Noibi, 1993:50). It is evident from the statement above that some teachers may not be able to teach the content due to this principles affecting their performance and hence, the misunderstanding and misinterpretation of current practise in teaching sexual education in Life Orientation exists.

2.3.3.4 Monitoring and support mechanisms for teaching Life Orientation

Nasir (2004) study examines how "teachers intervened to help students avoid resistant behaviour, especially to overcome emotional and academic challenges in

the subject Life Orientation" (Nasir, 2004). His argument is further strengthened by stating that in the subject Life Orientation, "disruptive behaviour is noted and through using spiritual guidance, positive language, close monitoring and supporting learners consistently, learners can improve holistically" (Nasir, 2004). This is evident in the quote he mentions by stating that "Teachers believed that one of the goals of teaching children Life Orientation was to help them realize their own spiritual potential and spiritual mission in life" (Nasir, 2004).

Moreover, Gilbert (1991) expresses his concern by mentioning that "many teachers do not have sufficient experience and often experience stereotypes when teaching Life Orientation because of the diverse topics arising in the curriculum" (Gilbert, 1991). Therefore, it is evident to conclude that many of the sensitive topics in the classroom that is discussed will have stereotypical consequences. The different types of religious faiths, thoughts on different sensitive topic content, background of learners, interaction and actions of learners will affect the teachers ability to transmit knowledge on sensitive topics in Life Orientation.

2.3.4 Professional identity formation in relation to the LO curriculum

The professional identity formation with regards to the Life Orientation curriculum can be described in the different categories below

2.3.4.1 Perceptions of principals and Life Orientation teachers

The characteristics that South African Life Orientation teachers for teaching sexuality education express the importance of two concepts, namely personality and life experience. Scholarly work by Boahene (2007) emphasise how teachers proclaimed that "it is challenging to create an open dialogue in the classroom and maintain classroom discipline when teaching sensitive topics in Life Orientation" (Boahene, 2007). Teachers have to play "different roles with regards to the learners they educate in Life Orientation by becoming their friend, parent, counsellor and social worker" (Boahene, 2007). Furthermore, it is evident from the quote above that teachers teaching Life Orientation perceive the idea that teaching about sensitive topics such as sexuality education is a role that a teacher cannot step in and out of.

In addition, principals' perceptions on Life Orientation reveal how "Life Orientation becomes promising in theory, but there are many problems in the implementation of the subject thereof" (Jacobs, 2011). They include the lack of a value system whereby learners are carless and irresponsible within themselves, the lack of parental involvement whereby Parents were struggling to keep up with taking care of their children and lastly, the influence of the community as behaviour of learners revolve around this aspect. Therefore, it is evident that principals find their perceptions different compared to teachers as teachers are directly exposed to the learners when teaching Life Orientation in the classroom whereas principals are not.

2.3.4.2 Readiness towards the implementation of the curriculum

Readiness towards the implementation of the curriculum contribute to the process of the professional training of LO educators. Jacobs (2011) expresses the view that "LO skills require expert skills from teachers'" (Jacobs, 2011). Furthermore, emphasis is placed on how teacher training be focused on retrieving information and being ready to present it and illustrate it through the different areas of the curriculum. It is in this way which teachers professionally can administer the teaching of Life Orientation in South African classrooms.

In addition, "A multicultural classroom, where the mother tongue of the teacher and the learners differ which make it an even much more difficult task to enable readiness when teaching content knowledge from the Life Orientation curriculum" (Prinsloo, 2003). This argument clearly articulates that teachers should be ready to teach the curriculum so that opportunities for social cohesion among learners from different perspectives and their cultures can be successful for teaching and learning as well as for the overall schooling environment (Prinsloo, 2003).

2.3.4.3 Non-violent pedagogical approach to teacher development for Life Orientation

The challenges for current-day teachers for Life Orientation teachers are important to consider, because one of their primary tasks is to develop learners social and emotional growth (Department of Education, 2002) and because LO as a school subject has much potential to interrupt long-standing cycles of violence. In relation to the argument above, Lamb (2017) proposes that "violence in South African schools seems to be increasing and the consequences affect not only the physical,

emotional, and academic lives of learners but also their resistance to delinquent and criminal behaviour" (Lamb, 2017). Hence, because the foundations for youth violence are laid in early adolescence, violence prevention in schools is a critical need. Life orientation as a compulsory school subject could play a key role in helping South African learners deal with these aspects, again, only with the specified, expertise certain teachers gain from training (Lamb, 2017).

2.3.4.4 Innovative pedagogies for Life Orientation

Kehily (2002) argues that in "sexual education one should move away from the idea of the teacher as the person who possesses the knowledge and control in the classroom, and use more informal approaches when teaching sexual education" (Kehily, 2002). In this way, the communication channel of interacting and the exchange of information will be beneficial for both the teacher and the learners.

Previous research by Engelbrecht (1998) reveal how "the integrity of the Life Orientation teacher is of utmost important" (Engelbrecht, 1998) when relating to the pedagogy of teaching Life Orientation. In addition, "teachers who themselves have no positive value system, who entertain little enthusiasm in the teaching task, who show no diligence and are unpunctual should not be allowed to present the LO programmes" (Engelbrecht, 1998). This provides clarity on how the person – specifically referring to the Life Orientation teacher, determines the degree of success of teaching and learning taking place in the classroom.

2.3.4.5 Life Orientation teachers career development

In the study on the perceptions of Life Orientation teachers by Walker and Milton (2008), it suggests that some Life Orientation teachers felt uncomfortable and cannot find measures to develop when teaching this sensitive topic. This is because many teachers experienced their sexuality and sexual experiences questioned by the learners' and this became a topic in the classroom" (Walker & Milton, 2008). Whilst other teachers expressed how they were unable to hide their discomfort behind their role as a teacher and felt that they have to be themselves when expressing themselves in the classroom (Goffman, 1959). This serves to provide evidence that Life Orientation teachers career development vary from teacher to teacher due to

their own personal and professional view on their career and professionalism level they wish to reach.

Goffman (1959) elaborates on how teachers' perceptions in his study revealed how "the teachers did not worry about how to handle different opinions in the classroom and being judgemental about themselves which is often seen as difficult when teaching controversial issues" (Goffman, 1959). It mainly impacted their career by devaluing their self-esteem by being embarrassed in front of the learners.

2.3.5 The relationship between the personal and professional values for Life Orientation educators

Professional identities of teachers are equally important to the identities of teachers, just as their personal identities. Teachers enter the teaching profession with their individual identity – whether it is cultural bound or socially related. Therefore, professional identities of teachers are important in order to regulate their lives through maintaining a boundary between their personal and professional lives. This is the main reason why codes of conduct must be prevalent in any professional career.

Campbell (2008) claims that "the moral nature of teaching should combine with the applied professional ethics of teaching" (Campbell, 2008). In relation to the subject Life Orientation, it is vital for it to contribute to the moral and character formation of their students. Knowing from right and wrong is commonly known as the "Golden rule" which many teachers and learners live by, however, when it comes to teaching in the classroom professionally, this may have a different meaning for different educators (Campbell, 2008). Therefore, the moral complexities that teacher's work, with both good and bad experiences convey the actions of teachers. I argue my point further by stating that teacher professionalism both contribute to a sense of ethical responsibility.

In addition, Carr (2006) mentions that "In order for teachers to be professionals in the workplace, their qualities, capacities and dispositions consider teachers or teaching to be good" (Carr, 2006). Therefore, it is evident from the statement above that

teaching professionalism like any other profession, depends entirely on the effectiveness and efficiency. "Teaching professionalism therefore is measured by the responsibilities of an individual teacher and how they approach, respect and accommodate their learners with the contribution towards the school environment and other professionals involved" (Carr, 2006). In this way, teaching and learning is beneficial for both the learner and the facilitator.

Hansen (2011) demonstrates the link between the personal and professional values of Life Orientation teachers by making reference to individual teachers and their role in helping learners needs in a globalized world" (Hansen, 2011). He aims to emphasise how the influence of the internet, TV and other forms of technology allow teachers and learners to deal and react differently with regards to their professionalism levels in the workplace. For example, teachers may feel personally that they do not want to join a teacher's union, however, professionally it is compulsory to join a teaching union at work.

Furthermore, personal and professional values of teacher's are interrelated in the spirituality context as "Spirituality is not about religion, but does include religion" (Nodding, 2008). It provides people with a purpose and direction that we see in our work and our life, as well as the world around us. Hence, it is important for professionalism to link to individuals' personally, as they have a direct relationship with one another. Without guidance in an individual's life, one would not be able to choose a career path and act professionally in it (Nodding, 2008).

To support my argument above, guidance in teachers lives are prescribed according to the "ethical standards that people can expect from a group of professionals to adhere to which is set by the profession" (Warnick & Silverman, 2011). In relation to teaching, teachers are required to abide by the code of conduct set by the South African Council for Educators (SACE). This requires teachers to put learners' interests first and implement leadership skills for learners to follow.

2.3.6 The relationship between gender and teaching

2.3.6.1 Teachers perceptions of female teachers and male teachers within traditional gender roles

The perceptions between male and female teachers in teachers work relate to the manner they perform at work personally and professionally. According to Sari (2016) a study on perceptions of male and female teachers, it is found that female teachers are classified under the term "devoted mother, and diligent one undertaking many tasks" (Sari, 2016). In comparison to male teachers, they are gathered around the term such as "figure of authority and security and leading one" (Sari, 2016). In schools, particularly in the subject Life Orientation, one must be educated on the equality of both genders in any context. With this taken into account in the education system, the discrimination and traditional gender roles in society continue to deepen.

Furthermore, Acker (1995) elaborates on how the "dominant culture of the school and entire curriculum reveals that textbooks content, teacher and student interaction in educational environments include gender bias and stereotypes" (Acker, 1995). The argument above is further strengthened by the quote by Sari (2016) claiming that: "Teaching is deemed to be one of the most eligible occupations for women with most girls being directed to teaching in their career choices consciously or unconsciously" (Sari, 2016). Therefore, it is evident from the argument above that the teaching profession is distinguished from a gender perspective. In addition, Cushman (2005) reveals how "a relatively small number of men who tend to be teaching experience attitude related to their status, salary, working in a female environment and physical contact with children" (Cushman, 2005). In conclusion, studies by Spilt, Koomen and Jak (2012) reveal how "female teachers can build better relationships with their students; whereas male teacher's serve useful especially for male students" (Spilt, Koomen & Jak, 2012).

2.3.6.2 Teachers' competencies and factors affecting the performance of female teachers

All education systems require the performance of teachers as one of the main factors which determines effectiveness of all learning outcomes. Naik (1998) explains that "teaching is a noble, but demanding profession" (Naik, 1998). This is also the reason why many teacher's need to take into consideration personal

responsibility for their own growth and development. In order to measure teachers competency, depends entirely on their "motivation, qualifications, experience, training, aptitude and amongst others the environment and management in which they perform their roles" (Mohanty, 2000).

Previous studies by Mohanty (2000) mention how there are "internal and external factors" (Mohanty, 2000) which affect the performance of female teachers. He further claims how the good pay helps female teacher's concentrate on their jobs. However, the salary packages offered are not enough. Therefore, many female teachers are disinterested due to low salary and large amount of female teachers have to do part time jobs, such as tutoring to meet their basic needs.

External factors which affect the performance of teacher's include "gender justice, gender threats, distance to their hometowns, transport problems and political instability" (Mohanty, 2000). It is evident that teacher's status is lower than that of doctors, engineers, lawyers and distinctions between the different professions and their individual benefit also affect the performance of female teachers.

2.3.6.3 The role of female teachers in activating effective teaching skills

The learner is the main eye to catch when presenting oneself into the classroom. Hence, it is permissible to state that teaching is merely a process of primary communication between the teacher and the learner. In order to be effective, it is important for the teacher to have effective communication skills and use "verbal and non-verbal communication methods" (Zayed, 2013 & Ahmed, 2005). Effective teaching methods, persuasion power, comfortable learning environment and effective skills and understanding are essential factors in facilitating the learning process and achieving the required outcomes of learning.

Therefore, it is evident from the discussion above that effective teaching in female teacher's "rely entirely on the teachers' expertise" (Wahsheh, 1998). Learners acquire skills, habits and trends as well as teaching aids to provide effective teaching in the classroom" (Wahsheh, 1998). This type of teaching needs teachers to possess training and manage classroom activities. As a result, the role of female teachers in effective teaching skills depends on the preparation of the teacher, "responsibility of

choosing appropriate teaching methods and techniques which will enable learners to reach their full potential of acquiring knowledge in the classroom" (Zayed, 2013 & Ahmed, 2005).

2.3.6.4 Gender in the teaching profession

According to Sabbe and Aelterman (2007) Gender in the teaching profession is one of the factors which can influence leadership practises in schools (Sabbe & Aelterman, 2007). This particular study focuses on how female teachers are more skilled in managing student and classroom matters. Furthermore, Drudy (2008) mentions how "female teachers outnumber men at most primary and secondary school level" (Drudy, 2008). This conveys how the number of males in the profession of teaching decline especially in developed nations. As a result, "the gap in the teaching profession with the female gender dominating the profession and the male gender being underrepresented in the teaching profession" determines gender roles in the teaching profession (Drudy, 2008).

2.3.6.5 Teaching style differences between male and female teachers

Teachers are regarded as role models for their students. Emadi (2019) claims that "students learn best from the teachers they respect and have developed a good relationship with" (Emadi, 2019). Hence, teachers and their teacher style differ from one another. Emadi (2019) found "a significant difference in the perceived knowledge and familiarity of male teachers in comparison to females" (Emadi, 2019). It is also evident in this study that male teachers knowledge was higher than those of females.

In addition, Gilmartin (2007) agrees that "women are better teachers based on their experience, who possess a positive attitude towards school, whereas men receive negative comments in relation to effective nurturing of students" (Gilmartin, 2007). In my argument above, I aim to describe how different teaching styles between male and female teachers and their behaviour influence student achievement and interactions between male and female teachers in the schooling environment.

2.3.7 Dealing with sensitive topics in the classroom from an Islamic perspective

2.3.7.1 Comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) in South African schools

Lees and Vergnani (2015:8) claim that "delivering high quality comprehensive sexual education (CSE) requires adequate training and capacity" (Lees & Vergnani, 2015:8).In addition, the article mentions how teachers who are going to present lessons on sexual education should be trained using the appropriate curriculum content as well as various methodologies, which they can choose from, to teach this topic effectively. In this way, teachers can become committed, responsible and capable enough to manage the subject appropriately.

Furthermore, an article by Francis (2012) places emphasis on "how teachers feel uncomfortable and often avoid discussing sensitive issues such as sexual behaviour or sexuality and therefore cannot engage students successfully in health and life skills education" (Francis, 2012). Francis (2012) further strengthens his argument by elaborating on how "some teachers simply ignore the lesson plans that they are supposed to teach because of their own personal religious and cultural beliefs or discomfort they experience with the curriculum content" (Francis, 2012). This study portrays the extent to which I personally experience discomfort and inappropriate feelings and attitude towards this particular topic in the Life Orientation curriculum.

2.3.7.2 Life Orientation linked to the Islamic context

The subject Life Orientation had raised "dislocation between policy visions and practical realities in schools and classrooms which remains a challenge to education change theorists" (Young, 2001:21). Furthermore, many "beginner teachers' are exposed to sensitive topics such as sexual education and different religions in the content of the Life Orientation curriculum.

Young (2001:21) further states that "the way in which Muslim teachers form their teacher identity is influenced by both how they feel about themselves and about their students" (Young, 2001:21). This explains how "being a teacher" and "being yourself" in a classroom may need to be separated. Personal life issues such as religion, association of gender roles and ability to teach particular topics in the curriculum of the subject Life Orientation are linked to the Islamic context. Therefore, it is

permissible to say that certain sensitive topics may constitute "a major role in influencing Muslim female teacher's identity and development" (Young, 2001:21).

In addition, Muslim scholars such as Arslan (2005) define "Islamic values as concepts of tauhid[10] implying unity, khilafah[11] implying trusteeship and adalah[12] implying justice" (Arslan, 2005). All of these values are also attributed to the Islamic education system which enables it to function correctly. Therefore, "Islamic values in education are a reflection of how the religion Islam promotes certain ideas, commandments, respectful obligations and Islamic teachings, which are compulsory for Muslim followers to adhere to and to practise" (Arslan, 2005).

 These Islamic values may not necessarily comply with the education system that is demanded and needs to be in place in South Africa. Ebady (2001) supports the idea that this may not be a stumbling block by mentioning that "adaptations and application of education methodologies may differ from teacher to teacher and assist some teachers in educating learners whilst adhering to the Islamic values" (Ebady, 2001).

According to Halstead (2007) "what is considered halal[13] and haraam[14] in Islamic values in Islam is understood in terms of what God defines as right and wrong values" (Halstead, 2007). Hussain (2019) believes that "Islamic values include moral education which is disseminating knowledge on what Muslims should do and not do and encourage them to act in accordance with that knowledge" (Hussain, 2019). In this manner, the Islamic values taught to Muslims can shape the way they live their lives.

Other modern-day scholars such as Nilan (2017:173) believe that "the sensitive issue of religion and gender cause conflicting forces which disrupt the day to day teaching and learning in 21st century classrooms amongst female beginner teachers" (Nilan, 2017:173). The idea is further elaborated when he emphasises that by

---

[10]Tauhid - unity

[11]Khilafah - trusteeship

[12]Adalah – justice

[13]Halal – Permissable

[14]Haraam – Forbidden

bringing Islamic values to the meaning of sexual education, it forms a deeper understanding of Islam itself to Muslim females. Many Muslim females have experienced, at a young age, how improper it is to involve oneself in sexual education matters in the open. Thus, when it comes to Islamic values and education, it is regarded as a sensitive issue due to the severity of harm it may cause some Muslim females.

In addition, "due to the curriculum and its effects on our abilities to transmit knowledge, it is important to consider the personal upbringing and the social environmental factors that one may interact in as well as the religious duties which play a role in the school context" (Matthews et al, 2006). For example, communication between a female teacher from the Islamic religion with a male teacher would be regarded as uncomfortable due to the Islamic upbringing which does not allow males and females to communicate.

2.3.7.3 Teaching sensitive topics

The term sensitive topics refers to "an issue that needs to be dealt with" (Collins, 2017). These need to be carefully dealt with because of the likelihood of causing a disagreement or of making people upset or angry which can lead to further harm (Collins, 2017). Sensitive topics have an impact on a teacher's life due to the many different topics that a teacher may be exposed to in her teaching career. A teacher from the Islamic religion has been taught the tenets and traditions of the religion Islam. These must be carried out and adhered to throughout her life. This background knowledge of Muslim females is drilled into them and shapes their identity and lives (Collins, 2017).

South African authors, Hoskins *et al* (2014), claim that "there are a variety of perspectives to consider when teaching sensitive topics in the classroom" (Hoskins et al, 2014). Lowe and Jones (2015) suggest that "Islamic teachers should develop critical consciousness amongst students so that understanding of the learners place in the world is understood in the classroom" (Lowe & Jones, 2014). This argument is supported by DuBois (2014) when he states that "Islamic teachers must prepare the learners for responsibilities by developing values of religious and social conduct" (DuBois, 2014). He discusses how teaching sensitive topics should rather be done

in an investigative manner, than using a straightforward technique in the classroom. This also enables "Islamic teachers to prevent using face to face discussions on sensitive topics taught in the classroom which may cause emotional reactions leading to harm Islamic teachers" (Du Bois, 2014).

Furthermore, Anacona (2014) states that "the ways in which sensitive topics can be taught to learners by teachers are important to consider" (Anacona, 2014). He further suggests that the specific way chosen "can either facilitate or hamper the teaching and learning process for both the teacher and learner involved" (Anacona, 2014). Hence, Anacona (2014) proposes four steps towards teaching and understanding sensitive topics to learners. Firstly, "instructions are important to be provided together with the consequences given if the rules are ignored. Secondly, keep in mind that learners observe teachers behaviour and act through it. If the discussion is spoken through care and respect, the learners will be likely to react to it. Thirdly, make use of real-life examples to convey the aspect or goal you wish to achieve through the lesson. In this way, understanding the topic will be much simpler and clearer. Lastly, enable emotions of strong feelings and reactions into a beneficial dialogue" (Anacona, 2014). Instead of feeling insulted by discussing sensitive issues, teachers and learners must be taught how to disagree and debate on different ideas, without the discussions affecting them personally.

2.3.7.4 Relationship between teaching sensitive topics and an Islamic perspective

A human heart has a strong heartbeat and is fully functional in the body. This is how the Islamic religion and sensitive topics in education need to function together so that the Muslim teacher may be successful when teaching. Sahin (2018:2) describes research in the field of sexual education and says that "sexual education remains unsystematic and often lack conceptual depth and clarity" (Sahin, 2018:2). He further states that there is no complete, ordered system when it comes to teaching sexual education. The system thus remains inadequate, lacking direction and functional approaches towards teaching sexual education. This can contribute to shortcomings in the education field.

The Islamic religion and its relation to sexual education as a sensitive topic, play an important role in influencing the thoughts and beliefs of an individual. Zaabi (2018) believes that some parents in the country of Oman express the opinion that "school

teachers are the most important sources when teaching sexual education" (Zaabi, 2018). They are the initial transmitters of knowledge. Teaching and learning cannot take place without them (teachers) being an integral part of the process.

Siddiqui (2020) mentions a particular reaction to a sexual education lesson that a learner spoke of when their teacher taught them sexual education in a Islamic school saying: "*she talked about it Islamically, saying what is halaal, haraam and Sunnah, It is not like she is doing anything wrong. It is something we need to know about*" (Siddiqui, 2020). An Islamic school principal, Ali (2019) states that "in most Islamic schools, they avoid dealing with these issues" (Ali, 2019). These views also describe how both schools and people differ when dealing with the different sensitive issues they may be faced with. For each of the situations, feelings about the topic and reactions to the topic may vary.

On a broader scale, some countries such as the United States have introduced a "curriculum for sexual education but have excluded Muslim schools from it" (Smerecnik, 2010). He further claims that "it is better to make sure that what is being taught to the learners is appropriate in order to maintain the quality of education in the schools" (Smerecnik, 2010). However, authors such as Shahidul (2010) believe that "making sexual education a topic is not an option in schools. It should rather be regarded as a natural, normal progression which is learnt with time" (Shahidul, 2010). These two ideas, from different authors, differ vastly from each other and demonstrate the different perspectives schools may have on teaching sexual education.

Teaching sexual education needs to be done by the correct teachers. Sudan (2012) mentions that "someone with a counselling background must teach learners about this topic" (Sudan, 2012). This will enable the teacher to correctly manage a situation where serious issues arise, while an unexperienced teacher would not be able to do this. Moreover, Poelman (2011) states that "specific positions in schools should be created for this job or topic to be taught to learners at Islamic schools" (Poelman, 2011). I believe that the appropriate teachers, suited to teach this topic, will be beneficial for the entire school especially if an allocated time for this lesson to take place is scheduled.

In addition, Schaefer (2015), claims that "teaching sensitive topics within the Islamic perspective can be challenging yet beneficial to students and teachers" (Schaefer, 2015). It is important to consider "locating religion and sexual topics within the Islamic perspective by means of both the content and delivery being an information giving process in which the origins, history and evolution of Islam are emphasised in the Islamic legal tradition" (Schaefer, 2015).

This is supported by Ali (2016) who states that "one of the first issues to consider before teaching sensitive topics within the Islamic perspective is the concept called Shari'a law[15], which can have a double meaning namely, firstly by gaining a sense of legally enforceable rule and secondly by constituting the idea of an all-encompassing framework of continuous divine rules and unchangeable human intellectual endeavour" (Ali, 2016). This promotes a sensitive approach in relation to teaching sensitive topics at a basic level.

When Shahid (2017) discusses the ways in which sensitive topics can be taught, he claims that it "can be enjoyed even within an Islamic perspective" (Shahid, 2017). He further states "teaching sensitive topics within the Islamic context can be by creating academic freedom, felt by designing and teaching the specified curriculum" (Shahid, 2017). In this way, the lesson can be conducted in a manner which creates comfort and openness and the specified outcomes easily attained by creating activities which suit the teacher best.

Niyozov and Pluim (2015) state that "females remain the central participant in the Islamic law" (Niyozov & Pluim, 2015). This creates gender sensitivity and female friendly rules in the Islamic legal tradition. A Muslim female can develop by allowing herself to think critically and thus provide herself with an opportunity to understand and feel the difference between "real life theories in the classroom and make sense with it together with the Islamic law Shari'a" in mind". (Niyozov & Pluim, 2015).

According to Mamman (2018), "teaching sensitive topics within the Islamic law can be challenging intellectually and practically" (Mamman,2018). However, "the engagement can be of a rewarding process" (Mamman, 2018). He mentions how

---

[15]Shari'a law: constitutes a double "law" in the sense of legally enforceable rules and continuously unchangeable intellectual behaviour.

vital it is for students to be informed about the Islamic law and that, when teaching sensitive topics. Muslim female teachers ask critical questions in a respectful and mature fashion. In this way, "the values of the Muslim are in accordance with the Shari'a law" (Mamman, 2018).

Teaching sensitive topics within the Islamic perspective will not be harmful to females if it is done in the correct way. This is done by ensuring that the content is taught using the correct methodology and by keeping the primary sources, which are the Qur'an and Hadith, in mind when teaching. In this way, there will be open communication as well as discussion and development for both the Islamic teacher and learners which can also benefit society.

2.3.8 Life Orientation in the CAPS curriculum

2.3.8.1 Origin of the subject

Due to the introduction of Life Orientation as a compulsory subject in the South African curriculum, it requires for all learners to be treated equally and give themselves the required respect they deserve. Due to South Africa's situation of past oppression and social problems such as poverty, drugs, alcohol, gender-based violence and health problems contributed to the creation of the subject Life Orientation.

The Life Orientation curriculum and assessment policy statement (CAPS) stipulates that its desired outcome is a "generation of learners who are able to think critically and contribute to a just and democratic society" (DBE, 2003). Each subject in each grade will have a single, comprehensive and concise CAPS policy to help teachers on what they need to teach learners. Moreover, Life Orientation will also include concepts like other subjects including the aims, topics and content in its CAPS policy" (Hofmeyr, 2010).

2.3.8.2 Grades 7-9 Life Orientation Curriculum and assessment Policy Statement (Senior Phase)

The CAPS curriculum aims to ensure that all learners acquire the skills and knowledge that will benefit their lives. Hence, it is evident that the purpose of Life Orientation is for the development of the self. Learners must grow up learning about who they are, what they like and what they expect from life (DBE, 2003)

By specifying different CAPS documents for different subjects and phase groups, Learners are able to distinguish how to live optimally and judge for themselves which subjects and career paths they need to follow in order to develop professionally.

2.3.8.3 Overview of the learning topics in Life Orientation

The subject of Life Orientation contains the following six topics:

Development of the self in society

This topic constitutes the topics of sexual and religion education (which I struggle with). It deals with self-awareness and self-esteem through decision making skills, awareness of health and gender issues in the South African context (DBE, 2003).

Social and environmental responsibility

This topic includes healthy and safe ways of living and improving quality of life and well-being of learners (DBE ,2003).

Democracy and human rights

"The contemporary ethical, moral and spiritual issues are explored in personal recreational, political and religious realms in the South African society is explored in this section" (DBE, 2003).

Careers and career choices

"Learners develop knowledge about themselves and their personal opinions regarding their career and career choices in this area" (DBE, 2003).

Study skills

"Learners are aware of learning styles, strategies, time – management skills and study plans" in study skills (DBE, 2003).

Physical education

In this area, "a variety of indigenous games and sports are promoted. Learners participate in these activities with the purpose of improving their fitness and health" (DBE, 2003).

In conclusion, Life Orientation is a compulsory subject which must be taught in schools in South Africa. The different topics presented in each CAPS policy document provides different areas that must be studied. These areas of study must be "linked to the learners age group, intellectual ability and growth levels that are taken into account before planning the CAPS document for South African schools" (DBE, 2003).

2.4 World views on teaching sensitive topics within an Islamic context

2.4.1 European Union countries

Europe countries such as France have "expressed that sooner or later they will encounter issues that are met with disbelief, protests or feelings of discomfort that was expressed by pupils" (Savenjie, Brauch & Wagner, 2019). According to Savenjie, Brauch and Wagner (2019), "the main idea is to contribute to the field of research into teaching sensitive and controversial issues in history by integrating the historical educational and socio psychological perspectives and theories" Savenjie, Brauch & Wagner (2019). In return, teaching sensitive topics within an Islamic context will be simpler and much more sensible. However, in countries like Germany, Italy and the Netherlands, Nystrand et al (2012) claimed that "by using qualitative and quantitative methods, an interdisciplinary group of scholars make it possible for in depth study of specific cases which provides insight to sensitive issues in the Muslim context" (Nystrand et al, 2012). They further state that many factors of the Muslim female beginner teacher play a role in teaching sensitive topics. In addition, Nystrand et al (2012) explains how "the individual teacher, their skills and knowledge, Islamic beliefs, identity conception, the local classroom composition, the national curriculum and national policies play a vital role in what female beginner teachers will be teaching in our country" (Nystrand et al, 2012).

2.4.2 The United States of America

In the United States (US) of America teachers have "reported avoiding the teaching of sensitive topics in the Islamic religion because of the lack of time and an already full curriculum, but also because of the fear of their superiors or pupils reactions and because of personal ambivalence" (Evans, Avery, Pederson & Kello, 2016).Goldberg, Wansink, Akkerman and Wubbels (2017) state that, in America, teaching sensitive topics within an Islamic context "creates teachers frequently

reporting feeling the lack of expertise both in terms of context knowledge and for the facilitation of discussion". Goldberg, Wansink, Akkerman & Wubbels (2017). They also believe that it is necessary and vital to teach sensitive topics within an Islamic context for self-knowledge which can be beneficial to them and others in the country.

2.4.3 African countries

In African countries, specifically referring to South Africa, the African Christian Democratic Party (ACDP) protested with regard to the sex education in schools as being "anti-family, anti-marriage and anti-christian" (Matthew & Moosa, 2019). In addition, there are "continuous protests taking place to ensure that the scrapping of the governments planned introduction of the comprehensive sexual education in the Life Orientation syllabus" (Matthew & Moosa, 2019). This would allow teachers to avoid teaching sensitive topics when they are beginner teachers, and just being introduced to the teaching field. The protesters also chanted, "we refused to poison the minds of our children" (Matthew & Moosa, 2019). This statement reveals how sensitive topics affect not only the teachers but the learners too.

In another African country, Ghana, the president of Ghana has said that "he will not allow comprehensive sexual education to be taught" (Matthew & Moosa, 2019). By doing this, it will "create advantages to teachers as the sensitivities experienced by them will be less, and this will mean more time for other subjects to be taught" (Matthew & Moosa, 2019).

According to Matthew and Moosa (2019), "reviews are important to be completed regarding lesson plans, learning materials and the development of the teaching for all initial education teaching programmes and considerations of strengthening continuing professional teacher development courses" (Matthew & Moosa, 2019). In this manner, every aspect of teaching sensitive topics will be made available so that "teaching sensitive topics for teachers in different religions will be made simple, available and accessible" (Matthew & Moosa, 2019).

2.5 Synthesis of the main findings in the literature review

The main findings that were discovered in my literature review were:

Comprehensive sex education

- Countries such as the United States (US) and certain African countries experience a major problematic issue with the curriculum of sexual education due to the lack of knowledge and skills, as well as training for the educators (Goldberg, Wansink, Akkerman & Wubbels, 2017; Matthew & Moosa, 2019).

An Islamic context:

- Findings from the literature include the concept of Islamic context. The literature reveals the the origin of different Muslim groups in the religion Islam and how they influenced the Islamic heritage. Furthermore, the literature shows that Islamic traditions, both internationally and nationally, require different devotional practises to increase their taqwa[16] and discipline which is important in the context of this study (Faheema, 2017;Goldziher, 2017 & Samodeen, 2019).

Female teacher identity

- The main findings regarding the concept of female beginner teacher identity show that "female beginner teachers have different experiences regarding gender and religion, in teacher identity and professional development globally" (Klassen & Chiu, 2019:745; Sumsion 2002:16).

- Another key finding is that teacher identity is "more complex than just managing a classroom on a day to day basis" (Olsen, 2010:97). Smit and Fritz (2008) regard teacher identities as "multiple, unstable and frequently shifting" (Smit & Fritz, 2008).

2.6 Theoretical framework

2.6.1 Introduction

The theoretical framework is defined by Grant (2014) as "a collection of interrelated concepts, like a theory, but not necessarily so worked out" (Grant, 2014). It is used to guide your ideas in research, determining what things you will measure, and what statistical relationship you will look for" (Hult, 2016). I employed tenets of the theoretical framework into my research study to demonstrate an understanding of the theories and concepts that are relevant to the topic of my research study. In the section below, I make reference to how Third World Feminism argued by liberal feminists convey religious and gender identities of Muslim females. A model will

---

[16]Taqwa – God consciousness

follow thereafter, representing the links between the concepts of religious and gender identities. I also relate my theoretical framework to Islamic education, pertaining to tarbiyah[17] , ta'lim[18] and ta'dib[19].

2.6.2 Third World Feminism

At the global level, Muslim women are less educated and have wider gender gaps than all other religious groups. Alldred and Dennison (2002) argue that "The first wave of feminism represented the struggle for equality and integration, the second wave criticised dominant values and value hierarchies associated with feminists and the third wave sets boundaries through deconstructing gender binaries offering a more welcome space" (Alldred & Dennison, 2002). This statement contributes to the matter of how females are exposed to being a part of patriarchal exclusion and allowing for the emergence of feminism.

Spivak (1996) writes from a post-colonialist perspective arguing that "in western scholarship theory, it is always written for someone white and western, therefore supporting oppression and exploitation" (Spivak, 1996). In addition, Mohanty (1998:62) further aims to portray how liberal feminists participate in colonization with the experiences of non-white and non-western women to support arguments which seek to better their individual positions" (Mohanty, 1998:62). This shows how the relationship between the theory and theorist is a meaningful one, which demonstrates whether one is powerful or powerless.

