THE ROLE OF TEACHER ENGAGEMENT IN CREATING POSITIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS IN POORLY RESOURCED SCHOOLS

by

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at the

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Supervisor: Professor Jan Nieuwenhuis

AUGUST 2017

Declaration

I declare that the dissertation, THE ROLE OF TEACHER ENGAGEMENT IN CREATING POSITIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS IN POORLY RESOURCED SCHOOLS, which I hereby submit for the degree Magister Educationis at the University of Pretoria, is my own work and has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other tertiary institution.

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Dedication

I dedicate this research to my son Rigard Venter, may you always pursue your dreams and to the love of my life, Sakkie.

Acknowledgements

In achieving this milestone in my life, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the following people:

- My Heavenly Father, who provided me the strength, knowledge and perseverance to complete this study;
- Professor Jan Nieuwenhuis (research supervisor), for his advice, guidance and motivation during this study and his willingness to assist me to complete the study;
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- Last, but not least –
  Sakkie, for believing in me.
  Rigard, for your love.

Abstract

The availability of resources and the importance thereof differ from school to school, depending on the school's socio-cultural and geographic position. Most public schools in South Africa experience a lack of resources, aggravated by 86% of the South Africa educational budget being spend on teachers' salaries. The portion spent on other resources is limited and in many cases, ongoing in many decades, resulting in several schools being severely under-resourced (UNESCO, 2015). Global research claims that teachers are the most important resource available to ensure effective learning, particularly in the case of an emerging economy characterised by a severe lack of resources. Under such conditions educators are required to use their resilience, creativity, improvisation and initiatives to ensure learning occur within the classroom environment. This implies that educators need to be engaged in their work, classes and the learners.

Schaufeli (2002) defines work engagement as a positive, fulfilling, and work-related state of mind, characterised by vigour, dedication and absorption. The ability to have a positive attitude and be constantly involved with one's work is reflected in engagement. It indicates a relationship between individuals and their work, even though the work may be demanding and challenging. Certain characteristics of resilience allow dealing with these demands and challenges. The term 'efficacy', positively relates to this engagement. Successfully work engagement leads to personal improvement, indicating professional and personal development. The research investigates previous global research regarding teachers' work engagement, resilience, positive learning environments and low resource schools, supplemented by an in-depth case study of poorly resourced schools, focusing specifically on the work engagement of teachers.

Key Terms:
Work engagement, resilience, positive learning environments, poorly resourced schools.

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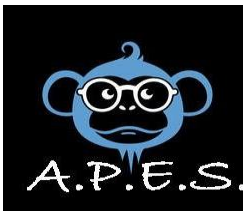

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List of abbreviations

AIC	Agency Insurance Company
BA	Bachelor of the Arts
BMIT	BMI TechKnowledge (Consulting and Market Research Company)
CAPS	Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement
CHAT	Cultural Historical Activity Theory
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
DOE	Department Of Education
EAPPS	Educational Administration Planning and Policy Studies
ECD	Early Childhood Development
EFA	Education For All
EMS	Economic and Management Science
FTI	Fast Track Initiative
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
SCCT	Social Cognitive Career Theory
SCT	Social Cognitive Theory
TNTP	The New Teachers Project
UNESCO	United National Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

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CHAPTER ONE:
GENERAL ORIENTATION

1.1 Introduction

The lack of resources based on the geographical location of a school, is a reality in several countries globally, including South Africa. Every child has a right to basic education no matter their residence, their background or any socio-cultural differences. Schools in impoverished communities or rural areas, often struggle due to a lack of resources and an inability to find teachers committed to creating positive learning environments for learners, despite the non-availability of resources (The Constitution of South Africa, Act 108, 1996).

The lack of resources in these schools became an educational development challenge for teachers. Ebersöhn (2014) indicates that teachers understand they are the most important resource in the classroom environment but they need resources like textbooks, instructional materials and facilities to improve education (The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), 2015. Qualified teachers are crucial in low resourced schools. Increasing the quantity of teachers in these schools will not necessary improve the circumstances; the quality of the teachers in these areas need to be addressed (UNESCO, 2015). Each individual school experiences its own unique resources challenges. An important factor in the allocation of resources is the Governments' budget (UNESCO, 2015). Much of the budget is allocated to teachers' salaries, leaving inadequate funding for other expenses (UNESCO, 2015). The non-salary budget available for other expenses, mostly allocated to secondary schools, leave little to no funding available for primary schools (UNESCO, 2015). Resources are important in the teaching and learning process and teachers need to retain and protect what is available (Hobfoll, 1989).

Teachers need to be engaged in school activities to retain and protect resources. This engagement refers to a teacher's ability to be aware of their surroundings. The classroom is the main surrounding that teachers should be aware off. Creating an environment where learners can learn is critical in any educational setting (Sutliff, 2008). Schaufeli (2003) states that engagement in the teaching profession relates to a sense of energy and an effective connection with learners. These teachers are

motivated to complete learning tasks and can deal with circumstances that might arise during the workday (Klassen, 2012). Circumstances can refer to the lack of resources. Being positively engaged relates to self-efficacy (Høigaard, 2012). Teachers with high self-efficacy, indicate more openness to new ideas, experimental, and can solve challenges (Guskey, 1998). Self-efficacy is a personal resource, impacting positively on engagement (Guglielmi, 2012). Personal resource refers to resilience. This quality enables teachers to stay committed to the teaching profession, despite challenging conditions and setback (Brunetti, 2006). This study indicates a strong link between resilience and self-efficacy. Teachers indicating a constant engagement in their work and in their classroom despite the circumstances, (lack of resources) show resilience. Being resilient allows teachers to use creativity, innovations and initiatives to create conducive learning environments, despite deplorable conditions.

1.2 Problem statement

From a review of literature, global studies focus mainly on lack of resources across different countries. Each of these countries entertains different circumstances and challenges, grouped together, suggesting possible outcomes UNESCO (2015). The outcomes focus on countries globally, in the EFA Global Monitoring Report. These countries are compared based on similarities. National literature regarding the lack of resources, focuses on an understanding that resources became a vital problem in several schools, including South Africa, though the understanding is that no suitable solutions will be found soon and teachers in low resources schools need to continue what is available. Literature on resources mentions the important role of resources in the education setting and reiterates the importance of the teachers as the most valuable resource in the classroom environment.

Savasci (2013:114) states “educational resources are of vital importance in terms of its role in attaining educational aims and objectives”. “Educational resources play an important role to provide equal opportunities for learners by reducing the effect of socioeconomic factors on academic achievement” (Savasci, 2013:114). Studies done on the relationship between educational resources of a school and academic achievement yield different results (Savasci, 2013). Researchers (Card, 1996; Greenwald, 1996; Fuller, 1994; Heyneman, 1983) recognise the effect of physical

and economical resources on achievement. Physical resources indicate individuals and equipment. Savasci (2013) indicates that some studies demonstrate, the effect of education resources on learner achievement, depends on the development level in a country. In developing counties, the relationship between learner achievements, learner-teacher ratio, educational level of teachers and school facilities, are more apparent than in developed counties (Savasci, 2013). Some studies in low-income counties emphasise the significance of human resources for effective learning, referring to teacher abilities and teacher experiences (Fuller, 1994; Heyneman, 1983). These teacher abilities and teacher experiences link to resilience. Edwards (2010) states that resilience should be observed as the capacity to contribute towards learners in any setting. In poor resource schools, learners perform (reasonably) well despite the circumstances; the difference indicates dedicated teachers who want to make a difference in learners' lives.

Creating a positive learning environment where learners can learn and teachers can teach remains a great challenge for teachers, more so in low resource schools.

A variety of challenging conditions and recurring setback forms part of teachers' lives daily and they need to find workable solutions to continue teaching. Most international literature focuses on using technology in the classrooms in creating a positive learning environment. National literature indicates, creating a positive learning environment refers to each learner having their own desk and chair. Most authors refer to a positive learning environment as a place where learners feel included and safe. Hébert (2014) indicates, this should be a place where learners' social and emotional development is supported. In this study, a positive learning environment refers to a classroom, conducive for learning. Teachers displaying high levels of self-efficacy (resilience) are more resourceful and flexible enabling improved engagement in managing their classroom (environment) more and productively; creating an environment for learners in which learning can occur (Wood, 1989).

The study focusses on teachers remaining in the teaching profession despite challenges and conditions, understanding their resilience.

1.3 Aims of the research

My inspiration to embark on this study, was Dr S. Coetzee and the contents of her thesis, *Sustaining teacher career resilience in a resource-constraint rural education setting: A retrospective study* (2013). My inspiration also indicates my personal experience as an educator in an affluent, well-resourced urban school. Teachers from the neighbouring low resource primary schools, consulted us regarding unutilised access resources. These resources where provided to them. My interest was aroused to understand why these teachers remain in a school environment where they cannot conduct lessons with proper resources, while our school resources are in abundance despite all the protocol to obtain the resources.

Williams (2003) and Brunetti (2006) find, regardless the risks teachers take daily in low resourced schools, they choose to remain teaching in these schools. Most teachers reveal that their satisfaction derives from strong interpersonal motivation (Brunetti, 2006). These teachers explain that their contentment derives from making a difference in children's lives (Fritz, 2008). Brunetti (2006) further identifies that these teachers share a common love and commitment with their learners. These teachers need to obtain, retain and protect the resources in their school environment (Hobfoll, 1989). They still choose to remain in the teaching profession, despite experiencing daily stress factors within a low resources school. This can be reflected as teacher resilience and self-efficacy (Brunetti, 2006). A resilient teacher engages in the classroom, ensuring learning occurs, as they want to make a difference. These teachers are motivated, display high levels of energy and want to complete tasks while dealing with arising demands in their workday (Klassen, 2012). Work engagement is a motivation concept referring to the voluntary allocation of personal resources directed at tasks demanded by a vocational role (Christian, 2011).

1.4 Research questions under investigation

I became intrigued by the concept of work engagement, and wondered how work engagement contributes to teachers making a difference in the learning environment. I was assumed that resilient teachers indicate engaged teachers and this lead to the main research question: "*How does teacher work engagement impact on creating positive learning environments for learners in low resource schools?*" To further analyse the main research question I formulated two secondary questions:

- *How does resilience (self-efficacy) impact teachers' work engagement?*
- *How does the lack of resources impact creating a positive learning environment?*

The purpose of my research was to gain an in-depth understanding of the impact of teacher work engagement on creating a learning environment that is conducive to learning in a low resourced school. I wanted to explore how teachers experience teaching in a low resourced school, how they conceptualise a lesson considering the possibility of lacking resources in constructing a lesson.

1.5 Key theoretical concepts

Numerous theoretical lenses exist, through which work engagement can be studied. One such theory state:

"*that the framework of the Social Cognitive Career Theory is derived primarily for Bandura's (1986) general Social Cognitive Theory emphasizes the means by which individuals exercise personal agency in the career development process, and extra personal factors that enhance or constrain agency. In particular, focus is places on self-efficacy, expected outcomes and goals*" Lent (1994).

Lent (1994) states, a person's being (race, gender, ethnicity and predisposition) combined with the person's historicity, influences the behaviour of the person. Personal being and background, links to learning experiences and from these learning experiences, self-efficacy and outcomes expectations develop. These self-efficacy and outcomes expectations, affect a person's interests, goals and actions in situations. Interests, goals and actions directly influence a person's behaviour.

The concept of work engagement, investigated in this research, becomes the link between the self-efficacy and the outcomes expectations. Xanthopoulou (2007) finds that self-efficacy served as workplace resource, predicting work engagement. Work engagement indicates to relate to self-efficacy; such as believes in the capabilities to accomplish task in certain environments (Klassen, 2013).

Teacher-student relationships might play the primary role in fostering student engagement and positive student outcomes (Davis, 2003; Klassen, 2012; Pianta, 2012 & Wang, 2009). Work engagement enables a person to influence interest, goals and actions through behaviour. Schaufeli (2004) indicates, this statement relates to description of work engagement as an affective-motivational, work-related state of fulfilment. Being in this state of fulfilment combines self-efficacy expectations and outcomes expectations through work engagement. A person's behaviour is influenced by being actively engaged in a situation.

1.6 Research paradigm

The most significant consideration in opting for a research paradigm, transpires from the purpose of the study (Vivar, 2007). Choosing a research paradigm is therefore based on the nature of the phenomenon being studied (Nieuwenhuis, 2016). This research followed an interpretive approach. According to this paradigm, knowledge is constructed by the research participants (Cohen, 2011). The intent of this study was to understand the meaning of work engagement from participants in the classroom environment.

1.7 Research design and approach

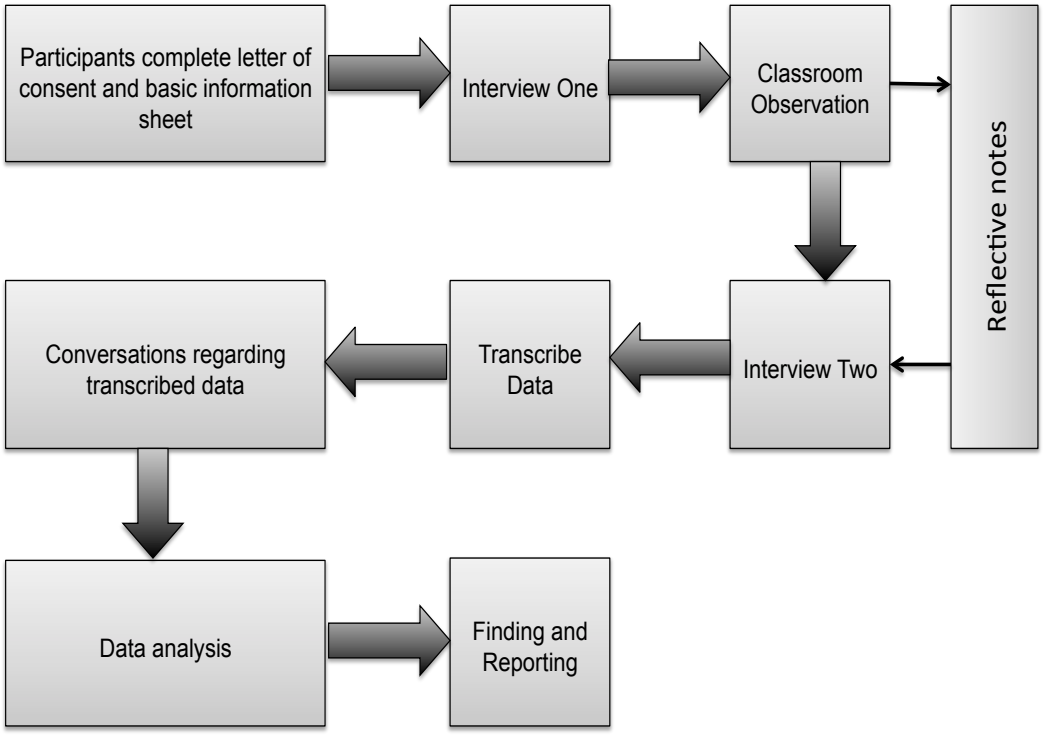
A case study design was selected as a unique example of real individuals in real situations (Cohen, 2007). A case study investigates a programme, event, activity or process of one or more individuals (Creswell, 2007). For my study, I purposively selected a poorly resourced school that met all the criteria typically associated with such schools, such as lack of resources, multiple-grade classrooms, impoverished learners and inadequate trained educators. The criteria for this type of school relates to the geographical location of the school, their constraints in terms of funds available to obtain resources for the classrooms, their teachers who need to teach across multiple grades and the lack of training for teachers to cope with these circumstances. These criteria is discussed on p.41 and p.47. The selected school was therefore a good exemplar and I could investigate the phenomenon of educator resilience thoroughly, based on the nature of my research. The participants in the study were selected as they formed part of the school (case study) selected. They held data relevant to my investigation and they gave clear descriptions of their

understandings and perceptions. Purposive selection was used to obtain the information and responses to the research questions.

1.7.1 Data collection plan

Interviews indicate the most prominent data collection strategy, understanding individuals' perceptions, to define certain situations and to better understand individuals' construction of reality, served as the basic data collection source (Punch, 2009). A semi-structured interview question assumes the participants hold a good basic knowledge on the content of the interview (Engelbrecht, 2016). After the first interview, I completed a classroom observation based on the interview and observation guidelines. I constructed a second interview, based on the classroom observations, to obtain clarity and more insight in to the participants' perceptions. I video recorded and voice recorded the interviews and observations (permission was obtained from each participant prior the interviews and observations were conducted). I made reflective notes during all the interviews and observations. Once all the data was collected, an independent party transcribed the information. All transcribed data indicated a true reflection of the collected data. The transcribed data was presented to the participants to establish if it represents a true reflection of their intentions. Once this process was completed, the data was analysed and the findings were reported. Figure 1.1 depicts the data collection plan.

Figure 1.1: Data Collection plan



1.7.2 Data analysis and interpretation

Data analysis allows the researcher to clarify of a specific phenomenon by analysing participants' perceptions, attitudes, understanding, knowledge, values, feelings and experiences to approximate the participants' construct of the phenomenon (Nieuwenhuis, 2016c). The researcher needs to interpret and understand the information collected (Goodson, 2001). The purpose of data analysis in this study was to become acquainted with the data. For the analysis of the data from this research I utilised thematic data analysis. I interpreted all the data (video or voice recordings) from all the interviews and observations, reflective notes and transcribed data, to form a clear perception of the information. I coded reoccurring ideas from the data. These codes where allocated to categories. From these categories I identified themes. Boyatzis (1998) mentions that thematic analysis is a method of identifying, analysing and reporting patterns within the information collected from the participants. Data analysis is a cycle process; there is a constant movement between the data and the analysis (Engelbrecht, 2016).

1.8 Limitations of this study

The limitations are typical of a case study. The research was conducted in a bounded system, which is characterised in terms of context and content linked to this research (Simon, 2013). This indicates no claims could be made regarding generalisation. This research was limited as it focussed on a school situated near an informal settlement within a low resourced school environment, and therefore cannot be generalised to all informal, low resourced schools. Each school and its environment are different in context and hold its own variables. This research however, provides a picture of a school environment that may reveal certain aspects associated with this school environment that could apply to other contexts, therefore some information could be transferable.

1.9 Research structure

This study comprises five chapters as outlined below:

Chapter 1

This chapter contextualises the study and provides a broad overview of the main research question, aims and objectives. The concepts of the main research question links to previous research and the concepts are in context for this study.

Chapter 2

Chapter 2 discusses the reviewed literature. Relevant literature was evaluated to provide a theoretical framework for this study. The concepts of the main research questions explained existing global literature on these concepts.

Chapter 3

Chapter 3 discusses the research design and methodology of the qualitative research. Attention was provided to research approach, namely a case study used. The selection of participant, data collection methods and the proposed data analysis process are discussed in detail. The chapter concludes with a clarification of the ethical issues considered and how credibility, transferability and dependability were assured throughout this research.

Chapter 4

In this chapter, the analysis of the data is discussed. The participants are described, with pseudonyms, ensuring anonymity to the readers of this study. Each theme discovered from the data analysis using thematic data analysis, are mentioned in detail and reference to the categories identified by the participants, positions the study in context.

Chapter 5

This concluding chapter contains the aim of the study and endeavours to answer the research questions based on the data collected. The findings are presented and are linked to each concept of the research questions, indicating the main research question guided the investigation. A summary of the conclusions is provided after each finding. In conclusion, suggestions for future research are briefly mentioned.

CHAPTER 2:
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Chapter 1 indicates schools in several regions in South Africa, as low resource schools. The challenge is not unique to South Africa, as numerous schools in other countries, such as Sub-Saharan, Latin American (including certain developing countries), face similar challenges (UNESCO, 2015). This chapter reviews the literature dealing with education provisioning, including the resources in schools. Focus is specifically on the role teachers fulfil in these low resource schools. The study commences with focus on the lack of resources in schools, work engagement of teachers, resilience, self-efficacy and positive learning environments. The chapter concludes, explaining the conceptual framework used to answer the research question.

2.2 The lack of resources as an educational development challenge

Schools globally, South Africa included, are constantly battling with challenges concerning the lack of resources. Resources and the importance thereof, vary in schools, depending on the school's location and several other factors. Each school holds its unique challenges regarding resources. Eighty-six per cent of South Africa's educational budget is spent on teachers' salaries. The percentage of the indicated budget spent on other resources is limited (UNESCO, 2015).

Ebersöhn (2014) states, teachers are the most important resource available to ensure effective learning, particularly in an emerging economy characterised by a severe lack of resources. Several national budgets globally, do not indicate education as a priority (UNESCO, 2015). Most of these budgets allocate an excess of 80% of the national budget to teachers' salaries, leaving inadequate funding for additional expenses. Resources perform an important part in creating a positive learning environment. One-third of primary recurrent spending (including learning and teaching materials), should be earmarked for salary expenditure to reach acceptable levels of quality and efficiency (World Bank, 2013). Various types of resources are required to improve learning. The non-salary expenditure is mostly allocated to secondary education, indicating inadequate funds available for pre-primary and

primary education (UNESCO, 2015). Due to geographical locations of schools, the availability of resources is negatively influenced as it is based on community needs and not on learner needs. Significant investment was made into the infrastructures in rural areas globally, indicating remarkable progress in primary education access (World Bank, 2013).

Several countries made significant efforts to improve roads, electricity and water infrastructure in rural areas (UNESCO, 2015). These factors (on a community level) indicate a positive effect on schooling access. Qualified teachers indicate the most important resource, especially in rural and remote schools. Data indicate the teacher -pupil ratio in South Africa as 80:1. Improving the quantity of teachers will not be enough to breach the gap; the quality of teachers needs to improve. Teachers need to be well trained and motivated (UNESCO, 2015).

Mestry (2014) states that the teacher-pupil ratio remains high in underprivileged schools. Inadequate access to financial resources, lack of textbooks and large classroom sizes continue to account for the underprivileged performance of schools. Teachers need to protect available resources, using them sparingly to create sustainability of resources in their classrooms.

The availability of textbooks, other instructional materials and facilities is important in improving education. The availability and sustainability of resources links directly to teachers' work engagement. Teachers also need to rely on personal resources, such as resilience and efficacy to create conducive classrooms UNESCO (2015).

Schools require a basic infrastructure to educate learners. In addition to a basic infrastructure and resources (important to improve learning), are required. Veriava (2010) indicates that creating an annually reviewed monetary adequacy, benchmark for non-personnel expenditure. The benchmark should stipulate the amount to be allocated to each learner; ensuring learners receive an adequate education. Rakabe (2016) provides input and output norms in the form of a table, refer to table 1.1.

Table 1.1: Education input and output norms (Rakabe, 2016)

Table 52: Education input and output norms

			Input norms		Output norms	
	Policy area	Input	Minimum	Maximum	Minimum	Maximum
Funding	LTSM, consumables and furniture	Learner subsidy allocation	50%	-	-	-
	Municipal services		38%	-	-	-
	Maintenance		12%	-	-	-
	Infrastructure	Infrastructure conditional grant	-	-	-	-
Educators	Teacher training (pre-service)	Quantity/quality of pre-service teacher training	Education diploma/ NQF 5	-	Set competency levels	Set competency levels
	Teacher training (in-service)	Quantity/quality of in-service teacher training	-	-	-	-
	Teacher supply distribution	Learner–educator ratio	-	30–40	-	-
Non Educators	Administration		-	-	-	-
	Security		1	-	-	-
Classrooms	Class supply	Number of classrooms	-	-	-	-
	Classroom size		1.2 m × 1.5 m	2 m × 2.6 m	-	-
Curriculum	Curriculum	Relevance/clarity of the curriculum		-	-	-
	Contact time	Contact time	7 hours	-	Set competency levels	Set competency levels
	Grade repetition	Level of learner repetition	-	2	-	-
	School admissions and streaming policy	Level of stratification	-	-	-	-
LTSMs	Materials provisioning	Quantity of LTSMs	1 textbook / learner	-	-	-
	ICT	Quantity of cutting edge LTSMs		-	-	-
Infrastructure	School construction, equipment and design	Quality of school buildings and equipment	Comply with policy	-	-	-
	Libraries and laboratories		1	-	-	-
	Sport and recreational facilities		1	-	-	-
	Electronic connectivity		Comply with policy	-	-	-
Management	Management training	Management capacity of school principal	-	-	-	-
	School principal conditions of service	School principal salary and fringe benefits	-	-	-	-
	Governance training	Level of community involvement	-	-	-	-
	Provincial/district support	Quantity/quality of district support	-	-	-	-
Access Issues	Scholar transport	Transport for remote learners	-	-	-	-
	School nutrition	Health of learners	Daily meal/ learner	-	-	-

According to Rakabe (2016), the inputs are not definitively express. The standards and norms in school infrastructures state that each school should hold sufficient sanitation facilities, water supplies and libraries, but do not indicate the combination

of facilities, signifying a fully functional school. The Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS) document, is also referred to, indicating that input norms are not directly linked to the production of output (Department of Basic Education, 2017). Rakabe (2016) states, CAPS stipulate that the content teachers should teach and assess by grade and subject, assuming all schools comprise the required inputs to produce prescribed learning outcomes.

Veriava (2010) claims that the setting of the adequacy benchmark appears to be arbitrarily, indicating insufficiently linking to improve learner results, or the real cost of quality education regarding infrastructure, services and retention of quality staff through competitive remuneration.

Rakabe (2016) states, the national adequacy benchmark for learner subsidies (the minimum amount considered adequate to realise a learner's right to education) does not encompass an empirical basis. It is adjusted annually by inflation rates only. The minimum set subsidy allocation for underprivileged learners are insufficient in meeting national policy aspirations such as the "one textbook per learner" policy (Rakabe, 2016).

The research assumption indicates that the required resources vary in schools. Schools in rural and remote areas within South Africa might require different resources, compared to schools in urban areas. Chudgar (2015) mentions that most researchers agree that a child's background is crucial in explaining their educational outcome. Socioeconomic factors, such as the level of parents' education and financial resources, devise a significant effect on scholastic achievements. Extensive research from the United States (US) indicates that traditional resources are not systematically associated with improved learning levels (Hanushek, 1997).

Cohen (2003) investigated three routes to explore resources, indicating instructional processes and the resources teachers use, focus on the schools' collective characteristics and teachers and learners' interactions within a specific content. The system theory differentiates between three key aspects, input, process and outcome. Input refers to the resources challenge available to the school, including teachers and learners. The process refers to activities in the classroom, the learning and

teaching processes. Outcome refers to the results achieved from the learning and teaching processes.

Grubb (2008) contradicts these routes, stating that the resources progress beyond these conventions, should be more coherent and systematic. Conventional resources are referred to as “simple resources.” Grubb (2008) introduces compounded resources, complex resources and abstract resources. Compounded resources indicate use with other basic resources, combined with teachers’ experience and training in a subject. Complex resources refer to teachers’ innovation concerning teaching style and approaches. Abstract resources are often hidden in the characteristics of the school, such as school practices.

Rural and remote schools globally lack more resources, compared to urban schools (UNESCO, 2015 & World Bank, 2013). Sullivan, 2012; Castro, 2010; Mukeredzi, 2013; Ebersöhn, 2012; Mafora, 2013, indicate a similar understanding of the terms in rural and remote schools globally, referring to resources in their studies. These schools are geographically isolated from urban areas and large cities.

Sullivan (2012) mentions that these schools comprise small to medium underprivileged communities. These communities deal with numerous hardship and despair, such as low-resources, illiteracy, unemployment, weak infrastructure, lack of services, violence, communication and health issues. Teachers in these schools need to daily manage basic requirements of learners. These schools lack access to basic facilities and services, such as clean water, electricity and telephone connectivity. Classroom resources or “simple resources” are not a reality in these schools (Grubb, 2008). Ebersöhn (2012) mentions that teaching in these rural settings, provides numerous images of barriers, hardship and despair. These schools indicate insufficient classrooms for learners and restricted access to resources such as library books (Ebersöhn, 2012). Chudgar (2015) notes that schools require a basic infrastructure. Teachers in these schools are often unqualified. Qualified teachers indicate a compounded resource in classrooms Grubb (2008).

Mukeredzi (2013) and Mafora (2013) argue that a community develops in a specific area; indicating groups of individuals starting to live together in the same area. As the

community grows the need arises to educate the children in the area. As the need develops, the community often responds in building a school. Unqualified teachers are appointed, resulting scarcity of funds. Rural and remote schools lack access to resources, available to urban schools and lack support from the Department of Education (DOE).

Mukeredzi (2013) explains that most South African schools lack material, infrastructural resources and basic services and facilities. This indicates these schools will not receive the same benefits such as textbooks, an educational effort presenting the greatest influence on learning. The Department (governments) cannot provide similar services due to financial constraints (UNESCO, 2015). The socio-economic circumstances in these schools are abandoning these communities, managing with the few resources available.

Castro (2010) states that rural and remote communities mainly comprise low-income households and a culturally diverse population. The community cannot obtain teachers with guarantees of good incentives and working conditions. Teachers subsiding within these communities or the surrounding areas, usually teach at these rural schools. Grubb (2008) accentuates the importance of teacher skills and training as a resource. These teachers are isolated from the teaching community and the DOE, lacking access to support from district officials to assist with learning and teaching programmes.

Resources form an important part in the teaching process. Teachers need to obtain, retain and protect resources (Hobfoll, 1989). Teachers experience stress when they fail to secure or protect resources. Demerouti (2001) expresses a different opinion on resources than Cohen (2003) and Grubb (2008). Demerouti (2001) observes resources could be divided into various categories, such as physical, social, psychological and organisational. These categories of resources allow teachers to reach goals, reduce demands from learners and stimulate personal growth and development. The abovementioned division of resources are more in line with this research. Resources comprise both intrinsic and extrinsic motivational potential (Schaufeli, 2004). Resources provide intrinsic motivation for facilitating learning (in

the learning environment) and extrinsic motivation, providing instruments to assist, or specify information for goal achievement.

Cross sectional studies by Xanthopoulou, 2007; Saks, 2006 and Hakanen, 2006, indicate that resources relate positively to work engagement. Altunel (2015) specify that resources indicate a good predictor for work engagement. These findings are parallel to results from earlier studies (Bakker, 2008; Hakanen, 2008; Koyuncu, 2006 & Simbula, 2011). Studies by researchers (Mauno, 2007; Saks, 2006 & Hakanen, 2006) indicate an association between work engagement and resources. Mauno (2007) and Xanthopoulou (2007) additionally, state that personal resources, such as self-efficacy and organisational self-esteem, relate to work engagement. Grubb (2008) states that several effective resources cannot be bought, referring to spending money on resources in schools. Effective resources refer to resources that will effect change, creating a difference in learners' lives. The teacher is the most effective resource. Several factors influence the availability and sustainability of resources in any school or classroom environment (Grubb 2008).

Certain instances signify limited resources. The responsibility remains with the teachers to protect and sustain these resources. The teacher needs to provide learners with the opportunity to learn by relying on their own resilience and efficacy and by being actively engaged (work engagement) in their classroom and with their learners.

The availability of qualified teachers raises another concern. Progress regarding this matter is indicated but the ratio of qualified teacher to pupil is still of concern due to the shortages of qualified teachers. The pre-eminent role of teachers in providing basic quality education is recognised. Governments of developing countries are urged to enhance the status, moral and professionalism of teachers, enabling them to participate in actions affecting their professional lives and teaching environments. To attract and retain good teachers, policy makers need to improve teacher education, deploy teachers fairly, provide incentives with appropriate salaries and create career paths. Teachers often teach learners in disadvantaged schools with less preparation than those in advantaged schools (UNESCO, 2015). In South Africa,

teachers with a good knowledge of Mathematics are commonly deployed to urban and better resource schools (Altinok, 2013).

Teachers should rely on resources provided by the school, but more importantly on their own resources to create a positive learning environment for their learners to ensure learning is important to review the Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT). Lent (1994) indicates, to establish the link between teachers' own resources in creating a positive learning environment, educators need to use own resilience, creativity, improvisation and initiatives, ensuring the highest possible learning quality within the classroom. This indicates teachers' constant engagement in their work, educating learners. The definition of school engagement is complex and disagreement exists regarding the theoretical dimensions. Two dimensions are referred to for engagement, such as behavioural and emotional dimensions (Finn, 1993 & Skinner, 1993). Three dimensional engagements are indicated: behavioural, emotional and cognitive behaviour (Fredricks, 2004). Davis (2012) argues that teachers need to consider engagement, encompassing three interconnected dimensions: behavioural engagement, cognitive engagement and relational engagement. Christian (2011) refers to work engagement as a motivation concept linking to the voluntary allocation of personal resources directed at the range of tasks demanded by a vocational role.

Bakker (2011) indicates two core conceptual dimensions; energy and involvement, supporting work engagement. Saks (2006) mentions three domains of engagement; physical engagement, emotional engagement and cognitive engagement. In certain circumstances, these three domains are hidden under the higher-order engagement construct, whereby individual domains are experienced simultaneously or holistically (Rich, 2010 & Sonnentag, 2003).

2.3 Teachers' work engagement

Schaufeli (2002) defines work engagement as a positive, fulfilling, and work-related state of mind, characterised by vigour, dedication and absorption. This engagement reflects the ability of a positive attitude and constant work involvement. A working relationship is indicated even though the work may be demanding and challenging.

Certain characteristics assist in dealing with these demands and challenges. The term ‘efficacy’ positively relates to this engagement.

Successful work engagement leads to self-improvement, reflecting qualities, such as professional and personal development. Work engagement refers to the relationship between employees and their work. Work engagement does not mean commitment to an employer, but relates to the satisfaction gained from the work and the continuation thereof (Macey, 2008; Schaufeli, 2011).

In contradiction to the above statement, Altunel (2015) notes that employees repay their organisation by their level of engagement. Employees choose to engage with varying degrees and in response to the resources received from the organisation. Work engagement therefore is dynamic, not static, with fluctuations daily, weekly and even per task (Sonnentag, 2011). The concept of work engagement in the teaching profession, indicates a sense of energy and an effective connection with the learners and with the work activities they conduct in the learning environment (Schaufeli, 2003).

Klassen (2012) indicates engaged teachers as motivated, displaying energy, effective in completing tasks and able to deal with complex demands arising during their workdays. These demands can refer to the creation of a positive learning environment, or the lack of basic resources. Teachers can deal with the demands of their profession and find suitable solutions in school environments with low resources.

Work engagement can be characterised by involvement, resilience and energy (Maslach, 1997). Guglielmi (2012) states that work engagement is characterised by high levels of energy and strong work identification. Work engagement is an affective-motivational, work-related state of fulfilment in employees, characterised by vigour, dedication and absorption (Schaufeli, 2004). Vigour can be described as high levels of energy, being involved and work willingness and effort. Dedication is a sense of enthusiasm and a sense of positively influencing learners’ lives and pride.

Absorption is to be totally engaged in the convergent task provided. These teachers can be observed in a school environment, indicating high levels of energy and excitement about their work, being engaged with their learners (Macey, 2008). Salanova (2005) indicates that engagement relates positively to customer satisfaction, indicating the learner (customer) will be satisfied.

Høigaard (2012) states that work engagement positively relates to teacher efficacy. Teacher efficacy can be defined as teachers' beliefs on their ability to influence learner outcomes (Wheatley, 2002). High efficacy teachers are more open to innovative ideas experimenting new methods, with the ability to resolve challenges (low resources) (Guskey, 1998).

Guglielmi (2012) concludes that self-efficacy could indicate a personal resource with a positive impact on work engagement. Hobfoll (1989) states individual factors and environmental factors affect the work engagement. Individual factors (personal resources) can be linked to resilience and the teacher's ability to control and impact pupils in their classrooms (the learning environments) (Hobfoll, 2003).

Richter (2011) states a positive link between work engagement and professional learning (formal and informal). Teachers involved in their classrooms activities and their learners, are inclined to expand their personal knowledge, ensuring they keep learners engaged. High performing teachers are often indicated as role models (Lombarts, 2010). These teachers create enthusiasm amongst their colleagues, inspiring them to be more engaged in their work and in their classroom environment. Scheepers (2014) concludes, that more engaged teachers are consistently evaluated by their students (learners) as better teachers. This creates positive learning environments for the learners, relating to the teachers' teaching environment and the school as a learning environment, not only the classrooms.

Guglielmi (2012) reveals that school principals, confident about their capabilities, may identify more resourceful aspects in the work environment, possibly leading to higher levels of work engagement. Altunel (2015) refers to work engagement as "old wine in a new bottle" due to the similarities with the "workaholic" concept. According to Klassen (2013) a relationship exists between work engagement and burnout. Some

researchers describe work engagement as the opposite of burnout. If a person is fully engaged low burnout are indicated and if a person is not engaged, the burnout will be high.

Bakker (2008) agrees that the concepts are similar, but do not overlap each other. The difference can be indicated in “workaholic” is an addiction (compulsive drive) and work engagement is activities ensuring positive outcomes. Research undertaken by Klassen (2012) indicates that work engagement and work satisfaction are not synonymous, but highly correlated. The teachers actively engaged with their learners in the classroom, experience high levels of work satisfaction and continue engagement.

Work engagement relates to teachers’ positive attitudes, their willingness to ensure they create positive learning environments for learners. Their ability to daily deal with demands and challenges, utilises their own characteristics and efficacy to improve themselves as part of professional development. Teachers rely on resilience to be effective.

2.4 Resilience definition

According to Eldridge (2013), the definition of resilience remains topical and as a result, no universal definition exits. Beltman (2011) states that research on teacher resilience amongst education professionals, indicates a definition of this construct is not globally agreed on. Luthar (2000) suggests, the reason for the lack of clarity on the definition of resilience, is that operationalisation of the term “resilience” varies in studies.

For their respective research studies, the following authors define resilience. These definitions can relate to this research. Brunette (2006) defines resilience as a quality enabling teachers to maintain their commitment to teaching and their teaching practices, despite challenging conditions and recurring setbacks. Oswald (2003) describes resilience as the capacity to overcome personal vulnerabilities and environmental stressors, to ‘bounce back’ in the face of potential risks, and to maintain well-being.

Patterson (2004) suggests resilience uses energy productively to achieve school goals in adverse conditions. “The capacity to continue to ‘bounce back’, to recover strengths or spirit quickly and efficiently in face of adversity”; a dynamic construct subject to be influenced by environmental, work-specific and personal contexts (Sammons, 2007). Tait (2008) describes resilience as a mode interacting with events in the environment, activated and nurtured in stress times.

Edwards (2010) argues that research on resilience should not only make explorations into the capacity for personal adaptation and an ability to ‘bounce back’ from adversity, but also uncover the social situations and practices that a person engages with that enable resilience to develop.

Edwards (2010) uses the Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT), arguing that if individuals want to develop their own resilience, they need to engage responsibly. Edwards (2010) further states that resilience should be viewed as the capacity to personally contribute towards and use the resources available in any setting. To further knowledge development and understanding resilience, research should analyse the relationship between individual and systemic processes.

2.4.1 Resilience link to self-efficacy

Bandura (1994) defines self-efficacy as individuals’ beliefs in their capabilities to produce designated levels of performance, exercising influence over events affecting their lives. Bandura (1999) states that individuals have little incentive to act or to preserve difficulties, unless they believe they can produce desired effects with their actions. Friedman (2002) describes self-efficacy in teachers, as an ability to perform tasks and to regulate relations involved in the process of teaching and educating students (classroom efficacy) and perform organisational tasks, becoming part of the organisation and its political and social processes (organisational efficacy). Bandura (1994) mentions four main sources, influencing self-efficacy.

The first source indicates mastery through experiences; successes built a strong belief in one’s self-efficacy while failures break it down. A resilient sense of efficacy requires experience in overcoming obstacles through perseverant effort (Bandura, 1994). The second source indicates creating models. Bandura (1999) states that

observing individuals in the same manner as observing oneself, succeeds by sustained efforts in raising beliefs that they possess the capabilities to master comparable activities required to succeed.

Bandura (1999) indicates the third source as social persuasion. This source strengthens personal beliefs to succeed. This verbal persuasion allows a person to mobilise greater effort and sustain these efforts to succeed. The final source is to reduce stress reaction and alter negative feelings. Bandura (1999) mentions, it is not the intensity of the emotional and physical reactions, but rather how they perceive and interpret, that matters.

Wood (1989) states that individuals of high efficacy indicate greater cognitive resourcefulness and strategic flexibility, managing their environment effectively and productively. Efficacy beliefs can perform an important part in shaping the courses, by influencing the activities and environment individuals choose to enter (Bandura, 1999).

According to Lent (1994), individuals with a strong sense of personal efficacy, consider a wide range of career options, develop a greater interest in them, and prepare themselves for various careers, holding greater staying power in their chosen pursuits. Bandura (1999) states that human well-being and accomplishments require an optimistic and resilient efficacy. Difficulties are experienced daily; it requires a resilient sense of efficacy to override such conditions. Shepard (1995) concurs by stating that resilient self-efficacy provides the needed staying power. Innovative and social individuals and reformers hold an optimistic view, adding valued changes.

2.4.2 Resilience link to teachers' work engagement

Work engagement is characterised by vigour, dedication and absorption (Schaufeli, 2004). Sullivan (2012) refers to resilience as the ability to successfully adapt to change, despite challenges or threats. Vigour relates to high levels of energy and work involvement, present in resilience. If a teacher lacks high levels of energy or indicates uninvolved in their work, they cannot observe that change is necessary. Dedication relates to enthusiasm, drive and the sense of making a difference, also

present in resilience. Resilience allows the teacher to achieve aims differently, maintaining the same end goal. Absorption indicates being totally engaged with the imminent task provided. A resilience teacher is totally immersed and involved with the task to ensure the best possible outcome, despite challenges. Schaufeli (2004) observes work engagement as an affective-motivational, work-related state of fulfilment. This statement is linked to research on resilience and in what way resilience allows teachers to fulfil the characteristics of work engagement.

Adekola, (2010); Benders, (2012); Castro, (2010); Mukeredzi, (2013); Corbett, (2013); Miller-Day, (2012) and Ebersöhn, (2014) found similarities of the concept of resilience. For teachers to be constantly engaged in their work and in their classroom activities, they need to express resilience. Teachers constantly face challenges. Castro (2010) defines resilience as the ability to adjust in adverse conditions. Adekola (2010) refers to resilience as a person's willingness to invest in their work, persisting during difficult periods. This statement links to the characteristic of vigour, concerning work engagement.

According to Eldridge (2013) resilience comprises three notions: individual factors, contextual factors and teachers' views on their work content. These notions directly link to work engagement. Some teachers manage to attend to their classes daily, despite negative working conditions. They work hard to ensure their learners receive the best education possible (Mukeredzi, 2013). Benders (2012) observes that the teachers remaining and continuing teaching at school, display a unique resilience. These teachers want to make a difference. This statement links to the characteristic of absorption concerning work engagement.

Ebersöhn (2014) states that all teachers are affected by the same or similar circumstances, coping daily in a resource-constrained school environment. Sinclair (2008) mentions that teachers encounter significant challenges and adversity. When the reality of teaching matches entry motivations, these teachers indicate an increased teaching commitment (Sinclair, 2008). Some teachers manage these circumstances and choose to stay in the teaching profession. This statement refers to dedication.

Sullivan (2012) and Castro (2010) emphasise an ever-changing situation existing in classroom environments. Teachers find themselves in various challenging situations daily. They need to adapt daily, such as their teaching style to manage problematic situations, ensuring learning occurs. To be able to constantly adapt to the circumstances in the learning environment, engaged teachers strive to be resilient. Miller-Day (2012) states that 97% of observed lessons are adapted when presented to learners. The teacher needs the ability to adapt in the classroom and be fully engaged in the curriculum presented to the learners. The teacher needs to display enthusiasm to keep learners engaged. According to Corbett (2013), improvisation rather than scripted performances as a framework for curriculum, can assure more hospitable schools.

Teachers take risks constantly. These risks include adversity, teacher traits, weakness and environmental barriers (Ebersöhn, 2014). Ebersöhn, (2012 & 2014) states that resilience indicates the extent to which such systematic adaption is possible and sustained, as response to mediate the impact of risk factors. Teachers cannot adapt if they are not engaged in their work in the classroom. The teacher must devise pragmatic innovations and traits, to adapt to difficult situations.

Ebersöhn (2014) mentions, comparable to the risk factors, protective resources are embedded in specific context (external) and with the teachers (internal) indicating ecological resilience (Ungar, 2012). Hobfoll (1989) agrees with this statement, asserting that environmental factors affect work engagement.

The study agrees on these factors, indicating that the teachers need to constantly make quick decisions based on their daily circumstances. These quick decisions involve risks, to ensure that the learning process continues. Teachers need to be engaged to identify these risks and to find suitable solutions to their circumstances, implicating resilience. Teachers need to constantly adapt to the changing needs of the learners in the school environment. Teachers are constantly required to make decisions, considering the risks, aiming to protect the resources available to conduct teaching and learning. The extent of daily risks contributes to high levels of teacher stress.