According to Tong (1998:15) "Liberal feminists played a significant role in the years 1960's and 1970's in the women's liberation movement in the US and Britain" (Tong, 1998:15). Therefore, it is evident that liberal feminism is influenced by a vision and highlights inequalities faced by women. Tong (1998:15) claims that "it is found that these challenges are addressed through legal and political reform" (Tong, 1998:15). In conclusion to the argument above on Third World Feminism, liberal feminists writing draws attention to the oppression and suffering of gender inequalities that

---

[17] Tarbiyah - socialisation

[18] Ta'lim – teaching and learning in formal and formal structures

[19] Ta'dib – good conduct

females are subject to and strives for change towards the concept of gender equality. Moreover, the following model provides clarity on theorizing the relationship between the different concepts on religion, gender and development.

Figure 2.6: Visual representation of the theoretical framework employed in this study (Connelly & Barriteau, 2002).

Religion

Historical, Patriarchal, Cultures and Traditions

Gender Politics

Gender inequality
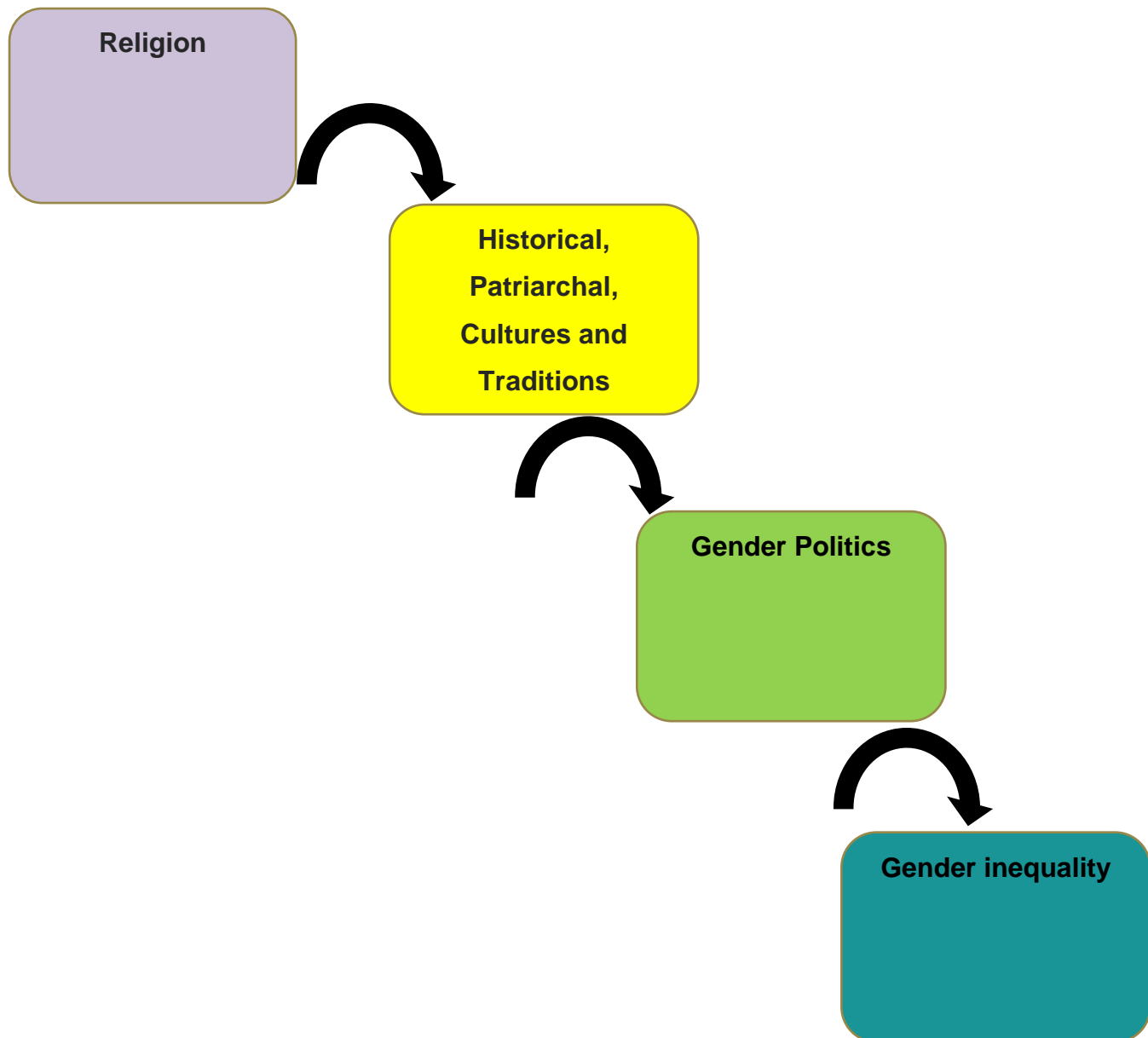
2.6.3 Interpretation of the theoretical framework model (Figure 2.6)

Religion

The initial stage begins with religion. This has a direct influence on the female Muslim teacher. The individual is taught about her religion, the meanings, values

principles and in addition, the five pillars of Islam which form the religion. Religion constitutes as an important factor when relating it to Islamic education. This is because, Islamic education teaches individuals details on how to live their lives according to the origination of their religions.

Historical, Patriarchal, Cultures and Traditions

Certain rituals must take place at an early stage for Muslim females. This contributes to the topic mentioned above on the cultures and traditions as well as historical and patriarchal components in Islam. For example, the culture and tradition of the naming ceremony, where the azhaan[20] is recited in the babies ears may differ for different families depending on the patriarchal status of the family and history. In my situation, my name had to have a significant meaning which must be honoured and lived by throughout my life.

Gender Politics

Positive epistemology, which is hierarchical in power, ignores women's knowledge and focuses on men's perspectives. In addition, "Liberal feminists insists that if gender in politics involve women, the methodological approach adopts a mainstream science epistemology known as positivism" (Spivak, 2002). This creates awareness amongst the gender politics relating to third world feminism in relation to class, race, ethnic groups and marginalized women in societies.

Gender inequality

The reason why "male domination of women has priority in many elemental domains, is because males in the religion Islam have power over females" (Rambo, 1999). In most societies, the gap of inequality prevails amongst the gender group of males and females. For example, Muslim females are not allowed to wear perfumes in comparison to males, where it is permissible for them to put on perfume. Due to these simple gender inequality factors, arises a complex issue of gender inequality as an issue that persists till today. As a result, this affects female beginner teachers as they feel less valued than those of males due to the hierarchy placed amongst them.

---

[20]Azhaan – Call for prayer

2.6.4 Islamic education and its reliance on 3 inter-related epistemologies

Tarbiyah (socialisation)

According to Abdullah (2013) Islamic education "always faces complex problems and never ends" (Abdullah, 2013). This is because Islamic education fails in improving the moral quality and character of the nation. Abdullah (2013) further finds how "Tarbiyah aspects arise in Islamic education, however, it does not compensate for the quality of their teachings (Abdullah, 2013). Therefore, it is important for Islamic education to be integrated with all aspects in life. This contributes to the concept of Tarbiyah, indicating socialisation in the faith of Islam. The article further argues that due to the increase in diversity problems when socialisation occurs, changes in the education system should follow. To strengthen my argument above, I use the following quote from Einstein (1990) who stated that "knowledge without religion is blind, and religion without knowledge is paralyzed" (Einstein, 1990). Hence, it is evident from the above argument that faith will only strengthen and increase, if it is accompanied by knowledge.

Ta'lim (teaching and learning)

Ta'lim refers to "the instruction in the Qur'an, Hadith and Islamic law, provided in mosques" (Aslam, 2011). After completing the Holy Qur'an, the student is awarded a certificate of merit to indicate the successful study of certain Islamic education. Ta'lim sessions further inform a Muslim individual about the history of Islam, from the stories about the Prophet (PBUH) to general Islamic prayers that must be read daily. According to a study done by Sahin (2018) "Muslims living in non-Muslim countries prefer their children continuing with this type of education to establish instruction" (Sahin, 2018). This type of teaching is done through the Imam[21]. In conclusion, I use the following quote derived from the Qur'an which states that "God will exalt those of you who believe and who have knowledge to high degrees" (Sahin, 2018). As a result, through acknowledging this verse from the Holy Qur'an, it provides motivation for the Islamic society to strive for education and learning.

---

[21] Imam – Muslim leader/teacher

Ta'dib (good conduct)

According to Sassi (2018) "the purpose of the concept Ta'dib in Islamic education is mainly to prepare, direct and restore the purpose of education" (Sassi, 2018). In this way, Islamic education will attain good manners and a noble character. Islamic scholarly work by Abu al-Qasim (1988:285) said: "We need more Ta'dib than knowledge" (Abu al-Qasim, 1988:285). This indicates how Islamic education in the element of Ta'dib requires a Muslim to revive humanity to be more human. Good deeds are compulsory to be committed in any context. This is Islamic educations core principle and value that must be taught to the Muslim society as a whole. In addition, demands of the community by implementing Ta'dib must be met and remaining consistent with the principles of Islam should be administered.

2.7 Conclusion

Chapter 2 provides a literature review on existing literature of teaching sensitive topics within an Islamic context: A female beginner teacher's auto-ethnographic account. The study incorporates an introduction to the chapter followed by information on how I worked towards conducting a literature review. The themes and sub-themes that were evident in my literature review are further reflected upon. World views on teaching sensitive topics taken from International European countries, American countries and African countries were further narrowed down to the South African context. The Life Orientation curriculum in relation to the teaching context was also explored. Synthesis of the main findings from the literature review are explained and related to the concepts discussed earlier in the study. In conclusion, the theoretical framework that was employed was explained in detail and included Third World Feminism and Islamic education pertaining to three inter-related epistemologies.

CHAPTER 3 – RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

Reasons for using the specific research design and methodology chosen for this study are presented in this chapter. The methodological decisions taken were specific as they informed and provided guidance for the study. Both the research design and data collection strategies contributed to finding possible answers to the research questions of the study. Thornhill (2012) supports this statement by stating that "in your study, you can define research design as a general plan about what you will do to answer your research question" (Thornhill, 2012). The reasons why the research design and methodology are important in my study is presented and discussed. Moreover, an analytic auto-ethnography as a research design is discussed as it explains data generation and verisimilitude. How it was applied in my research study is also explained.

3.2 Research design

A research design "is a guideline through which the researcher can follow throughout the study serving as a route map of the study" (Creswell, 2014). According to Creswell (2014), "a research design is a set of methods and procedures used in collecting and analysing measures of the variables specified in the research problem" (Creswell, 2014). The definition of research design by Jang (2007) states that "research designs are mainly conducted for the specific purpose of providing a plan of the study which permits accurate assessment of the cause and effect relationships between independent and dependent variables" (Jang, 2007). Mikeal (2001:145) proposes that "a research design has a purpose to answer questions that are being investigated, gather extraneous factors that are controlled and inform the degree of generalisation that is made and ensure that it is valid" (Mikeal, 2001:145). For my study, I proposed a research design which allows me to gather information on *teaching sensitive topics within an Islamic context: A female beginner teacher's auto-ethnographic account* as my research topic.

Bhat (2019) described a research design as "the framework of methods and techniques chosen by the researcher to combine various components of research in a reasonable and logical manner so that the research problem is handled correctly" (Bhat, 2019). This definition of research design is further supported by Mime (2019)

when he states that "a research design is a detailed outline of how an investigation will take place" (Mime, 2019). Farooq (2013) mentioned that "a research design will typically include how your data will be collected, what form of instruments" (Farooq, 2013) will be incorporated into your study, and how the specific type of instrument will be meaningful for the researcher to be able to analyse the data. Therefore, "a research design can be described as a pre-proposed sketch which provides an outline or specified plan for the specific purpose of obtaining answers to research questions" (Farooq, 2013).

3.2.1 Overview of the function and research design employed in my study

"The function of a research design is to evaluate, describe and explain the type of research that the study is undertaking in order for research questions to be answered" (Booth, 2018). However, Vaus (2001) claims that "the function of a research design is to ensure that the evidence obtained enables one to address the research problem logically and unambiguously as possible" (Vaus, 2001).Therefore, research designs "focus on providing a solution to the research, rather than testing theories" (Vaus, 2019).

Bhat (2019) also explains that "the types of research design can vary from qualitative, quantitative, experimental, survey, correlation, semi experimental designs and many more" (Bhat, 2019). Therefore, the type of research problem used in the study will determine the research design used (Bhat, 2019). However, each research design, despite "the type of research being conducted in the study must possess basic elements which include the accurate purpose of statement of research design, a set of techniques used which will be used for collecting details for the research, appropriate methods applied for analysing the details which are collected and the type of research methodology" (Bhat, 2019). He also suggests that planning must include answers to "possible objections/bias for research, a suitable setting for the research study, formulated timeline and measures of analysis" (Bhat, 2019). In other words, without the building blocks of the basic elements of the research design, the entire building, with reference to the research study, would be likely to collapse.

This study uses a qualitative research design. A qualitative design is usually implemented "when the relationship between data collected and observation is based on theories" (Bhat, 2019). This research design elaborates the reasons why a

particular theory exists and what humans have to say about it (Bhat, 2019). It explains data in the linguistic language (words) rather than numeric (numbers), and is thus more meaning based, which differs from the statistical forms of data analysis (Maree, 2016:212). The above is supported by Manion, Morrison and Cohen (2014), who explain that "all qualitative research is naturalistic and focuses on natural settings where interaction occurs, in terms of the social life" (Manion, Morrison & Cohen, 2014). In addition, the "qualitative research approach uses open, exploratory questions" (Maree, 2016:212) which makes understanding the phenomena easier. Maree (2016:212) also states that "it is important for people and individuals to contribute to their experiences, circumstances and situations" (Maree, 2016:212). The meanings which people, including individuals, assign to texts and other data are specific to that situation and therefore a specific method of gathering effective results is needed. As defined by Denzin (2008) "qualitative research approach studies produce explanations only of particular studies" (Denzin, 2008). As I am using personal and specific information generated on my journey through life, seen through my own perspective, the best approach to use would be a qualitative research approach.

An analytic auto-ethnography was also used as part of the research design.. According to William (2006), "an analytic auto-ethnography is a form of a qualitative research in which the researcher applies personal self-reflective narratives to explore and express personal experience and link it to autobiographical stories to cultural, political, social meanings and understandings" (William, 2006). Ultimately, the main aim of this study is to use real life experiences in a reasoned analysis to reveal the totality of teaching *sensitive topics within an Islamic context: A female beginner teacher's auto-ethnographic account.*

3.2.2 The research process as part of the research design

A research process is the progression of the research approach that is chosen for a particular study. A "research approach can be defined as a plan and procedure that consists of the steps of broad assumptions to a very detailed data generation, analysis and interpretation" (Chetty, 2016). This implies that it is the foundation of the research problem being addressed. Chetty (2016) further states that "a research approach can be divided into two categories namely, the approach of data

generation, and the approach of data analyses and reasoning" (Chetty, 2016). Saunders et al (2003) propose the following research process onion, as a diagram, to demonstrate the research approach in a study.

Figure 3.3.1: RPO Figure - "The research process onion" (Saunders et al, 2003:83).
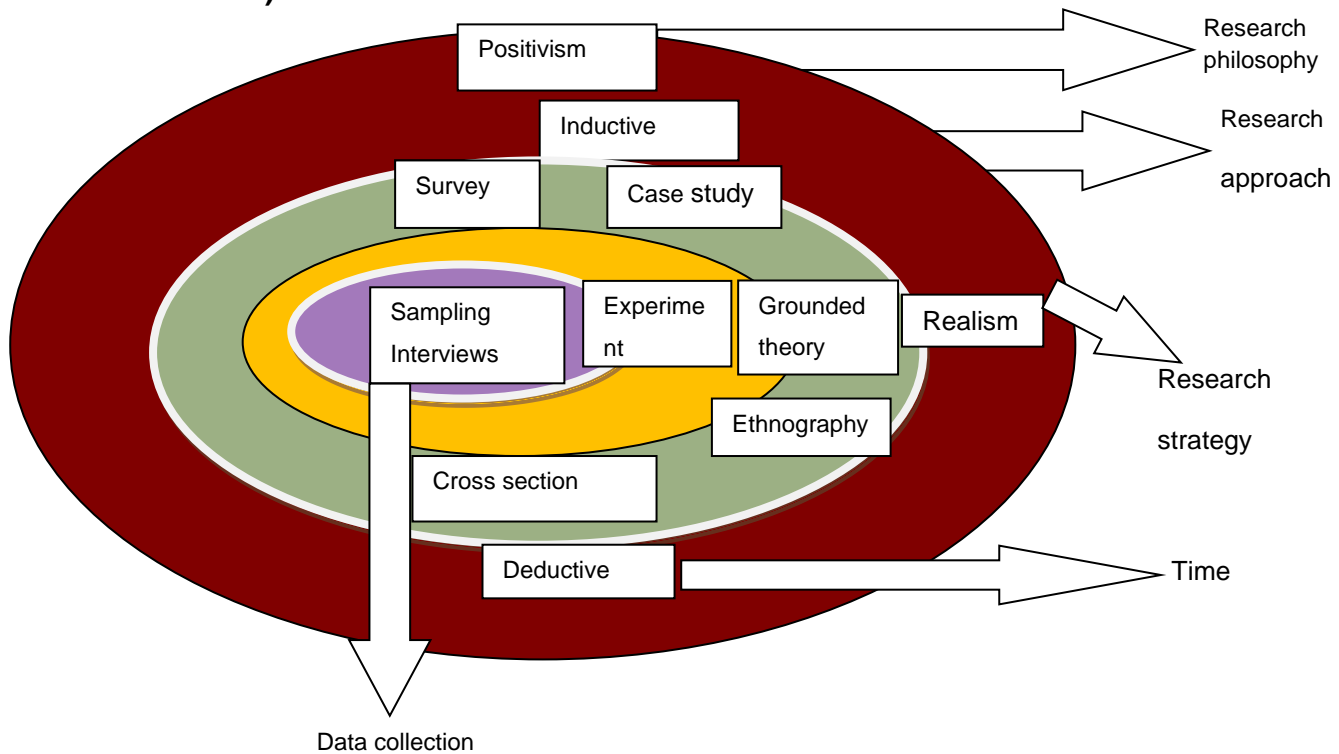
3.2.3 Interpretation of "The research process onion" (Saunders et al, 2003:83).

The diagram above demonstrates the different steps in the research process that "must be taken into consideration before implementing the research steps" (Saunders et al, 2003). He further states that "the five different layers of the onion constituted the different steps which the researcher must incorporate into the research study" (Saunders et al, 2003).The description of the "five different steps are namely, the research philosophy, the research approach, research strategy, time horizons, and the data generation methods" (Saunders et al, 2003). I will now describe my own process according to Saunders et al (2003) suggestion.

3.2.3.1 Research philosophy

Research philosophy deals with "the belief about the ways in which data about a phenomenon should be collected, analysed and used" (Zukauskas, 2018:7). The

research philosophy chosen for my study includes an interpretivist approach. The qualitative research methods, which I used, influenced my research methodology. I therefore collected primary and secondary data in order to answer my research question, but I also created new knowledge for my research study.

3.2.3.2 Research approaches

Research approaches are defined by Elsayed (2008) as "plans and the procedures for research" (Elsayed, 2008). A research approach will include the detailed methods of data collection, analysis and interpretation. The type of research approach incorporated into my study includes a qualitative research approach. This approach is associated with the social constructivist paradigm. In addition, such an approach adds meaning to my experiences as described in this study.

3.2.3.3 Research strategy

A research strategy can be defined as a "step by step plan of action that gives direction to the thoughts and efforts, enabling you to conduct research systematically and on schedule to produce quality results and detailed reporting" (Tajvidi, 2005). The research strategy for this study was formulated by structuring a procedure which, when implemented, allowed the research objectives to be answered. I have chosen a flexible strategy focusing on an analytic auto-ethnographic study. This part of the study will be done using interviews with my co-constructors of knowledge, who were chosen for this study.

3.2.3.4 Sampling technique used in the study

Purposive sampling

The type of sampling technique used in my research study is known as purpose sampling. "This type of sampling technique is chosen with a purpose to represent a phenomenon, group, incident, location or type in relation to a key criterion" (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). By applying this type of sampling technique in my research study, it made it possible for me to gather findings by interviewing my family members to collect information for my data process. In this way, my family members could provide a detailed picture on the events of my life which they can remember and benefit my research study.

3.2.3.5 Data collection

Bilsborrow (2016:89) defines "data collection as the procedure of collecting, measuring and enabling one to answer the research questions" (Bilsborrow, 2016:89). The data collection in my research study included conducting (face to face) open-ended interviews with my co-constructors of knowledge, so that I could gather material to write my self-reflective narratives.

3.2.3.6 Data generated from this sample

The data generated from my sampling process was derived from five participants. These were my father, mother, eldest sister, aunt, teacher at Madrasah and school. Moreover, the data generated from these five participants through conducting open-ended interviews with my co-constructors in the study. In this way, their views, ideas, beliefs, and attitudes about the events of my life were recorded. This enabled me to understand how the very small important events contributed to a great part of my life in forming myself as a Muslim female. For example, when I was born in the first self-reflective narrative, the Kindergarden stage, it was important for the azhaan to be read into my ears. This information was collected through conducting interviews with my parents. Data generated from the purposive sampling technique was done by taking down notes. Thereafter, these notes were written down and gathered in an unorganized manner. I decided to separate them by differentiating the different phases of my life in which these events took place so that I could begin writing my self-reflective narratives in a systematic manner.

I recorded my data generated under stages of certain phases of my journey through life. The first one included stage one, called the *Kindergarden stage*. Stage two was called *My toddler years*. Stage three was known as the *Ideal childs age*. Stage four was *My teenage years* and stage five proposed *My young adult years*.

3.3.3.7 Time

The time allocation for the research methodology process was a period of three months. The open-ended interviews with my family members were used to collect information. This was done so that I could add it to my self-reflective narratives.

3.3 Research methodology

Research methodology can be defined as "the specific techniques that are adopted in a research process to collect, assemble, and evaluate the data generated so that relevant information can be used" (Sileyew, 2019). The study was thus written and interpreted using the researchers experience and co constructors opinions to gather findings for the study. The sampling method is described above to gain data for my self-reflective narratives and draw conclusions to my research study.

3.3.1 The relationship between research design and research methodology

Research methodology is defined as "a specific procedure or technique used to identify, select, process and analyse information about a topic" (Paul, 2019). Paul (2019) further states that the "main purpose of a research methodology is to solve a research problem systematically" (Paul, 2019). Kothari (2004) claims that "we talk of research methodology, we do not only talk about the research methods but also take into consideration the logic behind the methods that we use in the context of the research study" (Kothari, 2004) so that it can be applicable to the study and "can be evaluated by the researcher and others" (Kothari, 2004).

Matthew (2019) explains the difference between research design and research methodology by claiming that the "research design is a specific guideline or route map which is detailed" (Matthew, 2019) whereas the "research methodology is a general framework guiding a project" (Matthew, 2019). He also states that different designs can be used to suit different questions and explains how the design can be applied in order to answer a particular research question (Matthew, 2019). This implies that there is a direct link between the "research design and research methodology, where the research design served as a book cover and incorporates the research methodology inside the book" (Matthew, 2019).

Both research design and research methodology are equally important for my study, as I would discover the findings of my research using the route map of my research design and research methodology. I apply a qualitative research approach in this process and include the interpretivist paradigm along with the ethical considerations. The sampling method in my research study is presented in chapter 3, as it was important for me to use a specific set of individuals to generate my findings for my

study. My analytic auto-ethnography is in the form of personal self-reflective narratives and has been divided into different phases which echo my life. It also contains a clear description of the findings which are applicable to my research questions. My research design is thus detailed and comprehensive which will elaborate on the why's and how's of the study. This will be the guideline for my research study. In addition, the view of Matthew (2019) that "methodological choices served as an implementation of how the study was being conducted" (Matthew, 2019) has guided me in the formulation of my methodology.

3.3.2 Analytic auto-ethnography as core methodological aspect

Ellis et al (2011) describe an analytic auto-ethnography "as a personal approach to research and writing that seeks to describe and systematically analyse personal experience in order to understand cultural and personal experience" (Ellis et al, 2011). The analytic auto-ethnography is key to my study and fulfils the requirements of Bochner (1984) as having the "cultures relational practises, common values and beliefs, and shared experiences for helping insiders, and outsiders" (Bochner, 1984).

3.3.2.1 Methodology of an analytic auto-ethnography as a research design

According to Mendez (2011:2), an "analytic auto-ethnography is a research method and methodology which uses the researchers personal experience as data to describe, analyse and understand cultural experience" (Mendez, 2011:2) and is "a form of self-reflective narratives that places the self within a social context" (Mendez, 2011:2). Silverman and Freebody (2003) state that "the underlying assumption of qualitative research is that reality and truth are constructed and shaped through the interaction between people and the environment in which they live" (Silverman & Freebody, 2003). An analytic auto-ethnography as a research design also constitutes the idea of "how a variety of methods in a humanistic stance in which phenomena under investigation are examined through eyes and experiences of individual participants" (Creswell & Merriam, 2009). These authors further imply that because of this particular approach to inquiry "personal narratives, experiences and opinions are valuable data which provide researchers with tools to find results that they are looking for" (Creswell & Merriam, 2009).

In addition, Barkhuizen and Wette (2008) claim that "in telling their stories of experience, teachers necessarily reflect on those experiences and thus make meaning of them, by gaining an understanding of their teaching knowledge and practise" (Barkhuizen & Wette, 2008). Mcllveen (2008) believes that "it is not just about writing about oneself; it is about being critical about personal experiences in their development of the research being done or experiences of the topic being investigated" (Mcllveen, 2008). Danahay (1997) proposed that "the following characteristics of doing a methodology of an autoethnography as a research design" (Danahay, 1997) are:

→ "The role of the auto ethnographer in the narrative: is the auto ethnographer an insider or outsider of the phenomenon being described?" (Danahay, 1997)

→ "Whose voice is being heard: who is speaking, the people under investigation or the researcher?" (Danahay, 1997)

→ "Cultural displacement: some realities are being described by people who have been displaced from their natural environment due to political or social issues?" (Danahay, 1997)

Personally, I feel that using an analytic auto-ethnography as a research design has led me in telling my own story and has made me reflect on my learning history. It has also made me empathise with learners, and understand my own and other emotions, experiences, and reactions. Below, I further elaborate on the analytic auto-ethnography as it was a central component of my research study.

3.3.2.2 The nature of an analytic auto-ethnography

Cluster (2014) expressed the following about auto-ethnographic writing:

"...auto-ethnography is not simply a way of knowing about the world; it has become a way of being in the world which requires one to be living consciously" (Cluster, 2014). This type of writing reveals "different feelings within the writer which can be joyful, sad, revealing, exciting and occasionally painful" (Cluster, 2014). An analytic auto-ethnography also "describes the patterns, values, behaviours and different traditions and beliefs that make a diverse nation" (Cluster, 2014).

According to Bochner (1984), "there are specific characteristics in critical ethnographic studies" (Bochner, 1984). The major links are from "personal experiences, traditional experiences, different beliefs and inequalities which may promote transformation that guide for a better life for one and all" (Bochner, 1984).

Maree (2016:80) suggests that the analytic auto-ethnography refers to the researcher describing and interpreting "the shared and learned patterns and values, behaviours, beliefs and language of a culture sharing group" (Maree, 2016:80). He further states that an analytic auto-ethnographic study "focuses on an entire cultural group, typically involving many people who interact over time" (Maree, 2016:80). Anderson (2006) states that "analytic auto-ethnographies describe personal and interpersonal experiences" (Anderson, 2006).

According to Adams (2011), "an auto-ethnography requires an autobiography and ethnography to become an auto-ethnography" (Adams, 2011). He states that an "autobiography revolves around the researcher selectively writing about their past experiences" (Adams, 2011) and that "the researcher may interview others and consult texts, photographs, interviews and recordings to recall past events that took place" (Adams, 2011).

Goodall et al (2010) believe that "ethnographers become participant observers by taking field notes and interview cultural members which using different space, place, architecture, clothing types, books, movies and various resources to explain individual experiences" (Goodall et al, 2010). They also state that the "combination of an autobiography and ethnography compiles a complete auto-ethnography study" (Goodall et al, 2010). In an analytic auto-ethnographic study the researcher writes selectively "about personal experiences in a narrative possessing a particular cultural identity" (Goodall et al, 2011).

The following model by Herbert (2005) is used to understand "how the autobiography and ethnography forms an auto-ethnography" (Herbert, 2005).

Figure 3.3 Model forming an auto-ethnography

3.3.2.3 Model forming an auto-ethnography

The above model by Herbert (2005), creates an awareness of how the following words 'auto', 'ethno' and 'graphy' are linked together from an autobiographic and ethnographic point of view (Adams, 2011). The arrows indicate the way in which the ethnographic process is conducted, as well as how the autobiographic process is conducted. This highlight why Adams (2011) states that "an auto-ethnography is both a process and product" (Adams, 2011).

3.3.2.4 How the analytic auto-ethnography will be applied in my study

I used a personal narrative auto-ethnography in my research. It is "specifically focused on my own academic, religious and personal life" (Barbara, 2002). Barbara (2002) argues that the purpose of a self-reflective narrative is "to understand the self and some aspects of life as it intersects with a cultural context, connects to other co-constructors and invites readers to enter the researchers world and use what they want to reflect on, understand and cope with in their own lives"(Barbara, 2002).

The self-reflective narratives in my analytic auto-ethnography include the five phases of my journey through life. It begins at stage one which is called the *Kindergarden stage,* age zero until the age of five years. Stage two is between five and eight years

and is called *the toddler stage*. Stage three, from eight to twelve years, is called the *ideal child's age*. Stage four is between the ages of twelve and nineteen years and is known as the teenage years. The final stage five, which began at the age of twenty and lasted five years, is called the young adult age.

In my self-reflective narratives I first familiarised myself with past events and important incidents where certain rituals or traditions had to take place. These experiences are divided into different stages where I explain in detail what exactly took place at that moment in my life. I used co-constructors of knowledge in my research study to ensure that I had accurate memories of what actually took place. The experiences that I wrote about in my self-reflective narratives convey the manner in which I experienced each phase of my life and how they (the experiences) impacted on my religion, personal values, relationships with co-constructors of knowledge, and challenging situations. The narratives also show how the challenges in my life were ultimately handled and dealt with.

My self-reflective narratives give a deeper, significant meaning to my study and have added value to the topic of my research study: *teaching sensitive topics within an Islamic context: A female beginner teacher's auto-ethnographic account.* The narratives are the main component of my research study and explain in detail how significant each tradition is, or how each celebration is conducted, and how they have motivated me to do this research study.

3.3.3 Generation of data for my study

It was important that the generation of data for my study was conducted in a manner which would lead to the most reliable and effective findings. The data generation process that was used in my study is described in the section below.

According to Ferguson (2012), "data generation refers to the theories and methods used by researchers to create data from a sampled data source in a qualitative study" (Ferguson, 2012). He also explains that "the data sources include human participants, documents, organizations, electronic media, observations, intervention studies, focus group study and many others" (Ferguson, 2012). The sources of data in my research study were my co-constructors of knowledge.

In this way, "the framework for collection and analysis of data" (Ferguson, 2012), or data generation, was reliant on the co-constructors of knowledge. The reason why I incorporated the co-constructivist theory in my study is because I asked family members, siblings and few friends to contribute information of past events and to affirm the validity of past events in my life with accuracy and insight. By doing this, my self-reflective narratives would be precise and straight to the point, explaining my personal experiences just as they had occurred.

3.3.3.1 Choosing the co-constructors of knowledge for my study

Co-constructors of knowledge is a concept which means "learning from others and expanding their knowledge in a social or cultural space" (Brown, 1989). Brown (1989) also states that "the social interaction and collaborative articulation of processing ideas which lead to new understandings is also regarded as co-constructors of knowledge" (Brown, 1989). I involved co-constructors of knowledge in my study after identifying who would be capable of confirming the accuracy of the events that took place in my journey through life. I list the co-constructors of knowledge included in my study and the reasons why I had included these specific individuals, below:

Table 3.4: Indicating co-constructors of knowledge and reasons for inclusion

Co-constructors of knowledge in my study	Reason for inclusion
1. Jainoodeen – Father	Always provided guidance in my life and motivated me to always be devoted to my religion
2. Salma – Mother	Supporter in every phase of my life
3. Lianah – Eldest and only sibling	Attended school with me and experienced many events with me
4. Fouzia – Aunt	Spent most of my childhood at her house
5. Moulana Ashraf Bham – Religious teacher at Madrasah	Religious motivator - I learnt much about Islam in his Madrasah
6. Mr Parvesh – Life Orientation teacher at school	Physical education lesson experiences described in his classroom

3.3.3.2 Informing my co-constructors of the research process

I informed the co-constructors of knowledge beforehand about the study that I was conducting and what was required of them. Consent forms had to be signed by the

co-constructors of knowledge before they could begin contributing to my research study. They were informed that they were free to withdraw from the process if they wished to. I also made the co-constructors of knowledge aware of the purpose of the study before asking them to contribute to the process. I assured them that their real identities would be protected, and that their interaction in my research process would not be used in a negative manner.

The co-constructors of knowledge in my study were both overwhelmed and surprised when asked to take part in the study. They had never expected me to write a research study in which I would reflect back on my journey through life or ask them about the experiences I had had with them. However, they were glad that I had asked them for assistance in my study and were more than willing to contribute to it. They also said that it was a very good choice of topic, as many female Muslim beginner teachers struggle with this topic.

3.3.3.3 Dealing with the data gathered from my co-constructors

Face to face open-ended interviews with my co-constructors of knowledge were conducted. Data were gathered by writing down my co-constructors of knowledge responses in a notebook. I made sure that I remembered what all the co-constructors in my study had said by reading and then reflecting on the responses in my notes.