Teacher resilience and work engagement will assist teachers to cope and handle daily stress in the classroom and in the school environment. The characteristics of the concept 'work engagement' (vigour, dedication and absorption) are therefore linked to the concept of 'resilience'. A possible need exists for a positive learning environment to engage teachers in their work, displaying resilience.

2.5 Positive learning environments

The teacher needs to create circumstances and a location that includes all learners. Learners should feel safe and should know what is expected from them in a place conducive to learning. The classroom needs to provide social and emotional support to each learner and create an open invitation to learn. Each classroom requires an own unique culture to create a sense of belonging amongst learners. Vandeyar (2014) describes culture-rich classroom, as framed by metaphors, mirrors and windows according. The mirrors indicate validating the identity of each student in the class. Windows allow students to observe the external environment. Sutliff (2008) states that setting a foundation for learning is critical in any educational circumstances. Teaching and learning are interactive processes where all parties benefit when students feel safe, know what is expected, are challenged and realise they are valued human beings.

Allinder (1994) observes that teachers with high efficacy, indicate greater enthusiasm and commitment, engaging with learners in the learning environment. These teachers are less critical when learners make mistakes in their work. They attend to struggling learners by assisting and providing additional work. A classroom culture is a psychological atmosphere, nurturing and shaping learner's attitudes on their own identity, classes, school and learning (Major, 2008).

Various studies introduce several concepts to create positive learning environments. Driscoll (2002) indicates, a blended learning environment refers to the blend of the effectiveness of face-to-face teaching and information and communications technology (ICT), medicated teaching and learning environment. Graham (2009) describes the blended learning environment as the combination of instruction, both methods and delivery media from two archetypal (standard) learning environments: the traditional face-to-face learning environment and the ICT-mediated or e-learning

environment. Teenagers in middle and high schools benefit from classroom environments supporting their social and emotional development (Hébert, 2014).

Learners' intellectual development accompanies their social and emotional growth; teachers are responsible for nurturing the social and emotional development of children (Hébert, 2014). Creating a positive classroom entails more than just desks and chairs. The teacher needs to engage with learners on a social and emotional level. Rakow (2005) states that during this stage of adolescence, relationships with peers are often the highest priority in a teenager's life. Learners need to be part of a supportive and respectful learning environment. Schaps (2007) found that being part of such a classroom is "being a valued, contributing member of a group dedicated to the shared purposes of helping and supporting all members as they work together, learn and grow."

Schaps' (2007) statement is consistent with the philosophy of invitational education by Purkey (2008). The main purpose of invitational education is to create learning environments where learners choose to be and where they want to learn. To ensure that the learning environment is invitational there needs to be respect, trust, optimism and intention (Purkey, 2008). Tomlinson (2002) states that several young individuals seek the affirmation they are significant in the classroom. Teachers indicate a crucial invitation to learning when young learners feel an abiding sense of affirmation from teachers and peers in the class.

Teachers need to create an invitation to learn. This invitation can take various forms. The teacher needs to ensure that each learner in the classroom receives this invitation, responding in a positive manner to ensure that learning occurs. An attitude of "this classroom, is ours not mine" ensures a positive outlook in the learners (Tomlinson, 2002).

Blecker (2010) states that teachers need to be responsive to learners' needs to create a successful learning environment. Teachers need to build a positive culture in their classroom. The teacher's goal indicates the learners wanting to be at school and in the classroom. Classroom culture will dictate if a learner wants to be in your class. The teachers retain the responsibility to maintain a positive classroom culture.

This positive culture will also be represented in the manner colleagues are treated. Classroom activities should mirror the schools' culture (Wright, 2014).

Creating a positive learning environment where learners feel valued as human beings, is crucial to ensure that learning materialises. Learners need to feel included in their classroom and that their needs for social and emotional well-being is attended to. Teachers often depend on resources from the school or the DOE, or they provide their own, enabling creating positive learning environments. Resources present an important part accomplishing these environments.

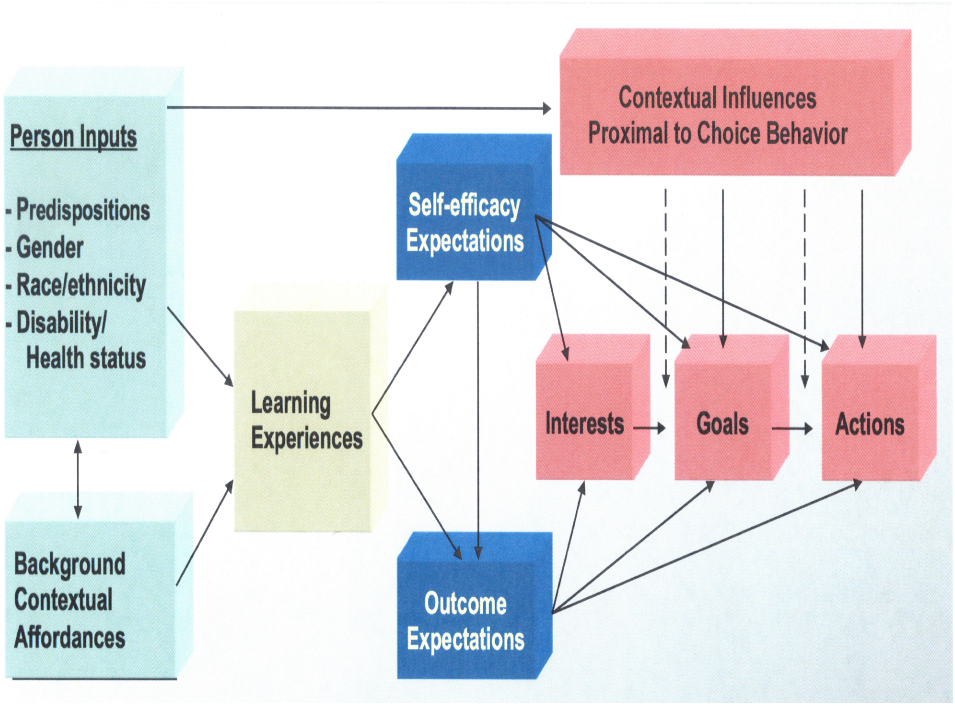
2.6 Conceptual framework

Several factors influence positive learning environment creation, where learners feel safe, socially and emotionally accepted, and provided a learning environment. The research focuses on active involvement of teachers (work engagement) and the teacher's ability to be resilient. SCCT Lent (1994) is utilised as conceptual framework for this research. A teacher's personal input, background and learning experience, allowing them to use resilience and efficacy in a manner that outcomes can be predicted, are explained. These actions of teachers also allow them to be engaged in the learning process, adapt to changes, ensuring learning occurs, utilising outcomes in a manner ensuring re-engagement.

The SCCT Lent (1994) was developed from Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (1986). The SCCT Lent (1994) was developed to understand the aspects of career development, concerning interest, choice, performance and persistence. Lent (1994, 2002) focuses on how self-efficacy, outcomes and goals are interrelated and mentions individuals' personal involvement in the career development process. SCCT focuses on three primary elements to career development, identified as self-efficacy, outcome expectation and goals, graphically illustrated in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1: Social Cognitive Career Theory

Lent, Brown and Hackett (1994, 2000, 2002)



Bandura (1986) defines self-efficacy referring to individuals' judgements of their capabilities to organise and execute a course of actions to attain designated performance. Self-efficacy refers to a person's thought process and reactions when confronted with an obstacle (Lent, 1994). The view on self-efficacy in this research, indicates self-efficacy is an active, dynamic set of self-beliefs, interactive between outcomes and goals. The Social Cognitive Theory assumes that self-efficacy is an ever-changing attribute changing the performance level of a person, depending the challenging task provided (Bandura, 1986). Competent skills and a sense of self-knowledge are required to utilise resources effectively (Lent, 1994). Self-efficacy relates to resilience, concerning the teachers' belief on their own ability to complete a task in their classroom and to ensure that learning occurs.

Resilience is based on own personal performances and response capabilities, including interaction within the school environment. A person's belief in the probability of a specific outcome in a situation is another component of the social cognitive theory. Outcome expectations involve the imagined consequences of performing behaviours (Lent, 1994).

Various classes of outcome expectation are indicated, such as physical, social and self-evaluative can affect career behaviour (Bandura, 1986). Individuals act on their judgement of their own capabilities, and on their beliefs regarding the effect of various actions (Bandura, 1986). The link between self-efficacy and outcome expectations is seen. Should a person anticipate an outcome from course of actions and doubt their ability to perform the action, they will avoid the action. A strong sense of efficacy may sustain efforts, even where outcome attainment is uncertain (Lent, 1994).

Self-efficacy and outcome expectation is affected by the activity that needs to be completed. Self-efficacy performs the predominant part in situations indicating a direct link to quality of performance to determine the outcomes. Should this not be confirmed, outcome expectations may independently contribute to motivation and behaviour (Bandura, 1989).

The Social Cognitive Theory, indicates goals as the final element (Bandura, 1986). Goals are significant for self-regulation and behaviour. Personal history and background shape individuals' behaviour. By setting goals, individuals organise and guide their behaviour. Goals assist individuals, sustaining behaviour over long periods with active involvement in attaining desired outcomes. Bandura (1986) defines a goal as the determination to engage in an activity or to affect a future outcome. A goal represents a person's desire for a future outcome, evaluating own behaviour in achieving the outcome.

Thompson (2012); Diegelman (2001); Amaya (2011); Schaub (2005); Lent (2008); Tokar (2007) and Brown (2011) used the SCCT as a basis for their research. Thompson (2012) and Tokar (2007) state that the SCCT relates to teachers' personal input and background, contributing to the learners' learning experiences. These learning experiences are often a direct source of teachers' resilience (self-efficacy) and outcome expectations. The SCCT focuses on interactions between the teachers' cognitive processes and their environment (Thompson, 2012).

Within the SCCT, an individual's (teacher) personality contributes directly to the formation of the relevant learning process (Tokar, 2007). Schaub (2005) mentions

that more research must be conducted on personality traits, concerning the learning process. (Brown, 2011; Lent, 2008 & Diegelman, 2001) refer to achieving goals as working towards a common goal in low resource schools, enabling teachers to participate in personal and culturally valued activities assisting in providing life structure and meaning to learners. Brown (2011) states, if individuals (teachers and learners) work towards a goal and achieve it, the positive outcomes will allow more challenging goals to be set, continuing the cycle of learning. The SCCT indicates that general cognitive ability academic or work skills that individuals (teachers) develop through experiences, influences work performance (engagement), directly through self-efficacy and outcome expectations (Brown, 2011).

Self-efficacy refers to learners and teachers' confidence in their own abilities to complete a task. Outcome expectations indicate the engagement in these tasks. Lent (2008) states individuals (teachers) with stronger self-efficacy beliefs, are likely to hold more optimistic expectations in obtaining the work outcomes they value. Self-efficacy and outcome expectations relate positively and significantly to express interest in the task (Diegelman, 2001). The more engaged the teacher is, the more successful the outcome will be.

Amaya (2011) refers to applying the SCCT to a worksite. In this research, the worksite refers to low resources schools. Their environment is instrumental, assisting them to cope and to continue assisting learners to achieve their maximum potential. Creating a positive learning environment is crucial for interest creation, goal setting and implementing actions to achieve goals.

Lent (2008) draws on Bandura (1997) and Lent (2002) by expanding on the concept of self-efficacy. Self-efficacy refers to personal beliefs on the ability to perform the necessary behaviours to achieve work-related goals (goal self-efficacy) and to perform tasks require for success in the work environment (task self-efficacy) (Lent, 2008). Researchers wanted to expand on the SCCT by including job satisfaction in the theory (Bandura, 1986).

Lent (2006) states that the SCCT comprises three segmental models of vocational educational interest, identified as, development, choice and performance (Bandura,

1986). By including job satisfaction as part of this theory, the link between self-efficacy and outcome expectations will be stronger. The SCCT provides a causal link between self-efficacy and interest, where changes in confidence leads to changes in interest (Bonitz, 2009). Experimental manipulations of confidence resulted in changes of interest, providing support for the SCCT model's links (Bonitz, 2009). Brown (2011) states that the SCCT is concerned with pathways through which abilities affect performance. More capable teachers develop a stronger self-efficacy belief, producing positive outcome expectations.

Teachers' beliefs in their self-efficacy, affect their orientation towards the educational process and specific instructional activities (Bandura, 1986). Teachers holding high efficacy, are more engaged and express higher levels of organising and planning (Allinder, 1994). Judge (2004) states that personal resources are functional in achieving goals, protecting the teacher from threats and stimulating personal growth and potential.

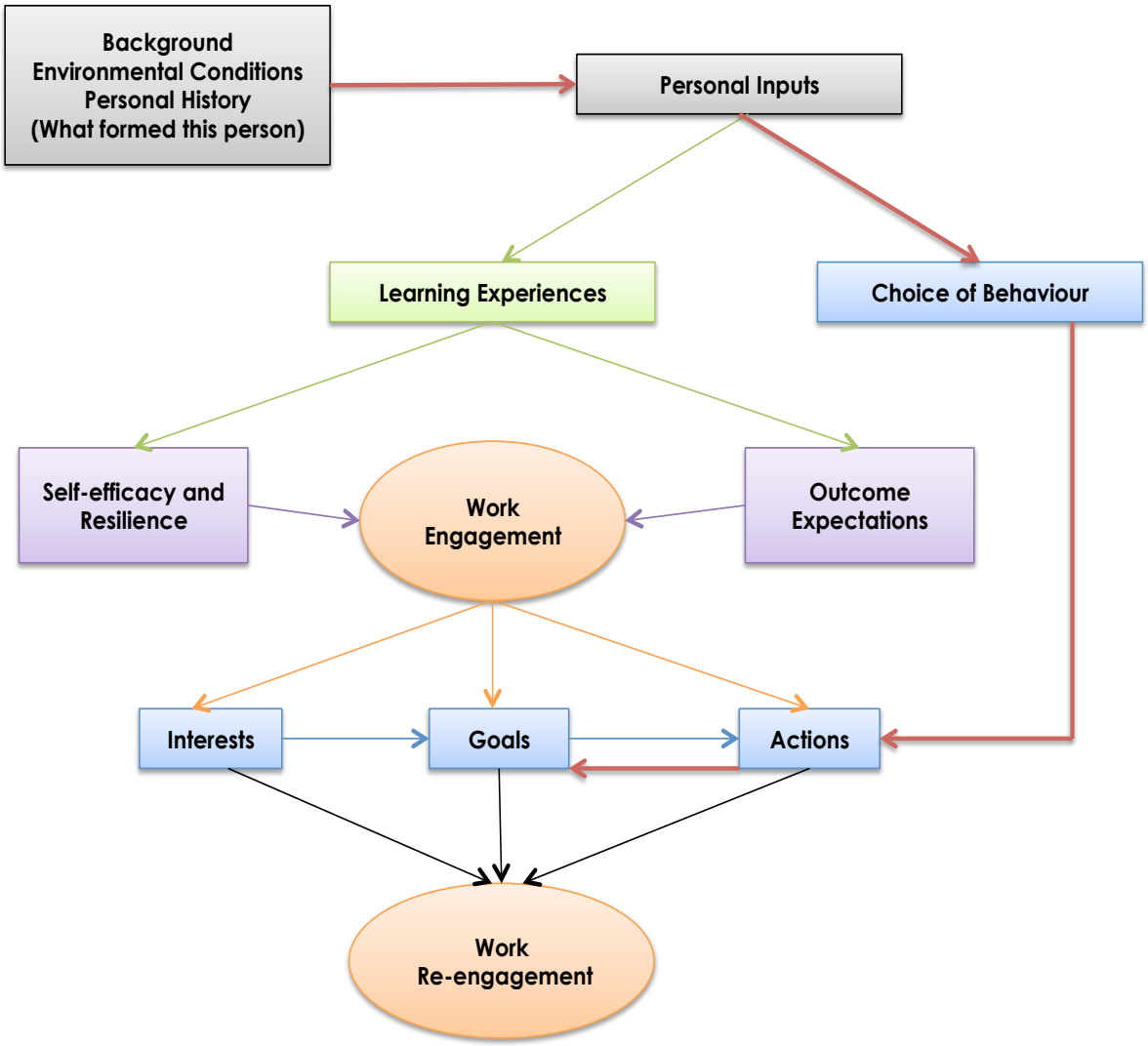
According to Xanthopoulou (2009) the reason for this is that the higher the personal resource (resilience), the more positive the individuals' self-regard. Teachers' professional development can be achieved by formal and informal learning opportunities. These opportunities deepen and extend teachers' professional competence, including knowledge, beliefs, motivation and self-regulatory skills (Kunter, 2007). Formal learning opportunities refer to graduate courses. Informal learning opportunities refer to book reading, classroom observations of other educators, collaborative activities between teachers and study groups (Richter, 2011).

Guglielmi (2012) agrees with the SCCT, stating that personal resources determine how employees (teachers) perceive the work environment.

2.6.1 Link between the Social Cognitive Career Theory and this research

After reviewing the SCCT according to Lent (1994), it is important to establish how the SCCT relates to this research. The important factor included in this research is the concept of work engagement and how it fits into the SCCT as described by Lent (1994). Figure 2.2 indicates this relationship.

Figure 2.2: Link between the Social Cognitive Career Theory and this research



The link between the SCCT and this research is indicated as follows: The participant (teacher) entertains certain attributes (personal inputs), influenced by the participant's background, environmental conditions, and personal history. These personal inputs influence the participants' behaviour. A direct link exists between the personal inputs of the participant and their choice of behaviour (Lent, 1994). This choice of behaviour reflects in the participant's actions to achieve the set goals. The participants' behaviour directly links to the goal setting element in the SCCT. The red arrows in Figure 2.2 indicate this process. From these personal inputs, the participants form their own learning experience and lived experiences, forming part of the participant's past.

These learning experiences allow the participant to form certain beliefs, maintaining the confidence to organise and execute actions (indicated by the green arrow in Figure 2.2, from learning experiences to self-efficacy). The participants' confidence and belief in themselves refers to self-efficacy and resilience. Creativity, improvisation and initiatives (components of resilience) link to work engagement forming part of self-efficacy (indicated by purple arrow from self-efficacy to work engagement). The thought process follows when confronted with a situation, especially in low resource schools. Work engagement is described as an affective-motivational, work-related state of fulfilment in employees, characterised by vigour, dedication and absorption (Schaufeli, 2004).

The teachers' work engagement indicates an important link between self-efficacy and outcome expectations. The participant is therefore capable to expect outcomes in situations through their own learning experiences (indicated by purple arrow from outcome expectations to work engagement). Both self-efficacy and outcome expectation relate to work engagement concerning the participants' belief to fully engage with learners in the learning environment by creating learner interest, setting achievable goals and ensuring that proper action is taken to achieve the pre-determined goals (indicated by blue arrows between interest, goals and actions). Within low resource schools, teachers need to set goals ensuring learning occurs and that learners reach their maximum potential. These goals need to be set for the teachers and the learners, ensuring working towards a common goal.

The participants' personal inputs indicate behaviour and choices. Self-efficacy and outcome expectation is linked through work engagement ensuring the interests, goals and actions of the participant are met (indicated by the orange arrows from work engagement to interest, goals and action in Figure 2.2). Goal achievement reflects the choices the participants' choices. Feedback on these goals, interests and actions keeps the teacher re-engaged in the process (indicated by the black arrows between interest, goals and actions to re-engagement). Figure 2.2 indicates the link between the SCCT Lent (1994) and work engagement.

2.7 Summary of this chapter

The aim of this study was to locate teacher resilience within the Social Cognitive Career Theory. The study indicated the context of impoverished and resources constraint schools. Teachers' work engagement, relating to self-efficacy was considered. This process developed the theoretical lens, using the SCCT as basis, providing the background for the research. Chapter 3 indicates the research design.

CHAPTER 3:
THE RESEARCH PROCESS

3.1 Introduction

This study aims to indicate understanding how resilience operates in teachers' professions daily, in resources constraint schools. The research considers the possibility for teachers to succeed in providing quality education, considering a constant challenge regarding resources scarcity. Teachers' own construction of the situation and challenges is perceived. The research uses a qualitative design with interpretivism as lens. A resources constraint school is purposefully selected for the study. A case study serves as the basis for the research.

The success of a case study depends on the degree to which data saturation is secured, and on the multiplicity of data collecting techniques. The basis for the data collection indicates individual interviews, supplemented by observation and documentary analysis. The timeframe of this research, the criteria ensuring the quality of the data collected, and the role of the researcher are discussed. This chapter concludes, discussing the ethical consideration adhered to.

3.2 Paradigmatised perspective on this research

A paradigm can be described as a set of assumptions or beliefs on fundamental aspects of reality, establishing a global-view, addressing fundamental assumptions on faith, such as beliefs on reality, the relationship between knower and known and assumptions on methodologies (Nieuwenhuis, 2016a).

To select a paradigm the following questions needs to be answered:

- The ontology question - What is the nature of the reality?
- The epistemology question – How to recognise the reality?
- The methodology question – How can knowledge of the reality be obtained?

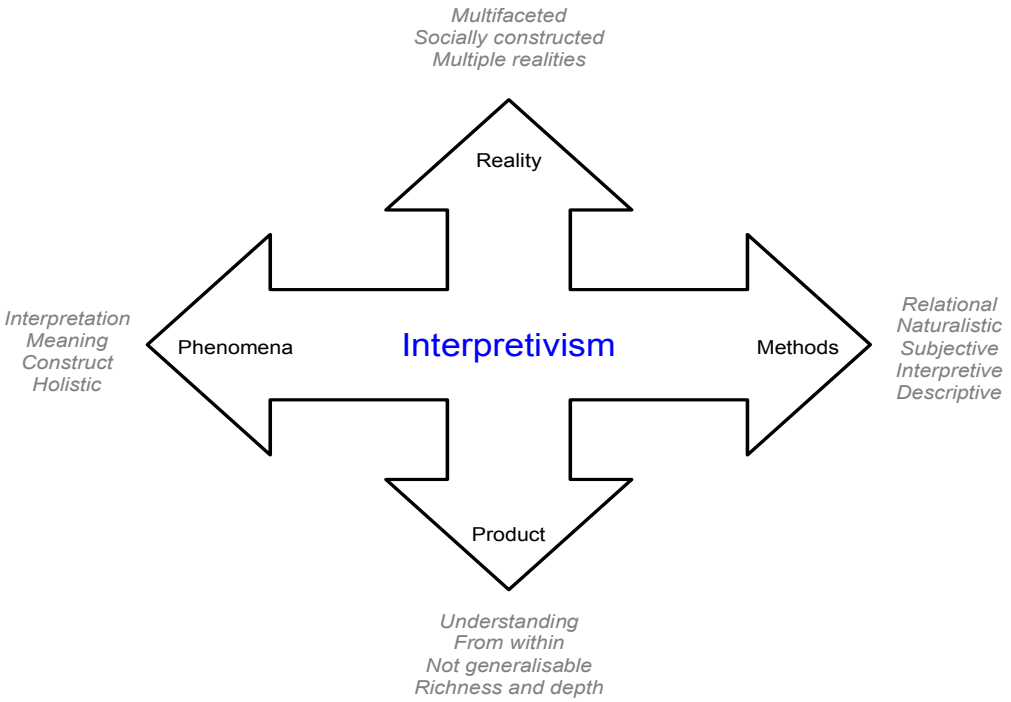
Once these questions are answered, the research should be able to identify the subjective reality, interpret the reality and interact to understand the reality. The interpretivist paradigm is selected to conduct the research.

3.2.1 Interpretivism

Researchers describe interpretivism as a paradigm where knowledge is socially constructed by individuals actively partaking in the research process, making sense of the complex world of experiences from the viewpoint of various individuals (Stringer, 2009; Cohen, 2011; Schwandt, 2000; Farzanfar, 2005 & Tuli, 2010). An interpretivist approach allows the provision of valuable insights into social structures and human behaviour. A flexible and open-minded approach can be adopted to capture the social constructs central to this research. This paradigm was selected for this research as it is based on subjectivity and findings with the participants. The focus is to understand the findings and not to predict the findings. The literature indicates the interpretivist research paradigm as a close link to the constructivism paradigm. The focus remains understanding the participants and how they provide meaning to their social construct and environment.

Adopting an interpretivist paradigm enabled constructing an in-depth understanding where the participants understand their personal experience. Figure 3.1 represents a summary on the concept of interpretivism in this study.

Figure 3.1: Concept of Interpretivism



Source: (Maree, 2013) p. 61

According to Nieuwenhuis (2016b), interpretive studies attempt to understand the phenomena through the meaning individuals assign to them. To retain the integrity of the phenomena being investigated, efforts are made to understand individuals' observations (Cohen, 2011). The interpretivist paradigm is directed at understanding the phenomenon from an individual's perspective, investigating interaction amongst individuals and historical and cultural contexts which individuals inhabit (Creswell, 2009). Farzanfar (2005) mentions that in this paradigm the inquiry is interpretive and the purpose of the inquiry is to understand a phenomenon, not to generalise to a population. Schwandt (2000) states that the goal of interpretivism is to understand the 'lived experiences' from the view of those who live it daily. Cohen (2011) mentions that the interpretivist approach focuses on action; 'behaviour-with-meaning' and the actual intentional behaviour of the person.

Stringer (2009) indicates that in an interpretivism paradigm and the perceptions of individuals are important; human action is an essential component. According to Tuli (2010) researchers indicating an interpretivist paradigm are realists since they apply to real-world situations as they unfold naturally, inclined to be non-manipulative, unobtrusive and non-controlling. Neuman (2003) in contradiction, states that some researchers embrace human behaviour as patterned and regular. Interpretivist researchers view such patterns as being created through evolving meaning systems and individuals generate with social interaction.

Merriam (1998) cautions that since the interpretivist paradigm place a strong emphasis on better understanding of the world through first-hand experience, truthful reporting and quotations of actual conversations for the insiders (participants) perspective, are crucial.

The interpretivist paradigm occupies shortcomings though. Rolfe (2006) indicates, reality is subjective and it differs from person to person, implying that participants cannot be expected to observe the same interpretations indicated by the researcher. Berliner (2002) states that some policy makers are reluctant to fund interpretivist research because it produces highly contextualised qualitative data, indicating the data devises limited transferability and cannot be generalised. Cohen (2007) mentions that the interpretivist paradigm often neglects external structural forces,

influencing human behaviour. Participants might not understand the forces, guiding their actions.

Based on the understanding of the literature on interpretivist paradigm, I need to adhere to certain stipulations to obtain functional data for this research. For my research, I had to create a trustworthy relationship with my participants. I achieved this by listening attentively and digitally record the participant's response, enabling capturing their exact words in the transcription process. The participant conversely, trusted me with the information and beliefs that the information provided would be recorded and transcribed in the way the participant intended it to be. The participants completed a basic information sheet (Annexure B), enabling me to obtain background information and other relevant data before commencement of the research process. In relation to this research, I utilised the interpretivism design to establish how the participants' ability to construct their own reality assisted them to continue teaching in a school with low resources, coping with daily challenges and their reliance on their own resilience. It was important for me to establish an easy and trusting relationship with each participant. I informed the participants regarding the scope of the research before conducting the study.

This research attains certain assumptions on the effect of resilience during work engagement in creating positive learning environments. I needed to establish a trusting and open relationship with the participants to determine the validity of these assumptions. The participants needed to feel comfortable with me; allowing them to share how they conduct their lessons in these low resource schools, ensuring that learning continues, through the creation of a positive learning environment.

In this research, it is important to consider that these participants devise their own lived experiences and relationships, influencing their behaviour and conduct in the classroom. Goodson (2001) indicates, this leads to the teacher developing a teacher education philosophy, embracing a specific professional identity, influencing their work and engagement. I need to fully understand participants' experience to fully comprehend their actions.

The interpretivist design allowed me to understand and observe the participants' behaviour. During the interview, the participants could have disclosed how they manage a situation in the classroom. During the observation, I could observe if the participant handled the situation mentioned, in the way described during the interview. This allowed me to ensure that the data collected was authentic and relevant to my research. My focus remained to understand the findings through the behaviour of the participants in the classroom. I could not predict any findings. After reviewing the paradigm, I addressed the research approach.

3.3 Research approach

I selected a case study as my research approach, in conducting this study.

3.3.1 Case study

Cohen (2007) describes a case study as a unique example of real individuals in real situations, enabling readers to understand ideas more clearly, and not simply representing them with abstract theories or principles. Bromley (1994) refers to a case study as a systematic inquiry into an event or a set or related event, aiming to describe and explain the phenomenon of interest. Yin (1984) defines a case study as an empirical inquiry investigating a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context. In the real-life context, the boundaries between the phenomenon and the context are not clearly evident, indicate multiple sources of evidence. From an interpretivist perspective, the characteristics of case studies is that they strive towards a comprehensive (holistic) understanding of how participants relate and interact with each other in a specific situation and how they sense the phenomenon under study (Cohen 2007).

Cohen (2007) further states that case studies can establish cause and effect. He indicates strength in these individuals, are they observed in real context, recognising that context is powerful, determining causes and effects. In-depth understanding is required to do justice to the case. The statement is relevant to this research. According to Stake (2000), researchers can choose their own case study, allowing them to investigate thoroughly and understand the phenomenon of interest.
Hitchcock (1995) argues three valid shortcomings of case studies:

- Case studies are set in temporal, geographical, organisational, institutional and other contexts enabling boundaries to be drawn around the case.
- Case studies can be defined, referring to characteristics expressed by individuals and groups involved.
- Case studies can be defined by participants' roles and functions.

I have addressed these shortcomings by ensuring that the school and the participants selected to participate in this study are relevant. I wanted to understand the meaning provided by the participants to the circumstances, therefore temporal and geographic shortcomings did not indicate a disadvantage to this study. I did not want to generalise the findings of this study, therefore the characteristics of the participants provided a clear understanding of their circumstances. The role and functions of these participants indicated an importance understanding their behaviour within the circumstances.

Due to the nature of this research, I needed to find an appropriate school that met the criteria of the research question. I considered a school environment where resources were low and participants (teachers), actively engaged in their classrooms, creating positive learning environments. I found these schools are normally located in geographical areas removed from urban cities.

In this interpretivist qualitative case study, the school environment selected is situated in Gauteng, South Africa. The school is located next to an industrial area. The school is within walking distance from an informal settlement (rural area) and an established formal settlement indicated within 7km from the school. The school offers exposure to an agricultural environment where learners are exposed to farm animals, adding to a nurturing environment. The main reason for selecting this school environment was because of its constraints and low school resources. The school is an independent school and follows CAPS as guideline.

Castro, 2010; Sullivan, 2012; Ebersöhn, 2012; Mukeredzi, 2013; Mafora, 2013 indicate a similar understanding of the term 'rural schools globally'. These areas are geographically isolated from urban areas and big cities. Sullivan (2012) further mentions that these schools comprise poor small to medium communities. They deal

with numerous hardship and despair concerning low-resources, illiteracy, unemployment, underprivileged infrastructure, little to no services, violence, communication and health issues. The communities, without proper infrastructure, build the schools in these areas (Ebersöhn, 2012). These schools lack access to basic facilities and services, such as clean water, electricity and telephone connectivity.

Mukeredzi (2013) and Mafora (2013) explain that a community develops in a specific area; indicating groups of individuals start living together in the same area. As the community grows the need arises to educate the children in the area. The community builds a school, indicating a shortage of teachers. This remains a challenge, and is of great concern to the community. These rural schools lack access to available resources compared to urban schools, lacking support from the Department of Education. This indicates that these schools will not receive the same services such as the provision of textbooks as the department does not provide similar services. The socio-economic circumstances in these areas and schools leave these communities behind and they must manage with the resources available.

Castro (2010) states that rural communities mainly comprise low-income households and a culturally diverse population. It is understood from this that the communities unable to attract teachers through offering great incentives and good working conditions. It is usually teachers from these communities or the surrounding areas, teaching at these rural schools. These teachers are completely isolated from the teaching community and the Department of Education, lacking support access from district officials to assist with learning and teaching programmes.

In some instances, these schools are private schools. They are totally reliant on school fees from parents and donations from businesses in the area or the community. Due to the location of these schools, the funds are limited and the resources are low.

The learners attending this school, mainly reside within walking distance from the school, though there are learners who commute by bus and taxis. The case study school building presents a double storey house (Photo 3.1) of which only the bottom

floor is utilised as classrooms. The upstairs section of the house is unsafe since the balcony has no railing, indicating unsafety. The classrooms are dark, cold and mouldy and the only light indicates some sunlight. Electricity is present, but the bills are not paid regularly and therefore the service is at times discontinued. A generator was installed, but the running cost is high, therefore it is not often used. Toilets are available for the learners and teachers but funds are lacking for toilet paper and other sanitary and cleaning materials.

Photo 3.1: School building

The property on which the house is situated is not maintained, therefore the grass is dying and the ground is dry. There is water on the property but due to the lack of funds, water consumption is kept to a minimum. There are livestock on the property, cows, an ostrich, ducks, geese, and chickens. The condition of these animals is shocking. Due to the lack of funds these animals do not receive enough food and water and no veterinary service are available, should they get sick. This also creates a health risk for learners and teachers on the premises.

The school participates in school sports and compete with other schools in the area. Sport facilities are non-existent. There is no grass, so the learners partake in sport activities in the sand. The soccer field (Photo 3.4) is just sand and the soccer posts were created by the teachers from tree branches and plastic pipes. The netball court

(Photo 3.3) was not maintained; therefore the surface is cracked and unsafe for training and matches. Compulsory sport periods are allocated twice a week and the teachers need to coach these learners. The teachers are not properly qualified to coach sport and no medical facilities are available. During matches at the school, cool drinks and chips are provided to the visiting team only, due to cost constraints the visitors receive the treat, not the hosting school.

Photo 3.2: Panoramic view of school

Photo 3.3: Netball court

Photo 4.4: Soccer field

The classrooms are cold and dark (Photo 3.5). Due to the lack of electricity, lights cannot be switch on and teachers rely on natural light. The school desks and chairs are limited and some are broken and cannot be utilised. In some classes, up to four learners share a desk. The textbooks are outdated and limited. Learners need to share textbooks. The learners lack their own stationery. Available stationery is kept in the classroom by the teachers and is shared when necessary. The teachers borrow stationery from each other to conduct a lesson. Learners have only one notebook for all their subjects. Some teachers use recycled copy paper for learners to do exercises on.

Posters in the classroom (Photo 3.6) are custom-made by the teachers. The paint on the walls of the classrooms is peeling (Photo 3.6). In some classrooms teachers initiated book corners but there are no books for learners to read, only outdated magazines (Photo 3.7).

Photo 3.5: Inside the classroom

Photo 3.6: Classroom wall

Photo 3.7: Book corner

The criteria for the pre-selected school for this research were met. The geographical situation of the school and the lack of resources needed to create an environment conducive of learning.

3.3.2 Procedure for conducting a case study

Several procedures are available for conducting case studies. I relied on the following guidelines offered to conduct my case study. The following key questions are offered as criteria, establishing a quality case study (Stake, 1995; 2000):

- Is the case study approach appropriate for this research? I have a clear identifiable case with boundaries and I seek an understanding from participants on how they provide education in a constraint resource school.
- Identify the case. This case study involves five participants. Each participant contributes various elements to their classroom. The way they engage in their classroom varies. The only similarity is the resource constraints, applicable to all participants. This case study indicated various perspectives to the problem.
- Is the researcher using different data collection methods? I utilised various methods of data collection. I included Interviews, observations, audio-visual recording and my research journal.

- Is the data analysis holistic of the entire case or embedded of a specific aspect of the case? I have that this case study embedded in specific aspects of the case. I focused on themes in analysing the data, not for generalising, but to understand the complexity of the case. I identified some general issues experiences by all the participants and compared participants' experiences, improving understanding the circumstances.
- What was learned from this case study? I obtained a better understanding of how teachers (participants) operate daily, creating positive learning environments for learners in a resources constraint school.

After reviewing the research approach and justifying my selection of a case study to conduct my research, I reviewed the research design.

3.4 Research design

3.4.1 Qualitative research design

Creswell (2007) describes the qualitative research approach as an inquiry process of understanding where the researcher develops a complex, holistic picture, analyses words, reports detailed views from participants and conducts the study in a natural setting. In this research, the natural setting referred to the low resource school where I conducted the research. The characteristics of a qualitative research process links directly to this study (Creswell, 2007):

- Natural setting. Using a qualitative approach, I collected data from an operating school in a real-life setting, enabling me to obtain information for the participants directly in their classroom environments.
- Researcher as a key element. As the researcher, I could collect the data directly from the participants and fully understood their daily circumstances. I could verify data, using various instruments.
- Multiple sources of data. In this research, I utilised interviews, observations, audio-visual recordings and my research journal to collect data. This allowed me to obtain a clear understanding of the participants' daily circumstances.

- Participants' meaning. The phenomenon of my research was from the participant's perspective. I needed to understand the meaning the participants wanted to convey and not my own assumptions.
- Emergent design. The nature of this research was emergent, this indicates I needed to learn from and understand the participants' experiences.
- Theoretical lens. I used an interpretivist approach in this research.
- Holistic account. My research aimed to provide an in-depth understanding of the participants and the environments.

Wicks (2006) states that qualitative research approaches focus on the way individuals interpret their experiences and the society in which they live. I interviewed and observed the participants in their natural setting allowing them to share their experiences. Indications were that the participants would share their daily experiences in the classroom (the environment) with me.

Qualitative research usually involves small numbers of participants; therefore, findings cannot be generalised to other participants or settings. Other academic researchers or policymakers might not take the findings seriously. Findings cannot be generalised but they focus on the uniqueness within the context observed that the strength of a qualitative approach lies in the richness of exploring and describing the specific phenomenon studied. The findings are also easily influenced by the researcher's personal bias. A first-time researcher should at least have one team member with some experience in the field, performing as mentor. I conducted cross-case comparison and analysis to ensure the data obtained is relevant. I needed to ensure that the interpretation of the data is free of own personal bias and could use the member checking to avoid personal bias.

3.5 Research methodology

3.5.1 Selections of participants

Sampling refers to the process used to select a portion of the population for a research. Research samples for a qualitative case study are usually small. The reason for the small sample, is that interviewing, transcription and analysis are time-consuming and expensive activities (Goodson, 2001). Onwuegbuzie (2007) states, sampling is the initial step in the qualitative research process. Qualitative

investigations involve small samples. The choice of the sample size and the sampling method are important considerations. It determines to what extent the researcher will be exposed concerning time and money. In this research, I used purposive selection. I decided to include all the teachers from a particular school in my research. The total number of participants indicated five.

Purposive selection can be defined as selecting participants according to preselected criteria relevant to a research question. Purposive selection is also known as judgmental, selective or subjective sampling. It relies on the judgment of the researcher concerning selecting the participants. The main goal of purposive selection is to focus on a specific characteristic of the population the researcher is interested in, identifying participants who can answer the research questions.

By including all the teachers at the selected school, I could determine specific characteristics that these teachers shared. The teachers' working experience is important, especially in constraint resources schools. The working experience, regarding this research, refers to the years the participants were teaching in low resource schools; it does not refer to working experience in the teaching profession. I needed participants (teachers) with two to five years teaching experience in a low resource school. According to Bumgartner (2013), teachers with teaching experience between zero to five years, express higher intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction than older, more experienced teachers. TNTP (2012) states that teachers with 20 year's teaching experience are not more effective than those with five years' experience. All the teachers at the selected school indicated less than five years' experience in a resource constraint school.

Another requirement was that the participants had to communicate in English. The English language is indicated as the instruction language in most schools. In this research, the sample (the participants) did not represent an entire population but focussed on answering a specific research question relating to creating a positive learning environment in a poorly resourced school.

The partnership between the researcher and the school (and its participants) had to be built on trust and understanding. It was my duty to inform the participants of the

scope and purpose of the research. The participants needed a clear understanding of what were expected from them before they considered participating. In turn, I also needed information from the participants. The participants completed a basic information sheet to determine if they met the predetermined criteria (Coetzee, 2013).

The predetermined criteria related to the working experience (between two and five years) in a low resource school, and the ability of the participants to communicate in English. The importance of the English language referred to the participants' ability to convey a learning instruction to learners in their classrooms, ensuring that when the participants share their life history with me, they could accurately reflect on their experiences I could include all the teachers as participants in the sample on the basis of judgment, possessing the characteristics being sought. I could build up a sample that was satisfactory, meeting the research's specific needs.

Table 3.1: Participants

Participant (Pseudonym)	*Sex*	*Age*	*Total teaching experience at time of study*	*Teaching experience in case study school*	*Number of learners in grades*	*Grade taught in low resource school*
1. Sunflower	Female	27	2 years	2 years	22	Grade R
2. Daisy	Female	49	26 years	1 year	15	Grade 1
3. St Joseph	Male	49	4 years	2 years	*	All grades
4. Daffodil	Female	35	11 years	2 years	Grade 2 12 Grade 3 13	Grade 2 & 3 combined class
5. Rose	Female	32	6 years	0,5 years	6	Pre-schoolers

* The school offers grade 1 to grade 7. St Joseph teaches entrepreneurial skills to all grades as well as other subjects for grade 4 to grade 7. From grade 4 to grade 7 the

numbers of the learners decrease drastically due to learners relocating to other areas. The total number for grade 4 to grade 7 is 25 learners.

As indicated in the abovementioned table the participants hold several years teaching experience but their teaching experience in a low resource school are limited. I wanted participants with between zero and five years' experience in a low resource school and all participants met this criterion. Three of the participants, Daisy, St Joseph and Rose followed alternative careers before selecting teaching as a profession. Daisy was previously involved with school administration. Daisy and Daffodil were born in Zimbabwe and completed their education there. Most of the participants indicated that they completed studies in education but the qualifications could not be verified.

3.6 Data collection methods

Qualitative research indicates the researcher as the primary instrument in the data collection process. Mayan (2001) states, the researcher obtains direct access to reality through interpretation, using interviews and observations. According to Creswell (2008), there are a few principles to be aware of in a qualitative data collection plan:

- General and suitable questions must be used to obtain the desired reactions from participants.
- A small number of participants are used to collect data from.
- Various types of methods are used to collect data, such as interviews, observations, documents and audio-visual materials.

I used interviews and observations as my data collection methods in this research. I recorded (audio and visual) all my interviews and observations to allow myself to review it when analysing my data. I kept a researcher's journal in which I made notes of my experiences while interviewing and observing.

3.6.1 Interviews as data collection method

Nunan (1992) describes an interview as method to obtain data (information) from one person by another person by way of a personal meeting (one-on-one). Punch (2009)

states that an interview is the most prominent data collection strategy to understand individual's perceptions, to define certain situations and to better understand their construct of reality. To understand other persons' construction of reality, it would be good to question them in such a way that they could respond in their own terms and in a depth, addressing the rich context such as the substance of their meaning (Jones, 1985). An interview is "a conversation, with the purpose is to gather descriptions of the life-world of the interviewee" regarding the interpretation of meanings of the "described phenomena" (Kvale, 1996).

Seidman (2006) states that the root of interviewing is an interest in understanding the experiences of individuals and the meaning of that experience to them. Interviewing provides access to the context of individuals' behaviour and thereby a way for researchers to understand the meaning of that behaviour (Seidman, 2006). Cohen (2007) adds that interviewing is "a valuable method for exploring the construction and negotiation of meaning in a natural setting." Barbour (2005) identifies the following crucial concepts researchers should consider when using interviews for data collection:

- Power relation. This refers to the interrelated power within the interview. The power might emerge from the interviewer. The researcher (interviewer) should therefore extent the interview to balance the relationship between the parties. In this study I took lead by starting of the interview making the participant feel relaxed and comfortable. I attempted to keep the interview on track in order to find relevant data to contribute to the study.
- Value. This refers to the interview itself and the value of the interviewees' words. I attempted the questions asked to be relevant to the study. I needed the participants to feel that their contributions are adding value to my study as well as value to them as individuals.
- Trust. This refers to the extent to which the research guarantees objectivity, accuracy and honesty. I was important for me to ensure that the participants trust me as an individual. I ensured them of the aim of this study and the contributions it will add to them especially in the classroom.
- Meaning. This refers to the meaning the interviewer intends to convey. During the meetings prior to conducting the research and during the conducting of the

research I ensured that the participants had a clear understanding what this study entailed.

- Wording. This refers to the wording of the question asked by the interviewer. The shorter the question asked the longer the answer will be and the better the interview. I have paid attention to the type of questions and the manner in which the questions were asked to ensure that the participants had clarity when answering the questions.