The process of verifying the selection of co-constructors in the study was as follows:

The co-constructors were instructed to give confirmation in the study after receiving the letter of invitation to participate in the study. They also received consent forms with the invitation – these had to be signed, thus giving consent for me to use their contribution in my study. Finally, the co-constructors had to write letters of verisimilitude that chapter four of my self-reflective narratives was correct. I did not record conversations, but I did store the data in a notebook of my own. I keep the notebook in a specific document drawer where all my files are kept.

3.3.3.4 Dealing with my personal biases during the data generation process

I dealt with my bias and prejudice by writing it down and expressed my personal ideas and opinions in a written research journal of my own. I added my personal

unique ideas and opinions regarding the subject in my auto-ethnography. In this way, I could prevent bias and prejudice in my research study (Ferguson, 2012).

I often felt a mix of emotions (happiness, excitement, surprise, disappointment and gratitude) when the co-constructors could relate to the previous events of my life. I always mentioned these different feelings in my notebook. How I dealt with the difficult memories, the ones that I did not want to hear about, was simply by writing them down briefly without elaborating further. I tried to discuss this process confidentially with peers in order to make the data collection process simpler.

3.4 Ethical considerations

The ethical considerations incorporated into my study are:

3.5.2 Transferability

Maree (2016:124) states that "transferability does not involve generalized claims but makes connections between the elements of study and the co-constructors of knowledge own experiences" (Maree, 2016:124). He also writes that "the complete picture of the study must be provided to the co-constructors of knowledge in order to make it transferable to their context" (Maree, 2016:124). Korstjens (2018) explains transferability by relating it to "the degree of which results of qualitative research can be generalized or transferred to other context or settings" (Korstjens, 2018). He further states that "transferability is the responsibility of the one doing the generalizing" (Korstjens, 2018).

To incorporate transferability in my study, I focused "on how typical the co-constructors of knowledge are to the context being studied and the context to which the findings apply" (Maree, 2016:125). To provide an example, I would relate events in my self-reflective narratives to the individuals that had experienced them with me. This reflects how crucial the events, that happened in my personal life, are to the study. Forero (2018) states that "the co-constructors of knowledge had to have a direct link on the context being studied" (Forero, 2018).

I provided "the co-constructors of knowledge on an overview about what my research is about, and how it was transferable to their context" (Forero, 2018). The co-constructors of knowledge "possessed a clear description, which refers to the

context and research design so that the readers could make their own decisions about transferability in my study" (Forero, 2018).

3.4.1 Informed consent or assent

According to Murphy (2007) "researchers undertaking qualitative or ethnographic research should obtain in advance informed consent of persons being studied, providing information, access to language or other material being studied or who are identified as having interests which might be impacted by the research" (Murphy, 2007). He further states that "it is also recognised that while researchers may personally gain from their work, they must not exploit individuals, groups, animals or cultural or biological materials" (Murphy, 2007).

The ethical aspect that was taken into consideration in my research study was informed consent. Informed consent is defined as "the voluntary agreement of an individual, or his or her representative who has the legal capacity to give consent, and who exercises free power of choice without undue inducement or any other form of constraint or coercion to participate in the research" (Olympia, 2017:5). Therefore, "the individual must have sufficient knowledge and understanding of the nature of the proposed research, the anticipated risks and potential benefits and the requirements of the research to be able to make an informed decision" (Olympia, 2017:6). To support this statement Rose (2019) argues that "informed consent is documented by means of a written, signed and dated informed consent form" (Rose, 2019).

The consent form served as proof that the co-constructors of knowledge in my research study had agreed to participate in my research study willingly. The co-constructors of knowledge that were used in my study agreed to have their input in my self-reflective narratives used in the study. All the co-constructors of knowledge contributing to my study were fully aware of what was taking place and why. Their personal feelings were expressed voluntarily as they contributed to the study by relating events and by refreshing my memory of events, so that my self-reflective narratives would be accurate and significant to my study.

3.4.2. Confidentiality and anonymity

Kaiser (2009) proposes that "confidentiality and anonymity are ethical practises designed to protect the privacy of human subjects while collecting, analysing, and

reporting data" (Kaiser, 2009). In addition, he claims that "many social research findings and codes of ethics convey that ideas relating to anonymity constitute part of informed consent" (Kaiser, 2009).

Confidentiality and anonymity were practised in my study because my research uses human subjects in the research. Doty (2004) demonstrates the "ethical value of using an analytic auto-ethnography by claiming that there must be limitations of academic voice and its impact on those who we write about" (Doty, 2004). During my study, steps were taken to protect the co-constructors of knowledge identities from being discovered by significant others. The "agreements from co-constructors of knowledge in my study was implemented in my study and I further maintained confidentiality by protecting private information of the co-constructors of knowledge to the public" (Olympia, 2017:2). In this way, the co-constructors felt more comfortable and could openly express what they had remembered about the specific event that was mentioned.

As the researcher, I took the confidentiality and anonymity of the co-constructors of knowledge very seriously. Their contributions contained sensitive and private information which I first organized and put into context before my self-reflective narratives could be written. I kept all the information written down in a notebook, locked in a drawer which only I could access. This is how I protected all the memories and self-reflective narratives until they could be written down systematically.

When writing down notes using my memory of certain events, I found that I had decontextualized some of the settings and therefore used information that the co-constructors of knowledge had luckily kept. There were also detailed descriptions of some events which I, as the researcher, did not mention in my written narratives. My co-constructors of knowledge have assisted me in accurately writing down each event with the appropriate details. Saunders et al (2003:62) mentions that "we have shown that anonymization is not something that can be done on an automatic pilot with one size fits all or find and replace approach" (Saunders et al, 2003:62).

3.4.3 Voluntary participation

Mapedzahama (2017) writes that "research participation must not only be voluntary but also based on adequate knowledge and understanding of the nature, duration, purpose, methods and potential hazards of the study" (Mapedzahama, 2017). Therefore, incorporating voluntary participation in my research study made it comfortable for each co-constructor of knowledge to be involved in the research process. Nothing was done forcefully. I incorporated voluntary participation by allowing co-constructors of knowledge to either agree or disagree to contributing to the data generation in my study. I provided each with a choice of either contributing or not, and if they did not want to contribute to my research study, they could say so freely.

In this way, I selected the co-constructors of knowledge who would contribute by eliminating those who did not wish to contribute to my research study. Thereafter, I began generating data using open-ended interviews with those who were willing to contribute and also began making sensible self-reflective narratives about them in an organised manner.

3.3.4 Process of data analysis

As indicated earlier, my data analysis was done using thematic analysis. The themes that evolved in my study contributed to the process of conducting a thematic content analysis. They also helped in drawing up ethical considerations and quality measures, which incorporated the process of verisimilitude, for my study.

3.3.4.1 Thematic content analysis

Elliot (2005) suggests "analysing data from a clean script, where one eliminates the pauses, intonations, false starts and utterances that are common in everyday speech" (Elliot, 2005). Furthermore, "a clean transcript focuses on the content of what co-constructors say and makes the material easier to read" (Carvalho & Malekane, 2015). I employed tenets of content analysis as I had to transform visual text information from my pictures to written text explanations. After that, I related the content analysis to the highlighted themes that emerged in my data analysis.. The main themes served as important elements for my study as they were based on my research and subsidiary questions.

3.5 Quality measures for this study

The quality criteria incorporated into my study are as follows:

3.5.1 Verisimilitude as quality measure for my study

Verisimilitude is defined by Mortensen (2016) as "a criterion for judging the sense of authenticity of a textual portrayal which implies a style of writing that draws readers into the experiences of respondents in such a way that those experiences can be felt" (Mortensen, 2016). Oddie (2001) claims that "this determines the level of truth in a particular theory or study" (Oddie, 2001) and further states that "verisimilitude is also known as truth-likeness and is the notion that some propositions are truer, or less true, than other propositions" (Oddie, 2001). I applied this quality to my study by compiling my self-reflective narratives, with the assistance of the co-constructors of knowledge, taking the necessary care to ensure that they were accurate, true and reliable and thus of greater significant to my research topic.

My personal contribution in this research process was to ensure that reliable, accurate and valid results of this research were provided, thus ensuring that the facts and opinions of people in my analytic auto-ethnography are voiced. I gathered appropriate information from the correct family members in order to recall events that occurred in my life. This information assisted in making sense of the data and helped to record accurate results. I took into consideration the various open-ended answers, received from some of the co-constructors of knowledge, that were used in my research study.

By applying verisimilitude, I generated true, honest data to conclude the findings of the study. I made sure that information gained from the co-constructors of knowledge was applied effectively in my data generation process, so that my memories were accurate and so recorded, or adjusted where necessary. Some of the information was obtained through informal discussions with the co-constructors of knowledge. This benefited my study, as I could refresh my memory of previous events on my journey through life.

I had to keep the responses recorded from the open-ended interviews with the co-constructors of knowledge very carefully, to allow the information to remain anonymous and confidential throughout the research process.

3.5.3 Dependability

According to Streubert et al (2007), dependability refers to the "consistency and reliability of the research findings and the degree to which research procedures are documented, allowing someone outside the research to follow, audit, and offer criticism on the research process" (Streubert, 2007). In addition, Maree (2016:125) believes that "dependability is demonstrated through research design and its implementation, the operational detail of data gathering and the reflective appraisal of the project" (Streubert, 2007).

The dependability of my study was confirmed by the qualitative approach using the interpretivist paradigm, and the manner in which the data generation process interpretations were completed. The "detail of data generation and appraisal of the project contributed to the dependability" (Maree, 2016:125) of the study. I kept a research journal to assist the data analysis process. I also recorded my bias as well as category labels in the journal. The entire analysis of my research study was documented.

3.5.4 Confirmability

Moon (2016) claims that "the confirmability of a study in qualitative research tends to assume that each researcher brings a unique perspective to the study, hence confirmability refers to the agree to which the results could be confirmed or corroborated by others" (Moon, 2016). The confirmability of the study also refers to the limitations of the study. The "co-constructors of knowledge view a particular question that should not be changed, but rather be left for the reader to decide what the co-constructor is trying to say" (Maree, 2016:125). The manner in which I interpreted the data enabled me to identify the trends and patterns in my research study. Limitations in my study were the contributions of co-constructors of knowledge, truths we are able to recognise and transcribe, time, co-constructors of knowledge religious affiliation, and the identities of the co-constructors of knowledge.

Furthermore, Lincoln and Guba (1985) "described confirmability as the degree of neutrality or the extent to which the findings of a study are shaped by the co-constructors and not by the researchers bias, motivation or interest" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This is often used in "human subject research" (Maree, 2016:214). My

research study ensured that "steps are taken to protect the identity of co-constructors of knowledge from being discovered, by other people which will apply to the concept of confidentiality" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The signed consent forms of the co-constructors of knowledge were kept confidential, as "it is important to protect private information of the co-constructors of knowledge to the public" (Olympia, 2017:2). In this way, the co-constructors of knowledge felt comfortable and free to express their opinions on the interactions that occurred during the research process.

3.6 Conclusion

In chapter 3, I define the concepts that explain the research design and research methodology for my research study *teaching sensitive topics within an Islamic context: A female beginner teacher's auto-ethnographic account.* The qualitative research design is described and explained as well as its applicability to my study. My role as a researcher contributes to the purpose of my study and is also discussed in depth. I provided reasons for the use of an analytic auto-ethnography in my study and discussed the methodology of using an analytic auto-ethnography. The concepts autobiography and ethnography are explained as well as how both these concepts create an auto-ethnography. The data generation strategies using information from the co-constructors of knowledge were acknowledged together with the surety that ethical considerations and quality criteria were to be observed throughout my study. I also mention verisimilitude and how it is implemented in my research study, thus allowing readers to be informed about the experiences which are described by the researchers writing. In the next chapter, I will describe my personal experiences, in the form of self-reflective narratives in detail and conclude with the findings of my study.

CHAPTER 4 – MY STORYBOOK (DATA GENERATION)

4.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, chapter 3, I have discussed the research methodology and motivated the reason for methodological choices and data generation process. In chapter 4, I introduced the significant others in my story by providing a brief biographical overview of them. As I have discussed in chapter 3, thematic content analysis was used to analyse the captured data. Moreover, I will be using an analytic auto-ethnography throughout the study. Therefore, the discussion of my five self-reflected narratives about the past, present memories and interactions during the different stages of my life will be described in depth. I applied all the data generated from chapter 3 from my research diary which assisted me during this process. In addition, during the process of writing my chapter 4, my self-reflective narratives reveal both positive and negative aspects related to my life. However, for the purpose of the study, it has served to be a productive piece of art which impacts on a major part of the topic of my research study, the personal experiences of my life.

4.2 Introduction to the significant others in my story

By writing the following section, I aim to introduce the significant others in my story by providing a description about them.

4.2.1 My Father – Jainoodeen

My father's name is Jainoodeen and describing his personality would be like explaining how the sky looks with a rainbow, completely amazing. My father had always been my pillar of strength, my guidance in life and contributed to a source of positivity and motivation throughout my life until date. He was always there for me, held my hand when I was sad and down, comforted me and held my hand when times were rough. I had always a role model to look up to. He was called my father.

My father has very dark brown eyes, eyes of which I inherited from him. He has a medium complexion colour and has recently grown a beard which he had never had in his life. Our birthdays are celebrated on the same day – 14th August. It is a blessing having to share my birthday with a loved one in my family. Every year, for our birthday, we have a mini embarrassing moment of greeting "Happy Birthday" to

each other. Each year he grows old, I grow into a younger lady. It is very sad, yet life goes on. Age is something which goes and cannot come back.

I was closer to my father than my mother. Maybe this was because we share our birthdays on the same day, or because I was spoilt by him when I was a little girl. I would open up to my dad easier because he had the ability to understand where I was coming from. Although being a very strict man to date, I now understand how his firmness has led me to be self-disciplined and provide guidance in my life. He had shouted me when I did something wrong, and sometimes also gave me the benefit of the doubt. I could not really do anything without consulting my dad. Whether it was opening my new play station that I got as a gift from my aunt or buying a new school bag for the new school year.

My father had always been a hard-working man. He would just want to see his daughter smiling, always. He never refused me for anything that I wanted. Especially when shopping for stationery for the new academic year. The only condition was that all homework was done, and he sees me pass every term of every year. Hence, I would always look forward to the beginning of January every year when I was at school.

He had taught me to pray, to always bow down to God in times of difficulty because he himself is a man of God. He also taught me to be good to those even though they do bad things to me, something I used to always be annoyed at because it felt unfair. However, until today I still live by that saying because it was instilled in me from a young age. Moreover, my father was very protective over me as he did not allow me to go for school camps or stay overs at anyone's place when I was young. He never left me alone and continued to support me whenever it was required. Lastly, I could go on writing about my father, but these words give meaning to his place in my life which is, "the only person who lost everything in life just to make me win".

4.2.2 My Mother – Salma

My mother's name was Salma but was never ever called by her name like that. She was always called as "ma" when I referred to her. A very funny, fussy type of person I would describe her as. Every unpacked drawer or scattered pieces of schoolwork

or campus work that lay around was always questioned upon. I could never ever have my way. Maybe only a few "lucky times" I would call it.

My mother had big green eyes with a light skin tone. Her hair was thick and beautiful, light brown in colour. I can still recall that in her younger age, when I was about 10 years old, she was very modern. Her makeup was up to date and she dressed to kill. But as time goes on, it changes everything. This is because in today's time, my mother does not have time for herself, but rather takes responsibility in looking after the household. If she had not been there, it could not have been called a household. The cooking, cleaning and handling of the household is done by her. Moreover, each dish is as tasty just like how hot coffee with lots of sugar on an ice-cold winters day. She manages the daily washing duties, ironing of clothing and controlling of what and where everything is situated in the house. If anything is missing, it would be her, the only and only "mother" who knows where it is.

My relationship with my mother was very open as well, but just to a certain limit. I would consider myself closer to my father than my mother. She had always been a helping hand and a shadow in my life I always knew who would be there in good and bad times. She had informed me about the puberty changes that would take place in my life when I got my first period at the age of thirteen. When I was sick, she was always there to put a smile on my face and heal with me. In difficult times, I would tell her my problems, and she would have a solution to it or fight against the situation that happen in my life. For example, when my friends would be mean and we would fight, she would always want to confront them and fight for me. She was a motivation in my life and has guided me throughout my life. The reason why I had furthered my studies after grade twelve, was because of her too. I was going to the world of work, just before she had persuaded and motivated me to pursue my dreams of studying teaching despite the challenges I had of finding a sponsor for my studies and going through the registration process. If there is anyone to thank today for my excellence in my academic world, it would only be my mother.

Honestly speaking, although we may have quarrels for petty things such as scattering all my things around, after a few hours, everything would just go back to normal. This is the type of relationship we have – where we do not keep things in our hearts but have the ability to overcome them. Lastly, if I was asked to describe my

mother in a few words, it would be as "the only person who was with me in every pain".

4.2.3 My Aunt – Fouzia

The only sister of my father – her name was Fouzia, but I always called her F. She was older than my father, which made her a role model figure for everyone after my gran passed on. She is known to be as a loud and straight forward person, but always a special person to talk to. She lives alone and did not get married. Her religious devotion was to ultimate perfection. Every prayer of hers five times a day was done. She would always encourage me to pray every day despite how busy my day would be. Her house was always the place where we spent most of our childhood.

There are memories of climbing the roof, playing modelling, eating not even three times a day, but I would rather call it five times a day at her house. She always cooked what we loved most, which were either baked beans or hot curries which I always licked my fingers to. There were always moments of myself, cousins and sisters troubling my grandmother and my aunt Fouzia, which they would always get annoyed by. For example, we would sing, and scream and shout out aloud, which they hated.

Each weekend, my aunt Fouzia used to buy for us a pack of snacks which included chips, a juice and a small Kit Kat chocolate. This would be enjoyed by all of us present at her house every day. Thereafter, we would all go outside her house and in the yard practise the spice girl dance. We would learn the steps together and excel at it eventually.

We would also play hide and seek, snakes and ladders, Ludu and many other games at her house. These were precious memories that remain to date because it holds a special place in my heart. My aunt was always at home and never worked in her life. She used to look after my gran and take care of all the household duties. They are originally born in South Africa, from the town of Nelspruit but had relocated due to financial issues in the family. They were mostly supported by my grandfather most of their lives until he passed on.

My aunt Fouzia now has a small tuckshop at her house to just make a living and buy small things like toiletries and groceries which she requires. However, until today, we still go and eat at her house, visit her often and never forget all the memories that took place at her house during our childhood.

My birthday parties that took place when I was young always happened at her house. She has been a figure of guidance in my life and has always offered to help whenever there was something to do. She now enjoys when I prosper and inform her on how my progress is in my academic career of completing my MEd. My aunt, who I describe as a big-hearted person always wishes to see me doing well in life.

4.2.4 My Life Orientation teacher – Mr Parvesh

He was a very formal, strict teacher who did not give any learner the benefit of the doubt in the classroom. He was short, dark in complexion and had a round shape body. He would always tell us things in a straight-forward manner. There were no exceptions for anybody. Whenever he found me speaking to anyone in the class, he would reprimand me. This would be very embarrassing, but I knew the limits I had in his classroom.

Mr Parvesh was a high school teacher, teaching the subjects Life Orientation and Science. When I first saw him, his face looked cute and I thought to myself that he is lenient and seems like a not so serious person. However, he eventually proved to be just the opposite. During physical education period he would never ever take a no for an answer, regarding participating in any activity. He never compromised and his rules were strictly stated especially when it was a physical education period. I used to participate in training activities, and sometimes even removed myself from it even though I lose the marks when it was the time of fasting.

I personally disliked going to school every Thursday because of the physical education period. He had no mercy. He was never ever open to any suggestions and could not listen to anything I had to say, probably because he assumed, I was just being lazy. I feel like teaching science, rather than Life Orientation would be better suited for him.

In order to be teaching Life Orientation, requires one to have the necessary personality with the appropriate emotions, experience and feelings. For me, it is not

a one size fits all approach. What he did with the learners in his science class, could definitely not have worked in his Life Orientation class – which is probably why I hated it the most. He could not understand me at all!

Even though marks in the subject Life Orientation is assumed to be the highest in one's report, however mines were relatively low. Maybe this was because of the relationship that I had with my teacher. Nevertheless, as time passed by, I got over it and at least passed the subject no matter what the mark was. At least it was just over. Done and wanted to forget him as soon as I walked out from writing the last Life Orientation paper.

4.2.5 My Elder sister – Lianah

The relationship I had with my eldest sister Lianah, was always open ended and in a continuous process until date. Even though we may have the worst fight or argument, things would always go back to normal. She is the one who is always there for me and the reason why I do not believe in many friends. We have a trustable approach amongst one another and tell each other everything. If there is something that is heavy on our hearts, we let it out by sharing it with each other.

Lianah is the one who had hosted a birthday party for me when I turned sixteen. We had experienced many moments together. Holiday trips to Durban were the best. We had moments sharing donuts which we ended up fighting for who would get the last one in the tray. I would always consult her before I could buy or decide on what to wear and was appropriate for me. We had learnt how to pray together as we attended the same madrasah, practised reading our surahs, and prayers together. There were times where we would share food, a few clothing items that would fit her, shoes, head bands and would make the same hairstyles and copy each other in everything that we do. It was like having a twin sister, although we did not look alike at all.

Lianah looked much younger than me. Being very small built, light brown eyes, light brown hair and a small face – just the total opposite of how I look. She was seven years older than me, which always made me follow her steps and be a leader for me.

Going to school together was the best thing ever. It was like having a ready-made tutor. She always assisted me with every homework activity that had to be done.

Each teacher was explained to me accordingly so I knew what I could and could not do in their specific class. We would always make jokes of an English teacher who all the learners took advantage of because she was old in age. However, she was the best.

Then time went on, and before I knew it, it was time for her to leave the house. She was getting married and her old room became mine now. She left all the memories of discussing her school days of where she had left her lunch box at school or how her class had made her English teacher cry. The days had passed by, but all the memories were left in my mind, heart and soul.

I miss her every day and wish all the days could come back, just if I had a rewind button. This is when I had realised that time may pass, but memories live on.

4.2.6 My Madrasah teacher – Moulana Ashraf

The Madrasah teacher of mine could be described as a tall, fair complexion with big spectacles who had a scary face but was a very well-respected man – as said by my mother. He was very functional in his daily Madrasah classes. There were many students at his classes, which just grew as the years went by. Many of the days, I had my ears pinched and was often questioned about why my homework was not been done, until I had grown up and began doing my homework and being responsible for my actions. However, I had to leave Madrasah when I had reached the age of puberty, which is before I had entered high school.

Moulana Ashraf had served to be a great religious motivator and provided a route map for me during my Madrasah years to follow which I live by throughout my life. He originally comes from Cape Town, where he was born and bred, which is why people say he is very good at what he does. It is believed to be said that most people who come from Cape Town have a stronger sense of religious duty and knowledge about their maker in the religion Islam. I agree with this statement, as I have seen on tv many religious people from the Islamic religion come from Cape Town.

Even though the relationship I had with my Moulana was not very strong, we managed to survive through right until I had graduated and completed the Holy Quran. I received a certificate in Madrasah for best behaviour and was very proud of

myself. This is when I started excelling. It served to be a motivator and improved the manner in which I could study my Madrasah work.

Today, Moulana Ashraf has relocated to Cape Town where he is originally from. He has decided to stay with his family after discovering that his life here living alone without his children and wife is incomplete and difficult. Nevertheless, there are many people who still enquire about him because of the knowledge and his good attributes of the religion Islam that he shares with the youth.

The days of walking down the road going to Madrasah are gladly missed with many fond memories about them. I can remember buying coconut clusters for R5 every Friday after the class was dismissed from the same Moulana Ashraf. He did this to fundraise and feed the poor and needy in the community. This is the reason why he is blessed and is happy and successful today where he is – because he thinks of others who are in need of food, shelter, clothing and water. I also wish to be a well-respected lady and help the needy just as the way my Moulana had helped others. In this way, I will be following my religion according, which will lead to peace and tranquillity in my heart.

4.3 Introduction to my memories

As discussed in Chapter 3, "An analytic auto-ethnography can be defined as a form of the researcher's life and experience which focus on the research" (Reed & Danahay, 1997). Hence, I will be discussing my five self-reflective narratives bellow which will be divided into the different stages of my life. In this way, they will convey the meaning which will contribute significantly to my research study.

Basically, I intend to start writing an auto-ethnographic story of myself as a female beginner teacher and describe my experiences from a very young age – starting from birth, zero - five years of age called the *Kindergarden stage*. I then go on to the *toddler stage*, called stage two which consists of my life through the five-eight years of age. Stage three will be eight- twelve years of age called an *ideal child's age*. Stage four will be thirteen-nineteen years of age called the teenage age and stage five will be the young adult age of twenty-twenty-five years. I have added pictures which display the certain experience or event so that it can reflect significant meaning in my study.

4.3.1 STORY ONE: KINDERGARTEN STAGE

The beginning process of being born is a vital stage in a Muslim individuals life. The parents, and immediate family are important as they have the right to play a role in giving the child a name which has a meaningful symbol that will benefit the child throughout his/her life. As Ali ibn Abi Talib (a.s) said: "The first beneficence of a parent towards his child is to give him a good name; therefore, you should name your child with a good name" (Ahmed, 2001:45).

There are major differences between the rituals and names that have to be performed from males and females in the Muslim religion. As told by my aunt Fouzia, that the male ritual involves the male parent whispering in the babies ear the Adhaan (call for prayer) being recited before the baby can be given to get cleaned. "Islam prescribes male circumcision with the purpose of being cleansed" (Ahmed, 2001:45). This can take place at any time which is convenient. However, it happens before the baby goes home from the hospital. I was also told that when a male baby is been born, they do not have to be any celebration or rejoice by having people come over or hosting a tea party for all the family members to see the baby boy. However, in contrast to the male baby, the female baby who is been born in a Muslim family holds more importance because it is said in the Hadith that giving birth to a girl is almost like having seven Qur'ans on the forehead. In other words, it is the greatest blessing that God has blessed a mother with. Moreover, the female baby must be handled very delicately and holds more value as there is a celebration by hosting a tea party so that all of the family can attend and see it within the first few weeks of it being born.

F also said that in the Islamic context, the parent of the child, or immediate family such as the aunt, uncle, grandfather, grandmother or close relatives of the child can give the male baby a name which must have a significant meaning which they can follow upon throughout their lives. Some of the male names with their meanings are:

Name:	Name:
Ayaan	*Qurban*
Meaning:	Meaning:

God's gift   *Sacrifice*

The female ritual involves the female parent (either the mother or father) whispering in the babies ear the Adhaan (call for prayer) being recited before the baby can be given to get cleaned. During the first month of the baby being born, small gifts can be given to family members to celebrate the birth of the baby being born. The name of the child is can also be given by the parent of the child or immediate family, such as the grandfather, grandmother or close relatives of the child that can give the baby a name which must have a significant meaning which they can follow upon throughout their lives. Furthermore, I was told that my name originated from the Arabic language meaning:

Name: Name

Sadiya   *Happiness*

My father had named me *Sadiya.* But, before giving me this name aunt F has also said that I was a happy baby always smiling from the time that I was born. My Aunt has said that this is the reason why this name was chosen for me. They believe it suited me best. My mother Salma had also told me that the name *Sadiya* was also chosen for me because her brothers daughters name was named *Sadiya.* This is where they heard the name from and began searching for the meaning of it. This is when my aunt Fouzia told me that my father had said that this name suited me best because of the meaning that it holds and until today I believe the meaning of the name *Sadiya* applies to my life because no matter how angry, upset or annoyed I get, I always look for reasons to be happy and smile.

Moreover, it was compulsory for my parents, Jainodeen and Salma to shave off my hair when I got home from the hospital. The hair that was shaved off contributed to a heavy amount. This is probably because I inherited being hairy from both my parents, as they have a lot of hair on them. However, they could not exactly remember the exact weighing amount from the scale as it was not recorded. A certain value of gold in a cash amount was given to the charity organisation in order to help the poor by providing them with food and daily necessities such as blankets, shelter and charity because of the weight of my hair when I was born.

I was told by my parents that there were many people attending the tea party hosted for me when I was six months. This was because I was a girl and all the family members had to see me, know my name, and brought many gifts with them which was of material value such as clothing, shoes, blankets and some brought monetary value gifts such as fifty rand in cash so that my parents could buy for me what was required. Attending the tea party also served to be of great help to my family because other family members had begun assisting my mother in the house and the relationship with family members grew gradually as it is also known "as a basic form of worship to bring one closer to Allah (s.w.t)" (Ahmed, 2001:48). However, "it is common in many other families for immediate family members to visit right away in the first week when a baby is brought home, and other visitors to attend the tea party in order to protect the baby from exposure to an illness or evil eye" (Ahmed, 2001:55). When I was told this by my mother, I felt glad because I am not such a social person and do not like associating with things or people which can cause me harm as I find it difficult to trust anyone very easily. Moreover, my mother had also mentioned that everyone at the tea party got very sensitive seeing me as I was a sweet girl always smiling. My mother was in convalescence for a period of fourty days, during which my parents had the entire family at the house with providing lunch for the family throughout that period of time. I have attached a picture below of the day in which tea party was held for me and where I wore a pink dress.

Photograph 4.1: Baby photo of myself at one years old

In the religion Islam, it is permissible to have a birthday party according to some Muslim families – as long as there is prayer taking place during the day of the birthday. On my birthday, the 14th August, I celebrated my first birthday party. My parents had a special prayer ceremony before I could dress up in my spontaneous dress that my grandparents had got for me. It had red and orange square shapes on it, with a pony like what Dora the explorer currently has in her cartoon. when I look at

what I had worn, it would make me feel like I was going to a circus because of how funky it looked. Although it was a short dress, I was modestly dressed because it was above my knees, therefore covering most of my legs. Before I could celebrate my birthday, I was told by my parents that I was first supposed to wear a traditional attire, called an abaya and scarf while the prayers were going on in my house. I had a fancy birthday cake written one year on it, with my baby picture on it. I was emotional, crying all the time. Usually, in the Islamic religion, we are not allowed to put up our pictures or take any, but I was told that because it was my first birthday, it was allowed to happen as such. Although I cannot remember much when I was one year old, I was told by my dad, Jainodeen that they were many people attending my one-year party as it was a joyous occasion of the celebration of a new member in the family. It was a very sensitive occasion because I was the last grandchild of the family. There was one candle on my cake and during the party. I was held by almost my entire family as I was the last grandchild in the family. Since there were many people who held me and the birthday party was hosted for me, it would be certain that they all had pictures of myself, which unfortunately all which they could not find till this date! However, I still found my little red orange dress that is difficult to believe that I could fit in it. I have attached a picture below of myself in the red, orange dress when I was at my 1st birthday party.

Photograph 4.2: Beginning stages of walking at two years old

At the age of two, I was told by my aunt Fouzia that I began running, kicking a ball and climbing the stairs. Becoming a toddler was enjoyable for myself as I began laughing and talking and using two-four-word sentences at the age of two years. My first word had to be an Islamic word namely: 'Bismillah' – (Glory be to Allah). The

next ritual had to take place when I was two years old. This was called Aqiqah[22]. This takes place when a child is being born. It is a compulsory ritual where the father of the child must slaughter one animal if the child is a female, and two animals if the child is a male. This type of animal can be a goat or a sheep. "One third of the meat is given away to the poor and the rest of the meat is shared in the community as a meal" (Ahmed, 2001:52). Relatives, friends, family and neighbours are invited to attend this type of ceremony to celebrate the new member of the family.

When I was this age, I was told by my grandparents that I started reading Islamic songs and identifying what I like and dislike between colours, and objects. I could recognise faces and begin to talk to my family members. One of many of the Islamic songs, that were called naats is:

Medina

Sweet Medina, Sweet Medina, Sweet Medina Very lovely.

Sweet Medina, Sweet Medina, Sweet Medina Very lovely.

How beautiful Medina, Very lovely Medina, How beautiful Medina Very lovely Medina.

This naat (song) was like a nursery rhyme that was taught to me from home which was making reference to the Mecca pilgrimage that takes place every year. It makes important reference to that place as it is sacred in the Muslim religion.

I began asking many questions to my family members such as why does certain things happen to us? Why do we have to go to Medina? When do we have to pray? What is the Adhaan? Why do we eat such food? I am told that I began interacting with my mum and dad on a social level and many of my mental interests were put into play at that stage.

For example, if I seen a Qur'an, I would simply ask my mum or dad what is this mum? How do we read it? What do we do with it? And my mum would say:

Do not touch the Qur'an with dirty hands!

---

[22]Aqiqah – The process of slaughtering an animal for a celebration of a new member being born.

It is a sin.

You are na-paak[23]

At the age of five-six years old, I was introduced to my new crèche called Al Hidaya Institute. This type of institute was a private institute that only catered for girls aged two-five years old. It was at this institute where I had learnt what the name of my religion is, how to say simple words and sentences in the Arabic language such as a prayer I have to read before I eat my food. I also learnt how to greet in the Arabic language being:

As-salaamu-AlaikumWa-rah-matul-lahi-wabarakatu

And the reply to this greeting would be;

Wa-alaikum-mus-salaam-wa-rah-matul-lahi-wabarakatu.

We were given specific food and drinks to eat such as food from the mosque or food that was prayed upon. There was also Zam-Zam water- a water that is brought from the holy pilgrimage place, Mecca which is rare to find in the nearby suburbs, and if found, it is at a very high price. The dress attire worn at the crèche was strictly Islamic. Hence, my first abaya and scarf was given to me to wear every day. We could either wear abaya and scarf or a long top that is at knee length, and a trouser/jeans till the ankle length. We were taught how to take out our shoes before we could enter the crèche. There were many assistants called "appas" which enabled each child to get individual attention.

The times of the crèche began at 8:30am and ended at 12:00pm. As told by my mum and dad, they became very emotional when it was the first day at creche for me because leaving me alone there was not very easy for them to do. We were taught basic Islamic environmental skills. This included wellbeing, which is the ideal identity and reflection of myself, as a Muslim female child. I began communicating with children who are within the same age range and religion as my own. There were also creative skills and playing fun activities such as playing ball and fun basic cooking. I was also taught Islamic knowledge and understanding of the world. This also meant a development in gross and fine motor skills. I began enjoying interacting and

---

[23]Na-paak – in acceptance to touch or use a religious belonging, such as a Qur'an.

learning and knowing about the social world. I had experienced a different environment other than my usual indoor life. This made me feel excited. I always looked forward to going to crèche every day and enjoyed it so much that at the end of the two years I began crying when I had to leave. There was a special ceremony or farewell for the children, and they received certificates and presents for those who reached the age of six years, as they had to leave and go into the formal educational schooling system. It was a very sad moment on the last day, but memories to cherish throughout a lifetime.

4.3.2 STORY TWO: MY TODDLER YEARS

It was a bright Monday morning, a weekend after my family and I got back from a vacation in Durban. seven days of fun in the sun was more than enough to make me forget about the sorrow I experienced leaving the crèche. The picture below shows a picture of my mother, sister and myself that was taken in Durban by the seaside.

Photograph 4.3: Vacation at the beach

On the 13th of January 2001, at 7:30am, there I was, dressed in my casual clothes with yellow sneakers waiting for my name to be called out at a formal school. It looked very big at first, with many people around me. Words cannot describe how scared I was to be in an environment like that for the first time. I was placed in an Islamic school with many people and kids as the same as me. Aged seven and looking as little as I was. However, as my name was called, I remember a lady, looking tall, with a dark complexion dressed in a long black dress with a scarf on. With time I learned that she had to be called my "teacher", which in an Islamic school – addressed as Appa.

I was placed in a seat with my dad and mum watching me and taking me to the specific place that my appa said I should sit in. They were there for a while- just until everyone had to get seated. It was then time for them to leave, which I remember quite well – and this is when I started to cry – a lot. My parents were also very emotional on my first day of school but unfortunately had to leave me and go. It took myself time to calm down and it was the most remembered day of my schooling career as it was traumatising to be left alone and scary to experience sitting with many of the children who were in the same class as I was. I was sensitive to the way of being around strangers of the same age as mine. The chairs and tables were a different colour. There were red, yellow, green and blue ones. I sat on a red one and as time went by, we were asked to greet the teacher in Islamic traditional way – all together as a class in Arabic words saying:

As-salamu-alaikum-wa-rahmatullahi-wabaraktu

As the teacher replied with the greeting, she then introduced herself and gave instructions. Her next instruction was for us to stop crying and made us all feel comfortable. She had asked us to stand up, say our names and ages to everybody so that we may get to know each other. At the end of the day, we got small presents which were chocolates with our names written on them – (probably just so that we return to school the next day). At least there was something which could make me smile when I stepped out of that class! This is one step in my life which I will never forget more especially, because I was dressed in casual clothes with yellow sneakers on the first day of school which made me feel awkward as all of the other children were in school uniform. It was a different feeling and new experience which meant a new beginning for me.

As I began getting used to going to school, enjoying the Islamic environment and meeting new friends, I also learnt new Islamic methods and traditions that were not taught to me from home. This is the reason why my parents had initially wanted me to go to an Islamic school. So that I could learn the Islamic way of life from my schooling years at a young age. However, as I began learning about my second year in school, I could still remember the dua (prayer) to say before I eat and after I eat, as well as when I go to sleep - that I learnt in first grade. There were many things that were different in second grade when comparing it to first grade.

For instance, I did not get homework in grade one, and in grade two we had homework for all subjects with Islamic subjects too. Going to school in grade two was scary, as I had a very cheeky teacher who always wanted things her way. Every prayer must be pronounced according to her way. At some time in that year, I felt like school is not so fun at all. It gave me worries on Sunday night, Monday the next day is school because of the manner in which our relationship was. I could not feel free to even ask her to go to the bathroom. There were many new things I learnt such as the method in which a Muslim male and female, before prayer, is obliged to make a cleansing ritual before they go for prayer in the mosque. This is called Wudhu. "Wudhu is the procedure of washing of the body, a type of ritual purification. It involves the washing of the mouth, hands, nostrils, arms, head, feet with the specification of water being used as a source of purification" and is necessary in Islam (Ahmed, 2001:60). This was taught to us by our teacher (Appa) who had taken us step by step through this procedure. However, males and females were separated during this ritual. The Moulana (male teacher) had taken the boys through this ritual and a female teacher had taken the girls. Everyday this had to be practised for an hour until we had each perfected it. It was at this stage when I got home from school, myself and my cousins were at my grandmother's place, and used to sing songs, play modelling, climb the roof and play all sorts of games such as Ludu, snakes and ladders and hide and seek.

However, the separation of males being away from females at this school during this ritual felt very comfortable and easy going. I felt free to take my scarf out and practise the wudhu ritual because we were not many females in the class. Everything just felt fine. It was like having our own space in an environment which is conducive for learning Islamic knowledge and procedures. Moreover, there was a prayer we had to say before we had begun this ritual of wudhu. It read, whoever performed wudhu and performed it well i.e. according to the prescribed rules, all his sins will leave him even from under his nails (Bukhari). A few of the prescribed rules were the person should be facing the Qiblah (the way you pray) facing south whilst making wudhu, and the recitation of Bismilla-wal-Alhamdulillah before beginning wudhu, which means In the name of Allah, the Beneficient, the Merciful.

There came times where I did not know answers to many questions in class, specifically in mathematics being the weakest of my subjects – where friends were

there to assist me, and I was comfortable in the environment I was in. However, there were specific rules when going to the toilet taught to us in grade three. This was taught to us specifically by saying "as part of growing up – the rules get more and more stern in the Islamic religion". It was called Istinjaa[24], meaning how to keep clean in the toilet, we had specific rules where we were not allowed to enter the toilet barefoot and bareheaded. We are not allowed to use our right hand in the toilets, printed paper, bones, cow dung, glass, coal or baked bricks. We are not allowed to talk, recite the Qur'an or pray in the toilet. It was not allowed for us to carry any Islamic books or anything with the name of Allah if we were not clean or using it.

We were also taught an Islamic ritual, of how to use a Miswaak[25] A miswaak is a twig of a tree which is used to clean the teeth. The last prophet in the religion Islam (Nabi sallallahu-alayhi -wasallam) used the miswaak and it was recommended from him that the (ummah) people follow his ways. In Islam, it is sunnah[26] (compulsory) to use the miswaak. Some of the benefits that was taught to us, derived from old notes of using the miswaak are:

- ➢ "It cleanses and sweetens the mouth and removes bad odour" (Rasool, 2015:90).
- ➢ "It is a cause of Allah's pleasure and a blow to the devil" (Rasool, 2015:90).
- ➢ "Allah and his angels love the person using a miswaak" (Rasool, 2015:90).
- ➢ "It strengthens the gums and improves eyesight" (Rasool, 2015:90).
- ➢ "It increases the reward of salat (prayer) by seventy times" (Rasool, 2015:90).

It was recommended that the miswaak should be used more by females than by males. This is when:

- ➢ Awakening
- ➢ Making wudhu
- ➢ After eating
- ➢ Before sleeping

---

[24]Istinjaa: The cleansing of a individual when using the toilet.

[25]Miswaak: A twig of a tree which is used to clean the teeth.

[26]Sunnat: compulsory

> ➤ Before going to a gathering.

This was the last Islamic ritual I had learnt in the Islamic school. Before I knew it, I had been going there for the last time to fetch my books and never returning to that institution again... I have attached a picture of me when I was in grade three, the last year attending an Islamic school wearing a headscarf.

Photograph 4.4: School photo wearing a headscarf

4.3.3 STORY THREE: THE "IDEAL" CHILD'S AGE

There it came! A new year, in a new school. It was a matter of time before I reached grade four – the intermediate phase in a school down the road from where I lived called Savanah Primary School. There were many things different in that school compared to where I came from. For instance, it was a secular school – public school with many new children from different races, religions and genders who were mixed together in one class. Growing up and going to a school where boys and girls were separated in a classroom made me feel comfortable and used to it, so when I went to the secular public environment, I felt different. At this stage, I was very attached to my grandmother and my Aunt Fouzia as they lived close to the new school I was going to. So, after school I would always be there. The workload in my new school was much less than the workload given in my previous school. One of the most upsetting moments that took place at the new school was when it was a rainy day, and I slipped down the stairs. I got hurt very badly and could not catch my breath. Teachers helped me calm down by giving me an asthma pump and called my parents immediately. I was plastered with teachers making use of first aid kit in the sick room. With a few bruises and scratches, I managed to feel better after four-five days and returned back to school. If you wanted religious knowledge, you had to go to Madrasah (a separate institution for religious studies). However, I felt like this made my life easier, by getting less homework, but I was also detaching myself

from a place where I could learn religious knowledge and inherit basic curriculum into my schooling system. Nonetheless, I was already admitted to that school and there was no going back. There were no restrictions when it came to going to the toilets, everything was much more freedom wise.

After experiencing strict rules and listening to teachers every instruction, I was now faced with disrespectful classmates who always spoke back to teachers. They were all from different backgrounds, religions and had different personalities. I felt very awkward at first, as I was always modestly dressed, even with a normal shirt, skirt with a trouser underneath, and then I had seen girls with short skirts and no trouser underneath. Everything was very different for me. The teachers were friendlier and approachable and there were no specific timelines of when we could use the toilets. I eventually began liking the new school I was in…also because I met new, nice friends who I could actually get along with.

The teachers at Savanah primary school were greeted in the form of the English way, mentioning:

Good morning learners, and the learners would say:

Good morning teacher peace.

There were also differences in the dress code of the school. We had to wear a shirt, with a skirt, and school shoes. With permission from the head of the school, I got lucky and was allowed to wear a trouser underneath my skirt. According to the Qur'an it says;

"Muslims' should not imitate non-Muslims in their dress or in any other way" (Akhlaaq 2014:23).

The tuckshop at the school had foods that were haraam. Whist Muslims should only eat Halaal foods. Halaal foods are all those foods which are made lawful for Muslims to eat. Haraam foods are all those foods which are unlawful and strictly prohibited for our use. Haraam foods such as the flesh of swine – pork, was sold at the tuckshop. Hence, Muslim students could not buy from the tuckshop. Our own lunch was brought from home, where it was taiyib[27] - acceptable for Muslims to eat. Such types

---

[27]Taiyib: pure, clean, wholesome, nourishing and pleasing to the taste.

of adaptations had to be made for me, due to the shift from the Islamic schooling to the secular, public world of schooling.

Due to no Islamic subjects being taught to us at a secular school, it was compulsory for us to attend the Madrasah[28]. This was after I came back from an operation where I had my tonsils taken out. After being sick for a few months, there came a time where the doctor said it was compulsory for me to take them out. That was a moment in my life I would never forget. The operation took place on January 11th, where a special prayer was made for me before I went in. I was very scared and did not know what to expect. I could not sleep the night before and wished for my mother or father to be there with me. It was a success and took me few months to recover. However, it did happen, and life had to go on.

I was in grade five, and new teachers, with new friends in a whole new environment. Everything happened so fast. It was difficult to manage the school and Madrasah life. There it was school starting at 7:30am and ending at 2:15pm. Thereafter, getting home at 2:45pm and then the rush to get dressed for Madrasah which starts at 3:00pm. It was a tough schedule, being busy from Monday to Friday. By the time I got home I could only eat supper and get my clothes out ready for the next day. I had learnt many Islamic rituals and prayers when I attended the Madrasah. My religious officials (Moulanas) name was Ashraf. He was originally from Cape Town. A very intelligent man who had excelled in teaching Islamic knowledge to his students. At times when I was younger, I used to get pinched for not completing my Islamic subject homework. Moreover, there was Islamic books and audio records, videos and programmes that we had watched and learnt from his Madrasah lessons. All these lessons taught us important values and morals from stories which taught us to treat others and want for others what we want for ourselves. We were also taught that the deed of giving gifts to others will increase the love between one another as gifting improves relationships amongst one another. There were programmes teaching us on how eating yourself without feeding your neighbour who is in hunger will bring you bad luck in life. Therefore, one should always look to their neighbour when looking at themselves. This life lessons also contributed to instilling values of kindness, sharing, love, support, and many more which made me a better Muslim.

---

[28]Madressah: a religious institution for Muslim people.

There were also many prayers we had to learn and were tested on during a weekly basis. Prayers such as, what do we read when someone gets angry, or before eating, drinking water or entering the toilet. My ears also got pinched when I did not master some of these. We had learnt the different methods and prayers which are different from men and women. For example, in a certain prayer on Friday, the men are expected to pray more than the women. We also learnt how to read the Holy Qur'an in Arabic. The Qur'an is one of the fundamental sources of the Islamic teachings. Most of the verses in the Qur'an was revealed in Makkah and Medinah, where the Holy pilgrimage takes place. The Surahs[29], which are legislations and rites of worship are one hundred and fourteen in number, that is in the Qur'an. These are unequal in length, which had to be studied and tested for in exams. These surahs are also part of the five times prayer a day, where a surah must be read in each prayer.

During my time at the Madrasah, there were also the most important aspects of Islam that I had learnt as a Muslim female. This was learning the true meaning of Islam. Derived from past old notes and remembrance, Islam means a perfect way of life, which maintains a refined code of manners. An individual's manner can explain their levels of discipline, commands and prohibitions which the Prophet is an excellent example where one can follow upon. That is the reasons why for every occasion, I ask for permission before anything can be done, I try my best to respect and be kind to people, pray before I dress, visit, go to the toilet, eat, learn, study, travel and last but not least look after my parents with everything that I have and help them wherever I can as the Qur'an makes specific reference to how to be kind to your parents.

The following remains as specific reference of how the religion Islam is built on the five pillars:

4.3.3.1 Ash-Shahaadah

The "profession of faith which must be recited by everyone who belongs to the religion Islam" (Kamil, 2009). This pillar makes reference specifically to *La*

---

[29]Surahs: legislations, rites of worship and transactions related to life.

ilahaillallah Muhammad Rasoolullah – this conveys how "there is only one God and none is worthy of being worshipped but Allah" (Kamil, 2009).

4.3.3.2 Salat (Prayer)

This prayer must be performed five times a day. They are called Fajr, Dhuhr, Asr, Maghrib, and Isha. Each have a different time to be prayed. This is one of the most important pillars in Islam as it is the "first act of worship in which man shall be asked about on the day of reckoning" (Kamil, 2009).

4.3.3.3 Zakat (Charity)

This means purification, in which a payment of some wealth makes the rest of an Individuals wealth pure. This type of charity is weighed annually, in the form of food, cash or cattle and is given to the poor, and the needy types of people.

4.3.3.4 Sawm (fasting)

This is observed during the month of "Ramadaan where the fast begins at dawn before the time you go to school and ends at sunset- at the end of the day" (Kamil, 2009). Eating, drinking and intimate activities with a spouse is forbidden during this time. Fasting serves with the purpose of attaining piety, humbleness and sharing feelings with those who are hungry and poor.

4.3.3.5 Hajj (Pilgrimage)

This is performed in Makkah and Medinah, for all those who can afford the trip financially, and can be visited at least once in a lifetime. Due to myself, and my family being unable to afford the trip, we have never seen Makkah, or Madinah yet. But still pray and hope for us to visit it in the future.

Moreover, to end my madrasah days on a positive note, I have attached below a certificate which I was awarded for in 2006 for best behaviour from my madrasah institution.

Photograph 4.5: Certificate awarded for best behaviour

4.3.4 STORY FOUR: MY TEENAGE YEARS

When I reached the age of thirteen years old, the ideal teenage age because one may reach the stage of puberty-just as I did. It was compulsory for girls to wear clothing that is above their waistline and trousers that cover until their ankle. It is not allowed for them to be under trees or anywhere near the Islamic books when they have their monthly menstruation cycle.

As I began getting my menstrual periods at the age of thirteen, I was in grade seven. It actually happened when I was at school. It was the last period at school and my friends told me there were marks at the back of my skirt. I did not know what a menstruation cycle was at that time. Initially I thought I was sick. Then I got home and showed my mother that something is wrong with me. It is then which I found out what a menstruation cycle is, the process of what must be done and that it is a every month cycle because I have reached the stage of puberty. I was very shocked and amused and sensitive to this approach of what changes would take place when I reached this stage. It was overwhelming too. However, it was life and I had to go with the flow and accept it.

 There had to be a prayer that was done when a girl gets her first period. This is a once off ritual and is not compulsory amongst all Muslims. I could not go to Madrasah anymore, as once a girl gets her menstrual cycle, it is recommended by the religious officials that they learn at home. I was mostly at home most of the time when this stage began. In the Islamic religion, it is important for girls to be at home, rather than go out- especially when they reach the age of puberty. In addition, it was also compulsory for me to undergo a specific ritual called Ghusl[30] - bathing myself

---

[30]Ghusl: to wash the entire body thoroughly and wet every hair and part of the body.

thoroughly using a certain routine when I got my period (became mature) for the first time. This type of routine/acts of performing ghusl takes place in the following way:

1. You have to begin in the name of Allah
2. Intention. You have to state your intention for performing it. For example, I had said I am performing this ghusl act due to becoming mature (reaching of puberty age).
3. I had to wash my hands up to my wrists.
4. I had to wash off all impurities after I got my menstrual cycle.
5. I had to wash off all my body parts with clean water.
6. I had to perform wudhu thereafter.
7. Then, I had to let water flow over the whole body thrice.
8. When pouring water over my body, I had to start from my head, thereafter "pour water over the right shoulder then over the left shoulder" (Kamil, 2009).
9. I had to rub the body.
10. I had to make sure the washed parts of the body do not get dry while performing ghusl.

At the stage that I had my menstrual cycle, I could not perform a prayer, hold the Holy Qur'an or enter a Mosque. This had made me feel like I was becoming a big girl. I had to know from right and wrong. I had to be much more mature by thinking before I am doing something. For example, before wearing a jean and a simple t-shirt, I had to look twice at how it looks on me and how much of my body is covered with it. The responsibilities of mine had become much more, compared to be a small girl which I always referred myself as. I had to look after myself more, wear presentable clothing covering my body and make sure that I am always cleansed as well as smelling good. At that time, I also felt like I should be reading more Islamic books so that I am well aware about the latest changes, societies stories and so that I can read more on Islam to be informed in general because just as there is no end to academic learning, it is the same with Islamic learning.

Its everyone's dream to reach high school – of which gave me very scary yet exciting feelings. Unlike the last time- at the beginning of my first day at school where I wore casual clothes, this time I was all set and ready for my high school stage. Dressed in a red and white Scottish skirt, with a black pants and formal white shirt, I began

walking to the assembly point hoping for an exciting first year at high school. Leaving my primary school friends was sad, as we all drifted apart going to different high schools - but I guess the excitement overcomes it all at the end. On the good side of it, I met new people, new friends with a new environment and learnt new ways of doing things in my new school.

In this school, we had different types of teachers too. Different teachers from different religions. Everything felt easy going and free compared to my primary school. We could wear what we wished. For instance, if I wanted to wear a headscarf over my head, we could. There was no petition about it. There was no need to ask for permission to wear a trouser underneath my skirt. This made me feel much more comfortable and respected in the environment that I was in. I was not judged for been who I am. I had freedom to be who I really am, and in return this had made me excel in it. I had felt like this is a dream come true, the perfect place for me to be.

Although, there were times where during physical education period in Life Orientation, we were instructed by our teacher to complete the task, even if we were fasting, in the hot sun. This felt very unfair and frustrating as my teacher could not understand the way we felt when we were fasting. I was very sensitive to the way she replied back to me, and sometimes would cry or get angry easily with her because of her inability to understand me. We had mentioned to Mr Parvesh countlessly on why we could not participate. But she never gave anyone the benefit of the doubt in the classroom. There were no exceptions no matter what the situation was. It was always being regarded as unfair if we do not participate as she had said that in all religions, we fast. She could never understand or sympathise with me. Hence, I feel she would have been better suited for another subject other than Life Orientation – because of her personality. Some of us in the class however, felt as if we rather lose the marks, rather then drain ourselves even more. It was part of our religion, yet Mr Parvesh refused to take head to it.

There were inequalities experienced by many of us during the first year of our high school life which had caused many sensitivities to me. This was because there was a minor portion of Muslims in the school, majority of the learners were Christians and Hindu learners. Hence, many of them had limited information on the Muslim religion.

The others were used to doing things in the Christian way. One of the situations which caused sensitivities was the role play performed by Muslim females about the fasting month, and how it is done – also what we do on Eids' day – both Eids'. For example, the manner in which the festival of Eid-ul-Fitr is done, what we do during the day, how we pray and informing everyone that it is the Eid we celebrate after the entire month of fasting. On the other hand, the 2nd Eid, called Eid-al-Adha was the Eid we celebrate after sacrificing an animal and distribute the meat to the poor and needy. The differences between males praying at the mosque and females remaining at home was also role played. This caused many sensitivities to Muslim learners at the school because some learners started laughing and making a joke about the whole situation. I had felt very bad about this and did not like the idea of this happening.

Moreover, there was a brief portrayal on stage of what Muslim males and females should wear and not wear. For example, a girl with a long dress (called abaya and scarf) was walking on stage as an example of what our dress code is. A boy with a long kurta (long sleeve dress until the knees) with a (topee) cap on the head was also demonstrated to the audience. With many comments such as "yooh" sounds from other learners, the play had to still go one. The manner in which Muslims conduct prayers were also shown, for example Muslim females were sitting in a row demonstrating the process of praying salah and males were shown in a mosque type background praying to show the difference of how males and females pray. There were also talks on puberty and sexual education which I felt was very sensitive for me and hence, walked out of the hall room when this was taking place. It was very sensitive for me to hear about it, listen to a discussion about it openly and participate in it, hence, I excused myself from this session.

I enjoyed watching and being part of the role play with my friends. In this way, I always strived for what was appropriate for the Muslim learners in a public school. This created the high school fame for Muslim learners in which we enjoyed interacting in. I have added a photo which I found from my days in high school below with having no headscarf on. Although, I could not even put up any photos for any occasion. My family did not believe in framing photos of anyone in the household

Photograph 4.6: Photograph taken at high school

The sky was cloudy, with a 60% of rain expected. And there it was the 14 August. I did not expect anything for my birthday or have any kind of plans for the day. However, as I got up and went downstairs, I was surprised at what I saw. There was a beautiful birthday cake with it written "Happy Birthday Sadiya". It had a mickey mouse face on it and a wonderful colourful scheme on it. It looked amazing.

Photograph 4.7 : Sweet sixteen birthday cake

Lucky for me, it was a Saturday. I did not have to share the cake with anyone at school. Haha, just kidding, my close friends were invited too – by my sister, Lianah who hosted the party for me. This time, they had told me we do not have to perform a long prayer, as it was done when I was a year old already. I was very happy and excited for this day, as I turned sweet sixteen. However, I was also told that I cannot

wear make-up even if I wanted to. This was not allowed as my parents were strict with me and regarded make up as destroying my skin and did not want me to put on makeup- even if it was just a little. I was very sad because I wanted my sister to apply some for me but could not. I just wanted to look a bit different for a change, just like what I saw a few friends having at school a few times, but some things are not for everyone, just like how putting makeup was not for me on this day.

One of the loveliest presents I had received was a key. It was gold. This had reminded me of how I am growing up so fast too. Just a few years back I just entered high school, and now I am almost working towards being done with it. I began thinking about how my days in Madrasah and being in an Islamic school were. This made me realise how the stages in my life were making me change too. From being a very dedicated person towards my religious life, I drifted apart due to the strenuous life of school and heavy workload I had. I could not be up to date with reading my five times prayers and reading the Holy Qur'an every year. This made me realise that I need to manage my time effectively and keep my school and religious life in balance so that I can fulfil them both to lead a healthy life. For example, it became difficult for me to wake up for the early morning prayer at 4:30am due to the heavy workload I was given at school and therefore, sleeping late. I was at school during the 2nd prayer which is at 1:30 and missed it too. The 3rd prayer was also difficult for me to do because I had become very tired from walking home from school and used to sleep in the afternoon. However, I managed to pray the 4th prayer at 7:30pm and the last one which is at 8:30pm. This enabled me to balance my life by at least making time for prayer during a hectic scheduled day.

I wore the same clothes that my aunt Fouzia had gifted me for Eid, for my birthday too. We took many pictures, which however were not allowed to use in the house or put up on our phones. There were many savouries such as samosa's, pies, rolls, and buns that were left over from the time of the fasting month. We had that for my birthday too and enjoyed the day with family and loved ones.

There was also a prayer done, before they had handed the gifts over to me which read:

"Give gifts to one another, for a gift removes malice from the heart" (Ahadeeth, 2011:11).

This began in the name of Bismillah, so that the entire celebration of my birthday would go well and all the gifts that I had received would last me and be worthwhile.

Then it was the 4am start of the week. It was a Monday morning where I could not concentrate, I'm mostly asleep at this time. However, the rush we had to experience-myself and my parents as we got a call from my aunty Fouzia, who lived with my granny saying that she is seriously ill.

As we got to my aunt's house, the ambulance was there taking my grandmother to the hospital. She was ninety-one years old and had a severe lung infection. Nothing much could be done due to her age and everything rejecting her body. Hence, we lost her. My one and only grandmother had left the world. It was a very sad and heart-breaking moment as most of my cousins and myself spent our childhood living by her house. It was time for the Muslim rites to take place. The following prayer had to be said on the body of my grandmother at the time of her death:

"There is none worthy of worship besides Allah; Hazrat Muhammed sallallaahu-alayhi-wasallam is the Messanger of Allah

O Allah, help me to overcome the agonies of death" (Akhlaaq, 2015:62).

Firstly, only the females were allowed in the place called the Ghusal area, where we had to wrap the body in a white cloth of the deceased before we could take it home. I was present at that ritual and had different mixed emotions when I was in there as I was still young and shocked that this had happened. This ritual that took place in this specific room was the same rituals which I had spoken about when I had reached the age of puberty and had to perform ghusl- which is mainly referring to the cleansing of the body. Thereafter, the Muslim female ladies such as my Aunt Fouzia, my mother and few elderly ladies were instructed and allowed to take the body to perform the ghusl for my grandmother. This was done for the purpose of ensuring that the body is been cleansed before it is buried. Muslim women will perform ghusl on ladies only and Muslim men will perform ghusl on men only.

The Muslim council, which is responsible for funeral rites was informed of the name, date of birth, and venue where the funeral will be taking place of my grandmother. This happened at about 4pm on Monday afternoon. The siren had begun to ring at the mosque which calls for people to read the name of the deceased on the notice

board- which is three times for a Muslim female and Muslim male. However, in other religions such as the Hindus', it would ring only once. This would show the difference of a Muslim person passing away and a person from a different religion such as the Hindus' passing away. The following prayer had to be said when cleansing of the body (Ghusl) was being done by a female member of the family, being my aunt, which read;

"O Allah, forgive amongst us those who are alive and those who are dead, those who are present and those who are absent, those who are young and those who are old, those who are males and those who are females. O Allah, whom you keep alive amongst us, keep him alive upon Islam and whom you caused to die, let him die upon Imaan (faith)" (Akhlaaq, 2015:34).

After this was completed, the body was brought back to the home where the family members were praying upon. In the Islamic religion, the body of the deceased cannot be kept for more than twenty-four hours. It must be buried before then. Many of my cousins and other family members had been travelling from places such as Cape Town and Durban before the body could be taken.

Hence, the process took much longer. There were forty Yaseen kitaabs (prayer books) that had to be prayed on the day. All the females were dressed in black abayas' and scarfs to cover our heads. The males had long kurtas (shirts) till the ankle length. The body was taken to the cemetery at 9pm after the Esha prayer.

 The men are only allowed at the cemetery in the Islamic religion. The body was placed in a coffin, which at the graveyard, the deceased was prayed on, taken out of the coffin and placed in with a sheet of cloth wrapped around it. People continued praying at home and a meal, niyaaz[31] (supper) was served to all the members that were still at the house. The food was prayed upon, and then served to the community and all those who had attended the funeral.

In the Islamic religion, a niyaaz (food that is prayed upon) is compulsory to give to the people of the community and members of the household on the day of the funeral. Three days after the funeral, it is compulsory to give the niyaaz again, as well as fourth day after the funeral date. This is to end off the mourning period. Rice

---

[31]Niyaaz: a offering of food that is prayed upon and given to people to eat.

with milk is most commonly given with a sweet dish. Usually, people are called/invited to attend this function. It was a very small function taking place at my granny house. There were forty people attending this function. After the people had eaten the food, the religious official prayed and displayed gratitude to Allah (s.w.t) for everything he has given us and to pray on the body of the deceased to rest in peace.

On every Eid or special occasion, we remember our loved ones who are not with us. Looking at family photos and videos where we all shared happy moments, sad moments and joyful experiences, the remembrance of my grandmother will always be there. Their footprints will remain in our hearts forever...

4.3.5 STORY FIVE: MY YOUNG ADULT YEARS

When I came to the adolescent age of being twenty, I decided the way towards which career path I would like to follow. This took me time as I began thinking about it during the gap year that I took that was after matric. After gaining a good pass, it was enough to keep me satisfied for the year. The matric year was very tough and exhausting for myself.

I had to get a part time job, teaching small children at a Madrasah for a few hours every weekend just to spend it on my Mathematics tuition when I was in matric. Every subject required the same amount of attention and dedication, hence, my family and free time had to be forgotten. Then there was the matric ball date set. I was not allowed to attend the matric ball and every time I insisted the idea to my parents, they were not very keen about sending me to it. It was very sensitive for them to send me to such events without their supervision. My parents did not believe in us attending matric balls. It was just not for us, they said. I suppose it is because at these types of events, there is dancing and drinking of alcohol as well as after parties which follow after the matric ball. Hence, the sensitivities experienced by them. My parents were very strict and made sure they know where we are, what we are doing and who we associate ourselves with. The tickets were One hundred rand and you were allowed to take a partner if you wanted to.

However, as I told my friends that I am not coming, very upsettingly they approached my parents and informed them that we will be going as friends just for the remembrance of matric memories as some of us may not see each other again.

Somehow, they managed to get my parents to agree and I was allowed to get a ticket for my matric ball!

This was very shocking. Never in my life did I ever imagine myself going to my matric ball. The date for the matric ball was after the final exams, 29 November 2012. I got to wear a dress that my cousin had gifted to me during the year for my 18th birthday. Although it was very simple- long sleeves, red in colour and until my ankles. I loved it! I could not wait for the day to arrive.

I had to wear a scarf with it and I was allowed to put make up for that day. My sister, Lianah had my makeup done for this first time and I could not believe the way I looked. It seemed as if my dream of having makeup put for my sixteenth birthday party, which had not become a reality, had finally come true! I felt like a totally new and different person! It was time for me to get to the venue, which was at Newsun conference centre. As my friends and I went together, we took pictures together and by ourselves when entering the venue, while other learners from our class had their dates and walked in with them. I personally did not have a date and did not want one. This was mainly because of my personality of myself being shy and not associating with males a lot. I did not feel comfortable. I was mainly into concentrating with my studies and what I wanted to do in the future, which career path I would want to follow, getting my driver's licence and progressing myself in life. I was not into the dating life at that stage in my life. I was at a sensitive stage, of learning new things, seeing new things and experiencing new things in my life.

It was a very exciting moment and memories that I would cherish forever. I wish the day could come back. The menu set for that day was mostly Haraam food – meat and alcohol that Muslims are not allowed to have. However, there was fish and salad with a few cold drinks that my friends and I had. We left the matric ball quite early, as we are not allowed to get home later than 9:45 in my household. My parents fetched us all and we enjoyed the evening for as long as it lasted.

When I finally decided what I would like to do with the rest of my life, I immediately applied for it. When I got accepted for it, it couldn't have been the best news that I have heard. I was very proud of myself for having to reach until this stage. I chose teaching. Teaching because it could shape minds, and I would be able to make a difference in peoples lives. Getting accepted was easy, but financing my studies was

the difficult part. Applying for many bursaries and not getting an answer from those institutions was as stressful as hell. I had to get a plan B. This was asking my parents, family members, such as my aunties and friends if they knew anyone who could assist me in paying for my studies.

My family members had helped with the finances for my studies such as paying the registration fees in my first year and I tried my best to save up a little from teaching madrasah children to contribute to the entire amount for my registration fees. I had begun applying at different bursaries institutions such as the Funza Lushaka and from private companies which I knew of. I was not successful though; they had rejected my application at Funza Lushaka because of subject reasons. Finally, I had heard from a school friend that I should apply for one last bursary which was a private bursary called TS sponsors-which stands for teaching sponsors. The requirements were many, as I had to also pay back the bursary after I would be completed with my studies. I had to pass all of my modules- which were very difficult too. It was an emotional state for me as I broke down in tears, not knowing if I will make it to pass and finish my studies in the complete four years. But I prayed and prayed and became strong and motivated into driving myself by taking the risk of studying and using a bursary to sponsor me.

Somehow, I managed to get the bursary. This institution financed my studies along the four years towards becoming a successful professional teacher. I experienced many bump roads, for example in relation to going to a private and secular school for my practical teaching, and not being allowed to do and wear certain things. The principal of the school had stated his rules and expectations of the school which student teachers had to follow. Personally, I felt as if those rules were over doing it. I was not allowed to sit in the staffroom when I was free to do some work and neither was I allowed to print anything from the printers. Everything had been monitored. Sometimes, I wished I hadn't chosen that school to go to for my practical teaching phase. I had immediately informed my family members about what was happening at the school and how horrible my days used to be. They were disappointed and told me I should have chosen another school instead of suffering there. They also told me I would not be learning anything if I do not enjoy the environment that I am in. and I agree to this statement, because I did not enjoy and learn much there at all.