Gill (2008) identify three fundamental types of research interviews:

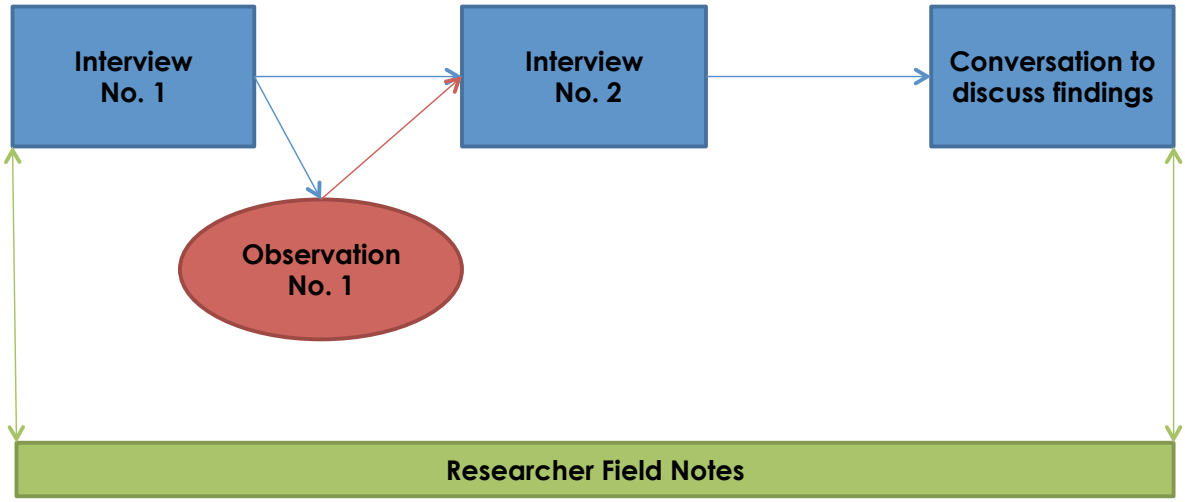
- Structured interviews. These indicate verbally administrated questionnaires. A list of predetermined questions is asked, little or no variations are allowed and no scope exists for follow up questions. These interviews do not allow for in-depth responses.
- Semi-structured interviews. These interviews comprise several key questions assisting defining the areas to be explored. It allows the interviewer and interviewee to diverge to pursue an idea or response in more detail. These interviews allow for in-depth responses.
- Unstructured interviews. These interviews do not reflect any preconceived theories or ideas, and are performed with little or no administration.

Mason (2002) lists some of the strengths of qualitative interviews (sometimes absent), arguing that through them we can explore:

- The textures and weave of everyday life.
- The understanding, experiences and imaginings of the participants.
- The understanding of social processes, institutions and relationships.
- The significance of the meaning the participants generate.

For this research my data collections process is depicted in Figure 3.2. I conducted two interviews in my data collection process. Both interviews were semi-structured.

Figure 3.2: Visual presentation of data collection process per participant



3.6.1.1 Interview One

Prior to the first interview, I met with the group of participants to inform them on the details of my study and provided assurance on my ethical principles, such as anonymity and confidentiality. By this action, I gave the participants an idea what will be expected from them and increased the likelihood of honesty and transparency. I provided each participant with an informed consent form (Annexure A) pertaining the details of my study. I requested each participant to complete a basic information sheet (Annexure B). After the informed consent form was returned, I arranged suitable times with the participants to conduct the first interview.

The interviews where held at the school in an area free of distractions. By arranging the interviews in an environment (natural setting) familiar to the participants, I ensured that the participants were more relaxed, resulting in more productive interviews. My meeting with the participants prior to the interviews, positively affected the development of the interview. Prior to conducting the actual interview, I familiarised myself with the interview schedule (Annexure C). This ensured that the process is more natural and it did not seem rehearsed. To ensure that each interview was productive I needed to ensure that I was well prepared. To reduce any sense of confusion I prepared by practising the interview schedule with a colleague. I ensured when commencing with the interview, to ask the participants if they were still

prepared to participate in the research. I requested permission to audio record and video record the interview. The most important skill required during the interview process is the ability to listen attentively to what is being said, ensuring that participants can recount their experiences as fully as possible, without any unnecessary interruptions.

It was important for me to display an open and emotional neutral body language during the interviews, by nodding, smiling and making encouraging sounds. When I was unsure what a participant meant or need clarification of what was said, I questioned the participant immediately to avoid confusion. At the end of the interview I expressed appreciation towards the participants for their time and enquired if they would like to add anything. This allowed the participants to make me aware of any issues they felt was important, that I have not dealt with. This allowed in some cases for new, unanticipated information.

All the interviews were audio or video recorded and transcribed verbatim. This allowed for a permanent record of what was verbalised during the interviews and allow protection against bias. The video recordings assisted me to discover the non-verbal demeanour of the participants. I made notes during and after the interviews, which assisted me with my observations and data analysis.

3.6.1.2 Interview Two

Interview two occurred after the classroom observation (Figure 3.2). These interviews also occurred at the school at a time convenient for the participants. I commenced the interview by enquiring whether the participants are still willing to participate in the research and asked their permission to audio or video record the interview. During this interview, I concentrated on participant behaviour in the classroom. I observed these participants and directed questions to understand their actions in the classroom. Some participants (during Interview 1) described certain aspects of their classroom activities but during the classroom observations, I did not experience them practising these activities indicated in Interview 1.

During Interview 2, I obtained a more in-depth understanding of their circumstances within the classroom. The most important part of these interviews was to listen

attentively to what the participants communicated. It was also important for me to stay neutral, avoiding participants to feel uncomfortable during the interview. If any of their responses were not clear, I requested further detail to obtain clarity on the topic. At the end of the interview I showed gratitude for their time and enquired if they would like to add any information. Interview 2 was also audio or video recorded and transcribed verbatim. The video recordings assisted me to discover the non-verbal demeanour of the participants. I made notes during and after the interviews, which assisted me with my data analysis.

3.6.2 Observation as data collection method

Definitions of observation are difficult to find in literature. Gorman (2005) defines observation involving the systematic recording of observable phenomena or behaviour in a natural setting. Observation is a highly flexible form of data collection that can enable the researcher access to the interactions in a social context, yielding systematic records of several forms and context, to complement other kinds of data such as interviews (Simpson 2003). Observations, enables the researcher to collect data on Morrison (1993):

- The physical setting. This refers to the classroom in which the teacher conducts the lesson.
- The human setting. This refers to the characteristics of the participants observed.
- The interactional setting. This refers to the formal, informal, planned, unplanned, verbal and non-verbal interactions.
- The programme setting. This refers to the resources available, the participants teaching styles, the curriculum and the organisation.

The study needs to understand individuals within their natural environment, indicating consistency with most of the indicated definitions.

Patton (1990) suggests, observational data should enable the researcher to enter and understand the described situation. Various types of observations are available. Cohen (2011) describes these observations as:

- Highly structured observations. The researchers know in advance what they are looking for and calculated the observation categories in advance.
- Semi-structures observations. The researchers have an idea of what they are looking for, but will collect data during the actual observation.
- Unstructured observations. The researcher is less clear on what is expected and will purely observe the situation.

Baker (2006) states that observation is a complex data collection method, requiring the researcher to play several roles and use several techniques, including their five senses, to collect data. These roles can be defined as the characteristics posture(s) researchers assume in their relationship with the individuals studied (Baker, 2006). Gold (1958) provides a well-known classification of the researchers' roles in observation:

- The complete participant. The researcher becomes a member of the group and conceals their role as researcher to gain insider knowledge.
- The participant-as-observer. The researcher becomes a member of the group but reveals their role as observer.
- The observer-as-participant. The researcher is not a member of the group, but participates in small group's activities; the role of the researcher is clear.
- The complete observer. The researcher only observes; detached for the group.

For this research, I used observation as a data collection method to observe the participants in their natural environment. I used semi-structured observations. I constructed an observation guideline (Annexure D) prior to the observations. I fully understood that this was merely to be used as a guideline and that my role was as observer participant. I focused on the participants' behaviour in their classroom.

The observation was conducted between Interview 1 and 2. During the first interview, the participant disclosed their actions and behaviour in the classroom. During the observation, I attentively observed these actions and behaviours to establish if the activities participants disclosed during the first interview actually took place in the classroom. During the second interview, I directed questions to fully understand and

to obtain clarity on their actions and behaviours in the classroom.

I commenced the observation, asking the participants if they can provide verbal consent to audio or video record the observation. Once the camera and recorder were set-up I sat at the back of the classroom not to disturb the learners and the participants. I observed the participants according to the observation schedule and made notes. At the end of the observation I express gratitude towards the participants and the learners for allowing me to observe their lesson. All the observations recorded, were transcribed verbatim for data analysis purposes. This allowed for a permanent record of observations and provided bias protection. The video recordings assisted me to discover the non-verbal demeanour of the participants in the classroom and their interaction with their learners.

I fully understand that the observations varied from participant to participant since each participant is different. Participants were observed in their classroom environment. The focus of these observations was to establish if the information shared during the first interview, reflects the classroom practices. I also observed the participant's actions to establish how the participant creates a positive learning environment. The focus remained the participant's utilisation of resources, and how they use creativity, initiative and improvisation to ensure learning.

3.6.3 Researchers' reflective journal.

Ortlipp (2008) states the researcher must keep a reflective journal and use this journal to note observations in their research, creating experiences, opinions, thoughts and feelings visible, as an acknowledged part of the research process. Boden (2005) proposes that an inexperienced researcher is often unaware of the "muddle, confusion, mistakes, obstacles and errors that constitute the research process. Keeping a reflective journal assists the researcher to align their thought process.

I made notes during both interviews and the observation. I noted participants' reactions to questions and their emotional experiences. I also made notes on the way participants talked about their experiences in the classroom. I wrote down the type of resources the participants used in the classroom and interesting occurrences during

the observed lesson. I noted certain changes in their voice and body language when situations occurred. I paid attention to the words they used to describe certain situations and any noticed hesitation to discuss certain situations. I used the video and audio recording to ensure not missing any behavioural patterns during the interviews and observations. This reflective journal assisted me to better understand my participants and not to confuse and disorganise my study.

3.7 Data analysis

Qualitative data analysis establishes ways participants understand a specific phenomenon by analysing their perceptions, attitudes, understanding, knowledge, values, feelings and experiences to approximate their construction of the phenomenon (Nieuwenhuis, 2016c). Goodson (2001) indicates, the purpose of data analysis is to interpret and understand the information collected by the researcher. Braun (2006) states, no ideal method exists to analyse data. The theoretical framework and the methods should provide the information to the researcher. With qualitative research, the researcher indicates the primary instrument in the data collection process (Engelbrecht, 2016). For this research, I have utilised a thematic data analysis process.

3.7.1 Steps for thematic data analysis

Boyatzis (1998) describes thematic analysis as a method in identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data. Engelbrecht (2016) states that thematic analysis must be indicated as an instrument and not as a method. A cycle process is used when analysing the data, indicating constant movement between data and analysis of the data (Engelbrecht, 2016). Braun (2006) provides steps to use thematic data analysis as an instrument (Table 3.2).

Table 3.2: Steps in thematic analysis

Step	Description	Action
1	Familiarise yourself with your data.	Transcribe the data collected. Read the data actively. Re-read the data. Identify possible patterns while reading.
2	Generate initial codes.	Code interesting characteristics of in all the data. Combine relevant data to each code.
3	Search for themes.	Combine codes to potential themes. Collect all data relevant to the potential themes.
4	Review themes.	Review themes considering codes and entire dataset.
5	Define and name themes.	Analyse data around each theme. Provide clear definitions and names for each theme.
6	Produce a report.	Analyse selected sections referring to research question and literature examples.

Once I completed all the interviews and observations I submitted all the audio and video recordings to a company to transcribe the data. I selected to outsource the transcriptions, due to personal time constraints. I transcribed some of the interviews to familiarise myself with the data (Step 1) and the participant. I perused the transcribed data carefully and compared it with the actual audio and video recordings and my own manual transcriptions. I am satisfied the transcribed data is a true reflection of the data collected in the research process. Following the steps in the thematic analysis process I perused the data carefully and made notes to identify original ideas or patterns. I perused the data again and referred to the original audio and video recording if any statements were unclear. I also perused the video recordings to view any actions and reactions of participants, indicating questions to establish patterns in the participants' behaviour.

During Step 2 of the thematic analysis process, I identified interesting characteristics relating to the study during the perusal of the transcribed data. I notated the characteristic that was repeated and coded (numbered) the characteristic in the transcribed data. I used various coloured highlighters throughout the data set, allocating codes (numbers) to each colour. I continued to 'colour code' all the data collected (interviews and observations) and in my reflective research journal.

Once I completed the highlighting and allocations of codes, I compared the codes to identify possible themes (Step 3). I grouped all relevant codes to a potential theme. Some codes did not seem to fit in anywhere due to their nature. I combined them in a "theme" called "the sock bag" – for me to re-examine once the analysing process was completed to establish possible alternative items.

During Step 4, I reviewed all the transcribed data with the themes. This ensured that I have not missed any relevant themes. I compared all the notes in my reflective journal to the data. I reviewed my "sock bag" items to establish if any of the codes are relevant to the selected themes and allocated them accordingly. The focus of the research remained on resources and positive learning environments, throughout the themes.

I analysed the data within the theme, defined the theme and provided a proper description of the theme as indicated in Step 5. I perused the themes again to ensure there were no gaps and that the themes do not surpass each other. I selected some sections of the data and parts of my reflective journal, referring to my research question and literature, to compile a report (Step 6).

3.8 Quality assurance criteria

If the research is to be considered effective and successful, the data obtained during the study, analyses and the interpretation of the data should be valid, reliable, objective, credible, transferable, dependable, confirmable, authentic and transparent (Kline, 2008 & Schwandt, 2007). Winter (2000) states, validity might be addressed through the honesty, depth, richness and scope of the data, the participants' approach, the extent of triangulation (crystallisation) and the objectivity of the researcher. Cohen (2011) indicates, reliability can be regarded as a match between

what the researchers recorded as data and what occurs in the natural setting being researched, such as a degree of accuracy and comprehensiveness of coverage. Objectivity can be obtained through needing to produce accurate information. The researcher needs to remain objective throughout the study (Cohen, 2011). Credibility will reflect in the prolonged contact and engagement with the participants (Kirk, 1986). The researcher needs to focus on the credibility of the data by spending adequate time with the participants to obtain a clear picture of the participants. Using various data collection methods in this research, indicate there will be more credibility links to the study (Nieuwenhuis, 2016d). The findings obtained must be transferable, indicating other researchers should be able to utilise the findings as a basis for further research (Hoepfl, 1997). There must be a proper audit trail provided, ensuring dependability of the data and findings and confirmability if any other researchers would indicate utilising this study for further research (Lincoln, 1985). The data and the findings must be authentic, indicating all the data collected must be part of the current research and the findings must be based on this research (Hipps, 1993). The information obtained must be transparent ensuring all data are being reflected accurately (Lincoln, 1985). All information must be confirmable, ensuring the reflexivity of the researcher (Cohen, 2011).

I needed to ensure all data collected from the participant reflects the true meaning and understanding of what the participant intended to share, when the data were analysed and interpreted. Due to the nature of this research the participants became co-researchers and therefore the participants were involved when I interpreted the data, ensuring the true meaning was reflected. I used member-checking, ensuring the validity and reliability of the interpretations.

Denzin (2005) states that attention must be provided to the following dimensions to increase trustworthiness (reliability) in a qualitative study, such as credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. Agar (1993), argues that in a qualitative collection the intensive personal involvement and in-depth responses of individuals secure a sufficient level of validity and reliability. The validity of qualitative designs includes the degree to which the interpretations and concepts are used, have mutual meaning to both the participant and the researcher. Merriam (1998) classifies six strategies to ensure internal validity in qualitative research, such as

crystallisation, member check, long-term observation, peer examination, collaborative research and researcher bias.

In this research, I combined various strategies and dimensions to ensure the quality of the data collected.

3.8.1 Credibility

According to De Vos (2011) to increase the credibility of a study, the transcription of data must be done with care and accuracy to ensure that unnecessary mistakes are avoided. Transcription of data is a complex task and more than one way exists to complete the task (Oliver, 2005). I submitted all my data to be transcribed by an independent party to avoid bias and reviewed all the recordings (video and voice) to ensure that transcriptions are a true reflection of the data. To ensure credibility, I relied on various data collection methods (Nieuwenhuis, 2016d). In this research, I collected data through interviews, observations and field notes in the form of a reflective journal. By using various data collection methods, I could verify data collected. This contributes more credibility to the data collected. To ensure credibility of the data, I was required to observe the participants over a period (Kirk, 1986). This aspect is not always possible due to the availability of the participants and time constraints. According to Nieuwenhuis (2016e), a strategy of crystallisation will add credibility to the data and analysis of the data. I was able to observe the same patterns arising, adding trustworthiness to my research.

3.8.2 Transferability

Transferability of a research can be assessed concerning the usefulness and appropriateness in other settings, with various topics and for a range of potential users (Burchett, 2012). Due to the nature of this research and the small sample size, the dimension of transferability indicates a limitation. The findings of this research cannot be generalised; it is possible though, that similar studies may be replicated in other resource constraint schools. Some researchers might consider the findings for their own research and therefore the findings might be transferable. As the dimension of confirmability links to transferability, some aspects of the findings may be transferable in other studies. This transferable and confirmability would depend on the judgement of the researcher who wants to use the findings.

3.8.3 Dependability

Dependability refers to the stability of findings over time. Research results would be the same were the study replicated the same to similar participants in similar context (Bitsch, 2005). To enable me to ensure the data is dependable, I followed a strategy of member checking. Member checking is defined as a quality control process by which the researcher seeks to improve the accuracy, credibility and validity of what is being recorded during the research process (Barbour, 2001). During the final conversation, the participants had access to all the data collected and was provided the opportunity to ensure that the data is true and reflects their actual intention. I also used peer examination where opinions of colleagues and co-workers were obtained. The most important strategy used in this research to create dependable data, is collaborative research. This indicates that the participants were actively involved in each step of the research conducted. During this research, I needed to be aware of being biased. I could easily have influenced the data by being biased. I had one team member in the field with me to prevent me from be being biased towards the data collected process.

The data collected in this research needed to be validated for this research to be successful. Using various methods to ensure the validity of the study made the study more successful. The most important aspect of the verification of data was issues regarding the researcher's personal bias specific attention were provided to this aspect.

3.9 Timetable for data collection process

Once I obtained ethical clearance I contacted the selected school principal to set up an initial meeting (22 Jul) with all the participants to explain the scope of my research and what was expected from the participants. At the next meeting (28 Aug) we discussed the letters of consent, I explained the process of the data collection and we discussed the possible times that participants might be available to conduct the interviews and well as which lesson was suitable for observations. Due to the availability and time constraints of the participants, I was flexible to accommodate them at times they were available. All the interviews and observations were conducted at the school for convenience of the participants. The duration of the data

collection was from 22 July 2016 to the 20 March 2017. The timetable for the data collection process is reflected in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3: Timetable for the data collection process

Participant	Field notes	Initial Meeting	Letter of Consent	Inter-view 1	Obser-vation	Inter-view 2	Member Checking
1. Sunflower	Continuous	22 Jul	23 Aug	30 Aug	6 Sept	20 Sept	20 Mar
2. Daisy	Continuous	22 Jul	23 Aug	30 Aug	27 Sept	27 Sept	20 Mar
3. St Joseph	Continuous	22 Jul	23 Aug	30 Aug	6 Sept	20 Sept	20 Mar
4. Daffodil	Continuous	22 Jul	23 Aug	30 Aug	6 Sept	20 Sept	20 Mar
5. Rose	Continuous	22 Jul	23 Aug	30 Aug	6 Sept	27 Sept	20 Mar

3.10 My role as researcher

LeCompte (1993) comments that the most important elements of securing access are the willingness of researchers to be flexible and their sensitivity to nuances of behaviour and response in participants. De Laine (2000) remarks, an ability to get along with individuals in the situation in question and a willingness to join in with and share experiences in the activities in question, are important criteria for gaining and maintaining access and entry into the field. The researcher is indicated as “without history” (Wolff, 2004), a “professional stranger” (Flick, 1998), one who should be accepted, become familiar and yet remain distant from those being studied.

At the start of the research I was extremely nervous and anxious. The participants were extremely apprehensive towards the study, but once the scope of the study was explained and they understood that this research was not a judgement, their attitudes changed. I found my role, as researcher challenging; especially concerning participants who did not seem to take their role as educator serious and believed this project was a complaining session. Once I made my role clear to the participants, the study proceeded without any delay. I remained objective to what the participants said and focused on the meaning of what was said. I listened attentively and asked the participants when I was unsure of the meaning of what they said. I realised that I was only a research instrument in the data collection process. I found my role as researcher interesting and life changing.

3.11 Ethical considerations

The ethical considerations in all research studies are imperative. The factors relating to the participants should be adhered to. I needed to adhere to all ethical considerations associated with a research, whilst engaging in the research. Firstly, I needed to adhere to the postgraduate research policy, guidelines and procedures for Master's and Doctoral students and supervisors, provided by the University of Pretoria. I could not conduct any research in a school in South Africa before obtaining written approval from all the parties involved in the research. These parties include, the Department of Education, the University of Pretoria, the principal of the selected school, the teachers (participants) in the research and the parents or guardians of the learners. Any community, cultural or traditional leaders, from the area in which the school is located, would also be consulted. The research could not commence, until relevant approval was received.

3.11.1 Importance of ethics

Three important factors are raised in the review of the importance of ethics, indicating privacy, anonymity and confidentiality.

Everyone, especially the participants, devise a "right to privacy" (Du Plessis, 2016). In research, the right of privacy can easily be overlooked during the research, thus making the participants vulnerable. Privacy relates to three aspects, indicating the sensitivity of the information provided by the participant, the place where the participant is being observed and the link of the information provided by a participant to the participant (Cohen, 2011).

The more personal the information is, the more threatening the information becomes. This indicates the greater the sensitivity of the information provided by the participant is, the greater the protection of privacy is required by the participant (Cohen, 2011). These issues normally relate to religious preferences, sexual practices and income. The second aspect relates to the environment where the participant is being observed. The researcher needs to obtain proper consent to observe the participant in their natural environment. In this research, the natural environment indicates the classroom. Conducting observations in a participant's home will not be allowed.

Finally, connections that can be drawn to link the information provided by a participant, must be protected; this indicates the factor of anonymity.