There were also other certain exceptions that were namely; not being allowed to wear a scarf on my head and not allowed to be excused to go for prayer at 12:30. I had felt like I was not been understood and there was no empathy between the relationship with me and the members of the school management team. There was no sense of respect for religion, gender, values and personality differences. For example, we could not associate with other. Teachers in the school and everything done had to be professional- work wise only. I was treated as a teacher who knew everything, as no guidance and development was even provided to me. I was criticized for being a student teacher trying to learn from others. This was not fair and left memories that I will never forget because it held a position in my heart which left a mark.

During physical education period, sensitive situations had occurred to me. For example, when training the learners, it was compulsory for me to wear a fitting pants with a sports top and tekkies. I was not allowed to wear my headscarf or wear an attire of my choice. On Fridays, it was not permissible for me to leave for the most important prayer that we have at 1:00pm called Jum'ah[32]. Usually, at this time, a female woman has to be at home praying while the men go to mosque to perform this prayer. This made me very angry because I felt like I was being denied the right to practise my religion when I was just a student teacher. However, it also made me realise and think that in the work of work, not everything will be my way and I will have to get used to different protocols and rules and regulations. The sooner I get used to that, the better it will be for me so that when I find a job, I will be ready for it. In a way, these experiences had also prepared me for the world of work.

In addition, there were many debates on religions that took place in that school, of which different teachers' may have gotten offended. So, unlike the campus days, my practical days of teaching was very different and difficult. I was also offended because of not being able to pray on time and be excused as I felt as if I was being denied the right of religion practises. For example, at campus, we were allowed to leave lectures or campus itself at our own time or according to our own wish. There were no ifs and buts, but maybe, this is the reason why they say, "campus is the best

---

[32]Jum'ah: important prayer that takes place on a Friday.

life". It's because you rule yourself and make decisions for yourself at this point in time. No one will tell you what to do or how to act or how to dress.

Eventually, I decided to be a better person at the school where I was doing my practical's and keep these issues behind me because I knew that I was not going to be there for a long time. Eventually, my practical time of serving teaching in that school would soon be over. Moreover, I knew where I come from, what my religion means to me and I was not going to argue about it unnecessarily with anyone because they were not happy with themselves. My patience ran out and I did no longer want to prove my identity to anyone anymore. All good things come to an end, and campus is now referred to as "one of the best days of my life" ... as I managed to graduate and am glad that I took the risk of signing the bursary form because it reaped the fruits at the end and I am currently paying it off successfully.

Myself as a beginner teacher teaching Life Orientation

During my first year after graduation, I personally experienced teaching Life Orientation to a grade nine class of forty-four learners in a public school. This was a part time job, whereby I had to fill in for a teacher on maternity leave, who was teaching the subject Life Orientation. I was told that this specific teacher was elderly in age, late forties and was the grade head in teaching Life Orientation. The four months that I had taught those kids were like hell for me. I did not feel comfortable at all. This is because many learners saw that I was young, and one of them saying to me "You are my sister", which gave me the impression that they can see that I don't have any experience in what I was teaching. Practical teaching did not serve as much experience and knowledge for me in my subject area, as when I got exposed to being alone in the classroom, it was much worse. I was scared and had no knowledge on how to approach the learners in terms of teaching them and interacting with them, as previously, this was done with a mentor teacher in the classroom.

The discipline of the learners when teaching Life Orientation was "out of order". They could not allow for a discussion to be made decently between myself and them in the classroom. This is because many of them felt that due to the differences in the backgrounds and religions that we come from, the lesson will not be beneficial for them and hence, I was undermined, feeling not capable enough to teach them. For

example, when the topic of personal and social well-being was taught to them, particularly on the subject sexual education and how one gets pregnant, many of them began shouting out asking me "why are you not pregnant" , "how does one get pregnant" and "requesting for an explanation of the picture of the reproductive system from the textbook". I was unable to fulfil this expectation for the learners and this made me feel a sense of shame, embarrassment, and inadequacy. I could not get the words out and the learners began laughing at me, due to the ineffectiveness that I was faced with and could not respond to their educational demands in the lesson. I began walking out of the classroom, bursting into tears. I had been thinking "Is this the correct career path for me?" "why did I come to this school?" and "I want to go home now"!!! I never went back to the school due to this incident and began thinking about how other Muslim female educators can do this. Hence, the rationale for writing this study. Till today, I am afraid to being exposed to teaching Life Orientation on sensitive issues such as sexual and religious education in high school, because of the inability of responding to learners in lessons.

Moreover, during the phase of my young adult years, the form of dress code that I adhered to came into play when I was adult becoming like. Dressing was a very sensitive phenomenon for me. This is the reason why I began reading many Islamic books because I was interested in knowing and learning new knowledge in Islam. It would lead me into becoming a better Muslim female. There were also narrations in the Muslim books which informed me further on how to dress like an Islamic ideal individual. I liked knowing about this because I could adjust my dressing pattern and learn the proper way of dressing because I was of an adult age. The usual denim blue jean, with a casual t-shirt which came just above my knee was accepting enough to be worn around with my perfume on. However, as I began learning about the do's and don'ts in my religion, I realised that perfume is strictly forbidden to be worn by Muslim females. I was very happy about this, because I had many perfumes and liked using them, but I had to give it away to friends who would use it because I wanted to make sure that I practised my religion correctly.

I avoided wearing perfume and garments that are thin and transparent which is not allowed in Islam, as it is known to reveal the body, as spoken about in the Islamic books too. it was also written that it is compulsory for a female dress code to consist of a shift, a veil and a cloak in the religion Islam. In this way, the females legs are

entirely covered, her head and neck and their head and shoulders. However, in wearing casual clothing such as a normal jeans and casual top, it can be covered too as long as the clothing is not clinging to the body to show my figure. Hence, I always dress in a manner which my figure does not show. It is not important to wear new clothes in Islam, as much as it is to wear clean clothes in Islam. Hence, the clothing in my wardrobe has been worn many times before but washed before I have worn them.

I also strived to buy clothes that are white in colour, as in the Qur'an it states that the ideal colour of a Muslims clothing should be white in colour. It is also a sin to be buying many clothes and keeping them in the wardrobe to lay there, and not wearing them. Therefore, I avoid going for shopping and buying unnecessary clothing which I know I will not make use of.

Unlike a woman, A men's way of dressing is different in many ways. For example, it is allowed for females to wear gold and silk, but it is forbidden for the males to wear this. This is because females have a special connection with being compared to something that is of value such as gold and sensitive like the material silk. Swim wear is allowed for to wear on a condition that it must be covered from the navel to the knees but not be exposed to others. Sports can be played in specific types of shorts which is necessary to cover the other parts of the body and not show the men's form. In the case of females when dressing for sports and swimming activities, they must wear a specific Islamic costume which covers from head to toe so that the figure cannot be transparent and seen.

Therefore, for holidays or any special swimming party, I usually dress myself in an Islamic costume and cap. I also wear a long trouser and t shirt whenever I am outside the house. This shows the respect I have for my body, and attitude I have towards my religion as a Muslim girl. I feel very satisfied and content with myself when I am like this and look at myself in the mirror dressed appropriately. I personally do not like to associate with people or have friends who are not dressed or follow the same values that I have in my life. For example, I would not like being around friends wearing short trousers or half tops. It would naturally make me feel uncomfortable and strange. I will feel a sense of shame and also badmouth them, which I would not want to do, hence I stay away from such people.

There came a time where bells had to be rang. This time, not the school bell, but wedding bells! Yes! It was my sister Lianah who was getting married. Everyone was very excited with this announcement. This was going to be the first wedding in our family. The invitation looked like this:

Photograph 4.8: Wedding invitation

In the Islamic religion, getting married is compulsory. It is a very sensitive issue and is part completing half of your religion. There is no other option in the Islamic religion other than getting married to each other if you love one another. I believe that this is the correct way if you want to be with someone. It is better to make things official rather than do things behind the societies back. Hence, before the wedding date could be set even, a specific prayer had to be done to ensure if the partner was correct. The answer would arrive in the form of a dream, which could be a good or bad dream. It could also be given in the feeling felt by the person reading the prayer. The prayer read as follows:

"O Allah, I ask you to grant me the ability through your power that this matter be good for my faith then ordain it for me and make it easy for me and if it is bad for my faith and my livelihood then turn it away from me and ordain me for the good wherever it be" (Akhlaaq, 2015:44).

The prayer was done, and results were good. Wedding preparations had begun. There were three compulsory functions that were done. The first one was the Khatam[33] done a week before the wedding, second one was the zikr[34] which is

---

[33]Khatam: A prayer to bless the girl and boy before the marriage.

[34]Zikr: prayer before the night of the marriage.

prayed the night before the wedding and the Nikaah[35] day which is the marriage between two parties- the male and the female. They are described below as follows:

Khatam

The khatam is the day in which a prayer is done by Islamic female officials taking the brides and grooms name a week before the marriage is taking place. It requires the bride to be to be present and cooperate herself into the prayers by repeating the prayers after the religious officials have said them. After this prayer is done, the members attending this prayer are served with drinks, tea and savouries which serve as an offering for the marriage that is going to take place.

Zikr

The zikr takes place a night before the marriage and is for males only. The purpose is to mainly pray for everything to go well and smoothly on the wedding day.

Nikaah

The Nikaah is the wedding day. This takes place in the Mosque and is when the bride and groom agree to marry each other and say it three times to the Moulana (religious official). There must be witnesses in the mosque, such as the bride and grooms father, uncle, and relatives present. A dowry (payment in cash or coin) is compulsory to be given to the bride at the time that the marriage is taking place in the mosque. "There is also a ceremony that takes place where the exchanging of gifts happens. The bride's family give gifts to the groom and the groom gives gifts to the bride's family" (Shahid, 2017). The wedding is usually at the expense of the bride. Thereafter it is done, a small celebration takes place by celebrating the marriage of the new couple. By this, I mean that there is a small ceremony of cooking for people, and them having supper with tea and cakes served after with mostly family members who eat food only after the Nikaah process has been done. This Nikkah ceremony remains as a sensitive issue as there are sad moments when the girl leaves her mother's house to stay with her husband.

The dress code for the Nikaah day is an abaya and scarf for females, and for males, it is a kurta[36] and tope[37]. Thereafter, people are served with niyaaz (food). They are

---

[35]Nikaah: a marriage between 2 parties

[36]Kurta: a shirt which is long is length – until ankle length.

given food which is prayed on to feed the people so that the new couple's marriage is blessed. A walimah[38] is compulsory in the Muslim religion to celebrate the marriage of a couple after the wedding day. However, some families prefer to have the wedding and Walima in one function. *The Nikaah becomes haraam* when a man becomes incapable of supporting his wife. She has a right to ask for maintenance from her husband and if such cannot happen – he cannot support her then the woman can dissolve her marriage.

There are many sensitive situations in the religion Islam that I strive to follow until this date. Sometimes I fail and sometimes I excel at it. For example, I fail at praying my salah from time to time. Due to busy weekdays I do not fulfil this duty. This makes me feel bad, but I strive to work harder to completing this duty towards myself and my religion. I also fail at managing to take care and associate with my neighbours and finding out how they are because of getting home late and always being indoors. But I wish to work on these issues and correct them. On the other hand, I excel at reading many Islamic books and work on improving issues which remain sensitive for me, for example sexual education. By trying to improve on these weak areas, I make time for them by getting many books and articles and reading them, so I am more informed in this area of my weakness. I am currently working towards becoming a better person by improving my character and therefore becoming a better Muslim. I aim to do this by helping others by contributing to charity organisations whenever I can, so that others can live happily and not be short of anything. I will feel a sense of relief and satisfied by achieving this. However, I never fail to forget each day about how far I have come and how proud I am to originate from this religion Islam, as it is beautiful and certainly provides direction for me through each and every way in my life.

4.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have introduced the significant others in my narratives and thematic analyses was used to analyse and record the data. I have described my five self-reflective narratives dividing them into different stages of my life. It began from zero years until the age of twenty-five years. I have presented the self-reflective narratives

---

[37]Tope – a cap like to cover the head of a man.

[38]Walima: function that celebrates the marriage

in an accurate, well explained, clear, concise and logical form. In this way, my self-reflective narratives could be understood in the simplest form and I was able to elaborate on each and every incident which contributes to the data generation and interpretation method in my research study. I have explained reasons why my experiences had led me to feel the way I do. In this way, it presented a sensible logical flow for each narrative. Some pictures have been added to demonstrate what each event looked like or how I looked like at that specific stage to convey meaning to my study. Finally, I also fore grounded the sensitive issues in my narratives which were spoken about by my mother and the significant others in my research study. This has led me into developing my themes and sub-themes which will be discussed further in the next chapter, chapter 5 of my research study.

CHAPTER 5 – INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

5.1 Introduction

In chapter 5 I present the themes that emerged through an analysis of the data generated in the previous chapter. I also comment on new findings which came from my study, that has not come to the fore in the literature. In addition, the reflection on the theoretical framework will be included.

5.2 Summary of emergent themes and sub-themes from my data

The themes and subthemes emerged from my data has revolved entirely around the components of the Islamic religion, gender aspects, and teaching of sensitive topics as a beginner teacher.

Figure 5.1 demonstrating the themes and sub-themes emerged from data generated

Themes	Sub-themes
5.3 THEME ONE: The Islamic religion	5.3.1 Islamic beliefs 5.3.2 Islamic scripture and traditions 5.3.3 Religious officials in Islam
5.4 THEME TWO: Islam and gender	5.4.1 Islamic gender roles 5.4.2 The influence of Islamic gender roles on my personal identity construction 5.4.3 The concept of modesty
5.5 THEME THREE: Teaching sensitive topics as a Muslim female beginner teacher incorporating LO curriculum as a core subject	5.5.1 How did gender roles influence my teaching? 5.5.2 How did my Islamic background influence my teaching? 5.5.3 How did my Islamic background influence my experience of teaching sensitive topics?

5.3 THEME ONE: The Islamic religion

The Islamic religion constitutes of three major components in my research study which are:

5.3.1. Islamic beliefs

Islam mainly consists of certain beliefs which different Muslims follow. Thus, even though an individual can belong to the Muslim religion, their beliefs will be different. For example, my family did not believe in framing photos of anyone in the household. This can be linked to the story described in story four chapter four, teenage years of my life where I took class photos at school but was not allowed to frame them up in the household. It is not permissible and allowed to happen in our household. Whereas, in other families it may be allowed to frame photos and put them up. Hence, in my literature review, Faheema (2017) claims that "Islamic traditions internationally and nationally require different devotional practises to increase their taqwa and discipline, their attitude and behaviour towards others" (Faheema, 2017). Moreover, to explain the theory into practise using my experiences, I used the event where I was put into an Islamic school at first where I used to learn Islamic subjects, but I was then moved into a public school where my parents believed it would be fine for me to attend a Madrasah separately. This is explained in story three, in chapter four, the "ideal" childs age. Other people, from different Muslim families would believe in keeping their child in a Muslim school for the sake of learning the two in one, which is the secular and Islamic subjects together.

Hence, the theme of beliefs in Islam is important in my research study because it can mean different things for different Muslim individuals. My beliefs for myself meant that I devote myself to the religion Islam in every action, thought, behaviour and see it as a manner which guides me through living my life. Therefore, before I could even choose a career path to follow, which was teaching in, as explained in story five called my young adult years. In my case, I made it compulsory to pray a certain prayer called istikaarah[39].It is in this prayer that I would specifically ask for guidance for the career path which I wish to follow which is teaching. After conducting this prayer, the answer would be given in the form of a dream or feeling. In addition, my beliefs meant that my entire surrounding and world revolved around those values and attributes which enabled me to manage and maintain consistency in my life. In

---

[39]Istikaarah – a specific prayer in which you ask for guidance for a career choice, marriage partner etc

all honesty, it is in this way which I feel that I can achieve my goals, by always owning my beliefs and practising it consistently.

In comparison to the literature review, some of the similarities of the beliefs that exist from the literature review involves the concept of how the rituals in Islam is present in both my beliefs and my literature review. This is evident in my belief system when the self-reflective narrative about the ghusal conducted when I had reached the age of puberty, the birthday party prayers which was done in celebration of my party, the prayers that had to be conducted before any wedding can take place which was a khatam and Nikkah in an Islamic home and the process of birth in a Islamic home which was conducted when I was born. Hence, Samodeen (2019) claims that "Islamic traditions and rituals pertain the five pillars of Islam as their focus is for ritual practises from the initial stages of their lives" (Samodeen, 2019). This quote supports the above events that occurred in my life which contaminates the rituals in Islam, which is compulsory for me to be aware about so that it serves as a guide for me throughout my life.

In the literature review, it is mentioned aby Beijaard et al (2016) that "the contrast of identities of teachers vary vastly" (Beijaard et al, 2016). This is in relation to the fact that in olden times the teachers were more stable and at a developing stage, whereas in the recent times teachers identities are unstable and continually shifting (Beijaard et al, 2016). This can be because of the newly implemented curriculum and subject involvement in the schooling system. Moreover, this statement above is similar to the event in my findings in chapter four. This is when I describe the incident about my practical experience at a school. I had conducted it at a secular school with diverse learners present. It was not an option for me to obey my Islamic way of life and dress in the manner which was appropriate for me at that school. It was compulsory for me to adjust my ways of communicating, verbally, physically, and mentally. Thus, my identity shift is displayed at this moment as I had to change my attire during physical education period and wear a fitting pants with a t-shirt and tekkies without a head scarf. I was not allowed to go for prayer at 12:30pm during the school day. This sharpens the similarity of how identity shifts, unstable identities and recently improved curriculum is consistently occurring which causes changes to teachers identities.

When pointing to the differences about my belief system in comparison to the literature review, it is important to sharpen the focus to the issue of gender importance. This is because it contributes to an integral part of practising the Islamic religion. Hence, indeed it remains as an important factor that was pointed out clearly in my findings which contributes to my belief system as in the narrative of the initial stage of my life, the birth stage, it clearly dictates the Islamic relations between the males and females. This is when a clear distinction is made between the males and females. For example, the birth stage narrative describes the ritual process done for a male and a female child when he or she is born. However, although both the male and female gender must have the adhaan recited in their ears just after birth, they differ by the name process and the circumcision process which must be conducted before the baby can go home.

In addition, the concept of the ritual cutting the sheep also displays a major difference between the male and female gender in the religion Islam. The male has to cut two sheep or a goat, and the female one only. However, this ceremony is for the sole purpose of the celebration of a new member in the family and only "one third of the meat is distributed to the poor and needy" (Shahid, 2017). The Islamic law dictates that the male has more power over females, for example in wealth, the male will have a larger share than the female because the male has a family and children to support and the female is sought to be married and supported by her husband.

This is the reason why the theme of belief systemin my literature review can be differentiated from the theme of beliefs in my own findings. The manner in which a Muslim female is brought up and set their individual belief system is unique from one person to another. Hence, Shahid (2017) expresses his belief in which one can teach sensitive topics successfully, by saying that "teaching sensitive topics can be enjoyed even within an Islamic perspective" (Shahid, 2017). He further states that "teaching sensitive topics within the Islamic context can be enjoyed by creating academic freedom felt by designing and teaching the specified curriculum" (Shahid, 2017). However, in my opinion, I disagree with this statement as in my findings according to my beliefs, I wrote about being brought up using a specific set of guidelines and rules that I will carry out throughout my life. For example, I followed through all the rituals and read specific Islamic books which led me into following my religion in the correct manner and being confident in practising the appropriate belief

system set by myself. This is in contrast to the quote by Harrison (2020:64) as he claims that "designing the curriculum content in a suitable way may enable a teachers development and influence their behaviours" (Harrison, 2020:64). Therefore, this implies that the curriculum cannot erase the fact that the same topic will be discussed despite the method used to conduct the lesson. Other measures must be implemented, such as adjusting teachers behaviours and attitude towards the topic. However, according to my personal point of view, the topic of the lesson will affect me and my upbringing values and opinions. This is the reason why I feel that differences in individuals opinions will remain, as one person thinks, reacts and feels differently.

5.3.2 Islamic scripture and traditions

The holy scripture called the Qur'an states many facts about how the religion Islam should be followed. For example, in my literature review, Cahroo (2019) writes about "Islam being a monotheistic religion that teaches us that there is only one divine being and one supreme creator of the universe" (Cahroo, 2019). I agree with this argument by Cahroo (2019) as in my self-reflective narratives, I describe how the Islamic scripture called the Qur'an led us Muslims as a family in following the religion Islam. For example, in Madrasah, I learnt how to read the holy Qur'an and had to learn the surahs so that I was able to pray my five salah's. I began singing Islamic songs called "Sweet Medina" which I had learnt from my home when I was younger. This song was compulsory for Muslims to learn as it reflected the importance on fulfilling the hajj pilgrimage to Mecca, by first going to pray in the place Medina at first. Another event which could be related to the Islamic scripture is the occasion where at one stage I did not even know what a Qur'an was and when I saw it at first, I began asking my mother questions about how do we read it?, what is this for? and what do we do with it? Furthermore, my mother would reply; do not touch the Qur'an with dirty hands, it is a sin! Hence, the holy scripture was a guideline for mankind in the religion Islam on how to follow the religion in the correct manner.

5.3.3 Religious officials in Islam

The importance of religious officials in Islam is well conveyed in my research study as I explain how in Madrasah my Moulana who was addressed as Moulana Ashraf had assisted me in learning new and extra knowledge in teaching me about Islam.

This was done by showing us videos, tv programmes, and reading Islamic books to keep ourselves up to date with new and current happenings in the Islamic religion. In comparison to what my literature review says on Islamic knowledge, it states that according to Muslim scholars, "Muslim traditions require specialised training, societal participation questions about the nature of humanity, and the cultivation of character through recitation in Arabic, Persian and other vernacular languages used in the Islamic community" (Samodeen, 2019). This aims to imply how knowledge in Islam is learnt through going to Madrasah and informing oneself through the history of Islam and humanity learnt through the Islamic community.

The religious officials in Islam are also permitted to teach salat to the members of the community. Scholarly work by Faheema (2017) define the orgin of salat mentioning that "Salat originates from the Arabic language meaning prayer" (Faheema, 2007) in the Islamic context. Therefore, when one reaches the age of going to school, they should also attend madrasah, which is where I learnt how to read and follow Islamic traditions and rituals in my religion. For example, in my chapter four I describe how in the first school I attended, it was an Islamic school and I had learnt basic Islamic knowledge together with the secular subjects.

I further mention in my self-reflective narratives how Madrasah was compulsory for me when I had to move to a public school from grade four. This called for changes in my life as I had a seven to five day. There was schoolwork to do, and after school I had to attend Madrasah for Islamic studies. All of these events in my life as a child contributed to the person who I am today and the religious values which I uphold till today in my life.

Moreover, the literature review emphasises how Muslims all around the world believe that Islam can be practised by anyone at any time and in every place. Cahroo (2019) states that "obedience and guidance in life for Muslims to follow is defined as their devotion to the total submission of God" (Cahroo, 2019). This is also related to religious officials in Islam as the Moulana is the individual who carries out the ritual of converting a non-Islamic individual to the religion Islam. This ritual can only take place by the Moulana being present and with individual along. A certain prayer must be read by the Moulana and the individual who wants to convert to the religion Islam must repeat after the Moulana.

I had also learnt about how males are different from females and in which ways. For example, I realised that males are expected to read a longer prayer on the Friday prayer, whereas females read less. These experiences support the quote expressed in my literature review which states that "gender roles manifest themselves as males and females are allocated different rights for different Islamic traditions" (Ikram, 2016). Moreover, it is found in my research study that because of these rules set, it may hamper development for females in the religion Islam, as females are mostly the ones who are restricted in the religion Islam. Moreover, my literature review places emphasis on how "females in International countries such as Doha and Saudi Arabia still fighting for the rights for females in the community" (Carolyn, 2019). Therefore, it was very important for me to attend Madrasah when I was younger so that background knowledge and new and current information regarding Islam was interrelated to my life through the religious official that served as a guideline in my life to follow through.

5.4 THEME TWO: Islam and gender

The second theme prevalent in my research study is on Islam and gender. They are further elaborated on in the following paragraphs below:

5.4.1 Islamic gender roles

The theme of gender had emerged largely in my research study. This is because in my literature review it states that "men and women must be given equal footing in the religion Islam" (Lamrabet, 2016). This means that men and women must be treated equally and not base any rules based on their gender. However, my self-reflective narratives do not comply with the view of this author above, as in my journey through life thus far, the male and female gender were associated by the appropriate term that they fall under. For example, if you are a female, it is compulsory for you to cook for the family and be responsible for keeping the house clean. You are required to also ask for permission from your family or husband before you do anything like look for a job or if you want to go anywhere for example shopping. In addition, it is the same for males. If you are a male, you control the household, provide for your family and ensure that they are well taken care of and responsible for you. There are certain duties allocated for males and females which must be fulfilled in order to maintain a household.

Therefore, Islamic gender roles demonstrate a major difference between the two genders of males and females. I further support the statement above with a description on the differences between the males and females in the religion Islam. This includes how males are allowed to wear perfume whereas the females are not. Moreover, there are certain actions that only males can conduct, such as go to the graveyard and pray for the deceased, whereas females are strictly forbidden not to. The males are only allowed to give ghusal to the male deceased person only and the females are allowed for the female deceased individual only. Speaking from my own experience by referring to my narratives, I feel like it is important for me as a Muslim girl to separate male and females as when I was in the Islamic school and the males were separated from the females during the wudhu period, I felt much more comfortable and free to express myself. I feel like I possess a modest behaviour and personality, which is why I feel this way. However, I feel as if having male and female differences and separation in Islam is a good thing and make it a religion with limits to live by. In addition, it prohibits sinful acts and can serve as a guide to follow through living life in the correct manner.

I had also learnt about how males are different from females and in which ways. For example, I realised that males are expected to read a longer prayer on the Friday prayer, whereas females read less. These experiences support the quote expressed in my literature review which states that "gender roles manifest themselves as males and females are allocated different rights for different Islamic traditions" (Ikram, 2016). Moreover, it is found in my research study that because of these rules set, it may hamper development for females in the religion Islam, as females are mostly the ones who are restricted in the religion Islam. Moreover, my literature review places emphasis on how "females in International countries such as Doha and Saudi Arabia still fighting for the rights for females in the community" (Carolyn, 2019). Therefore, it was very important for me to attend Madrasah when I was younger so that background knowledge and new and current information regarding Islam was interrelated to my life through the religious official that served as a guideline in my life to follow through.

In addition, according to my personal view, I feel that due to the current feelings, beliefs and thoughts that I have on my personal life as described above, indeed it has contributed to making it difficult for me to teach sensitive topics. This is because

I feel that as a girl, I do not want to speak openly about sexual education to other people. I feel like this particular topic is a very crucial, fragile and sensitive issue that must be spoken about when everyone is comfortable about it. As in a classroom of diverse learners, a teacher may not know who is sensitive about this issue and is uncomfortable learning about it. This factor of being unaware on this issue may create problems as a whole in the school environment and with teaching and learning occurring. Hence, I feel as if i abstain from these sinful acts of discussing sexual education in the open, it will enable me towards living a purer, peaceful life with a clear direction to follow.

5.4.2 The influence of Islamic gender roles on my personal identity construction

The influence that Islamic gender roles had on my personal identity construction can be related to the rituals that played an important role in being a female in the household. For example, my self-reflective narratives explain that in every event celebrated or ceremony that was mourned on, for example my grandmother's funeral there had to be a ritual done. Ghusl had to be performed on her body by female family members only and there had to be a supper served after the funeral had left the house. This can be related to the literature findings in chapter two where it mentions that Shahadah is one of the pillars of Islam. It is in this pillar where Samodeen (2019) "reflects the fundamental beliefs of Islam" (Samodeen, 2019). This includes the ritual of performing Ghusl which is relevant to my experiences mentioned in chapter four of my study.

Moreover, prayers had to be done on my first birthday before I could celebrate it. This forms part of one of the pillars of Islam mentioned in the literature review which is salat. In this particular pillar of Islam, it clearly states that prayer in Islam requires "five times a day recitation by kneeling towards Mecca" (Faheema, 2017). However, this prayer had to be conducted just before my birthday had begun. This prayer had to be performed at home because I was a female and females do not attend the mosque for prayer. Moreover, it was a specific prayer that had to be read for my birthday in particular, so that my birthday could go well, and I should be blessed with many more years to come.

In addition, the literature review makes mention of how all the five pillars of Islam incorporate the factor of conducting wudhu before anything can be done. This is because in order to have or make wudhu you need to believe in Islam by making wudhu, perform prayer with wudhu, fast with wudhu, give charity whilst having wudhu and going for the pilgrimage to Mecca while having wudhu. Hence, I had to learn how to perform wudhu so that it was permissible for me to pray the Qur'an and surahs only once I was cleansed, which was after performing wudhu. There were certain steps in performing wudhu before the entire process could be completed, which I had memorised at one stage in my life at Madrasah.

In chapter four, I also describe how I made use of a miswaak as it was recommended as a ritual which can be used to clean my teeth. Moreover, my parents had slaughtered one animal for me because I was a female during the process called Aqiqah, which was a compulsory ritual to take place when a child is born. This can be linked to the literature review emphasising that "Islamic traditions Internationally and nationally requires different devotional practises to increase their taqwa[40] and discipline" (Faheema, 2017).

Therefore, my personal identity construction was majorly influenced by my gender role. Beginning from the simple steps in life such as the naming ceremony, to the point where every action, behaviour, thought and way of living life that had to be linked to the specific condition of abiding by the rules that were set for being a female. Hence, the gender role has a big impact on decision making, consistency and maintaining my life each day.

5.4.3 The concept of modesty

The results of my study constitute the idea that there are different rituals and ceremonies performed for different incidences that may occur in a Muslim females life. Hence, it is absolutely correct that personal factors and upbringing can change an individual's choices, ways of thinking and reactions to particular situations in life. For example, taking the topic of my study into account *teaching sensitive topics within an Islamic context: A female beginner teacher's autoethnographic account*. It is clearly evident that Muslim females experience a wider variety of restrictions

---

[40]Taqwa – God consciousness

before they can do anything. This brings in the concept of modesty. Modesty is defined by Tarlo (2010) as an Arabic word meaning "barrier or partition" (Tarlo 2010). In Islam, it includes measuring behaviour as well as dress code for both males and females. For example, it may be considered inappropriate or immodest to reveal certain parts of the body for a Muslim female, whereas another female it may be permissible to wear a bikini and reveal their bodies. In my view, modesty in Islam means covering your body completely and not talking to males who are not immediate family members.

Modesty in Islam also influences the concept of "the gender inequality between the male and female in the religion" (Mdletshe, 2010). This is because many females in the religion Islam are not allowed to work or conduct anything before asking their husband or immediate families for permission. Many of these situations can be sensitive to the females and this can affect their beliefs through which was taught to them when they were growing up.

The dress code which I wear as described in my narratives also contributes to the concept of modesty. This is because modesty for me means that there is going to be a compulsory set of rules which Islam bestows upon Muslims. This type of rules convey that despite the age of an individual, it is important to conduce prayers for birthday parties and dress appropriately despite the occasion that it is. The dress code of Muslims presents their form of manners. So, in other words, the way in which I dress can tell a handful about my level of belief in my life. For example, If I wear dresses below my knees, it can convey what type of a believer I am and how I value my religion. Hence, as I speak for myself, I am grateful for the guidance taught to me and that I learnt from during the early years of my life, as it guided me by being drilled in my head since the earlier stages of my life.

In addition, my attitude, personal beliefs, values and personality also convey the manner in which I perceive my religion Islam as an important and necessary part of my life. This is seen in the five different narratives where I describe the integral processes required to be conducted before any ceremony can take place. For example, for my sister's wedding, out of respect it is essential for the Muslim female

to stay at home and not go to the mosque. The Nikkah[41] and Khatam[42] is compulsory to be done for blessings for the marriage, whereas some Muslims believe that a Khatam is optional and not necessary.

5.5 THEME THREE: Teaching sensitive topics as a Muslim female beginner teacher incorporating LO curriculum as a core subject

Theme three focuses on teaching sensitive topics as a Muslim female beginner teacher. They will be discussed below:

5.5.1 How did gender roles influence my teaching?

Gender roles influenced my teaching by not allowing myself as a Muslim female to take part in the process of going against the rules, traditions and rituals taught to me in my background stages of life. For example, it had caused difficulties for me in expressing myself to other people on sensitive topics such as sexual education. This had led me to become less confident in teaching learners at school. This is because I felt that I was not capable enough of doing the job correctly because of the challenges I had experienced in expressing myself. To support my argument above, I use the following statement by Joyce et al (2020) claiming that "identifying teachers characteristics and teaching behaviours included the attitudes, level of conceptual development, personal and professional characteristics which consisted in verbal interaction" (Joyce et al, 2020). Hence, gender roles in teaching sensitive topics influence my specific performance in a negative manner because of my personal upbringing which has impacted my actions in the professional setting.

I felt feelings of inability to conduct the job for the field which I studied in. This led me to also feel hopeless, worthless and deep sadness because of this topic and the impact it had on me. I had to therefore lift myself up and overcome the struggles I had experienced because of being a 'girl'. I had to choose one, it was either dig a hole for myself which I had created and lie in there for my entire life, or fight against the odds and become the person I want to be. Eventually, I had managed to control my emotions, feelings, thoughts, and actions and overcome this struggle I had in teaching this particular topic. I spoke to other teachers, friends and family members

---

[41]Nikkah- Islamically married

[42]Khatam – Prayer done before someone gets married

and asked for counselling and advice on how I can deal with this matter I was experiencing. I was then told to manage the situation by only teaching what I am comfortable with and removing all the topics in my life which has led me to feel the way I do. In this way, I will not think about the decisions I have made in my life and allow my background and personal beliefs to interfere with my professional life. This is when my outlook on my career, personal beliefs and upbringing changed and I was able to slowly change my thoughts, actions and behaviour to a suitable manner which will allow me to be happy and grateful for my choices and never look back or have feelings of unhappiness and discomfort because of who I am and meant to be.