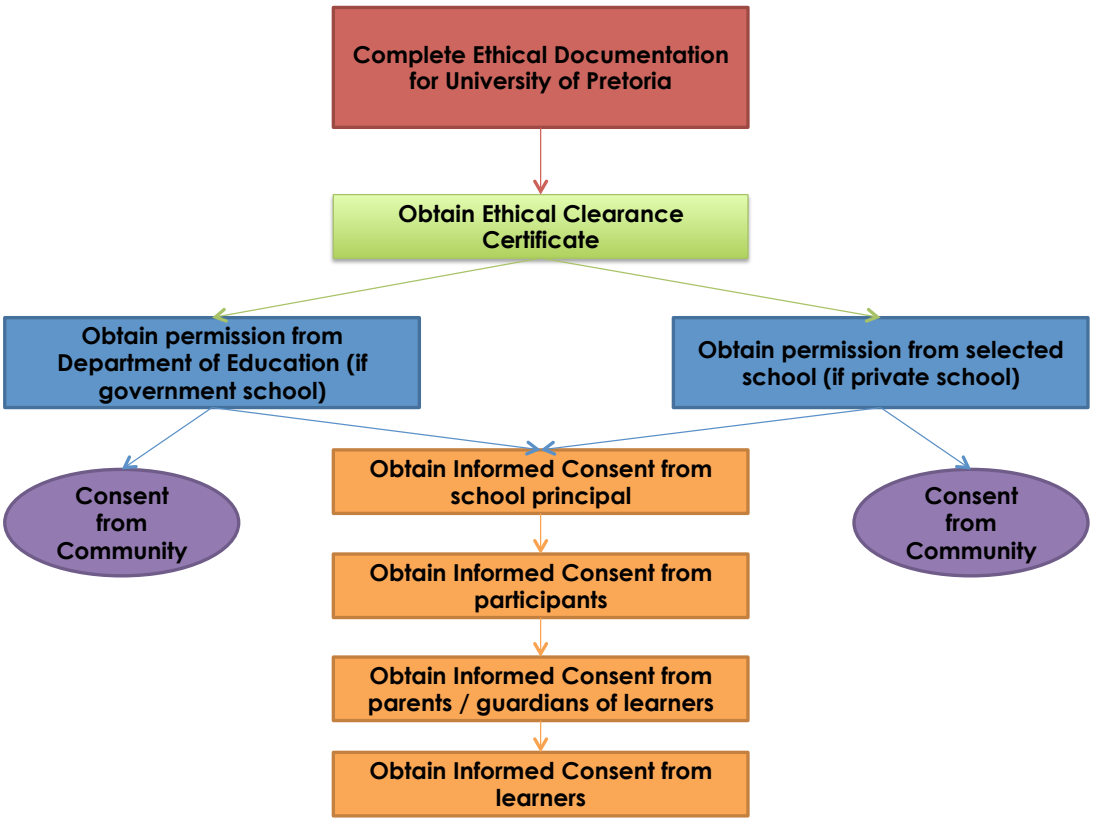
According to Cohen (2011) the essence of anonymity is that information provided by participants should in no way reveal their identity. A participant is thus considered to be anonymous when other individuals cannot identify the participant from the information provided. During the one-on-one interviews and observations, the researcher cannot, for obvious reasons, guarantee anonymity. The researcher can though, promise confidentiality (Cohen, 2011).

In this research study, I conducted the interviews and observations, indicating that I realised each participant and cannot guarantee anonymity to the participants. I provided participants with a pseudonym to protect their anonymity. I could assure confidentiality, indicating I would not disclose any information provided by the participants in any way that might disclose the participant's identity. I undertook not to discuss the information provided by the participant with anyone. I would not make the connection between the information and the participant public.

3.11.2 The ethical process for this study

Figure 3.3 reflects the ethical process I needed to complete before my research could commence.

Figure 3.3: The procedure to be completed before research can be conducted



I applied for ethical clearance at the University of Pretoria. After all relevant documentation was completed and submitted to the ethical committee, the ethical committee provided me with a letter of approval, to commence with research. Once this letter was received, I applied to the Department of Education for permission to conduct research at the pre-selected school. The school selected was a private entity and I needed to contact the school directly to obtain permission from the principal to conduct research at the school. The principal of the school granted permission, which I obtained in writing. I also needed to obtain permission from community leaders, cultural leaders and traditional leaders, should the location of the pre-selected school require this.

Once the permission to conduct research at a pre-selected school was obtained, I needed to contact the principal of the school to explain the scope of the research. Once permission was obtained from the principal in writing, I contacted the chosen potential participants they weren't participants yet to explain the scope of the

research through an informed consent letter. When the potential participant decided to participate in the research, they needed to sign an informed consent letter. After the potential participants were provided written consent to participate in the research, I obtained consent letters from the parents and legal guardians of the learners.

Once all the written consent forms were received and signed by all the relevant parties, I commenced with the research.

3.12 Summary of this chapter

In this chapter I discussed the research process. I used an interpretivist paradigm in this research and explained why I used this paradigm. This indicates, the participants in the study, actively constructed knowledge. Using the participants' construct of meaning to their circumstances, I understood the reasoning behind each participant's behaviour. It was important to consider how the past influenced their present, concerning their work engagement and resilience and how their present allowed them to develop their skills for the future. A qualitative approach was selected, since I dealt with participants who interpret their surroundings. The selection of the research site and the participants were based on pre-determined criteria to answer the research questions.

A case study was used because of the unique phenomenon found in the preselected school. I utilised interviews and observations as research instruments to collect the relevant data, using a qualitative approach. During the interviews, I learned about the participants' ideas, beliefs, views and opinions to understand their circumstances. During the observations, I could perceive the participants behavioural patterns, impartially. I adhered to all ethical aspects associated with this research; this was vital for the protection of the participants. A research project is considered successful when all data is verified and validity ensured.

Chapter 4 discusses the research analysis. Each participant is discussed briefly. I disclose some of the transcriptions from the interviews and observations and my reflective journal to enhance my themes. I conclude with a summary of each theme to encapsulate the essence.

CHAPTER 4:
DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

Chapter 3 indicated the research process for this study. I discussed the paradigm, case study as approach, the data collection processes and the data analysis strategies. I briefly mentioned the participants and the ethical considerations for this study for this study, were discussed.

In this chapter I discuss the research results and how they were analysed, by using codes, categories and themes. I have linked this analysis to my research question. The data collected from the research were analysed and described using thematic data analysis (Braun, 2006). According to Engelbrecht (2016), the thematic analysis forms a constant cycle proses, moving between the data and analysing the data, the concepts, the theories and the literature study. I commenced by immersing myself in the transcribed data, allocating codes to repetitive ideas in the data. Henning (2004) describes this process as the breakdown of data understanding the context of the concepts and categories. After I identified the twenty-eight codes, I sorted these codes into fifteen categories and from these categories I identified four themes. I used information and quotes from my participants' interviews and observations and my field notes to identify the themes and to explain them. At the end of each theme I provided a brief summary of the theme and in Chapter 5 I will link each theme to the conceptual framework and literature discussed in Chapter 2.

4.2 Participants

I completed two interviews and one observation with each participant. After each interview and observation, I transcribed the data and indicated field notes on my experiences and observations on the participants. I will briefly discuss the individual participants using a pseudonym to protect their identity.

4.2.1 Sunflower

Sunflower is a 27-year-old female teacher. After she completed Grade 12 she lacked financial support to continue with her studies. She wanted to study mechanical engineering. She entered the work sector to support herself and her family. In 2014

she decided to enrol with a teaching college and after completion, received a one-year teaching diploma. In July 2015, she joined the school selected in the study, on a part-time basis and was employed full time in January 2016. She teaches the Grade R learners.

Sunflower is new in the teaching profession but her passion for her learners and teaching is clear. Her classroom is decorated with several learners' projects and she indicated great effort in creating a positive learning environment for her learners. She also works around the lack of resources in the classroom, especially concerning worksheets for her learners. She uses her own funds to print worksheets from the Internet for her learners.

Sunflower created and bought most of her classroom resources. She spends approximately R600 per month on classroom resources. She is well prepared for her lessons and even abstains a teacher's planning file. She also works according to themes in her lesson plans and applies themes through in all the subjects. Sunflowers' classroom activities are inclusive and she allows learners to actively participate in learning. Her lessons are well structured and she maintains discipline in her class. She is aware of the resources required to present meaningful lessons; she is extremely creative and innovative with her available resources. She describes creativity as "*using anything we can*." Sunflower is also aware of the basic skill set required by Grade R learners and she attempts to develop each skill set.

Sunflower was accessible and willing to participate in this research and valuable data was obtained from her as a participant. During the first interview, Sunflower became emotional when we discussed her background and that she is from a disadvantage family and could not study full time after she completed Grade 12. She is well spoken and her physical appearance is refined. She is well dressed and professionally presented. She indicated nervousness at the beginning of her classroom observation, but as the lesson progressed she was more relaxed. During Interview 2, she disclosed her relationship with learners' parents and how she deals with situations relating to the learning concerns of her learners. Sunflower indicated awareness that the learners in her class learn differently and she is accommodating to assist them. She stated, "*I try to have patience daily, patience to accommodate all*

of them because they all have different characters." Sunflower understands that learners behave differently in diverse situations. It is therefore important for her to understand these behaviours. She said, "*I just take them as different individuals with different feelings and different emotions*." Upon answering the question of a positive learning environment, she stated "*everything that I do in my classroom I try to do it at my best*." Sunflower is an inspirational teacher and I found her to be extremely genuine in her quest to be an exceptional teacher.

Sunflower was the most honest and open of all the participants during the interviews and observation. She is a perfectionist and would like all in her classroom to go smoothly. Sunflower places voluminous pressure (also financially) on herself to succeed in the classroom. Her personal appearance is exceptional. She is involved with her learners in the classroom to ensure that they all do their best. Sunflower is sensitive and caring but fully aware that her perfectionism places pressure on her learners. She went through a process of grief, not fulfilling her passion to become a mechanical engineer but accepted her role a teacher gracefully. Sunflower wanted to impress me during her interviews and observations and she did.

Fieldnote-KM-22September2016

4.2.2 Daisy

Daisy is a 49-year-old female teacher. She matriculated in Zimbabwe in 1984 and completed a B Ed in 1989 at the United College of Education in Zimbabwe. She taught (in Zimbabwe) in primary schools from 1990 to 1999. In 2000, she accepted an administrative position at another primary school and enrolled for her Master's Degree at the Zimbabwe Open University (correspondence). She completed her Master's Degree in Administration (EAPPS) in 2008. In 2011, she left her Zimbabwe and relocated to South Africa. She joined a private school in Alberton before accepting a position at the case study school.

Daisy appears highly intelligent with the desire to continue to study. She does not have the opportunity, due to financial constraints and a lack of staff training. She teaches Grade 1 learners. Her biggest concern is that her learners do not have their own chair and desk. She stated that this is crucial, especially for Grade 1 learners, since they need to learn good posture when they are taught how to write. She also stated that teaching Grade 1s, is not an easy task but through trial and error she manages to win their confidence. Daisy seems to be rigid in class. Her programme is strict and she keeps to it. Learners in her classroom know exactly what is expected from them and there is no deviation from the programme. She follows the same programme daily and believes it provides structure for the learners. She believes in regularly assessing learners, especially on the completion of a section of work.

Since Daisy works according to a strict programme, she relies on the school to provide relevant and usable resources, especially textbooks. The textbooks at the school are outdated and irrelevant to what she teaches in her classroom. The textbooks for Mathematics and English are used but needs to be supplemented.

The reading books available in the school library are insufficient for the level of reading required for Grade 1 (Photo 4.1). For extension exercises, she uses her white board to create her own exercises for the advance learners. Using the white board, creates new challenges due to the lack of white board markers. She stated that she adheres to the CAPS curriculum and works strictly according to the CAPS planning documents for Grade 1.

For extension work and learners who battle to grasp a concept, she provides additional exercises on the white board, that learners complete on a piece of paper (old photocopying paper). Daisy feels that learning resources (Photo 4.2) for the classroom will positively impact on learners; she indicated some of her own but beliefs that proper laminated resources must be displayed in the classroom. At the start of the observation she was a bit nervous, but as the lesson progressed she became more relaxed. During the observation, Daisy used the textbook only, she read from the textbook to the learners and they followed, using the limited number of textbooks available. She moved through the classroom to indicate where she was reading from. I did not notice any lesson planning notes during the lesson. The

discipline in her classroom is good and learners listened attentively. Should learners shout, Daisy immediately made them aware that they need to listen to each other.

Daisy appeared to be uncooperative and even threatened by the research process. Daisy was a bit reluctant to participate in the research. She felt it was like an inspection to see if she does her job right. Although she was offered the opportunity to withdraw from the research she indicated that she preferred to continue. The demeanour was cold and standoffish with folded arms during our first meeting with all the participants. She also was not at school when the first observation was done but we arranged a time suitable to her to conduct the first observation. She seems to be passive aggressive at times and showed negative body language. Daisy is rigid in her classroom and quite demanding on her learners. She prefers to work in a structured and ordered environment. Due to her years of experience in the school environment she clearly has a good understanding of how the system should work. She is well presented in class and her appearance is neat. Her learners are aware of her nature and adhere to the rules in the classroom.

Fieldnotes-KM-22September2016

Photo 4.1: Daisy's classroom book corner

Photo 4.2: Daisy's classroom wall posters

4.2.3 St Joseph

St Joseph is a 49-year-old male teacher. He matriculated in 1985. He completed a BA (HED) degree in Economics (1986 to 1990) at a university in the Cape. He began teaching economics and business economics in 1991 at a secondary school in Gauteng. St Joseph indicated strong political views and indicated this as a possible

reason why his contract was not renewed. St Joseph experienced several political challenges in the schooling system. In 1994, St Joseph sold shoes for an income and exported equipment to Zimbabwe. In 1997, he entered formal employment, selling insurance and arranging conferences. He joined other companies before starting his own conference company. This company later merged with a well-known company, indicating a joined venture for conferences and market research. St Joseph saw a possible challenge in the ICT sector and decided to get more involved in this sector. He became involved in a project in a township in 2010 relating to education.

In 2011, he decided to start his own school based on his experiences in the township. He believed that the schooling system did not have any context and he wanted to create a context for learners in a school, for when these learners finish school they can contribute positively to the economic system in South Africa. He believes that entrepreneurial education was the context that could change education for learners. The department was not receptive on this concept therefore he created an independent school.

The school was initiated officially in 2014. St Joseph is passionate about entrepreneurship. He sees himself as "*an natural entrepreneur*." From an early childhood (age 14) he traded various items to assist his family financially. Even at this age he wanted to become a teacher "*I love imparting of knowledge, the position of knowledge and what goes with it*." St Joseph's indicates strong views on education and believes changing the curriculum continuously will not solve the challenges experienced in the school system in South Africa. St Joseph teaches entrepreneurial skills for Grade 1 to Grade 7.

He mentioned that the earlier learners are exposed to the terminology, the greater the chance to succeed and the greater their love for the subject. He did extensive research and global benchmarking on occurrences in other countries globally, concerning entrepreneurial education, since South Africa does not represent local benchmarks. He has not provided any formal curriculum for this course, relying on his own knowledge and experience to teach this subject, creating a passion within the learners for entrepreneurship. He wrote an entrepreneurial school song and

poem to inspire the learners. He believes that his teaching methods are unconventional.

The focus of the school is entrepreneurial skills. The learners, even in Grade 0 are exposed to the aspects of entrepreneurship. Learners are taught how to create products (supply and demand) that can be sold, indicating an income. The products created by these learners are sold at local markets for learners to understand concepts of profit and loss. St Joseph uses his commerce experience and believes learners should become independent business owners and contribute actively to the South African economy. The mission of this school, according to St Joseph is to raise a generation of strong academic ambassadors and entrepreneurs in South Africa. The school places a strong emphasis on entrepreneurial education as it fosters discipline, work ethic and self-reliance amongst learners, indicating critical elements in building character and life skills. The school further strives to create a generation of learners, not influenced by their parent's challenges, guilt or limitations but rather a generation of "I-Canners." Learners that believe everything is possible and meaningfully contributing in society and the next generation. St Joseph believes that the provision of quality education remains the primary basis through which the South African economy can develop; learners can be inspired and empowered to a better future.

St Joseph was confident during the interviews. He is ambitious in his personal capacity and optimistic about the future of education in the school and in South Africa. St Joseph likes to refer to the 'big picture' and where the school fits in. He has a strong sense of community and is a good motivator for the teaching team, even in the face of limited resources at the school. St Joseph is a generator of great ideas that sometimes feels a bit unrealistic. He was an interesting participant and has great insight into the concepts of entrepreneurial schools in South Africa.

Fieldnote-KM-22September2016

4.2.4 Daffodil

Daffodil is a 35-year-old female teacher. She completed matric in 1996 in Zimbabwe and wanted to do nursing. Due to her moms' illness, she stayed at home to take care of her. After her mom passed away, she was accepted at a teaching college in Zimbabwe in 2002. She completed her teaching training and received a diploma in 2004. She taught at various schools in Zimbabwe from 2005 to 2008, prior to relocation to South Africa (Eastern Cape) in 2009.

During 2009, she came to Johannesburg and taught at the Rare Mount College in Soweto. In 2011, she moved to Basa College in Soweto, where after she joined the case study school in March 2015. Daffodil teaches a combined class of Grade 2 and 3. She has 20 learners in her combined class. She divides the resources between the pupils in the different the grades, including, the desks, chairs and the whiteboard. Her classroom only has eleven desks. Her classroom is small, dark and cold and learners share the desks, indicating two learners at a desk. The desks are situated close to each other due to the lack of classroom space. She finds teaching a combined class extremely challenging, stating, "*it was hectic but I got used to it*." She needs to divide her attention and time between the grades in all subjects. She starts the mornings teaching Mathematics; she believes learners' concentration is better in the mornings. While she teaches the Grade 2s, the Grade 3s review the previous day's work. Once she completed her lesson for the Grade 2s, she writes work for them on the white board (the Grade 2 section) to complete. She proceeds to teach the Grade 3s. After teaching the Grade 3s, she writes work for them on the white board (the Grade 3 section) and continues teaching the Grade 2s, checking their completed work and assists where learners need assist. She moves her attention back to the Grade 3s to check their work and assists where needed. This process continues throughout the day in all subjects. She completes sundry planning to ensure both grades complete what they need to learn. She uses her experience within previous schools to assists her in the classroom.

Daffodil found the textbooks the school provides inadequate due to the number of learners in her classroom. There is a shortage of textbooks, and those books available seemed to be outdated. She relies on her own exercises and planning to ensure that the learners in her classroom are properly taught. I found Daffodil a

dedicated and self-driven teacher. She wants her learners to learn and achieve good outcomes, but she seemed to be challenged by the lack of resources in her classroom. I feel that she is sometimes desponded and frustrated with the situation but she daily attempts to succeed. I observed how she wrote twenty copies of the same worksheets for her learners to conduct a lesson; for me that demonstrates her dedication.

Daffodil seems to be reserved during the interviews and observations. She was willing to share her experiences but was selective in what she was sharing. Her class routine was very structured and that is quite understandable. Learners accept her authority in the classroom. She has the most difficult classroom situation but strives to make it work. Daffodil does not have the opportunity to be creative or innovative in the classroom. She wants to ensure that learners receive most of the knowledge during the limited time.

Fieldnote-KM-22September2016

4.2.5 Rose

Rose is a 32-year-old female teacher. Rose did not complete her matric. Her uncle raised her since her parents passed away when she was at a young age. Due to financial constraints, she could not return to school to complete her matric. Her passion was always to work with special needs learners. She started her career as a volunteer at a school with special needs learners in Limpopo, situated next to her residence. She completed an Early Childhood Development course while working as a volunteer at the school. The school assisted her financially to complete the course and she received a certificate. Rose teaches the pre-schoolers. These learners age range between three and four years. She starts the day with lots of singing and rhymes. Learners seem to enjoy all the activities and movements of their teacher in the classroom. Rose is an extremely active teacher with several physical movements and the learners imitate her actions.

She created posters and charts placed on the classroom wall to ensure learners visualise what they are singing about, such as colours and shapes (Photo 4.3). She also uses the learners' clothes they are wearing, indicating *"if you are wearing a red*

shirt today, shout your name." Learners are actively involved in the learning process. Rose's biggest desire for her classroom is sunshine exposure and to warm up the classroom during the winter (Photo 4.4). Due to Rose's training as a special needs teacher and her experience, she is intuitive and relates well to her learners. She immediately notices if a learner is upset or unhappy in a situation.

She stated that her classroom is beautiful but she does not have enough resources. She created special areas in her classroom for learners to express themselves. These areas lack essential resources. She created a book corner (Photo 4.5) but there are no age appropriate books in this area and the magazines in the book corner are inappropriate and outdated. She has an area where learners can build puzzles but with only two age appropriate puzzles. Her greatest idea is to create a fantasy corner (Photo 4.6). She stated, *"Children might not be happy at home because parents are shouting, I want to create a space where they can feel safe and play with toys."* She is attentive to young learners and fully understands their development needs. I found Rose to be quiet and reserved during the interviews but when she is in front of her class, she changes indicating a great passion for the learners. She believes that learners at this age (three and four years) need to learn through playing, but the lack of proper resources in her classroom make her task difficult.

I found it difficult to understand Rose during the interviews. I had to repeat questions and explain questions a few times. It seems to be a language barrier. She indicated great empathy towards her learners in the classroom. Rose feels insecure regarding her job, due to her lack in qualifications. She felt a bit threatened by the research process; she thought she might say the wrong things. In the classroom, I found her to be a different person: her interaction with the learners was inspiring.