5.5.2 How did my Islamic background influence my teaching?

The findings also present the answer to the research question which is how does the (the self) teach sensitive topics? To find out the answer to this research question, I had presented my findings in the form of self-reflective narratives where I had expressed my experiences about myself and with others. This enabled me to answer my question which is the manner in which learning from the Madrasah, as well as the rituals performed when I was born, my naming ceremony and other dress code factors predicted the manner in which I should behave and align my behaviour with the appropriate actions too. Teaching sensitive topics for myself can be regarded as a no do job for me as I personally find it as a difficult and struggling process. This is because all my life I have been living through a prescribed set of rules and procedures which I was brought up with and hence, it is difficult to mend or adjust myself from these attributes which my upbringing has profound on me.

My background influenced my teaching by being unable to express myself in teaching sensitive topics effectively. This is because of all the Islamic learning and attributes that I have made myself used to all my life. This therefore created many difficulties for me when being exposed to teaching these topics. It had led me to having feelings of being confused, uneasy and moments of reflecting on why I had chosen this type of career because I do not feel good doing something which makes me struggle and not enjoy it.

Moreover, The concept of ghusal[43] described in my self-reflective narrative describes the traditional action conducted in my life which applies to a specific meaning which is aligned with being of pure nature, detaching myself from impure, harmful actions which can affect my life in a negative way. Hence, this is the reason why I, as an individual cannot speak about impure topics which can be of a sensitive nature and may offend myself and at risk to offend someone else in return.

5.5.3 How did my Islamic background influence my experience of teaching sensitive topics?

I have realised that the theme of sensitive topics in Islam has emerged as one of the most important elements in my research study. This is because it has contributed to different kinds of emotions in myself and many people around me. I have felt overwhelmed, anxious and a sense of anxiety when been exposed to teaching sensitive topics as a Muslim female beginner teacher. I always felt a sense of nervousness and shortness of breath, getting my words stumbled and mixed up when I was confronted with this topic in particular in the Life Orientation curriculum. This is the reason why I feel as if I cannot teach this subject comfortably. Yes, indeed the subject expectations revolve around developing a learner holistically in all phases of their lives, but how is that possible if transmitting knowledge was not possible in some areas of the content? Hence, feeling this way will always downgrade me as a professional educator and serve as a barrier when presenting myself in the classroom.

Moreover, it has also influenced the manner in which I perceive my career and the learners around me. During difficult times and through the different challenges I used to experience when teaching sexual education to learners, I used to feel a sense of mixed emotions such as anxiousness, sadness, guilt, anxiety and disappointment because of the struggles I experienced in this field towards the career I have chosen to follow through. It had made me question myself many times. However, through positive self-talk, opinions, assistance from other teachers, friends and family and solutions drafted towards the problem that was making me feel that way had helped me deal with this dilemma.

---

[43]Ghusal- cleaning ceremony

In addition, I have gained negative elements from teaching sensitive topics which must be taught from the curriculum, speaking from a female beginner teacher. Some of these negative connotations include the issue of being downgraded or feelings of a sense of less quality as a female Islamic beginner teacher. It had contributed to having a lower self-esteem with less confidence when looking at the learners. I also could not express myself effectively and felt feelings of worthlessness which affected my ability to perform in all phases of my school career as an educator. There was a lack of passion in me. I did not feel like going to school and being responsible for any task given to me. This affected me personally, in my own life, which relates to my time at home with my family. When I got back from school, I was not happy and having a bad day affected me twenty-four hours of the day with feelings of uneasiness. Therefore, the negative elements discussed above affected me personally and professionally.

To elaborate further on the discussion above on the negative effects I had encountered, I would like to use the example derived from my literature review by DuBois (2014) as it refers to how teachers should develop "critical consciousness amongst students so that understanding of values of religious and social conduct" (DuBois, 2014) can be understood. However, when relating it to the sensitive topics which I had experienced in my self-reflective narratives, the quote from DuBois (2014) can be linked to the story reflected upon when I described how difficult it was for me to know what puberty and menstruation is. I knew about that stage in life only when my mother told me about this, which was when I reached the age of thirteen years old. This also demonstrates how sensitive she was about it to discuss it with me before time. However, I felt like she should have opened up to me before time so that I knew what to expect and it would not be a surprise for me.

When I was confronted with this topic, it meant that I had to give up all my religious and personal values of trustworthiness, honestly, reliability, modesty and many more which I owned and was in control of throughout my life until this point. I felt as if my whole world would be falling apart into different pieces. This was because all my life I was devoted towards living in restricted limitations towards my speech, actions, behaviour, thinking and way of living life. This had all changed when I was confronted in the world of work by been instructed to teach a topic which was forbidden in my religion. This had a great impact on my life and there was no other

option, I had to fulfil this duty at school by teaching this topic because it was what I had to do to make a living. In return, this had called for many other problems in my life as it was compulsory for me to gain deeper motivational talks and develop a positive attitude by always gathering opinions and approval by others by asking for approval from others, for example, I would ask my family members, is it fine if I taught it in this way? Or which way is better? This aspect had led me to become confused and led me to take time to learn and develop a greater belief in myself.

In conclusion, the findings of my study present the manner in which I value my religion to the extent which does not permit me to teach sensitive topics which may cause harm to myself due to the sensitivity I may experience in teaching sensitive topics. I will always strive to be the best believer and align myself with what was taught to me since the early stages of my life. Therefore, it is simple for me to say that I am a firm believer and I am proud of it!

5.6 Conclusion

Chapter 5 has discussed the data interpretation and data analysis of my research study. The major themes and sub themes which have occurred during my research study is present and explained in detail. These themes and sub-themes were formed around the religious, personal, gender roles and family context influences. The appropriate themes are also supported by examples derived from my self-reflective narratives to support my research findings. Moreover, I have provided the similarities and differences which were identified in my research study. The limitations of my research design are also mentioned in this chapter. Finally, I will be concluding of my entire research study in the next chapter, chapter 6 which will be based on the summary of my overall findings from the literature and research conducted. I also present my research conclusion based on my primary research question as well as my studies contribution in the next chapter. The detailed recommendations for future research, practise and policy followed by my final conclusion will then emerge.

CHAPTER 6 – CONCLUSION AND REFLECTION

6.1 Introduction

In chapter 5, I have referred to the themes and sub themes that have emerged in my research study. To conclude this entire research study, chapter 6 will be an additional chapter which will tie up all loose ends. By this I mean that I will be summarising the overall findings from the literature and the overall findings from my research of writing an analytic auto-ethnography where I had shared my personal journey through life from lived experiences. The research question will also be answered in this chapter and explained in depth. In addition, I end of chapter 6 by presenting my recommendations to the schools, facilitators, training courses (workshop), teachers and parents.

Furthermore, I "present a discussion of the significance of the study and its possible limitations" (Vithal and Jansen,1997:18). This chapter also revisits the research assumptions on which the study was based. In conclusion, I present general recommendations and implications for future research and practice and present a summary of findings at the end of the chapter.

6.2 Summary of overall findings from literature and research findings

This section will be a brief elaboration on what the literature review had revealed on the topic of *teaching sensitive topics within an Islamic context: A female beginner teacher's autoethnographic account*. This section will also include the overall findings which are summarised in order to convey what the research has said about my study. In addition, this will be done by using my personal journey of life in the form of self-reflective narratives. This included the views of significant others in my study as well as my contribution of my own memories of my journey through life.

6.2.1 Revisiting the synthesis of findings from the literature review

As my literature review is discussed in depth in chapter 2, I will be revisiting the overall findings in a summarised form of writing in this section.

"Teaching sensitive topics is an important aspect of teaching the curricular which must be considered with care because of the possibility of the issue or topic which may contribute to making people upset or angry which can cause harm" (Collins,

2017). Many authors in my literature review convey that the way in which teaching sensitive topics to learners matter as the method chosen can either make it easier or a challenge in the classroom (see section 2.3.3.).

The literature review also dictates that teacher identity consists of three aspects which are the teacher as the subject master, the pedagogical expert and the didactical expert. The concept of *teaching sensitive topics within an Islamic context* point will affect the whole individual. Hence, in the literature review, it confirms that it is important for a Muslim female beginner teacher to abide by traditions and behaviour whilst still confirming to their career practises of teaching.

Moreover, world views specifically focusing on European Union countries such as France, Italy, Germany and Netherlands reveal that there are many factors, such as the individuals skills, knowledge, curriculum and national policies which play an important role in teaching sensitive topics in their countries.

Whereas in African countries, forms of industrial action such as protests and constant arguments in relation to sexual education in schools are being pondered upon. The citizens of South Africa continue protesting in order to eliminate the governments introduction to the curriculum on sexual education in the Life Orientation syllabus (see section 2.5.3). In addition, states suggest that reviews are important to be made readily available so that teachers can professionally improve through development courses (Matthew & Moosa, 2019).

6.2.2 Summary of the findings from my study

The lived experiences of my journey through life have reflected the way in which why I feel the way I do towards the topic of *teaching sensitive topics within an Islamic context: A female beginner teacher's autoethnographic account.* Sufficient information on past events was derived from significant others such as my mother, father, sister, Madrasah teacher, and aunt to inform my self-reflective narratives in a detailed, organised order. Some of these events in my life were also supported with certificates and photographs to signify meaning in my each of the stories written in chapter 4.

The main co-constructor who was active in this study was me (as the researcher). This is because I could remember most of the details that had occurred in my life

and jotted it down. However, the main support figures in my life were mainly my parents, sister, aunt and religious leader who had guided me in my life.

The bond between all the individuals stated above was very strong and had led me to where I am today. They also had a great contribution to my life. Moreover, the impact that my mother and father specially served to have in my life was that of great importance to me as they believed in me and pushed me to fulfil my utmost potential.

The main reason why I am devoted to my religion Islam and follow practising it accordingly in the prescribed way is because of my upbringing. I had learnt in Madrasah how to complete Wudhu, perform Ghusal, learn Hadiths from the Holy Qur'an and pray my five times prayer every day. I also learnt from right and wrong by reading Islamic books and confirming my behaviour and attitude towards others to gain blessings from God and follow my religion.

My parents, aunt, and sister were well aware of how I enjoyed studying and being obedient in all spheres of my life. Hence, whenever they celebrated my birthday party, or any tradition, such as my sister's wedding, they made sure that it was done in accordance with my religion Islam as I was a dedicated and consistent believer. Moreover, with the advice that I got from my family and the strength that God has given me, I have always managed to reach my goals and strive to overcome any challenge which I have or may be faced with. I believe that I am not alone, as with God by my side, I can reach the sky...

6.3 Revisiting the research questions

I had incorporated one primary research question in my research study with three subsidiary questions which follow. In this section, the research conclusions will be drawn from my research questions which was proposed earlier in this study. This research question had guided me throughout my study and was influenced by the phenomenon that was under investigation in my research study.

How did I as a female Muslim beginner teacher experience the teaching of sensitive topics within an Islamic context?

According to my research findings in chapter 4, it reveals how I experienced teaching sensitive topics to a classroom of forty-four learners. I felt traumatised and

questioned myself whether this was the correct career path that I wanted to follow. It made me never enter the classroom again after one painful experience that took place. Hence, I believe that training and exposure to these topics will enable me to become comfortable and get used to the topics which I regard as "sensitive" for me. In relation to my entire family and background to my life which revolve around the central component of following the Islamic way of life, I wish to point to the personal experiences that I had gone through throughout my life. Firstly, beginning from the age of one where before celebrating my birthday party, a prayer ceremony had to be completed to the stage where I am now – as an adult, where I need to take my religion Islam into account before doing anything tells a lot about how I would be teaching sensitive topics and why do I do it in such a manner.

I want to initially begin by firstly mentioning that due to my personal experiences (as a researcher, the self) my journey through life has explained in detail about why I react the way I do when it comes to teaching sensitive topics. The religious upbringing that I had encountered had led me to be teaching sensitive topics to learners in a manner which must be carefully reflected on. This is because I am not used to the fact of being around individuals from different backgrounds and different levels of open communication on the topic of sexual education. Hence, it is a very challenging and a struggle to adjust to adapting to the curriculum of teaching sexual education or talking about it to anyone due to the closed, excluded, inappropriate feelings I have towards the topic.

As I have stated in my early self-reflected narratives in chapter 4, I felt more comfortable conducting wudhu when the male figure was not around. This was also at a young age when I was attending a religious school. This scenario also depicts how these feelings of modesty and inappropriateness of interacting with male individuals were uncomfortable for me. Moreover, it shows how I perceive interacting with the different gender due to my religious upbringing of being a closed, shy, modest person. Due to this, the way I teach sensitive topics is considered to be a very brief and simple lesson due to the uncomfortable feelings I have towards this topic. Therefore, when I teach sensitive topics such as sexual education, I prefer gathering opinions from learners at first after writing questions on the board. I avoid talking in this lesson and use other methods such as working on your own doing activities or doing research and homework activities on this particular topic.

Why did I experience this in such a manner?

My reason for teaching sexual education topic in this manner is because the issue of sexual education was not even spoken out in the loud by members of my family. This is also one of the reasons why I teach it in such a manner. It will be difficult for me to express myself and interact with a diverse set of learners when talking about sexual education, as most of my habits were inherited from my upbringing, of which sexual education was not one of them. Although, I feel that teaching sexual education to a diverse set of learners, I can either refuse to teach the subject and not learn and develop myself, or I can continue teaching this subject and enable myself to develop further and learn from my mistakes and improvise the manner in which I teach it so that I can become comfortable enough to manage the subject and become capable of teaching it successfully. Eventually it will not be a problem for me, and I can become better at it as times goes by.

What is the nature of the tradition that shaped my identity, orientation, and beliefs as a female Muslim?

The nature of my personal background, in which family I was born, the rituals that had to take place and procedures that had to be taken before I celebrated my first birthday party till the day I live today, with the same traditional values and rituals that is compulsory to be performed has shaped my identity, orientation and beliefs that I follow in my life as a Muslim female.

The beliefs and Muslim female identity which I have inherited has allowed me to question myself and rethink the decision which I took in my life. However, I have also realised that challenges exist, in all phases of life and all career types. The manner in which you approach the problem, determines your success or failure. In conclusion, after writing this research study, I began developing a positive attitude towards the subject Life Orientation and learning how to deal with difficult situations I may find myself in when teaching sensitive topics of sexual and religious education. This is done by keeping myself knowledgeable on how to express myself to the learners when they ask me questions on sexual or religious education. I also wish to develop my knowledge and skills by attending workshops and training on the above aspects.

What are the expectations of the Life Orientation curriculum, as stipulated in CAPS?

The aim behind the introduction of CAPS was to streamline and clarify the NCS policy in schools (DBE, 2003). In this way, the possibility to display subject content sees CAPS as a culture to restore a culture of learning and teaching in South Africa. In addition, the expectations of the Life Orientation CAPS curriculum requires one to believe that life has no worth without critical thinking in life. The curriculum must be "designed to have students construct, unconstrict and reconstruct thinking and behaviour elements" (DBE, 2003). Therefore, with the introduction of the subject Life Orientation two decades ago, expectations in this subject include the guidance services offered at school institutions in South Africa to develop and attain adequate skills and knowledge which learners can live by.

Learners must be responsible and must be able to manage their own thoughts, behaviour, decisions, and actions as individual entities. Therefore, the above argument provides clarity on the purpose of the Life Orientation CAPS curriculum, which is to: teach the learner social skills and prepare them for real life situations (DBE, 2003).

In addition, the specification in the Life Orientation CAPS curriculum requires strict adherence to the new policies and subject topics. This implies how the content of specific topics such as sexual and religion education must be carried out. "The specific pace, time limit, methodologies, sequencing and assessment is outlined in the CAPS policy regards these sensitive topics and must be adhered to by independent schools and public schools" (Hofmeyr, 2010).

What are the typical challenges novice teachers might experience in relation to the teaching of LO?

Islamic values and principles of education pertain to the three inter-related epistemologies – tarbiyah, ta'lim and ta'dib which constitute the way in which Muslims live by. In addition to these teachings, there are numerous challenges which novice teachers experience in relation to teaching the subject Life Orientation.

Findings in my study reveal how factors of background, gender, attitude, thoughts, actions and speech impact on a female Muslim teacher in the workplace. This causes fear and mistrust in teachers lives. As a result, inefficiency and ineffectiveness in teaching and learning occur in female beginner teachers lives. The manner in which teachers present their knowledge, their teaching methodologies and reaction towards the specific topics such as sexual and religious education in particular have proven to cause difficulties to Muslim female beginner teachers when presenting lessons in the classroom. This causes intolerance and dissatisfaction in Muslim female teachers lives and therefore resorting to other career paths may be a choice taken to escape the dilemma experienced.

6.4 Possible contribution of my study

By writing an analytic auto-ethnography, it has enabled me to reveal my personal ideas, feelings and memories about the past which is beneficial for my auto-ethnographic study. My self-reflective narratives can serve as a beneficial factor to explain why Muslim female beginner teachers feel sensitive towards teaching sexual education to a diverse set of learners.

These are a few important elements which were drafted by the researcher (myself) which I deem relatable to the education field directly:

- If a Muslim female beginner teacher comes from a background where every duty conducted is carefully looked at from the religious perspective, it will be difficult for the Muslim teacher to present herself successfully in front of the classroom when exposed to teaching sensitive topics such as sexual education.
- The school/subject advisors in the education faculty must take into consideration that the "different beliefs, traditions, numbers of years teaching and environment that teachers function in on a daily basis affect their comfort and openness when teaching sensitive topics" (Mdletshe, 2010:5). Hence, beginner female teachers in general need to be well equipped and have sufficient experience in the subject that they want to teach. It would make no sense if a teacher is given a certain subject, for example Life Orientation is given to a certain female, Muslim female beginner teacher, but they are not comfortable with expressing themselves in front of a diverse set of learners. Therefore, some internal issues, such as subject givers in a school must take this aspect into account before giving certain

subjects to a teacher to teach. Communication on how they feel towards it should be administered.

- Young (2001:21) writes that "The way that Muslim teachers form their teacher identity is influenced by both how they feel about themselves and their students" (Young, 2001:21). Therefore, the manner in which you conduct yourself in the classroom whether you are teaching a sensitive topic or any other subject topic will reflect on how you feel about the subject/topic and how you approach it with your students. So, if you are teaching sexual education and you do not like the topic, both yourself and your students will not achieve the learning goals that you are supposed to achieve at the end. Thus, it will be better if you are assigned to a topic/subject that you enjoy so that your learners can enjoy and ultimately pass it too!

- Change takes time. So for example, if a Muslim female beginner teacher wants to redeem her identity, and learn new things in the workplace for example she wants to teach sexual education, there must be certain steps taken before she can be ready for it. Training, professional development workshops, planning and state of readiness is important to consider before implementation can take place when teaching this topic. As Shahid (2017) claims that "teaching sensitive topics can be enjoyed within the Islamic perspective too by creating academic freedom felt by designing and teaching the specified curriculum" (Shahid, 2017). This supports the argument above on the readiness which must be present before adjusting the teachers identity if she wants to be teaching sensitive topics.

6.5 Recommendations

Above the general recommendations for research given in chapter five, these are specific recommendations given based on the findings of my research that I would like to impose. Thus, the following recommendations are referred to the schools, facilitators, training courses (workshops), teachers and parents.

6.5.1 Recommendations for practice

These are the recommendations which I feel will be required for schools to function effectively in the education field:

- The school should consider implementing subject givers (for example HoDs) who have knowledge/expertise on how to choose a particular teacher for a particular subject. This can be done by evaluating their CVs and thereafter choosing the best subject and allocating it for a specific teacher who has majored in it at University or college level.

- Heads of departments (HoDs) at schools should consider monitoring and ensuring that the teacher is comfortable and productive in the classroom at all times. This can be done by conducting class visits and consistent reports throughout the year on the teacher and the subject. In addition, this ensures quality of education for the learners and schooling environment.

- In this context, the facilitators who visit schools particularly for the subject Life Orientation can do evaluation on how the teacher is teaching the subject, if they are coping and support educators on what needs to be improved or changed in their day to day teaching or routines of teaching the subject. In this way, teachers will not feel criticized or bad when learning new things, as it is a part of developing their professional identity in the workplace and identify ideas where their strengths lie and weaknesses thereof.

- Workshops for the Life Orientation subject specifically referring to the topic of sexual education might be administered every year due to new female beginner teachers entering the teaching world of work. In this way, newly qualified teachers who are unaware of how to go about teaching this topic to a diverse set of learners can be well equipped and use the knowledge and different methods of teaching this topic that they have learnt through attending workshops. Moreover, the teachers can learn and present themselves well enough when teaching sexual education in the classroom. It can improve their confidence towards this topic and become more capable and experienced if they practise it consistently (every year).

- Workshops might also serve to being a motivator or a guideline towards how to approach the topic effectively. They can discuss (one on one) about the difficulties and struggles experienced when approaching the topic. In this way, solutions can be formulated and therefore improving the professional

development of the teacher and enabling her to adapt positively to change in the education field of work.

6.5.2 Recommendations for teachers

The recommendations for teachers, who are the carriers of knowledge, are as follows:

- Self-introspection is a very important factor when you are studying teaching, as well as contributes to when you enter the world of work. This further implies that when you are majoring in a subject at University level, you should be capable of teaching it at school. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the teacher to speak out whether she is able to present the content of the subject effectively at school or would rather be comfortable taking another subject to teach. This will ensure quality of education and the teacher identity of the individual will develop positively.

- Muslim female beginner teachers should be self-aware and acknowledge their strengths and weaknesses when it comes to teaching sensitive topics to a diverse set of learners. So, if you know that you are not capable of teaching sensitive topics, a Muslim female beginner teacher should not major in subjects of Life Orientation as well as natural sciences in their University phase. This will eliminate possible issues in the workplace when choosing subjects to teach given by subject advisors in the workplace. Implications for theory, research and practise.

6.6 Implications for theory research and practise

Implications for theory research and practise are influenced by "approaches to change management as well as Educational theories, such as constructive alignment and in-depth approach to learning" (Harvey, 2006). In addition, this implies how further theory, research and practise will provide new teaching and learning policies, but with consequences involved.

According to Kaltsum (2019) female beginner teachers express that the "difficulties experienced by teachers in a particular subject also have a minimal effect on

teaching and learning practise" (Kaltsum, 2019). This will affect performance in the classroom as teachers cannot administer effective training in the subject they teach.

6.7 Possible limitations of the study

The limitations of the research study are based on the sole remembrance of the researchers past experiences of the events in their lives, as well as religious affiliations and time. The implementation of data generation method and presentation could have been different because I feel like I could have administered it differently and use more significant others to gain different perspectives in my research study. I did not manage to gather effective, rich, descriptive data generated successfully because of the significant others such as family members, religious officials and friends having not much time to contribute to this process. Many of them had their own personal matters to attend to and spent very little time and attention contributed towards my research study. Hence, the concept of time and space was a challenging aspect. However, I managed to gather the most important facts that would be beneficial for my research study.

The notes taken in my diary could have my family members responding into greater depth towards the scope of the study so a longer discussion could have been made to gather more results and views to the questions asked on my previous memories. However, as I have mentioned above, my family members did not want to write in the diary and made me write. The memories were also very vague and had to be confirmed by other family members who had lived experiences with me.

The data methods could be integrated with many other methods so that it could produce more valuable information for the study. For example, I could have added questionnaires and in-depth long interviews so that I can have much more information sorted and organized effectively in my research study. However, I did not use questionnaires and interviews because I felt that I had sufficient remembrance about past events even though they were not very clear enough. I just needed some family members to reassure the events. I preferred writing what I could remember and what the significant others in my study informed me about.

I could be more sensitive in the manner which I asked my family members about previous memories as some of them got emotional like my mother, father and aunt when reflecting on previous memories. This factor was compulsory for my research study and could not be avoided. I could understand how my family members would have felt about this issue because it was a reflection on how much they had been through to grow me up into the young, responsible lady which I am today. However, after the process of gathering the memories collected on past events, I managed to overcome the sensitivities experienced by them by treating them to a dinner and dessert session prepared by myself to show appreciation of all of the things that they have done and still do for me today.

6.8 Conclusion and final personal reflection

As I look back on this research study, there were many questions that were formulated but did not have any answers. I had decided to find out about the teaching of sensitive topics within an Islamic context by means of applying an analytic auto-ethnography research study. Hence, I found this topic as the best topic for me to write about my research study because many Muslim females are not aware about this type of issues that affects teachers in the 21st century.

I have developed personally from this research study by gaining knowledge on how my journey through life linked to my upbringing impacts on me today in the positive and negative way. I also realised that there is a requirement for me to establish a clear line in my life separating my personal way of life from my professional life. This is required so that I can perform exceptionally well in my professional life without mixing or attributing any aspects from my personal life in it. For example, if I teach the subject Life Orientation as a Muslim female beginner teacher, I need to think of it as discussing the sensitive topics as being a "professional teacher" and not being a "Muslim teacher". In this way, my upbringing background, personal values of having a Muslim identity, modesty code of dressing or gender attribute of being a "Muslim female" will not affect me in the world of work. I feel like this will enable me to perform at my best if I know that I am on a level where I am doing it for my profession, and it should not affect my personal identity. I will be able to develop by learning about new things from others in the classroom and being open to new

knowledge, ideas and discussions. I will be able to gain experience as well and becoming better at what I do so that one day, I will be able to teach any subject for any grade no matter what the content will be.

Moreover, although certain beliefs and religious ideas may contribute to a person holistically wherever they are, it should not be a factor which prevents you from growing professionally, learning and imparting knowledge to learners in the classroom. The modern day life in the 21st century incorporates different types of curriculum content such as sexual education to be taught, however my suggestion would be for certain religious teachers that cannot teach it, such as the Islamic religion, they should not participate and take those subjects to teach as an option when studying or working. This would be a decent way to ensure that professionalism in the workplace and duties are maintained and completed ethically and systematically.

During the study I found out new knowledge, values and different types of opinions that my family members and siblings had to remember about certain events that took place during my life. For example, I learnt about the little things of how I would behave when I was a little baby and how many traditions I had to follow because I was a girl. I learnt the differences between male and females in the religion Islam and how important it is to complete rituals because bad luck can fall on you if you do not follow them. I have also gained knowledge by acknowledging my family members and realising that they will be there for me no matter what I go through. My family members have guided me and showed me the road which I need to follow to reach where I am. Moreover, I have learnt that respect is the most important value for me in my life as I need to have respect for all religions, opinions, learn new facts and be open to suggestions so that I can be able to grow and develop professionally.

In addition, the most important information I have attained is the guidance and procedure that I must follow using the Life Orientation CAPS curriculum. I have mastered the overview of the different topics in this subject and improving myself in the practical form of teaching the subject. I know the purpose of the introduction of the subject, and manners in which I should approach it when teaching the subject. Hence, the study proved to be beneficial for me.

In conclusion, I had lived my experiences with my family and learnt from right and wrong, good and bad, happy and sad, and overcoming my challenges too. I went through various obstacles and burning bridges which has led me to where I am today. I grew by being able to accept different opinions and embrace the diverse opinions from the different people about my views and my life. I found communicating with family members about the past, very fruitful as it has enabled me to know my story about myself in full details so that I am clued up on who I really am, and where my true identity lies which can now shape my professional identity of being a teacher. Finally, the conclusion to the findings of my study reveal that *teaching sensitive topics within an Islamic context: A female beginner teacher's autoethnographic account* can be regarded as my own experiences about my journey through life, which were positive and negative, which has indeed led me where I am today. I am thankful for each and every experience as I am now stronger, wiser, capable to handle challenges and I am ready to conquer the world!

References

Abdullah, M.2013. Education: Synergizing Tarbiyah and Dakwah to answer social problems. Article available online on website:www.Tarbiyah.com//http. cited 25 January 2021.

Abu al-Qasim, P. 1988. Good conduct in Islam. Article available online on website:www.conducts.com//http. cited 24 January 2021.

Acker, S. 1995. Gender and teachers' work, Review of Research in Education, 21 (1995-1996) p99-162.

Adams, P. 2011. Autoethnographic potentials, issues and criticisms. Forum: qualitative social research.12(1). pp300-315.

Agass, J. 2000. Stanford encyclopaedia of philosophy. social ontology. Institutional individualism. The British journal of sociology. 26(2). pp144-145.

Ahmed, R. 2010. Insight on religious freedom and meanings. Journal of Religious and educational research. Vol 13. no 5. Article available online on website//http: www.religiousfreedom21.wilberforce.org//.cited 25 February 2018.

Alexander, R. 2012. Constructivism, computing and philosophy. Article available online on website: www.univerac.ac/constructivism.com//http. Pavia associated. Cited 19 August 2019.

Ali, M. 2019. Sexual education in an Islamic perspective when teaching. Article available online on website: www.Islamandsex.com//http. cited 26 April 2020.

Ali, S. 2016. Approaches to teaching and learning of the Islamic law: sharing some national and international perspectives. Islam in practise. pp337.

Alldred, M., Dennison, N. 2002. Waving it all away: producing subject and knowledge in feminism of colour. Journal of third wave feminism4(1)pp205-215.

Al- Muwatta, Z. Hadith software. Multimedia edition, 47.9. ISL software corporation.

Al – Qaradawi, Y. 1995. The lawful and prohibited in Islam. Translators Kamal El-Helbawy. Kuwait:Al faisal Press.p28.

Anastasiadis, E, Rajan, P, Winchester, CL. Framing a research question: the first and most vital step in planning research. J ClinUrol 2015; 8: 409–411.

Ancona, R.2014. Teaching sexually explicit Catullus. Journal of classics teaching. (30). pp9-12.

Anderson, L. 2006. Analytical autoethnography. Journal of contemporary ethnography.35(4). pp373-395.

Andrew, P et al. 2011. Research methods and designs. Article available online on website: www.researchmethods.com/http. cited 18 August 2019.

Arslan, U. 2005. Islamic values and principles in the organisation. Article available online on website:www.valuesandprinciples.com//http. cited 28 April 2020.

Aslam, R. 2011. Oxford Islamic studies online. Article available online on website:www.Islamicoxford.com.//http. cited 24 January 2021.

Badke, W. B. (2008). Research strategies: Finding your way through the information fog (3rd ed.). Lincoln, NE: iUniverse.

Barbara, J. 2002. Chronicling an academic depression. Journal of contemporary ethnography.31(6).729-757.

Barkhuizen, M., Wette, P. 2008. Qualitative research methods in autoethnographic studies. SAGE research methods. Article available online on website: www.SAGEresearchmethods.com//http. cited 15 February 2020.

Beijaard, P.C. Meijer, N. Verloop. 2012. Reconsidering research on teachers' professional identity. Teacher and Teacher Education journal, (4) pp. 107-128

Bell, C & Shaikhouni L. 2017.Saudi reforms. BBC trending. Article available online on website: www.saudireforms.com.cited 15 July 2019.

Ben et al. 2011. Embodied faith: Islam, religious freedom and educational practices in physical education. Journal of sport, education and society. Vol.34. pp18-34.

Berg, B.L. 2007. Qualitative research methods for the social sciences. Boston: Llyn & Bacon.

Bhat, A. 2019. Research design: definition, characteristics and types. Article available on website: www.definitions//research.com. cited 9 August 2019.

Biddle, C. 2014. What is objectivism? Article available online on website: www.whatisobjectivism.com/http.standard. p7-10.

Bilsborrow, R.E. 2016. Concepts, definitions and data collection approaches. Article available online on website: www.conceptsofdatacollection.com//http. cited 13 November 2020.

Black, K. 2008. Who am I as a teacher? *South African Journal of Education. Vol.* 28. No. 1. pp91-101. Article available online on website: www.teacheridentity.com. p226. cited 13 May 2018.

Boahene, A.L. 2007. Creating strategies to deal with problems of teaching controversial issues in social studies education in African schools. Intercultural education 18 no.3 pp231-442.

Bochner, A. 1984. The functions of human communication in interpersonal bonding. Handbook of rhetorical and communication theory. pp544-621. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Booth, D. 2008. A research design fit for purpose. Power and politics in Africa. Discussion paper (3). DFID. pp1-40.

Brown, J.S. 1989. Situated cognition and the culture of learning. Education researcher (1)18. pp32-42.

Brown, MEL. 2019. A medical science educators guide to selecting a research paradigm. Article available online on website:www.researchparadigms.com//http. cited 12 November 2020.

Cahroo, M. 2019. Introduction to Islam. Assunnah Muslims Association. Ottawa, Canada.pp2-90.

Campbell, E. 2008. Teaching ethically as a moral condition of professionalism. In handbook of moral and character education, edited by L. Nucci and D. Narvaez. New York:Routledge.pp601-617.

Carr, D. 2006. Professional and personal values and virtues in education and training, Oxford review of Education, 32(2)pp171-183.

Carolyn, H. 2019. People: Nicki Minaj pulls out of Saudi Arabia concert. The associated press. Gatehouse Media. LLC. p1.

Catherine, L., Mark, S. 2016. Writing a literature review. Journal of clinical urology.1st ed. SAGE journals pp.332-355.

Chetty, P. 2016. Importance of a research approach in research. Deductive research approaches. University of Manitoba. Pp234-290.

Chongkian, S. 2018. Islamic culture. Encyclopaedia of Islam. Rill publications.CD version.

Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K.2001. Research methods in education, 2nd ed. London: Routledge Falmer.

Collins, R. 2017. Definition of sensitive topics. Article available online on: www.sensitivedictionary.com//http. Cited 13 July 2019

Creswell, A., Merriam, U. 2009. Methodologies in autoethnography. Colombian applied linguistic journal (2) 15pp57-90.

Creswell, J. 2014. Research design: qualitative, quantitative and mixed method approaches. 4th ed. Thousand Oaks. SAGE publications.

Creswell, R. 2007. An ethnography study. First steps in research. 2nd ed. London.p80.

Crowther, D & Lancaster, G. 2008. Research methods. A concise introduction to research in management and business consultancy. Butterworth. Heinemann.