Fieldnote-KM-22September2016

Photo 4.3: Rose's classroom wall posters for colour and shapes

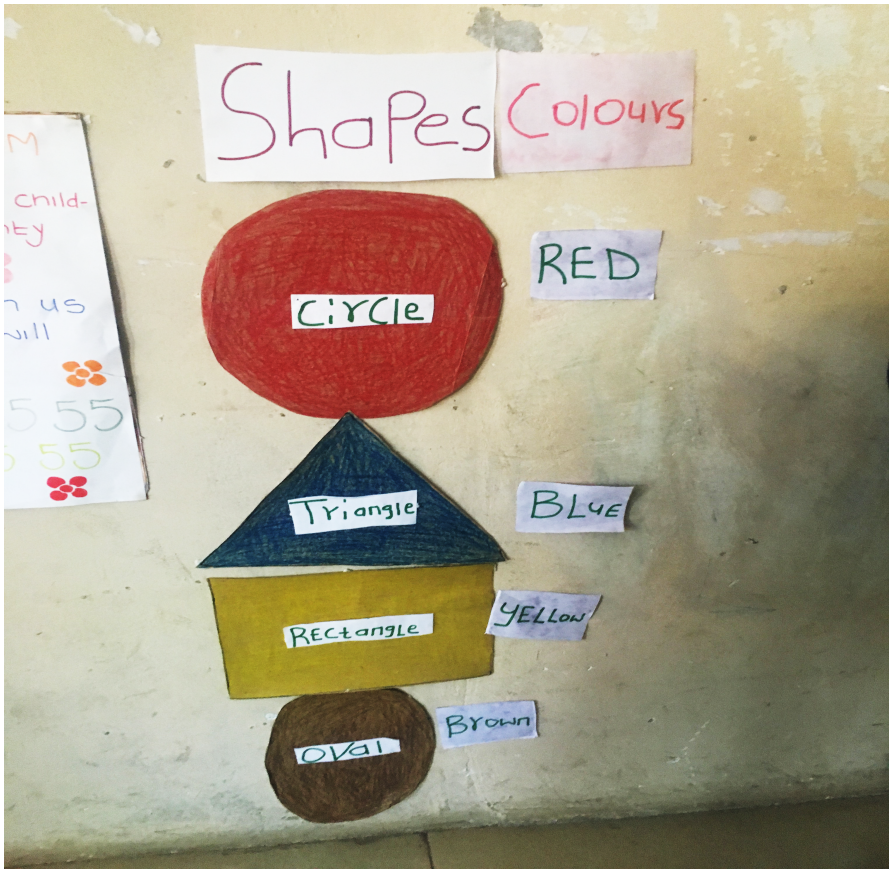


Photo 4.4: Roses' classroom (dark and cold)

Photo 4.5: Rose's classroom book corner

Photo 4.6: Rose's classroom fantasy corner

4.3 Coding and categories

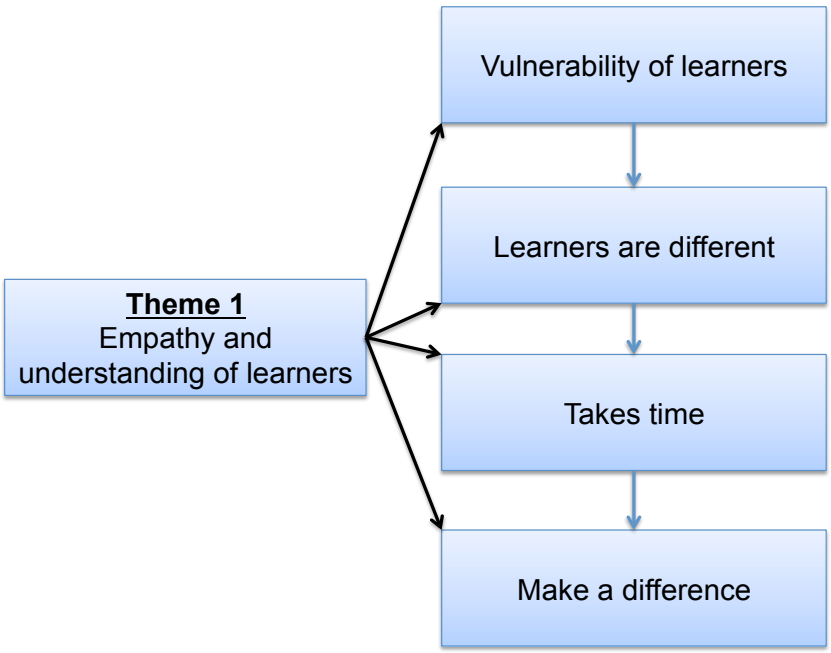
As indicated previously, I identified 15 categories in analysing the data. The categories were prominent from the data collected the participants. The categories of data identified were grouped into four broad themes and each of these themes with their sub categories are discussed in this chapter.

4.4 Themes

4.4.1 Theme 1 – Empathy and understanding of learners

From the data collected, the theme could be divided into four sub-themes or categories (Figure 4.1).

Figure 4.1: Theme 1



4.4.1.1 Vulnerability of learners

During the study, I had the opportunity to observe numerous instances where the vulnerability of learners became evident. Some of the participants also discussed the vulnerability of the children during the interviews. A few of these incidences indicate the following:

Sunflower briefly discussed the disadvantaged status of learners in the classroom; she feels that this disadvantaged is sometimes confused with vulnerability. During the observation of her classroom there was a situation where a learner provided the incorrect answer and another learner laughed at the learner. The learner who provided the incorrect answer started to cry consequently. Sunflower allowed both learners to explain their situation. The learner who laughed said that he thought the other learner's answer was funny and that is why he laughed. The learner who cried

explained that she supplied the incorrect answer by accident it just "*came out*." Once both these learners understood each other's situation they could understand each other better as people. The learner who laughed apologised to the crying learner. Sunflower proceeded to inform the entire class that laughing at someone because they provided an incorrect answer, is not the proper manner to deal with the situation. She stated, "*If your classmate provides an incorrect answer you as a considerate classmate need to provide support to you friend and help him or her*." During the second interview Sunflower revealed that the learner's (who cried) circumstances at home was not ideal and that she experienced emotional problems, explaining her vulnerability. Sunflower stated, "*She cries a lot these days, she is not happy at home*."

Another example in Sunflower's classroom, indicates a learner constantly going to the whiteboard to see what she wrote. Sunflower therefore ensures that this learner sits close to the whiteboard and during the lesson she pays attention to the learner to ensure the information on the whiteboard is copied correctly. During the second interview Sunflower revealed that this learner's parents experiences financial difficulty as both parents lost their jobs. She stated, "*The parents are aware of the fact the their child needs glasses but they do not have money to buy some*."

The second example derived, observing Rose. Due to Rose's sensitive nature she is extremely attuned to her learners needs. Being aware of learners' vulnerabilities she uses various ways to allow learners to learn. She wants to provide hope for her learners enabling them to achieve the outcomes set by allowing them to approach the problem/learning differently. Rose understands that learners' home circumstances affect them in the classroom and that is why she wants to create a safe place for her learners.

From the interviews conducted, the observation and my interaction with the participants, it became clear that they were acutely aware of the vulnerable status of most of the learners. It was evident with empathy they displayed towards learners; the way they interacted with learners; the support they offered to learners and the atmosphere observed at the school.

4.4.1.2 Learners are different

From my own experience as a teacher and during the observations of the learners in the classrooms it was clear that learners are different/diverse. Some of the classroom observations examples regarding this indication, are described below:

In the first example, Sunflower states that teachers need to be fair to learners. If you teach a concept to the class, you need to teach it in a few different ways because learners learn differently and teachers need to accommodate all learners in their classrooms. She feels that in classroom activities learners should not feel troubled to learn; the learning experience needs to be conducive for all learners. Sunflower uses the building of puzzles as an example. Learners need to enjoy building puzzles. She stated, "*It should be a fun learning experience but if a learner battles to build a puzzle, the learner will feel troubled and the experience will have a negative impact on the learner*."

Sunflower uses themes to conduct her lessons. These themes vary from farm animals to transport. She uses themes in all the subjects she teaches. The learners are then exposed to the theme in different ways; therefore, she accommodates all learning styles. Whilst understanding that learners are different and learn differently, she strives to treat each learner as an individual and not just as part of a group.

Daisy's classroom observation reflects the second example. Daisy is aware the learners in her class all learn at a different pace and she works according to the pace of the learners in her classroom. For learners that work faster, she creates extension work on the whiteboard, while she provides attention to learners who need assistance. Daisy relies on textbooks as resource in the classroom, therefore reading is an important component and each learner could indicate a different stage in the reading process. She stated, "*All learners must mastered the concept of reading before I can rely on textbooks as resource*."

The third example is from St Joseph's classroom observation. St Joseph acknowledges the different types of learners in his classroom but feels, if a teacher creates excitement concerning the subject taught, learners are more acceptable to the subject and to learning. He stated, "*Learners learn better from each other, this is*

a unique way for learners to create their own excitement towards the subject and learning."

Daffodil indicates the fourth example. Daffodil admits that teaching a combination class (Grade 2s and Grade 3s) is not without its own set of challenges. She stated, "*Dealing with learners' differences especially over two different grades provide additional challenges to me*." She strives to ensure all learners' differences are met, by encouraging learners to pay attention in class, especially during the revision sections. Daffodil believes that being actively involved in the classroom assists her to become aware of learners, finding it difficult to grasp a concept. She stated, "*A teacher cannot sit behind a desk and teach she needs to walk around in the classroom and pay attention to her learners' needs*."

Rose's classroom observation indicates the final example. Rose is co-operative in her classroom. She understands her learners' abilities, especially at such a young age, she assists them where she can and encourages them to attempt some activities on their own. When she provides feedback to the parents of her learners, she ensures to remind the parents that these learners are still young and should enjoy learning in a playful manner.

From my interaction with the participants, interviews and observations, all the participants indicate an understanding of the fact that learners are different. Not only do they indicate a clear understanding, but they embrace these learners' differences. Allowing learners to be different provide learners more opportunities to develop as individuals.

4.4.1.3 Learning takes time

Time constraints indicate a challenge in any classroom. To ensure proper learning teachers need to invest time into their learners ensuring learning. These low resourced classrooms are no different. Observations indicated the following examples:

Sunflower mentions that it is a teachers' job to teach, therefore she needs to take time to ensure that she does her job properly and that her learners can understand

each concept with clarity. She takes time to communicate with the parents of each learner. She stated, "*These communications are sometimes difficult for her, since parents are often not receptive to advice*." She feels a lack of support from the school principal regarding this matter. Parents do not want to hear that their children might have learning disabilities and that they should acquire professional assist regarding the challenge. In these cases, she spends additional time with these learners to ensure the learner can cope and understand the work. Sunflower understands the development ages of learners. She understands that there might be gaps between learners with same age. Those learners indicate different capabilities and as a teacher she needs to be aware of this and ensure that all learners can learn based on their capabilities. To ensure this, she carefully plans, taking all her learners' abilities into consideration.

She feels suitable learning aids are important such as, posters against the walls, to assist learners with learning; she spends most of her spare time to create these learning aids, based on her class themes. Sunflower stated, "*I constantly revise the work to ensure that the learners understood what I taught but sometimes I become a bit desponded when learners still battle to grasp a concept*." By constantly revising the work, she can also monitor each learner's progress. Daisy relies on the pace of her learners to progress to a new concept. She stated, "*When I work at my childrens' pace my planning suffers and I might not complete sections in the allowed time*." Daisy feels that it is more important for learners to understand a concept fully than understanding several concepts only partly.

During St Joseph's classroom observation, he encouraged learners to learn from each other. This concept of peer teaching is extremely time consuming and he stated, "*I belief that learning from each other also teaches them other valuable life lessons*."

Daffodil, alike Sunflower, strives to ensure that all the learners in her classroom have a clear understanding of the concepts taught including revisions of concepts in her part daily routine. She stated, "*My lessons are learner-centred*." Even though revisions are time consuming, it is important for Daffodil to ensure that learners understand the concepts before progressing to the next concept, especially in a

combination class (Grade 2s and Grade 3s). She also relies on pair work, allowing learners to learn from each other while teaching the other grade. Daffodil stated, "*When the grade 2s are working in pairs, I teach the grade 3s so I'm using my classroom time more effectively.*"

Rose is not bound to strict time rules in her classroom. She attempts to keep to a structure, but prefers to encourage learners to learn through playing. She stated, "*My children must play, play, play and learning will happen*." Rose devises some excellent ideas in her classroom to ensure learners continue to learn even though they are playing and having fun.

Time constraints remain a challenge in all classrooms. Teachers effectively using their time to teach, depends on each individual teacher. The importance of the contents of the lessons, and the way the teacher attempts to deliver, depends on the individual teachers' choice. During the classroom observations, I noticed participants made a consorted effort to manage their time accordingly.

4.4.1.4 Making a difference

Most teachers strive to make a difference, which is also indicated in this case study school. I have observed the following examples:

In the first example, Sunflower revealed that teaching was not her first passion, she wanted to become a mechanical engineer but now she realises the difference she creates in these learners' lives. This idea supports her to cope with the challenges of each day. She stated, "*I want to make a difference and when I stay here I can*."

During Interview 2, Sunflower stated she felt her learners were a bit overwhelmed during the classroom observation but that the observation was also a great experience for the learners. She felt that it made a difference in their daily routine. Sunflower stated, "*To make a difference is sometimes a bit frustrating, I am prepared to accommodate all my learners but circumstances I cannot control makes it difficult.*"

Sunflower indicated that patience is essential in the classroom. She admits that she also has "*bad days*" but she needs to put her emotions aside and concentrate on her

learners.

In Daisy's classroom she believes in a *"fresh mind, a fresh body"* philosophy. Her learners are fully aware of the structure within the classroom. She stated, "*I have introduced a rigid structure for the learners in my classroom, they are constantly aware of what I expect from them*." She believes in equal opportunities for all her learners, "*each and every child gets a chance*." Daisy also strives to encourage learners with acknowledgement from the classmates. If a learner provides a correct answer, the other learners acknowledge the achievement by clapping hands. Daisy stated, "*It is important for learners to be aware of each other especially in the classroom environment*."

St Joseph loves to inspire young minds. He loves imparting his own knowledge onto learners and encourages them to improve themselves. He stated, "*It's all about imparting different ways of thinking and imparting knowledge and so that you know a child wants to come to your class and be all excited about coming to learn something*." His has extremely strong views on education and the positions of education in South Africa. Some of the statements by St Joseph are controversial and is outside the scope of this research. He maintains however, "*Teaching is a noble profession*." He states that to make a difference in the classroom, you need passion. He feels strongly about the entrepreneurial aspects of teaching. He stated "*Because that whole issue of creating something and making yourself useful and things like that just becomes natural*." St Joseph wants to create "*a next generation of job creators in the country whereby our learners just naturally feel and have a sense of obligation, a responsible citizen*." He has strong views on providing challenges for his learners and stated, "*Failing a challenge also becomes a learning experience*." He further stated "*We as teachers have clear responsibilities towards our learners to create critical thinkers and teach learners problem solving skills."* He indicated, "I *do not want to hear problems, I do not want to hear negative things, you (the learner) raise an issue, it is an issue and not a problem*." St Joseph concluded his controversial way of making a difference by stating, "*so once it becomes a mind-set, it just becomes natural for learners and they become naturally positive as a way of life.*"

Daffodil teaches a combined class of Grade 2s and Grade 3s. She acknowledges that it is not normal for a teacher to teach more than one grade but strives to create an environment conducive to learning. She stated, "*I make sure every learner learns.*" Daffodil feels that she makes a positive impact on her learners: when she teaches the Grade 2s a new concept, the Grade 3s will say, "*Mam, we remember that from last year!*" Words like these make her feel "*warm in the heart*" and provide her with the gratitude in making a difference. While observing Rose as an example, Rose is the most actively involved in the classroom with her learners. She jumps up and down, sings and indicates active movement with each song the learners' sing. She believes that learners, at a young age, learn by imitating teachers. Rose stated, "*They will do what I do that is how they learn.*" I observed these learners and they imitate all her movements. Rose is fully aware of the skill set required by such young learners and ensures that each learner has the required skill set.

This sub category stood out the strongest for me under theme one. These participants attempt to make a difference daily, even though parents or management do not acknowledge them; their attempts are not unnoticed by their learners. During the classroom observations I observed the learners' interactions with the participants and it was clear that these learners indicate "*a great sense of appreciation and admiration*" towards their teachers.

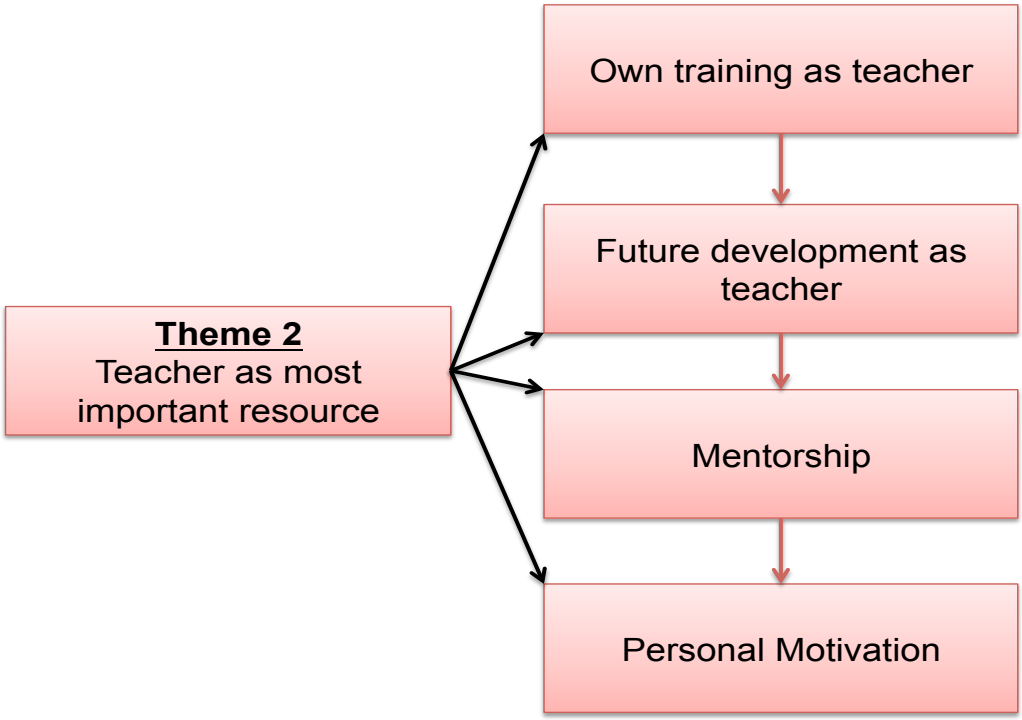
4.4.1.5 Summary of theme one

Theme one relates to an understanding that learners are vulnerable due to circumstances. These vulnerabilities follow learners into the classroom. Teachers must indicate empathy towards vulnerable learners and their circumstances. Learners are different/diverse, they learn and behave differently and sometimes they experience learning disabilities. Teachers need to be aware and embrace these differences. Sufficient time, ensuring learning in the classroom, is a factor that is sometimes overlooked. Time management play an important role in any classroom with the teacher as the only source that can management time. Learners notice the difference teachers create in their lives.

4.4.2. Theme 2 – Teacher as important resource

From the data collected, this theme could be divided into four sub-themes or categories. (Figure 4.2).

Figure 4.2: Theme 2



4.4.2.1 Own training as a teacher

Most of the participants in this research indicated choosing a different career path at the end of their schooling career. These choices ranged from a mechanical engineer, a lawyer, a businessman, a nurse to a social worker, but they all became teachers. The most prominent reason for the participants selecting teaching as a career was because of financial constraints; it was cheaper to complete a teaching degree of diploma than those careers initially chosen. The participants reflected as follows:

Sunflower completed a one-year teaching programme at a teaching college and receiving a diploma. She mentioned that additional "skilled training" for Grade Rs will benefit her as a teacher, as she completed only a one-year in teaching. Sunflower described "skilled training" as, "*Someone who can show me practical ideas to teach Grade R, how to use my own/available resources and how I can properly recycle resources.*"

Sunflower feels that she is running out of ideas and that it would be great to meet other teachers in similar situations (lack or resources) to share ideas. She also mentions that teachers in the surrounding areas can create a "resource library" where they can borrow from and return resources. She stated, "*This resources library will be able to assist all teachers that experience similar problems, like not having enough age appropriate puzzles or reading books for Grade Rs to build or read during a lesson*." The teachers can assist each other in issues such as, sharing recipes in making play dough. The teachers can share ideas on how to teach certain topics to learners that might battle with concepts. Sunflower stated, "*It can become like a teacher's support group that will provide the necessary support that is lacking in the school environment*." In the classroom, she often needs to explain a concept continuously, because some learners do not grasp the concept engaging with other teacher can assist her to find different ways to explain a concept. Even though Daisy wanted to become a lawyer she was inspired by her Grade 1 teacher who was extremely loving and kind and influenced her ability to make playing a part of learning. She stated, "*It was pro-play, we imitated her not realising what we were doing, just enjoying it!*" Daisy completed a four-year degree in Education in Zimbabwe and earned an EAPPS diploma. She has a least 26 years' experience in the school system, ranging from teaching and school administration. Daisy stated, "*Staff training at the school is lacking even amongst the teachers themselves.*" Due to Daisy's experiences as a teacher, she is knowledgably on the requirements of Grade 1s to be productive learners. She has rigid classroom practices, which can relate to her year of experience.

St Joseph is the only participant who studied in his field of teaching. He completed a BA in Economics at the University of the Western Cape. He stated, "*I use quite a few unconventional teaching methods, like incorporating writing songs and poems into my subject*." He believes for a school to be successful, teachers with a passion to teach and dedicated to the job should be employed. St Joseph stated, "*Passion is key*." Even from his earliest school experiences, he had a great respect for his own teachers.

After Daffodil's mother passed away she decided to change her career to teaching. Daffodil completed a two-year education diploma course in Education in Zimbabwe. Previous schools where Daffodil taught presented extensive staff training and staff workshops; she still reaps the benefits of this training in her teaching position. She stated, "*I use my experiences and what I have learnt from my previous school to help me now.*" Due to her training, both formal and informal, Daffodil has a good understanding of the requirements needed by her juniors to become productive learners and can find solutions to difficult situations. She stated, "*I can survive*."

Rose did not receive any formal training in education but she obtained her ECD (early childhood development) certificate while she was volunteering for six years at a home for learners with special needs. She would like to participate in staff training and workshops but the school do not indicate any opportunities. Rose stated, "*I would like to have more interaction with the other teachers at the school, I can definitely learn from them*." Rose reflected that the group of learners she teaches (ages three and four) need to play, because playing is a good way for these learners to develop the required skills.

During the interviews, the participants reflected on their own teacher training and their future development as teachers. They indicated a keen interest in pursuing personal teacher development and more importantly, they understand the need for the development.

4.4.2.2 Teacher development

To stay abreast of changes in the education profession remains an important factor for teachers at any school, specifically case study school. Teachers should attempt to become lifelong learners to teach the new generation of learners in our schools. Teacher development is a crucial part of becoming lifelong learners. The participants in this case study indicated a keen interest in pursuing future development as teachers, but financial constraints and family play important roles. The participants mentioned the following:

Sunflower is still passionate to become a mechanical engineer, but financially it is still not viable. She accepted the new career gracefully and strives to make a success of

it. Sunflower stated, "*I should make time to further develop as a teacher but my family has become a priority and I already spending a lot of time and money on the my learners*." She would welcome the opportunity to attend staff training and workshops.

Daisy would like to improve her basic computer skills and complete a course in school assessments. She stated, "*I do not have any money that is why I have not enrolled in any courses*." Daisy stated that time is a challenge, she spends considerable time on her learners and she has her own family to consider.