Cluster, N. 2014. Experience and story in qualitative research. San Francisco: John Wiley.

Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K.2001. Research methods in education, 2nd ed. London: Routledge Falmer.

Collins, H. 2010. Creative research. The theory and practise of research. For the creative industries. AVA publications. p38.

Connelly, P & Barriteau, E. 2002. Theoretical perspectives on gender and development in education. Article available online on website:www.theory.com//http.cited 23 January 2021.

Cushman, S. 2005. Traditional gender roles between male and female teachers' in context. Article available online on website:www.maleeducation.com//http.cited 21 January 2021.

Danahay, R. 1997. Research design and methodology in context. Colombian applied linguistic journal (2) 15pp 100-115.

Davis, E. 2011. The guiding principles of constructivism. Physical reality. New York: Harper.

DBE, 2019. Comprehensive sexuality education in Life Skills. Available on website: www.DBE.com//http. cited 19 January 2021.

DBE, 2019. National Curriculum Statement, Grades 10-12 (General) Life Orientation. Available on website: www.DBE.com//http. cited 19 January 2021.

Delanty, G & Strydom, P. 2003. Philosophies of social science. London, McGraw – hill.

Denzel, R.2018.Educationcounts.govt.nz. *Department of education publishers*. Article available online on website: www.educounts.co.za. cited 13 May 2018.

Denzin, K. 2008. The sage handbook of qualitative research. 3rd ed. Thousand Oaks. California. Sage publications. p21.

Doty, R. 2004. Identity and voice in the writing of academic international relations. York centre for international and security studies. York University. Toronto. Article available online on website: www.identityvoice.com//http. cited 16 February 2020.

Drudy, P. 2008. Gender balance/gender bias: The teaching profession and the impact of feminisation. Journal of Gender and Education.20(14).pp309-323.

DuBois, P. 2014. Teaching the uncomfortable subject of slavery. Addressing difficult topics in the classroom. Columbus, Ohio: Ohio state university press. pp187-198.

Dudovskiy, J. 2010. The ultimate guide to writing a dissertation. Butterworth. Heinemann.

Ebady, A. 2001. Islamic values vs. Muslim values. Article available online on website: www.valuesinIslam.com. cited 27 April 2020.

Einstein, A. 1990. In Education: Synergizing Tarbiyah and Dakwah to answer social problems. Article available online on website:www.Tarbiyah.com//http. cited 24 January 2021.

Elias, B. 2019. What is concept clarification in research? Research for a changing South Africa. Article available online on website: www.concepts.com//http. cited 16 October 2020.

Ellis, C et al. 2011. Autoethnography, an overview. Forum: qualitative social research.12(1). pp322-350.

Elsayed, Y. 2008. Chapter two: Research approach. Article available online on website: www.researchapproach.com//http. cited 12 November 2020.

Emadi, R. 2019. Teaching style differences in female and male teachers'. Article available online on website:www.differencestyles.com//http.cited 22 January 2021.

Engelbrecht, C.S. 1998. Society as a socio-educative arena. Only study guide for Socio-education. Pretoria: University of South Africa.

Esposito, G. 2012. Religious heritage insights. Steps to your individual upbringing. Pretoria. South Africa. Mumina publications. 1st ed. pp 400-465.

Evans, R.W., Avery, P.G., Pederson, P.V and Kello, R. 2016. "Taboo topics: cultural restraint on teaching social issues". The social studies 90(5):218-224.

Everington, J & Sikes, P. 2001. I want to change the world. The beginning of RE teacher. Journal of Living religion, cultural diversity and identity formation. 4(1)pp378-452.

Fadlallah, S.2015. Are men and women unequal in Islam. Article available online on www.Islamfemales.com.cited 15 July 2019

Faheema, R. 2017. Islamic thought. Religious practises. Article available online on: www.britannica.com//topic.Cited 14 July 2019.

Fairbanks et al. 2010. Teaching as a daily job. An online journal for teacher research. Vol.12. No.1.pp1-50.

Farooq, U. 2013. What is research design, the definitions and characteristics of a research design. Article available online on website: www.researchdesigncharacteristics.com. cited 10 August 2019.

Fayetteville, A R. 2016. How to complete an additional research proposal idea. Article available online on website www.universityresearch.com/University of Arkansas Libraries.com. cited 1 May 2019.

Ferguson, K. 2012. Data generation methods and events. SAGE research methods: Article available online on website: www.SAGEresearchmethods.com//http. cited 14 February 2020.

Forbes, M. 2016. Beginner teaching law and legal definition. Article available online on website: www.law&policydefinitions.com.p1. Cited 19 May 2018.

Forero, R. 2018. Application of qualitative research in transferability. Article available online on website: www.biomedcentral.com//http. cited 16 February 2020.

Francis, D. 2012. Sexual education in South Africa: Three essential questions. International Journal of education Development.(30).pp314-319.

Gilbert, B. 1991. Not without my daughter (DVD). Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.

Gilmartin, S. 2007. Difference in teaching styles and practises. Article available online on website:www.teachingstyles.com//http.cited 21 January 2021.

Gnolis, S & Poli, R. 2004. The value of ontology. The complete business process handbook. Article available online on website: www.valueontology.com//http.p14-20.

Goffman, E. 2008. Interaction ritual. 4th ed. New Jersey: Aldine Transaction. pp22-45.

Goldberg, C., Wansink, S., Akkerman, P.S & Wubbels, N. 2017. "Between trauma and perpetration: Psychoanalytical and social psychological perspectives on different histories in the Australian context". Theory and research in social education. 45(3):349-377.

Goldziher, I. 2017. International perspectives in Islam. Article available online on website: www.perspectivesinIslam.com/http.cited 21 July 2019.

Goodall, B et al. 2010. Writing the new ethnography. Walnut creek, CA: Altamira.

Grant, S. (2014) The limits of unlearning: Liberal feminism from the post colonial perspective. Article available online on website:www.liberalfeminists.com//http. cited 21 January 2021.

Greg, H. 2012. Applied thematic analysis. Thousand oaks. California: Sage p11.

Griswold, C. 2001. Platonic writing and readings. Pen state press. p237. Article available online on website: www.ontologicalassumptions//com. cited 11 August 2019.

Grossman, P.L. 1990. The making of a teacher. Teacher knowledge and teacher education. New York: Teachers' college press. Article available online on website:www.teacherknowledge.com//http. cited 19 January 2021.

Gxumela, K. 2016. Teaching strategies. Teacher resources to encourage a global perspective across the curriculum. Journal of Global education. (12)2. pp987-999.

Haddow, S. 2017. International Islamic practises. Encyclopaedia of Islam. Rill publications.CD version.

Halstead, J. 2007. Islamic values: A distinctive framework for moral education. Journal of moral education (36)3.pp283-286.

Hamachek, D. 2016. Effective teachers. What they do, how they do it and the importance of self-knowledge. In R Lipka& P Brinthaupt (eds). The role of self in teacher development. Albany NY: State university of New York press.

Handley, T. E. 2010. Teaching about and dealing with sensitive issues in schools: How confident are pre-service teachers'? Article available online on website:www.researchgate.net. cited 26 April 2020.

Hansen, D.T. 2011. The teacher and the world: A study of cosmopolitanism as Education. New York:Routledge.

Hanson, D & Herrington, M. 1976. From college to classroom: the probabationary year (London, Routledge & Kegan Paul).

Harrison, M. 2020. Class achievement and the background and behaviour of teachers. The elementary school journal.(77)p63-70. Available online on website: www.jstor.org.stable/1000439.

Harvery, L. 2012. Social research glossary, Quality research international art. available on website: www.qualityresearchint.com/httpsocialresearch. pp20-39.

Harvey, A. Bridging the implementation gap: a teacher as a learner approach to teaching and learning policy. Journal of higher education research and development.27(1).pp31-41.

Herbert, J. 2005. Participant observation: In the era of "ethnography". Journal of contemporary ethnography,28(5). pp540.

Hesse-Biber, S.N & Leavy, P. 2011. The practise of qualitative research. 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Hofmeyr, J. (2010). Is this a new curriculum I see before me? (Online Magazine) Available at:www.ieducation.co.za/is this a new curriculum I see before me/ accessed 21 January 2021.

Holt, K. 2003. A teacher's guide to management of learners. New York: Open University Press. pp19.

Hoskins et al.2011. Teaching controversial topics. Poorvu centre for teaching and learning. Article available online on: www.learnandteach.com.pp7-10.

Hult, E. 2016. Conceptual framework definitions. Article available online on website: www.Conceptualframing.com/http. cited 16 October 2020.

Husserl, E. 1965. Phenomenology and the crisis of philosophy. New York: Harper Torch books.

Husseini, M. 2015. The Islamic way of life. Cape Town. South Africa. Al Muqaramah publications. pp40-50.

Hussin, N.H. 2019. Embedding values in teaching Islamic education among excellent teachers'. Article available on website: www.teachIslam.com//http.com. cited 28 April 2020.

Ikram, U. 2016. Gender roles in Islam. Does Islam specifically say women are cookers, cleaners and housewives? Article available online on website: www.Islamicroles.com.cited 15 July 2019.

Jacobs, A. 2015. Life Orientation as a school subject. Article available on website:www.LOcirriculum.com//http.cited 9 May 2020.

Jacobs, A. 2011. Life Orientation as experienced by learners: a qualitative study in North West Province. South African journal of Education. 31(2)pp212-243.

James, P. 2014. Urban design in the global south: ontological design in practise. Design in borderlands. London: Routledge.

Jang, R. 2007. General purpose of research design. Article available online on website: www. Pubmed.com/http. cited 4 August 2019.

Jarvis, J. 2009. Paving the way to transformation: Student teachers' religious identity and religion education. Journal of religion education(3)10. Pp131-147.

John, N. 2013. Concepts and justification in research. Article available online on website: www.conceptjustification.com/http. cited 16 October 2020.

Jones, P. 2017. How to write a literature review: Writing the review's buildings library. Article available on website: https://libguides.msubuildings.edu/litreview.cited 4 July 2019.

Joseph, S. 2020. Aims and purposes of Muslim Education. Article available online on website: www.britannica.com//http//. Cited 26 April 2020.

Joyce, B., Brown, M., Murphy, D. 2020. Conceptual systems and teaching styles. American educational research journal.Vol(17) pp529-540.

Kaiser, K. 2009. Protecting respondent confidentiality in qualitative research. NCBI. Article available online on website: www.confidentiality.com//http. cited 17 February 2020.

Kajee, R. 2018. Saudi Arabia driving ban on women to be lifted. Article available online on website: www.SaudinewsBBC.com.cited 15 July 2019.

Kaltsum, H.U. 2019. To what extent will identity theories help. Article available online on website:www.identitytheory.com//http. cited 24 January 2021.

Kamil, I. 2009. The religion of Islam. Journal of sport, education and society. Vol.34. pp18-34. Article available online on website: www.Islam.com.p7. cited 18 May 2018.

Kelliher, et al. 2011. Interpretivism and the pursuit of research legitimisation: an integrated approach for a single case design. The electronic journal of business research methodology.3(2). pp123-132.

Klassen, B. & Chiu, S. 2010.Effects on teachers' self-efficacy and job satisfaction: Teacher gender, years of experience, and job stress. Journal of Educational Psychology, Vol 102(3)pp741-759.

Kaushik, V. 2019. Pragmatism as a research paradigm and its reasons. Article available online on website: www.researchparadigms.com//http. cited 13 November 2020.

Korstjens, B. 2018. Practical guidelines to qualitative research. Article available online on website: www.tandonline.com//http.pdf. cited 16 February 2020.

Kothari, C. 2004. Research methodology. Methods and techniques. 2nd ed. New age international publishers. p7-53.

Lamb, S. 2017. A non-violent pedagogical approach for Life Orientation teacher development: The alternatives to violence project. Journal for Educational research for social change.6(2).pp236-278.

Lamote, C, Engels N. 2010. The development of teacher's professional identity. *European Journal of Education.* Vol 33. no.1, pp1-15.

Lamrabet, A. 2016.Gender roles in Islam. The difference between males and females. Article available online on www.genderinIslam.com/http.cited 15 July 2019.

Lawson, C., John, S et al. 2007. Contributions to social ontology. Routledge studies in critical realism. London: Routledge. Published in 2013. Article available online on website: www.contributionontology.com//https. Retrieved 10 August 2019.

LeCompte, M. D., Klinger, J. K., Campbell S. A., &Menke, D. W. (2003). Editor's introduction. Review of Educational Research, 73(2), 123-124.

Lees, J & Vergnani, T. 2015. Attitudes, beliefs, confidence and discomfort levels of Western Cape teachers' addressing HIV education. Article available on website: www.attitudeHiv.com//http. cited 1 June 2020.

Light, R. J., & Pillemer, D. B. (1984). Summing up: The science of reviewing research. Cambridge, MA:

Lincoln, Y.S and Guba, E.G. 2007. Naturalistic inquiry. Newbury park, CA: Sage.

Lowe, P & Jones H. 2015.Teaching and learning sensitive topics. Journal of enhancing learning in the social sciences. (2). 3rd ed. pp345-350.

Luqmaan, R. 2010. Women as the protectors of Islam. Article available online on website:www.womenprotectors.com//http cited 31 October 2020.

Mamman, S. 2018. Women, Islam and media. The challenges of teaching sensitive subjects. Article available online on website: www.challengesinsensitivesubjects/http.cited 20 July 2019.

Mapedzahama, V. 2017. Ethnography and ethics approval. SAGE journals. Article available online on website: www.journals/sagepub.com. cited 16 February 2020.

Maree, K. (Ed.) 2016. *First steps in research,* 2nd ed. Pretoria, South Africa: Van Schaik Publishers. pp26-363.

Mark, L. 2010. The philosophical underpinnings of educational research. Polyglossia. (19). pp5-11.

Mathews et al. 2006. *The perceptions of teachers in Life Orientation.* [Online] Available from: http/www.percepteachers.com//pp721-782.[Accessed 20 November 2017].

Matthew, L. 2019. Difference between research design and research methodology. Classroom leaf group education. p1-10. Article available online on website: www.leafeducation.com/http. cited 6 August 2019.

Matthew, R & Moosa, K. 2019. Sex education in schools is anti-family, anti-marriage and anti-Christian. The Lenasia sun weekly. p16.

Mchunu, J.N. 2007. Teaching sexual education in secondary schools in pinetown district. Thesis available online on website: www.teachingperceptions.com// http. cited 26 April 2020.

Mcllveen, S. 2008. Content in research designs. Research Gate. PDF version available online on website: www.researchdesigns.com//http. cited 15 February 2020.

Mdletshe, B.C. 2010. *Exploring the experiences of Life Orientation teachers in the teaching of HIV/AIDS and sexual education.* [Online] Available from: http//www.abstracteachinghiv.com//. p1-3. [Accessed 20 November 2017].

Mendez, M. 2011. Autoethnography as a research method: Advantages, limitations and criticisms. Colombian applied linguistics Journal (2)15. pp1-152.

Mikeal, RL. 2001. Research designs, general designs. Article available online on website: www.researchdesigngeneral.com/http. cited 4 August 2019

Mime, G. 2019. Research design. Business dictionary express. Article available online on website: www.designdictionary.com. cited 10 August 2019.

Mohammed, S. 1999. Translation of the meaning of the Qu'ran by Mohammed Shakir. New York:Tahrike Tarsile Qu'ran publishers.

Mohanty, C. 1998. Introduction and under western eyes. Third world women and politics of feminism. Eds. Bloomington.

Mohanty, P. 2000. Education today and the foundation of a profession. In St Martins press.

Mollo, S. 2009. Naturalistic data settings. Beverly hills, CA: Sage.p29.

Moon, K. 2016. A guideline to improve qualitative social science. Ecology and society. Article available online on website: www.ecologyandsociety.org. cited 17 February 2020.

Mortensen, C. 2016. Verisimilitude and content – Research gate. PDF version available online on website: www. ResearchGate.com//http. cited 14 February 2020

Mullins, G & Kiley, M. (2002). "It's a PhD, not a Nobel Prize": How experienced examiners assess research theses. Studies in Higher Education, 27(4), 369-386.

Murphy, E. 2007. Informed consent in qualitative and ethnographic research. Article available online on website: www.informedconsent.com//http. cited 16 February 2020.

Naik, R. 1998. Teachers' competencies and factors affecting the performance of female teachers'. International journal of business and social science.2(19).pp217-230.

Nasir, N.S. 2004. Halal-ing the child: Reframing identities of resistance in an urban Muslim school. Harvard Education Review 74(2).pp153-174.

Nilan, Pam. 2017. Muslim Youth in the Diaspora: Challenging Extremism through Popular Culture. London: Routledge.

Niyozov, R & Pluim, P. 2015. Teachers perspectives on the education of Muslim students. A missing voice in Muslim education research (39)5. pp637-677.

Noddings, N.2008. Spirituality and religion in public schooling. In why do we educate? Reviewing the conversation, D.L. Coulter, J.R Wiens & G.D Fenstermacher (Eds). Chicago: National society for the study of Education.pp185-195.

Noibi, D.1993. An Islamic perspective, in: R Thomson (Ed.) Religion, Ethnicity and Sex Education: exploring the issues, pp41-57.

Nystrand, M., Wu, L.L., Gamoran, S., Zeiser, P and Long, D.A. 2012. Questions in time: Investigating the structure and dynamics of unfolding classroom discourse. Discourse processes 35(2):135-198.

Oddie, G. 2001. Truth likeness. Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy. Available online on website: www.truthlikeness.com//http. cited 14 February 2020.

Olsen B 2010. Teaching what they learn, learning what they live: how teacher's personal histories shape their professional development. Boulder CO: Paradigm publishers

Olympia, R.2017.Understanding confidentiality and anonymity. Human subject review. The evergreen state college. Washington. Evergreen parkway publishers. p1-10.

Palmer, J. 1997. The heart of a teacher identity and Integrity in Teaching, Change: The magazine of Higher learning. (29) 6.pp1-10.

Panday, D. 2007. Teachers' perspectives on the implementation of Life Orientation as a learning area. Master's thesis. South Africa: Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University.

Paul, D. 2019. Research support: research methodology. Article available online on website: www.libguides.wits.ac.za/research report. cited 5 August 2019.

Peter, J. 2014. Islamic context pointing and procedures. Article available online on website: www. Oxforduniversitypress.com//http. Cited 27 October 2019.

Philpott, S. 2011. Controversial issues: to teach or not to teach? That is the question! The Georgia social studies journal. (1)1. Council for social sciences. pp32-44.

Poelman, A. 2011. An exploratory study of Muslim adolescents' views on sexuality. Article available online on website: www.exploresexuality.com//http. cited 26 April 2020.

Primus, R. 2009. Limits of interpretivism. University of Michigan law school. Available on website: www.limitsofinterpretation.com//http. cited 16 August 2019.

Prinsloo, E. 2007. Implementation of Life Orientation programmes in the new curriculum in South African schools: perceptions of principals and Life Orientation teachers'. South African journal of Education. 27(1) pp155-170.

Qasim, M.I. 2007. The Muslim woman the challenges of life. Journal of Islamic studies research. (JISR). Abu Zaria. Vol 3 (1). pp405-440.

Ramble, A.2005. Meanings of words in the dictionary. Journal of teaching and teacher education.Vol.26.no.7.pp1349-1361.Availableon website/http//www.dictionarymeanings.com.cited 25 February 2018

Rambo, L.R. 2005. Article on Theories of conversion. Understanding and interpreting religious change. pp259-271.

Rasool, M. 2015. *Defining modesty*. Cape Town. Ulamah publishers. p98.

Ratner, C. 2002. Forum: Qualitative social research.3(2) pp16-222. Available on website: www.socialscienceresearch.com/http. cited 16 August 2019.

Richard, S & Andrew, R. 2012. Steps in writing a literature review. Research proposals in context. Article available online on website: www.writingareview.com/http.cited 15 May 2019.

Ritchie, J & Lewis J. 2003. Qualitative research practise: a guide for social sciences students and researchers. London: Sage.pp67.

Rooth, E. 2011. An practising LO in SA. Article available online on website: www.practiseinSA.com//http.com. cited 10 May 2020.

Rose, S. 2019. Informed consent office for the protection. University of Southern Africa. Article available online on website: www.informconsent.com//http. cited 15 February 2020

Rowe, S. 2002. Linking little narratives to big ones: narrative and public memory in history museums. Culture and psychology (8). pp96-112.

Sabbe, E & Aelterman, A. 2007. Gender in teaching: a literature review, Teachers' and teaching: theory and practise, 13(5)pp521-538.

Sahin, Abdullah. 2018. The Contribution of Religions to the Common Good in Pluralistic Societies: An Islamic Perspective. In Public Theology, Religious Diversity, and Interreligious Learning. London: Routledge, pp. 27–40.

Sahin, S. 2018. Critical issue in Islamic education studies: Rethinking Islamic and western liberal secular values of Education. Article available on website:www.secularvalues.com//http. cited 24 January 2021.

Samodeen, Z. 2019. Beliefs and practises. Religious literacy project. Harvard divinity school. Massachusetts.pp23-40.

Sari, M. 2016. Analysing teacher's perceptions of female teachers and male teachers within traditional gender roles. International Journal of Education and research.4(3)pp205-222.

Sassi, K. 2018.Ta'dib as a concept of Islamic education purification: A study in thoughts. Journal of malay Islamic studies.2(1).pp201-225.

Saunders et al. 2003. Research onion source. Scientific diagram. Research figure gate. Figure available online on website: www.researchsources.com//http. Cited 11 August 2019.

Savenjie, G.M, Brauch, N and Wagner, W. 2019. Sensitivities in teaching Islamic sensitive topics across Europe and Israel. Journal of pedagogy, culture and society. 27(1):1-6.

Schaefer, P. 2015. Debates: A way to teach controversial topics in Islam. Teaching Islam. Article available online on website: www.debatesinIslam.com/http.pp72-90.cited 17 July 2019.

Sheik, M.A.H. 2012. Morality in Islam: Sexual issues in modern era and its solutions in Islam. New Delhi: Adam publishers and distributors. Article available online on website:www.moralsinIslam.com//http. cited 2 November 2020.

Shahid, Q. 2017. The pedagogical divide: towards and Islamic pedagogy. Article available online on website: www.isna.net/uploads.http. cited 25 August 2019.

Shahidul, M. 2010. Facts about Islam schooling. Free Islamic literature. Article available online on website: www.factsofIslam.com//http/.cited 27 April 2020.

Siddiqui, R. 2020. The state of sex education in Muslim schools. Article available online on website: www.sexeducation.com//http. cited 26 April 2020.

Sikes, P & Everington, J. 2003. I'm a woman before I'm an RE teacher: managing religious identity in secondary schools. Journal of gender and education Vol.15. pp393-406.

Sileyew, K.J. 2019. What is a research methodology? Article available online on website: www.writeawriting.com/http. cited 25 April 2020.

Silverman, S & Freebody, R. 2003. Autoethnographic models in qualitative studies. Article available online on website: www.autoethnographicmodel.com//http. cited 15 February 2020.

Silver, U. 2014. Research in education: a conceptual introduction, 5[th]ed. New York: Addison-Wesley Longman. Article available online on: www.researcheducation.com//http. Cited 21 March 2019.

Simon, H.A 2007. Contributions to constructivism. New York. W.W Norton

Smerecnik, C. 2010. Sexual education: An Islamic perspective: Islamicity. Article available on website:www.Islamicity.com//http. cited 28 April 2020.

Smit, B. & Fritz, E. 2008. Understanding teacher identity from a symbolic interactionistperspective:two: two ethnographic narratives. *South African Journal of Education. Vol.* 28 no.1.pp91-101.

Sofie, A.R. 2001. Women in Islam: The western experience. London and New York:Routledge. Article available online on website:www.Islamicexperiences.com//http.cited 31 October 2020.

Sommers, F. 2001. The philosophical review. Vol 72(3). Published by duke university press. article available on website: www.jstororg/stable/21831613.p1-37.

Spilt, R., Koomen, P & Jak, S. 2012. Perceptions of male and female teachers'. Article available online on website:www.perceptions.com//http. cited 21 January 2021.

Spivak, G. 1988. The Spivak reader. Eds. Donna Landry and Gerald MacLean. London:Routledge.

Streubert, R., Sandelowskis, S & Polit, M. 2007. What is dependability in qualitative research. Article available online on website: www. Dependabilityinresearch.com//http. cited 17 February 2020.

Sudan, S.A. 2012. The state of sexual education in Muslim schools. Article available online on website: www.soundvision.com//http. cited 27 April 2020.

Summer, Y. 2008. Vol. 35, No. 3, Teacher Identity as a Useful Frame for Study and Practice of Teacher Education. *Teacher Education Quarterly Journal (4).* pp. 3-6.

Sumsion, J.2002. Becoming, Being and Unbecoming an early childhood education, a phenomenological case study of teacher attrition, teaching and teacher education. International affairs18.pp869-885.

Sunday, C.E. 2020. The role of theory in research. UWC. Article available online on website: www.UWCtheories.com//http/. cited 16 October 2020.

Tajvidi, M. 2015. Research strategy. Springer Link. Article available online on website: www.springerlink.com//http. cited 13 November 2020.

Tamir, P. 1988. Subject matter and related pedagogical knowledge in teacher education. Journal of teaching and teacher education. 4(2). p99-110.

Tarlo, E. 2010. Clothing matters:Dress and identity in India. University of Chicago Press. Article available online on website: www.dressidentity.com//http/com. cited 7 June 2020.

Thomas, B. 2019. The pros and cons of positivism and interpretivism. Article available online on website: www.prosconsofInterpretivism.com//http. cited 17 August 2019.

Thornhill, A. 2012. Research methods for business students. 6th ed. Pearson education   limited. p2- 7.

Tong, B.1998. A special third world women issue. Discourse 8. Fall Winter.

UNESCO. 2015. Emerging evidence lessons and practise in comprehensive sexual education: A global review. Paris. Article available on website:www.UNESCO.com//http. cited 3 June 2020.

Vesselin, P. 2011. Chapter VI: process ontology in the context of the applied philosophy. In Vesselin Petrov (ed): ontological landscapes: recent thought on conceptual interfaces between science and philosophy. pp137.

Vithal R, Jansen J. 1997. Designing your first research proposal's manual for researchers in education and the social sciences. Juta.pp14-19.

Vous, D.A. 2001. Research design in social research. London: SAGE. Pp21-39.

Vygotsky, L. 1962. Social constructivist theory. Article available online on website: www.socialtheories.com/http. cited 17 August 2019.

Wahsheh, R. 1998. The role of female teachers' in activating effective teaching skills and methods among high school students from the teachers' perspective. Journal of education and practise.6(36).pp162-180.

Walker, J & Milton, J. 2008. Teachers' and parents' role in the sexuality education in primary school children: A comparison of experiences in Leeds, UK and Sydney. Sex Education 6(4) pp414-428.

Warnick, B.R & Silverman, L. 2011. A framework for professional ethics courses in teacher education. Journal of teacher education,62(3).pp273-285.

Walter, L.2018. Cambridge university press. Article available online on website: www.cambridgeuniv.com.p1. Cited 13 May 2018.

Weed, V. 2005. Research pragmatics for your research proposal. Interpretivism and generalisation. Sociology, 34(2):209-224.

Wilk, R. 2001. The impossibility and necessity of re-enquiry of research: finding middle ground of social science. Journal of consumer research. 28(2). Pp308-312.

William, L.2008. Thesaurus dictionary com. Available online on website//http: www.dictionaryonline.com. Cited 25 February 2018.

William, M.K. 2019. Organizing your social sciences research paper: types of research design. Article available online on website: https//libguides.usc.edu/writingguides.com. USC libraries. Research guides.pp1-20.

Wilson, J. 2010. Research methodology. Positivism research philosophy. A guide to doing your research project. Sage publications.

Zaabi, O.A. Islamic parents, attitudes and beliefs towards school based sexual and reproductive health education programmes in Oman. Journal for sexuality, society and learning.(5).19.pp120-190.

Zain, M. 2010. Perceptions of sex education among Muslim adolescents in Canada. Journal of Muslim minority affairs. Vol 30 (3). Pp 391-407.

Zayed, R., Ahmed, N. 2005. In the role of female teachers' in activating effective teaching skills and methods among high school students from students perspectives. Journal of education and practise.6(36).pp162-180.

Zukauskas, P. 2018. Philosophy and paradigm of scientific research. Article available online on website:www.itechopen.com//books. Cited 12 November 2020.

Appendices

Appendix A: Letters of invitation to participate in research study

Dear Father: Jainoodeen   **Date: 9 April 2019**

Invitation to participate in a research study

My name is Sadiya Aboo Gani and I am currently completing my Master of Education Study at the University of Pretoria. I will be the sole researcher for my study titled: *Teaching sensitive topics within an Islamic context: A female beginner teacher's auto-ethnographic account*

I would like you to be a part of my study by participating in it. Therefore, this letter serves to be as an invitation for you to participate in my study. You will be regarded as a co-constructor of knowledge incorporated into my research study.

The title:

Teaching sensitive topics within an Islamic context: A female beginner teacher's auto-ethnographic account

Brief overview of my study

My study revolves around the idea of the particular aspect of teaching sensitive topics within an Islamic perspective, and the specific role that it plays in the experiences of a Muslim female beginner teacher's life on teaching sensitive topics.

Ethical considerations

I have successfully gained ethical clearance from the Faculty of Education Ethics Committee of the University of Pretoria (Certificate number: HU 19/11/02). I can only begin with data collection once all my co-constructors of knowledge understand why I am conducting this study and have given me their informed consent. Moreover, I will mention the inform consent process incorporated into my study which are:

1. Confidentiality and anonymity
   My research study will ensure that steps are taken to protect the identity from being discovered by others which will apply to the concept of confidentiality and anonymity.
2. Informed consent or assent

The individual participating in my study must have sufficient knowledge and understanding of the proposed research, anticipated risks, and potential benefits and the requirements of the research to be able to make an informed decision.

3. Protecting participants from harm

Participants/co constructors will be acquiring complete closure and safety measures before they can take part in the research process.

Purpose of participation

My self-reflective narratives will be written in the form of short stories from birth up to the age of 25 years. In order to attain confirmation of these self-reflective narratives, my co-constructors of knowledge will have to read my self-reflective narratives and provide insight or make necessary adjustments of the event if required. An interview will be conducted if further details are required on a specific event which is not clear enough and thereafter it will be recorded and transcribed later.

I will appreciate it if you participate in this study as you will be of great help to me in this research process.

If you require any further details on this, you can contact me using the following details:

Researcher: Sadiya Aboo Gani

Email: sadiyagani@yahoo.com

Cell: 072 484 6326

Supervisor: Dr Yolandi Woest

Email: yolandi.woest@up.ac.za

Thanking you in this regard

Sadiya

Faculty of Education
Fakulteit Opvoedkunde
Lefapha la Thuto

Dear Mother: Salma   **Date: 9 April 2019**

Invitation to participate in a research study

My name is Sadiya Aboo Gani and I am currently completing my Master of Education Study at the University of Pretoria. I will be the sole researcher for my study titled: *Teaching sensitive topics within an Islamic context: A female beginner teacher's auto-ethnographic account*

I would like you to be a part of my study by participating in it. Therefore, this letter serves to be as an invitation for you to participate in my study. You will be regarded as a co-constructor of knowledge incorporated into my research study.

The title:

Teaching sensitive topics within an Islamic context: A female beginner teacher's auto-ethnographic account

Brief overview of my study

My study revolves around the idea of the particular aspect of teaching sensitive topics within an Islamic perspective, and the specific role that it plays in the experiences of a Muslim female beginner teacher's life on teaching sensitive topics.

Ethical considerations

 I have successfully gained ethical clearance from the Faculty of Education Ethics Committee of the University of Pretoria (Certificate number: HU 19/11/02). I can only begin with data collection once all my co-constructors of knowledge understand why I

am conducting this study and have given me their informed consent. Moreover, I will mention the inform consent process incorporated into my study which are:

1. Confidentiality and anonymity
   My research study will ensure that steps are taken to protect the identity from being discovered by others which will apply to the concept of confidentiality and anonymity.
2. Informed consent or assent
   The individual participating in my study must have sufficient knowledge and understanding of the proposed research, anticipated risks, and potential benefits and the requirements of the research to be able to make an informed decision.
3. Protecting participants from harm

Participants/co constructors will be acquiring complete closure and safety measures before they can take part in the research process.

Purpose of participation

My self-reflective narratives will be written in the form of short stories from birth up to the age of 25 years. In order to attain confirmation of these self-reflective narratives, my co-constructors of knowledge will have to read my self-reflective narratives and provide insight or make necessary adjustments of the event if required. An interview will be conducted if further details are required on a specific event which is not clear enough and thereafter it will be recorded and transcribed later.

I will appreciate it if you participate in this study as you will be of great help to me in this research process.

If you require any further details on this, you can contact me using the following details:

Researcher: Sadiya Aboo Gani

Email: sadiyagani@yahoo.com

Cell: 072 484 6326

Supervisor: Dr Yolandi Woest

Email: yolandi.woest@up.ac.za

Thanking you in this regard

Sadiya

Dear Sister: Lianah   **Date: 9 April 2019**

Invitation to participate in a research study

My name is Sadiya Aboo Gani and I am currently completing my Master of Education Study at the University of Pretoria. I will be the sole researcher for my study titled: *Teaching sensitive topics within an Islamic context: A female beginner teacher's auto-ethnographic account*

I would like you to be a part of my study by participating in it. Therefore, this letter serves to be as an invitation for you to participate in my study. You will be regarded as a co-constructor of knowledge incorporated into my research study.

The title:

Teaching sensitive topics within an Islamic context: A female beginner teacher's auto-ethnographic account

Brief overview of my study

My study revolves around the idea of the particular aspect of teaching sensitive topics within an Islamic perspective, and the specific role that it plays in the experiences of a Muslim female beginner teacher's life on teaching sensitive topics.

Ethical considerations

 I have successfully gained ethical clearance from the Faculty of Education Ethics Committee of the University of Pretoria (Certificate number: HU 19/11/02). I can only begin with data collection once all my co-constructors of knowledge understand why I am conducting this study and have given me their informed consent. Moreover, I will mention the inform consent process incorporated into my study which are:

1. Confidentiality and anonymity

   My research study will ensure that steps are taken to protect the identity from being discovered by others which will apply to the concept of confidentiality and anonymity.

2. Informed consent or assent

   The individual participating in my study must have sufficient knowledge and understanding of the proposed research, anticipated risks, and potential benefits and the requirements of the research to be able to make an informed decision.

3. Protecting participants from harm

Participants/co constructors will be acquiring complete closure and safety measures before they can take part in the research process.

Purpose of participation

My self-reflective narratives will be written in the form of short stories from birth up to the age of 25 years. In order to attain confirmation of these self-reflective narratives, my co-constructors of knowledge will have to read my self-reflective narratives and provide insight or make necessary adjustments of the event if required. An interview will be conducted if further details are required on a specific event which is not clear enough and thereafter it will be recorded and transcribed later.

I will appreciate it if you participate in this study as you will be of great help to me in this research process.

If you require any further details on this, you can contact me using the following details:

Researcher: Sadiya Aboo Gani

Email: sadiyagani@yahoo.com

Cell: 072 484 6326

Supervisor: Dr Yolandi Woest

Email: yolandi.woest@up.ac.za

Thanking you in this regard

Sadiya

Dear Aunt: Fouzia   **Date: 9 April 2019**

Invitation to participate in a research study

My name is Sadiya Aboo Gani and I am currently completing my Master of Education Study at the University of Pretoria. I will be the sole researcher for my study titled: *Teaching sensitive topics within an Islamic context: A female beginner teacher's auto-ethnographic account*

I would like you to be a part of my study by participating in it. Therefore, this letter serves to be as an invitation for you to participate in my study. You will be regarded as a co-constructor of knowledge incorporated into my research study.

The title:

Teaching sensitive topics within an Islamic context: A female beginner teacher's auto-ethnographic account

Brief overview of my study

My study revolves around the idea of the particular aspect of teaching sensitive topics within an Islamic perspective, and the specific role that it plays in the experiences of a Muslim female beginner teacher's life on teaching sensitive topics.

Ethical considerations

I have successfully gained ethical clearance from the Faculty of Education Ethics Committee of the University of Pretoria (Certificate number: HU 19/11/02). I can only begin with data collection once all my co-constructors of knowledge understand why Iam conducting this study and have given me their informed consent. Moreover, I will mention the inform consent process incorporated into my study which are:

        1. Confidentiality and anonymity

My research study will ensure that steps are taken to protect the identity from being discovered by others which will apply to the concept of confidentiality and anonymity.

        2. Informed consent or assent

The individual participating in my study must have sufficient knowledge and understanding of the proposed research, anticipated risks, and potential benefits and the requirements of the research to be able to make an informed decision.

3. Protecting participants from harm

Participants/co constructors will be acquiring complete closure and safety measures before they can take part in the research process.

Purpose of participation

My self-reflective narratives will be written in the form of short stories from birth up to the age of 25 years. In order to attain confirmation of these self-reflective narratives, my co-constructors of knowledge will have to read my self-reflective narratives and provide insight or make necessary adjustments of the event if required. An interview will be conducted if further details are required on a specific event which is not clear enough and thereafter it will be recorded and transcribed later.

I will appreciate it if you participate in this study as you will be of great help to me in this research process.

If you require any further details on this, you can contact me using the following details:

Researcher: Sadiya Aboo Gani

Email: sadiyagani@yahoo.com

Cell: 072 484 6326

Supervisor: Dr Yolandi Woest

Email: yolandi.woest@up.ac.za

Thanking you in this regard

Sadiya

Dear Moulana: Ashraf Bham   **Date: 9 April 2019**

Invitation to participate in a research study

My name is Sadiya Aboo Gani and I am currently completing my Master of Education Study at the University of Pretoria. I will be the sole researcher for my study titled: *Teaching sensitive topics within an Islamic context: A female beginner teacher's auto-ethnographic account*

I would like you to be a part of my study by participating in it. Therefore, this letter serves to be as an invitation for you to participate in my study. You will be regarded as a co-constructor of knowledge incorporated into my research study.

The title:

Teaching sensitive topics within an Islamic context: A female beginner teacher's auto-ethnographic account

Brief overview of my study

My study revolves around the idea of the particular aspect of teaching sensitive topics within an Islamic perspective, and the specific role that it plays in the experiences of a Muslim female beginner teacher's life on teaching sensitive topics.

Ethical considerations

I have successfully gained ethical clearance from the Faculty of Education Ethics Committee of the University of Pretoria (Certificate number: HU 19/11/02). I can only begin with data collection once all my co-constructors of knowledge understand why I am conducting this study and have given me their informed consent. Moreover, I will mention the inform consent process incorporated into my study which are:

1. Confidentiality and anonymity

My research study will ensure that steps are taken to protect the identity from being discovered by others which will apply to the concept of confidentiality and anonymity.

2. Informed consent or assent

The individual participating in my study must have sufficient knowledge and understanding of the proposed research, anticipated risks, and potential benefits and the requirements of the research to be able to make an informed decision.

3. Protecting participants from harm

Participants/co constructors will be acquiring complete closure and safety measures before they can take part in the research process.

Purpose of participation

My self-reflective narratives will be written in the form of short stories from birth up to the age of 25 years. In order to attain confirmation of these self-reflective narratives, my co-constructors of knowledge will have to read my self-reflective narratives and provide insight or make necessary adjustments of the event if required. An interview will be conducted if further details are required on a specific event which is not clear enough and thereafter it will be recorded and transcribed later.

I will appreciate it if you participate in this study as you will be of great help to me in this research process.

If you require any further details on this, you can contact me using the following details:

Researcher: Sadiya Aboo Gani

Email: sadiyagani@yahoo.com

Cell: 072 484 6326

Supervisor: Dr Yolandi Woest

Email: yolandi.woest@up.ac.za

Thanking you in this regard

Sadiya

Dear Sir: Mr Parvesh   **Date: 9 April 2019**

Invitation to participate in a research study

My name is Sadiya Aboo Gani and I am currently completing my Master of Education Study at the University of Pretoria. I will be the sole researcher for my study titled: *Teaching sensitive topics within an Islamic context: A female beginner teacher's auto-ethnographic account*

I would like you to be a part of my study by participating in it. Therefore, this letter serves to be as an invitation for you to participate in my study. You will be regarded as a co-constructor of knowledge incorporated into my research study.

The title:

Teaching sensitive topics within an Islamic context: A female beginner teacher's auto-ethnographic account

Brief overview of my study

My study revolves around the idea of the particular aspect of teaching sensitive topics within an Islamic perspective, and the specific role that it plays in the experiences of a Muslim female beginner teacher's life on teaching sensitive topics.

Ethical considerations

I have successfully gained ethical clearance from the Faculty of Education Ethics Committee of the University of Pretoria (Certificate number: HU 19/11/02). I can only begin with data collection once all my co-constructors of knowledge understand why I am conducting this study and have given me their informed consent. Moreover, I will mention the inform consent process incorporated into my study which are:

              1.   Confidentiality and anonymity

My research study will ensure that steps are taken to protect the identity from being discovered by others which will apply to the concept of confidentiality and anonymity.

              2.   Informed consent or assent

The individual participating in my study must have sufficient knowledge and understanding of the proposed research, anticipated risks, and potential benefits and the requirements of the research to be able to make an informed decision.

3. Protecting participants from harm

Participants/co constructors will be acquiring complete closure and safety measures before they can take part in the research process.

Purpose of participation

My self-reflective narratives will be written in the form of short stories from birth up to the age of 25 years. In order to attain confirmation of these self-reflective narratives, my co-constructors of knowledge will have to read my self-reflective narratives and provide insight or make necessary adjustments of the event if required. An interview will be conducted if further details are required on a specific event which is not clear enough and thereafter it will be recorded and transcribed later.

I will appreciate it if you participate in this study as you will be of great help to me in this research process.

If you require any further details on this, you can contact me using the following details:

Researcher: Sadiya Aboo Gani

Email: sadiyagani@yahoo.com

Cell: 072 484 6326

Supervisor: Dr Yolandi Woest

Email: yolandi.woest@up.ac.za

Thanking you in this regard

Sadiya

Appendix B: Consent letters from participants

 Consent letter to the participants on the study *teaching sensitive topics within an Islamic context: A female beginner teacher's auto-ethnographic account*

Dear Father: Jainoodeen

This is to state that as a co-constructor of knowledge that is chosen for the study, I understand the nature of the study and I am agreeing to participate in the research study written by Sadiya Aboo Gani from the University of Pretoria, Faculty of Education.

> ❖ **Brief overview on my study**

My study revolves around the idea of the particular aspect of *teaching sensitive topics within an Islamic perspective,* and the specific role that it plays in the experiences of a Muslim female beginner teacher's life on teaching sensitive topics.

> ❖ **Implementation of the study**

Self-reflective narratives will be written by the researcher. As the narratives will be written and are finally concluded, it will then be forwarded to the relevant co-constructor of knowledge by sending an email to the relevant person. Thereafter, the co-constructor will read and re-read the self-reflective narratives jotted down. This is where your contribution will be required. If you have any remembrance or want to clarify and adjust some of the narratives you feel are not correct or add extra information on the event, this will be your time to do so. It is important for you to be truthful with your extra information or adjustments. You may also inform me where I have written wrongly in my self-reflective narratives. Then, I will be arranging a meeting where an interview will be held if I do not understand any of the comments or cannot make sense of the extra information written in the narratives. If an interview is held, I will be recording it and transcribing it for relevant data that can be used in my self-reflective narratives. As I have mentioned earlier, your part as a co-constructor of knowledge in my study will be to measure the accuracy or relevance of my self-reflective narratives and ensure trustworthiness is written in my narratives.

> ❖ **Important aspects to reflect on**

The purpose of an auto-ethnography is for the research data to be very personal and self-related only. My duty (as a researcher) is to ensure that I can gather the most truthful, accurate findings to the best of my abilities. This is the reason why your input, comments and confirmation will be gladly appreciated and beneficial for me. My self-reflective narratives can prove to come across to you as being 'a monster' because my honest views are provided on each event. However, the main point to ponder about for you is that it is the way that I viewed the situation. Please do not view it as critical criticism. Hence, it also forms part of the biases of my study, which is why it is required for me to make you read my self-reflective narratives and acquire further information through interviews if necessary.

> ❖ **Terms and Conditions**

1. I am able to discontinue my participation in this study, if I feel is necessary by informing the researcher/writer of this study in a straight-forward manner.
2. Before intervening or implementing further comments/adjustments/confirmations in this study, I am allowed to enquiry freely and fully about it if there is anything, I do not understand.
3. I am fully aware that my participation in this study will implement the ethical principles of confidentiality and anonymity.
4. We also would like to request your permission to use your data, confidentiality and anonymously, for further research purposes, as the data set are intellectual property of the University of Pretoria. Further research may include secondary data analysis and using the data for teaching purposes. The confidentiality and privacy applicable to this study will be binding on future research studies.

✓ I agree to the terms and conditions stated in this letter. It has been read and understood by me.

Kindly complete this section using **BOLD, CAPITAL** letters

Full Name of participant: **JAINODEEN ABOO GANI**

Signature: **J. GANI**

Contact number: **076 287 3043**

Email: **N/A**

Date: **24 APRIL 2019**

Signed at: **541 GREENVELD AVENUE, AZAADVILLE PRETORIA**

Signature of researcher Sadiya Aboo Gani: **S. Gani**

Date: **10 MAY 2019**

Signature of supervisor Dr Yolandi Woest:

Consent letter to the participants on the study *teaching sensitive topics within an Islamic context: A female beginner teacher's auto-ethnographic account*

Dear Mother: Salma

This is to state that as a co-constructor of knowledge that is chosen for the study, I understand the nature of the study and I am agreeing to participate in the research study written by Sadiya Aboo Gani from the University of Pretoria, Faculty of Education.

❖ **Brief overview on my study**

My study revolves around the idea of the particular aspect of *teaching sensitive topics within an Islamic perspective,* and the specific role that it plays in the experiences of a Muslim female beginner teacher's life on teaching sensitive topics.

❖ **Implementation of the study**

Self-reflective narratives will be written by the researcher. As the narratives will be written and are finally concluded, it will then be forwarded to the relevant co-constructor of knowledge by sending an email to the relevant person. Thereafter, the co-constructor will read and re-read the self-reflective narratives jotted down. This is where your contribution will be required. If you have any remembrance or want to clarify and adjust some of the narratives you feel are not correct or add extra information on the event, this will be your time to do so. It is important for you to be truthful with your extra information or adjustments. You may also inform me where I have written wrongly in my self-reflective narratives. Then, I will be arranging a meeting where an interview will be held if I do not understand any of the comments or cannot make sense of the extra information written in the narratives. If an interview is held, I will be recording it and transcribing it for relevant data that can be used in my self-reflective narratives. As I have mentioned earlier, your part as a co-constructor of knowledge in my study will be to measure the accuracy or relevance of my self-reflective narratives and ensure trustworthiness is written in my narratives.

❖ **Important aspects to reflect on**

The purpose of an auto-ethnography is for the research data to be very personal and self-related only. My duty (as a researcher) is to ensure that I can gather the most truthful, accurate findings to the best of my abilities. This is the reason why your input, comments and confirmation will be gladly appreciated and beneficial for me. My self-reflective narratives can prove to come across to you as being 'a monster' because my honest views are provided on each event. However, the main point to ponder about for you is that it is the way that I viewed the situation. Please do not view it as critical criticism. Hence, it also forms part of the biases of my study, which is why it is required for me to make you read my self-reflective narratives and acquire further information through interviews if necessary.

❖ **Terms and Conditions**

1. I am able to discontinue my participation in this study, if I feel is necessary by informing the researcher/writer of this study in a straight-forward manner.

2. Before intervening or implementing further comments/adjustments/confirmations in this study, I am allowed to enquiry freely and fully about it if there is anything, I do not understand.
3. I am fully aware that my participation in this study will implement the ethical principles of confidentiality and anonymity.

4. We also would like to request your permission to use your data,   confidentiality and anonymously, for further research purposes, as the data set are intellectual property of the University of Pretoria. Further research may include secondary data analysis and using the data for teaching purposes. The confidentiality and privacy applicable to this study will be binding on future research studies.

✓ I agree to the terms and conditions stated in this letter. It has been read and understood by me.

Kindly complete this section using **BOLD, CAPITAL** letters

Full Name of participant: **SALMA ABOO GANI**

Signature: **S. GANI**

Contact number: **079 653 8870**

Email: **N/A**

Date: **25 APRIL 2019**

Signed at: **541 GREENVELD AVENUE, AZAADVILLE PRETORIA**

Signature of researcher Sadiya Aboo Gani: **S. GANI**

Date: **10 MAY 2019**

Signature of supervisor Dr Yolandi Woest

Consent letter to the participants on the study *teaching sensitive topics within an Islamic context: A female beginner teacher's auto-ethnographic account*

Dear Sister: Lianah

This is to state that as a co-constructor of knowledge that is chosen for the study, I understand the nature of the study and is agreeing to participate in the research study written by Sadiya Aboo Gani from the University of Pretoria, Faculty of Education.

❖ **Brief overview on my study**

My study revolves around the idea of the particular aspect of *teaching sensitive topics within an Islamic perspective,* and the specific role that it plays in the experiences of a Muslim female beginner teacher's life on teaching sensitive topics.

❖ **Implementation of the study**

Self-reflective narratives will be written by the researcher. As the narratives will be written and are finally concluded, it will then be forwarded to the relevant co-constructor of knowledge by sending an email to the relevant person. Thereafter, the co-constructor will read and re-read the self-reflective narratives jotted down. This is where your contribution will be required. If you have any remembrance or want to clarify and adjust some of the narratives you feel are not correct or add extra information on the event, this will be your time to do so. It is important for you to be truthful with your extra information or adjustments. You may also inform me where I have written wrongly in my self-reflective narratives. Then, I will be arranging a meeting where an interview will be held if I do not understand any of the comments or cannot make sense of the extra information written in the narratives. If an interview is held, I will be recording it and transcribing it for relevant data that can be used in my self-reflective narratives. As I have mentioned earlier, your part as a co-constructor of knowledge in my study will be to measure the accuracy or relevance of my self-reflective narratives and ensure trustworthiness is written in my narratives.

❖ **Important aspects to reflect on**

The purpose of an auto-ethnography is for the research data to be very personal and self-related only. My duty (as a researcher) is to ensure that I can gather the most truthful, accurate findings to the best of my abilities. This is the reason why your input, comments and confirmation will be gladly appreciated and beneficial for me. My self-reflective narratives can prove to come across to you as being 'a monster' because my honest views are provided on each event. However, the main point to ponder about for you is that it is the way that I viewed the situation. Please do not view it as critical criticism. Hence, it also forms part of the biases of my study, which is why it is required for me to make you read my self-reflective narratives and acquire further information through interviews if necessary.

❖ **Terms and Conditions**

1. I am able to discontinue my participation in this study, if I feel is necessary by informing the researcher/writer of this study in a straight-forward manner.

---

2. Before intervening or implementing further comments/adjustments/confirmations in this study, I am allowed to enquiry freely and fully about it if there is anything, I do not understand.
3. I am fully aware that my participation in this study will implement the ethical principles of confidentiality and anonymity.
4. We also would like to request your permission to use your data, confidentiality and anonymously, for further research purposes, as the data set are intellectual property of the University of Pretoria. Further research may include secondary data analysis and using the data for teaching purposes. The confidentiality and privacy applicable to this study will be binding on future research studies.

✓ I agree to the terms and conditions stated in this letter. It has been read and understood by me.

Kindly complete this section using **BOLD, CAPITAL** letters

Full Name of participant**: LIANAH ABOO GANI**

Signature: **L.A.G**

Contact number: **090 752 4375**

Email: **Lianah.g@hotmail.com**

Date: **27 APRIL 2019**

Signed at**: 5 MOLLETE SAN AUCKLAND RD, JOHANNESBURG**

Signature of researcher Sadiya Aboo Gani: **S. GANI**

Date: **17 MAY 2019**

Signature of supervisor Dr Yolandi Woest:

Faculty of Education
Fakulteit Opvoedkunde
Lefapha la Thuto

Consent letter to the participants on the study *teaching sensitive topics within an Islamic context: A female beginner teacher's auto-ethnographic account*

Dear Aunt: Fouzia

This is to state that as a co-constructor of knowledge that is chosen for the study, I understand the nature of the study and is agreeing to participate in the research study written by Sadiya Aboo Gani from the University of Pretoria, Faculty of Education.

❖ **Brief overview on my study**

My study revolves around the idea of the particular aspect of *teaching sensitive topics within an Islamic perspective,* and the specific role that it plays in the experiences of a Muslim female beginner teacher's life on teaching sensitive topics.

❖ **Implementation of the study**

Self-reflective narratives will be written by the researcher. As the narratives will be written and are finally concluded, it will then be forwarded to the relevant co-constructor of knowledge by sending an email to the relevant person. Thereafter, the co-constructor will read and re-read the self-reflective narratives jotted down. This is where your contribution will be required. If you have any remembrance or want to clarify and adjust some of the narratives you feel are not correct or add extra information on the event, this will be your time to do so. It is important for you to be truthful with your extra information or adjustments. You may also inform me where I have written wrongly in my self-reflective narratives. Then, I will be arranging a meeting where an interview will be held if I do not understand any of the comments or cannot make sense of the extra information written in the narratives. If an interview is held, I will be recording it and transcribing it for relevant data that can be used in my self-reflective narratives. As I have mentioned earlier, your part as a co-constructor of knowledge in my study will be to measure the accuracy or relevance of my self-reflective narratives and ensure trustworthiness is written in my narratives.

❖ **Important aspects to reflect on**

The purpose of an auto-ethnography is for the research data to be very personal and self-related only. My duty (as a researcher) is to ensure that I can gather the most truthful, accurate findings to the best of my abilities. This is the reason why your input, comments and confirmation will be gladly appreciated and beneficial for me. My self-reflective narratives can prove to come across to you as being 'a monster' because my honest views are provided on each event. However, the main point to ponder about for you is that it is the way that I viewed the situation. Please do not view it as critical criticism. Hence, it also forms part of the biases of my study, which is why it is required for me to make you read my self-reflective narratives and acquire further information through interviews if necessary.

❖ **Terms and Conditions**

1. I am able to discontinue my participation in this study, if I feel is necessary by informing the researcher/writer of this study in a straight-forward manner.
2. Before intervening or implementing further comments/adjustments/confirmations in this study, I am allowed to enquiry freely and fully about it if there is anything, I do not understand.

3. I am fully aware that my participation in this study will implement the ethical principles of confidentiality and anonymity.
4. We also would like to request your permission to use your data, confidentiality and anonymously, for further research purposes, as the data set are intellectual property of the University of Pretoria. Further research may include secondary data analysis and using the data for teaching purposes. The confidentiality and privacy applicable to this study will be binding on future research studies.

✓ I agree to the terms and conditions stated in this letter. It has been read and understood by me.

Kindly complete this section using **BOLD, CAPITAL** letters

Full Name of participant: **<u>FOUZIA AHMED</u>**

Signature: **<u>F. AHMED</u>**

Contact number: **<u>N/A</u>**

Email: **<u>N/A</u>**

Date: **<u>28 APRIL 2019</u>**

Signed at: **<u>90 UMBER STREET, SILVER GARDENS, PRETORIA</u>**

Signature of researcher Sadiya Aboo Gani: **<u>S. GANI</u>**

Date: **<u>18 MAY 2019</u>**

Signature of supervisor Dr Yolandi Woest

Faculty of Education
Fakulteit Opvoedkunde
Lefapha la Thuto

Consent letter to the participants on the study *teaching sensitive topics within an Islamic context: A female beginner teacher's auto-ethnographic account*

Dear Moulana: Ashraf Bham

This is to state that as a co-constructor of knowledge that is chosen for the study, I understand the nature of the study and is agreeing to participate in the research study written by Sadiya Aboo Gani from the University of Pretoria, Faculty of Education.

❖ **Brief overview on my study**

My study revolves around the idea of the particular aspect of *teaching sensitive topics within an Islamic perspective,* and the specific role that it plays in the experiences of a Muslim female beginner teacher's life on teaching sensitive topics.

❖ **Implementation of the study**

Self-reflective narratives will be written by the researcher. As the narratives will be written and are finally concluded, it will then be forwarded to the relevant co-constructor of knowledge by sending an email to the relevant person. Thereafter, the co-constructor will read and re-read the self-reflective narratives jotted down. This is where your contribution will be required. If you have any remembrance or want to clarify and adjust some of the narratives you feel are not correct or add extra information on the event, this will be your time to do so. It is important for you to be truthful with your extra information or adjustments. You may also inform me where I have written wrongly in my self-reflective narratives. Then, I will be arranging a meeting where an interview will be held if I do not understand any of the comments or cannot make sense of the extra information written in the narratives. If an interview is held, I will be recording it and transcribing it for relevant data that can be used in my self-reflective narratives. As I have mentioned earlier, your part as a co-constructor of knowledge in my study will be to measure the accuracy or relevance of my self-reflective narratives and ensure trustworthiness is written in my narratives.

❖ **Important aspects to reflect on**

The purpose of an auto-ethnography is for the research data to be very personal and self-related only. My duty (as a researcher) is to ensure that I can gather the most truthful, accurate findings to the best of my abilities. This is the reason why your input, comments and confirmation will be gladly appreciated and beneficial for me. My self-reflective narratives can prove to come across to you as being 'a monster' because my honest views are provided on each event. However, the main point to ponder about for you is that it is the way that I viewed the situation. Please do not view it as critical criticism. Hence, it also forms part of the biases of my study, which is why it is required for me to make you read my self-reflective narratives and acquire further information through interviews if necessary.

❖ **Terms and Conditions**

1. I am able to discontinue my participation in this study, if I feel is necessary by informing the researcher/writer of this study in a straight-forward manner.
2. Before intervening or implementing further comments/adjustments/confirmations in this study, I am allowed to enquiry freely and fully about it if there is anything, I do not understand.
3. I am fully aware that my participation in this study will implement the ethical principles of confidentiality and anonymity.

4. We also would like to request your permission to use your data, confidentiality and anonymously, for further research purposes, as the data set are intellectual property of the University of Pretoria. Further research may include secondary data analysis and using the data for teaching purposes. The confidentiality and privacy applicable to this study will be binding on future research studies.

✓ I agree to the terms and conditions stated in this letter. It has been read and understood by me.

Kindly complete this section using **BOLD, CAPITAL** letters

Full Name of participant: **ASHRAF BHAM**

Signature: **ASHRAF.BHAM**

Contact number: **018 657 8374**

Email: **ash.bham@gmail.com**

Date: **28 APRIL 2019**

Signed at: **312 OLD ROAD, LAUIMNGTON, CAPE TOWN**

Signature of researcher Sadiya Aboo Gani: **S. GANI**

Date: **21 MAY 2019**

Signature of supervisor Dr Yolandi Woest:

Consent letter to the participants on the study *teaching sensitive topics within an Islamic context: A female beginner teacher's auto-ethnographic account*

Dear Sir: Mr J. Parvesh

This is to state that as a co-constructor of knowledge that is chosen for the study, I understand the nature of the study and is agreeing to participate in the research study written by Sadiya Aboo Gani from the University of Pretoria, Faculty of Education.

❖ **Brief overview on my study**

My study revolves around the idea of the particular aspect of *teaching sensitive topics within an Islamic perspective,* and the specific role that it plays in the experiences of a Muslim female beginner teacher's life on teaching sensitive topics.

❖ **Implementation of the study**

Self-reflective narratives will be written by the researcher. As the narratives will be written and are finally concluded, it will then be forwarded to the relevant co-constructor of knowledge by sending an email to the relevant person. Thereafter, the co-constructor will read and re-read the self-reflective narratives jotted down. This is where your contribution will be required. If you have any remembrance or want to clarify and adjust some of the narratives you feel are not correct or add extra information on the event, this will be your time to do so. It is important for you to be truthful with your extra information or adjustments. You may also inform me where I have written wrongly in my self-reflective narratives. Then, I will be arranging a meeting where an interview will be held if I do not understand any of the comments or cannot make sense of the extra information written in the narratives. If an interview is held, I will be recording it and transcribing it for relevant data that can be used in my self-reflective narratives. As I have mentioned earlier, your part as a co-constructor of knowledge in my study will be to measure the accuracy or relevance of my self-reflective narratives and ensure trustworthiness is written in my narratives.

❖ **Important aspects to reflect on**

The purpose of an auto-ethnography is for the research data to be very personal and self-related only. My duty (as a researcher) is to ensure that I can gather the most truthful, accurate findings to the best of my abilities. This is the reason why your input, comments and confirmation will be gladly appreciated and beneficial for me. My self-reflective narratives can prove to come across to you as being 'a monster' because my honest views are provided on each event. However, the main point to ponder about for you is that it is the way that I viewed the situation. Please do not view it as critical criticism. Hence, it also forms part of the biases of my study, which is why it is required for me to make you read my self-reflective narratives and acquire further information through interviews if necessary.

❖ **Terms and Conditions**

1. I am able to discontinue my participation in this study, if I feel is necessary by informing the researcher/writer of this study in a straight-forward manner.
2. Before intervening or implementing further comments/adjustments/confirmations in this study, I am allowed to enquiry freely and fully about it if there is anything, I do not understand.

3. I am fully aware that my participation in this study will implement the ethical principles of confidentiality and anonymity.
4. We also would like to request your permission to use your data, confidentiality and anonymously, for further research purposes, as the data set are intellectual property of the University of Pretoria. Further research may include secondary data analysis and using the data for teaching purposes. The confidentiality and privacy applicable to this study will be binding on future research studies.

✓ I agree to the terms and conditions stated in this letter. It has been read and understood by me.

Kindly complete this section using **BOLD, CAPITAL** letters

Full Name of participant: **JASON PARVESH**

Signature: **J.P**

Contact number: **987 473 6574**

Email: **Jp.org@yahoo.com**

Date: **29 APRIL 2019**

Signed at: **391 UMHLANGA RIVER, DURBAN**

Signature of researcher Sadiya Aboo Gani: **S. GANI**

Date**: 31 MAY 2019**

Signature of supervisor Dr Yolandi Woest:

Appendix C: Letters of verisimilitude from participants

Letter of verisimilitude from my father, Jainoodeen Aboo Gani

541 Greenveld Avenue

Azaadville

Pretoria

0919

6 April 2020

Dear Sadiya

VERISIMILITUDE LETTER

I want to confirm that I have seen your autoethnography in chapter 4 and I am content with it as it contributes to the application of verisimilitude.

Sadiya is my 2nd and final daughter which has been always dedicated to her studies since a young age. I am hereby glad that her wish of completing her Masters studies in the form of using an autoethnography has been fulfilled and I had contributed to it.

I had always known my daughter for being a very modest, well respected individual with a great passion for the education field. Her consistency has shown the level in which she has reached today. This is the reason why I had supported her during this time of embracing and re-affirming her past memories to make this important study for her a success.

I had always been attending award ceremonies of which Sadiya had been awarded with certificates regarding her good behaviour for example the certificate awarded to her at Madrasah or excelled academic performance from her school. This was when I realised that her excellence would enable her to reach her Masters degree one day in life, which is initially where she is now.

As Sadiya slowly but surely grows into a young lady day by day, I am proud to say that Sadiya deserves all the praise and worthiness in her life at this point in time because of all her sacrifices and hard work she has contributed into it.

I wish nothing but the best for her in the upcoming years of her life. I had also encouraged her to pursue her PhD studies in education but the ultimate decision will be hers to make.

Jainoodeen Aboo Gani

541 Greenveld Avenue

Azaadville

Pretoria

0919

7 April 2020

To Sadiya

VERISIMILITUDE LETTER

I want to confirm that I have seen your autoethnography in chapter 4 and I am content with it as it contributes to the application of verisimilitude.

I had always been a motivator for my daughter for always continue with writing her studies whenever she was giving up or unable to cope with the pressure of writing her campus work. I am happy that she had made use of important events in her story of her life. This made me to be proud of her and encourage her to finish up her Masters studies before left it halfway and gave up.

Myself as her mother being involved in her study also gave me feelings of happiness, sadness, excitement, joyfulness and a sense of confidence in myself as I could not believe how quickly my daughter had grown up and become a successful, responsible young lady. She had always followed advice that I had given her and believed in praying whenever things got hard or when she was feeling down in life.

I am happy and grateful to have a daughter like Sadiya and wish her the best in life with what she wants to do.

Salma Aboo Gani

Letter of verisimilitude from my Aunt, Fouzia

90 Umber Street

Silver Gardens

Pretoria

0234

10 April 2020

My special niece, Sadiya

VERISIMILITUDE LETTER

I want to confirm that I have seen your autoethnography in chapter 4 and I am content with it as it contributes to the application of verisimilitude.

I will always want to hear the way in which you had commented on my food which I had cooked for you and you enjoyed the most – which was can foods and spicy curries. The manner in which you had impacted on our lives was unexplainable.

Your presence in my life during the good old days left memories which could be implemented into your studies and I am happy for that. I used to teach you how to never miss a prayer and always make time for it. You were very playful and energetic along with your other cousins and your elder sister in your childhood days at my house. You grew up here and your memories will remain forever in my heart and mind.

I felt very happy to explain to you in detail about the olden days in your life, when you were small, which was experienced in my house when your granny was still alive. You were the joy of our lives.

Even though you have grown now and I have grown old – the memories I have of your childhood are still fresh in my heart and mind. And let me tell you one thing, you still have the same habits, same favourite food and happiness in your smile the way you had when you were a child.

Always keep up the good work, never let anyone and anything bring you down and hope to see you on stage again graduating my child!

Your aunt F

Letter of verisimilitude from my Elder sister, Lianah Aboo Gani

5 Mollete San

Auckland rd

Johannesburg

0089

9 April 2020

To my best and only sister, Sadiya

VERISIMILITUDE LETTER

I want to confirm that I have seen your autoethnography in chapter 4 and I am content with it as it contributes to the application of verisimilitude.

Being the eldest sister, I had to always take the blame for when things did not go well. We had constant arguments but also had a trustworthy relationship amongst each other which will never be broken.

I was the one with the idea to host a sweet 16 birthday party for you as I thought it would be something you can turn back to and reflect on one day in your life. The moments we spent together are cherished and I wish could have happened anytime, any day again. They were irreplaceable.

I enjoyed coming home from school, and tutoring you for your homework and assisting you with your struggles experienced. I also remember how you would always ask me if you should buy a certain set of clothing before you could take it to the till. Even though I am not living with you at this point in time, the things we experienced during our childhood days will never be missed, lost or forgotten.

I know you are a hard worker, especially when it comes to your studies and I hope that I have helped in enabling you to becoming a step closer to achieving your goals.

All the best with the rest

Lianah

Letter of verisimilitude from my Madrasah teacher, Moulana Ashraf Bham

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

312 Old Road

Laumington

Cape Town

0756

11 April 2020

Assalmu – Alaikum Muallima Sadiya
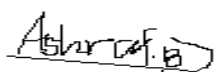
VERISIMILITUDE LETTER

I want to confirm that I have seen your autoethnography in chapter 4 and I am content with it as it contributes to the application of verisimilitude.

Alhamdulilah, after reading your life story in your chapter which included the aspects of attending Madrasah where I was the Mualim, I wish to applaud you on the aspects that are written there. You had become a better Muslim after attending this Madrasah in your childhood and learnt many new elements which you are now using in your life.

I hope you expand your knowledge and never stop learning in your religious and academic field of life. Keep on reading Islamic books and keep yourself informed with current innovations that are taking place in Islam. Learning never ever has an ending.

Always remain being a discipline, organised student that you are, and I wish you all the best in your future endeavours

Jazakallah Khair

Mosulana Ashraf Bham