St Joseph stated that he is open-minded about further teacher training for staff members. He stated, "*No one has absolute knowledge so it is always important to be informed*." He relies on the Internet to find information on entrepreneurial concepts for learners, since South Africa is not a leader in the field of entrepreneurship. He mentions that he is receptive to staff training at the school, but expects teachers to initiates the training and workshop ideas.

Daffodil would like to study, expanding her knowledge in mathematics. Due to financial constraints, she has not yet found the opportunity to enrol for a course in mathematics. She stated, "*I am not fond on mathematics but I feel it is for self-improvement and I am looking for a challenge*." Daffodil feels that staff training and workshops can assist teachers in personal development and will empower teachers. From previous workshops she learned from other teachers and found that peer reviews are helpful for self-improvement.

Rose wants to improve as a person and is still passionate about becoming a social worker. She stated, "*By being a social worker I can help children more*."

It is clear from the interviews with the participants that they want to develop their personal teaching skills. Each participant indicated a different reason to develop but participants' families and financial constraints place limitations on this development.

4.4.2.3 Teacher mentorship programme

Literature does not provide a clear definition of a mentorship programme. A mentorship programme is defined according to the purpose it must serve. Formal mentoring programmes differ significantly regarding focus, and outcomes (Ehrich, 2004). For this study, a mentorship programme refers to a support structure from which a teacher can obtain advice. The participants reflected as follows on this category:

Sunflower stated, staff training and workshops at the selected school is non-existent. She would eagerly participate if training and workshops were available at the school. Sunflower feels that feedback from the principal of the school is lacking. No class visits are being conducted. She stated, "*A mentorship programme will benefit all teachers at the school, especially new teachers starting at the school*." Daisy briefly mentions a mentorship programme and states that in her opinion, it will be beneficial for the school.

St Joseph did not express any clear views on a mentorship programme. Daffodil expressed that mentorship programmes are essential in all schools. She stated, "*Mentorship programmes allow for opportunities to learn from other teachers, especially in the same subjects*." At her previous school mentors met regularly to discuss ideas and challenges. Daffodil stated, "*Mentorship programmes are very beneficial to all parties involved*." The lack of a mentorship programmes at the school, is a concern to her and she believes several challenges will be solved with a proper-implemented mentorship programme. It will assist teachers who get frustrated and do not know how to handle situations. Rose feels that a mentorship programme will enhance the interaction between the teachers at the school She stated, "*We could share ideas and information amongst ourselves*."

The lack of a mentorship programme in the case study school proved to be of great concern to most of the participants. They feel that a mentorship programme could provide them with a necessary tool in order to cope with their circumstances.

4.4.2.4 Motivation

Mintrop (2017) states that teachers place more value on intrinsic motivating factors

than on extrinsic motivators. Motivation plays an important role in this research. These participants' extrinsic motivators are low; they need to rely on their intrinsic motivators to continue with teaching daily. Participants refer to motivation as follows:

Sunflower feels that she is effective in her classroom, as she can motivate herself to continue with a task, indicating teaching the learners. She feels there is no support from the principal indicating that she is doing a good job, so it is important to believe in yourself and that you can do a good job. Sunflower stated, "*It is important to belief in yourself and that you are able to do a good job*." Sunflower stated that some days she feels like giving up but if she observes her learners, she realises that giving up is not an option. She feels tired and stressed but she knows she must put her feelings/emotions aside and concentrate on her learners because they need her. She said, "*Every time I'm doing something I'm just trying to get the best out of the thing I need to do so I can get there*."

Daisy believes in motivation as a concept. She described, "*Motivating oneself, the teachers around you and your learners*." She stated being motivated creates effectiveness. Daisy mentions that she relies on "trial and error" in the classroom. If something is not working she changes it, indicating she needs to constantly keep herself motivated to progress.

St Joseph is extremely confident in his subject knowledge. He uses his own experiences to teach learners. He believes that his subject is complex but with basic principles he makes his learners understand. St Joseph said, "*I like to link theoretical aspects to practical aspects and love to see my learners enjoy the subject*." This motivates him to continue teaching. St Joseph stated, it is important to learn from your own mistakes and strive to improve; it is a concept of "trial and error."

Daffodil teaches a combined class of Grade 2s and Grade 3s. In the beginning, she found it hectic but due to personal motivation, she feels much more in control of her classroom environment. Daffodil stated, "*I experience internal stress to cope with teaching two grades but I belief that I have the abilities as a teacher to succeed*."

She relies on her previous experiences at other schools to motivate her. Daffodil's

own childhood classroom experiences motivate her to create her classroom as a place for learning. Rose is confident in her actions in her classroom. She seems to be internally motivated to ensure that her learners enjoy attending her class. Rose said, "*If my learners feel safe in my classroom I am doing my job*."

During the interviews with the participants it became apparent that they rely on own personal motivation to continue in the teaching profession, specifically within the case study school.

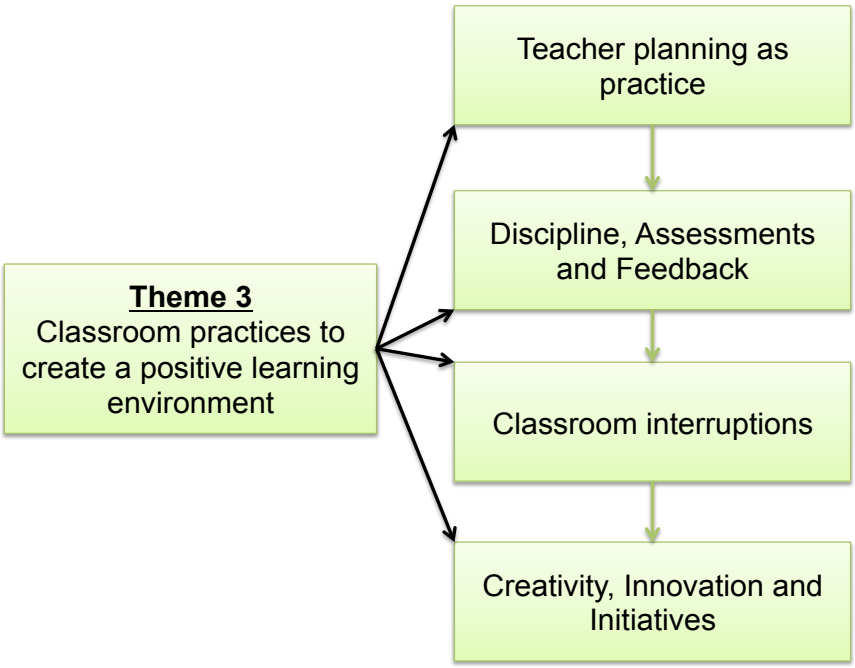
4.4.2.5 Summary of theme two

As mentioned in the literature review in Chapter 2, the teacher remains the most important resource in the classroom environment Ebersöhn (2014). This theme focused on the understanding that a teacher is the most important resource in a classroom. As an important resource, teachers need to have sufficient training in order to cope and understand their classroom environment but training does not end with a degree or a diploma it is a continuous process of improving oneself. Mentorship programmes play an important role to assist teachers, especially new teachers, in the school environment. Personal motivation allows teachers to believe in themselves.

4.4.3 Theme 3 – Classroom practices to create a positive learning environment

From the data collected, this theme is divided into four sub-themes or categories. (Figure 4.3).

Figure 4.3: Theme 3



4.4.3.1 Teacher planning as classroom practice

Most teachers rely on planning to ensure that teaching and learning takes place. The case study school is no different. The scope of planning and type of planning is with each individual. The participants explained during the first interview the quantity or volume and type of planning they do. The participants revealed the following:

Sunflower is an extremely well organised and diligent teacher. She starts with a yearly planner, divided into terms, then divided into weeks (Photo 4.7). She used CAPS as a guideline for her yearly planning. When she does her planning for the week, normally on a weekend, she accesses the Internet to obtain worksheets to utilised in the classroom (Photo 4.8). Sunflower stated, "*I prepare each day for the lesson for the next day, so every time when I get home I take an hour or two before I go to sleep to prepare for the next day*." Sunflower builds her planning on themes she incorporates across all the subjects she teaches. She teaches Grade Rs, and concentrates on language, life skills and mathematics. She displays the daily programme on her classroom wall for learners to have a clear understanding of what is expected from them daily (Photo 4.9). Sunflower stated, "*I incorporate the selected theme throughout all my interaction with the learners*." She does not use textbooks for Grade R, since most of the learners cannot read. Sunflower believes that free

play is an important aspect of learner development; she therefore includes free play as part of the learners' daily routine. Learners need a "quiet time" to reflect on what was learned during the day. Sunflower stated, "*Sometimes I stick to the planning but then sometimes because of the lack of resources I have to change and do something else*."

Daisy has strict classroom practices. She stated, "*I feel for everything to move according to a timetable and achieving objectives is core*." Daisy mentioned that she uses the CAPS curriculum in her classroom as guideline but could not provide me with a planning file to indicate how she incorporates CAPS into her daily lessons. She revealed, "*I do planning based on the learners' performance.*" Once she establishes what is lacking concerning learner performance, she plans accordingly. I experienced that since Daisy was in the profession for a long time, she feels that teaching became a second nature and that only younger and first year teachers use a planning file.

St Joseph fulfils the role of principal at the school. He stated, "*Because I'm the principal I have to plan my day a lot*." St Joseph does most of his classroom preparations and marking during weekends. He revealed, "*I know my subject very well this makes teaching easier because I rely on my own knowledge to teach learners*." St Joseph mentioned that he needs to do extensive research and global benchmarking regarding proceedings in other countries globally concerning entrepreneurial education since there are no South African benchmarks. He cannot rely on South African textbooks, since it does not reflect the true spirit of the subject. St Joseph stated, "*I sometimes refer to the CAPS document (Grade 7 EMS) for guidance.*"

During the observation of his lesson, he used the whiteboard to write an entrepreneurial situation. As the learners asked questions regarding the situation, he amended the situation written on the whiteboard to include the learners' questions. Some learners became confused, as he was not answering their questions but merely included the questions. I felt like this situation written on the whiteboard, was not a planned exercise and that St Joseph fabricated it as the lesson progressed. He said, "*I am an off-the-cuff person because sometimes it just comes naturally and then*

you will link it just naturally and then hopefully it makes sense I suppose." I did not notice any planning file in the classroom or clear guidelines regarding the curriculum for this subject by St Joseph. Since St Joseph teaches the subject for Grade Rs to Grade 7s. He needs to adjust the terminology used to accommodate the ages and understanding the level of the learners. He stated, "*I make sure that all learners understands the basic concepts of the subjects*." I did not notice any documentation to this effect. In his presentation of the lesson to learners, he stated that he uses scaffolding to introduce concepts. He feels that it allows learners to learn concepts at different levels assisting with growing the subject. St Joseph recapped the previous day's work prior to starting with a new lesson. He stated, "*It's the space of past knowledge but also integrating other aspects and bringing them together*."

Daffodil's classroom is structured. Since she teaches two grades simultaneously, she needs to plan her day carefully to ensure both grades received the same attention and workload. She stated, "*I start the day by teaching mathematics to both grades, first focusing on one grade and then the other*." She enforces her daily planning schedule to create stability for the learners in the classroom. "*If learners have a routine they are more comfortable*" she stated. She does all the planning at home, starting off with a "*skim plan*", referring to the term planning. She plans the day prior to conducting the lesson and uses CAPS as a guideline. Daffodil revealed, "*I sometimes plan a lesson but then I do not have the correct resources to implement the lesson properly - I need to improvise*." Rose follows a daily programme with her learners. She believes that "*routine*" is the best practice for her young learners. She attempts not to deviate from the daily programme, since it confuses the learners. Rose attempts to work according to themes with her learners; she feels that the themes assist learners to understand concepts better. She is an active participant in her own daily programme. Learners learn by imitating her movements and actions. I observed her singing a song about parts of the body and learners imitated her movements. Rose's classroom is active and nurturing; learners enjoy attending her class and they indicated feeling safe. During the observation, I did not notice any formal planning file.

During the interviews and observations it became apparent that there are no rules concerning planning in the case study school. Each participant does only what is

necessary for their class. No school planning policy exists concerning what content and context the school taught per grade.

Photo 4.7: Sunflower's planning file according to themes

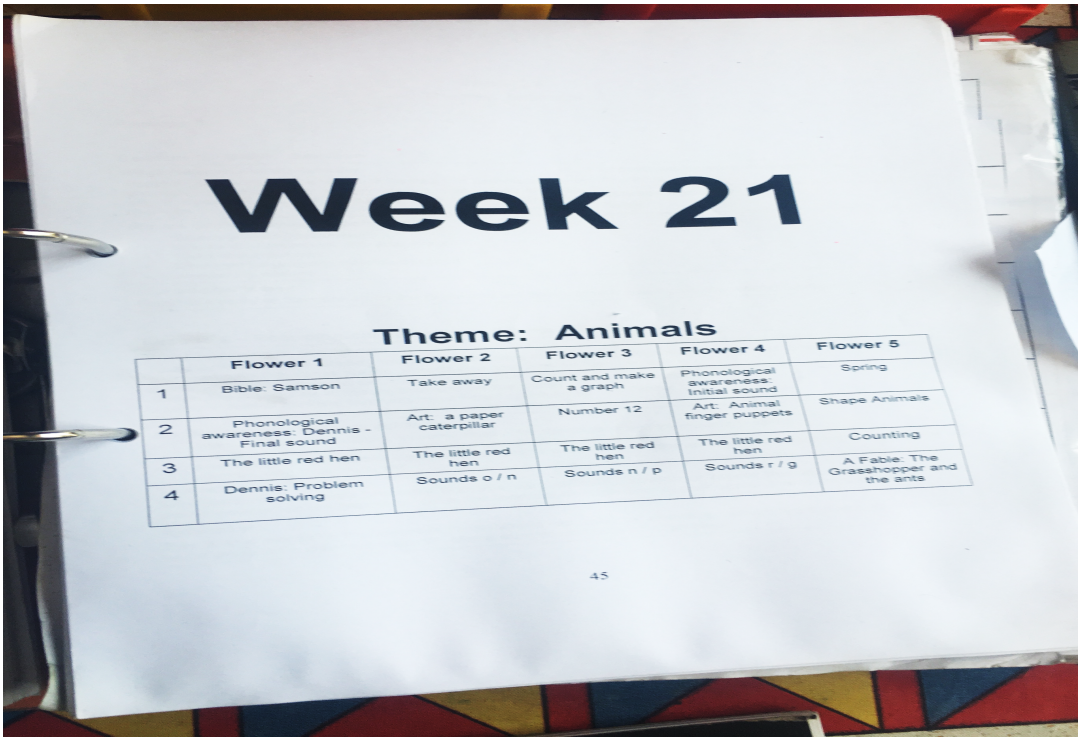


Photo 4.8: Sunflower's Internet worksheets

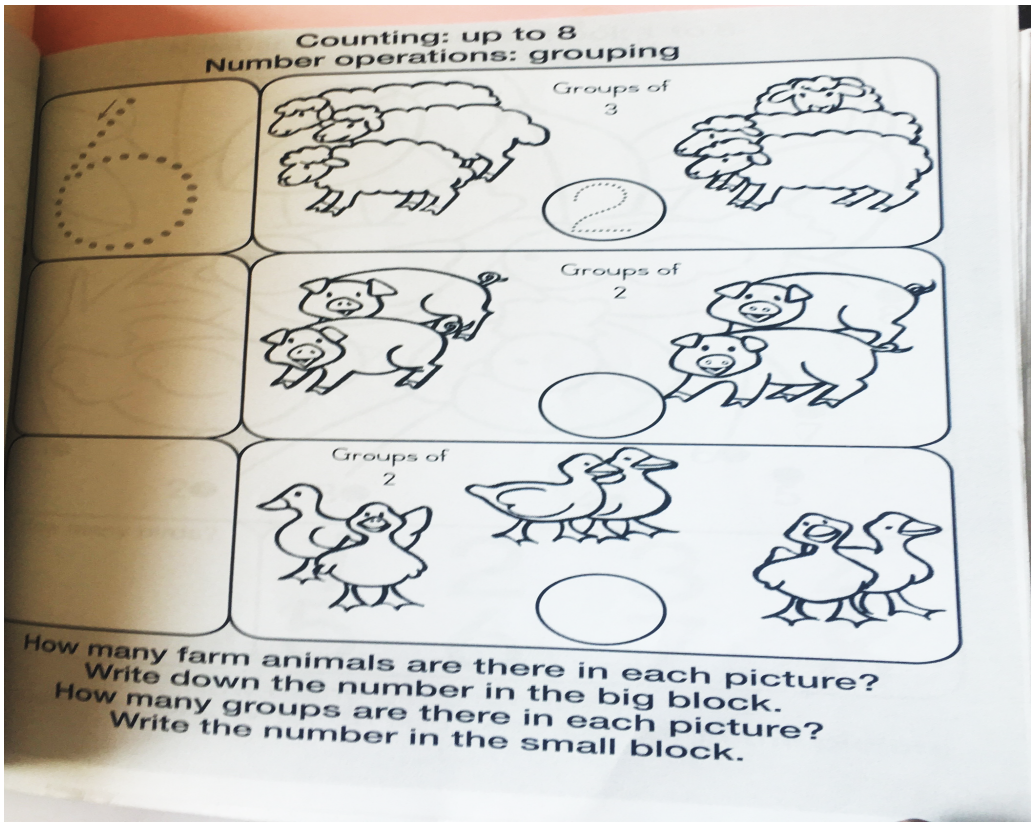


Photo 4.9: Sunflower's daily classroom programme

4.4.3.2 Teachers' classroom discipline, assessments and feedback

Discipline, assessments and feedback fall under the umbrella of classroom management (Van Deventer, 2003). Classroom management is defined as planned, organised activities and procedures, allowing effective learning and teaching to take place (Van Deventer, 2003). Classroom management for these participants include:

The discipline in Sunflowers' classroom was exceptional. In her classroom, she displayed the classroom rules on the wall. If a learner breaks a rule, she refers to the classroom rules and allows the learner to identify the rule broken and asks the learner why it was wrong to break the rule (Photo 4.10). At the end of each learning session, learners need to tidy up their own workspace and return all resources used to the correct storing space. Sunflower mentioned, "*My learners do not complete formal examinations but I assess my learners' abilities at the end of a theme, on a monthly basis*." Learners complete a small test, alike the worksheets completed during the theme month. From these assessments, she can determine if learners grasped the concepts taught to them and which areas she needs to review. Sunflower provided the parents with feedback on these assessments through a report to keep parents up to date with their children's progress.

Daisy is a strong believer of classroom discipline. She displayed classroom rules in the classroom (Photo 4.11). She stated, "*I left my previous employment because there was no discipline in the school*." She encourages learners to listen attentively when another learner is speaking and not to interrupt each other. Daisy stated, "*Learners learn from each other so it is important for them to listen to each other so discipline is important*." Daisy performs class assessments every Friday, based on the week's work. This assessment incorporates all the subjects taught during the week. She did not provide clear details on how she presents provide feedback to parents.

Since St Joseph fulfils two roles at the school, indicating principal and teacher. He finds the function of discipline complicated. He stated, "*I first need to maintain classroom discipline for myself and then school discipline for everyone*." I have observed the learners having great respect for St Joseph. I observed the learners in his classroom as well disciplined. St Joseph did not reveal any details regarding

classroom assessments for the entrepreneurial subject. I observed that the younger grades did not complete regular assessments but the Grade 6s and 7s completed an examination in this subject.

St Joseph involves the parents on a regular basis relating to entrepreneurial projects. He stated, "*The parents need to fulfil a specific role in the entrepreneurial projects, this allow the parents to be actively involved in their children's development and provides the parents with on hand feedback*." It was clear that St Joseph provides reports to parents, indicating feedback. As the principal of the school he regularly meets with parents regarding learner development.

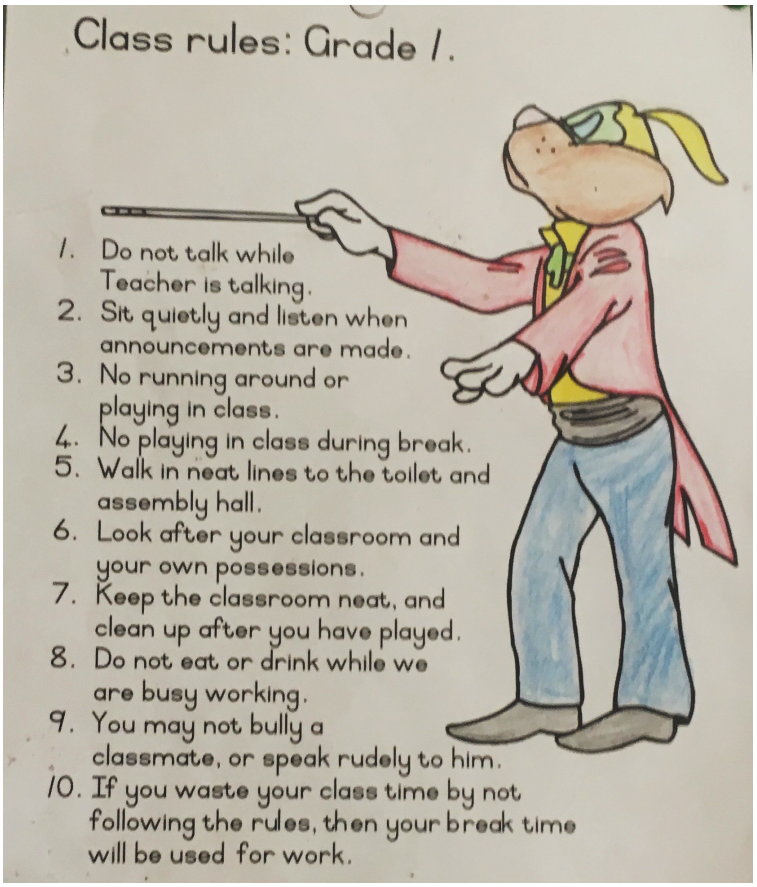
Due to teaching two grades simultaneously, Daffodil instils strict discipline in the classroom. Learners are aware of the classroom rules and adhere to them. She stated, "*My learners fully understand their class circumstances and know that learning cannot take place if there is no discipline.*" During the classroom observation, I found the learners to be well behaved; they listened attentively to their teacher and participated in the classroom activities. Daffodil uses of continuous assessments in her classroom. She stated, "*My learners complete an integrated assessment every Friday in order for me to establish the level of learning that took place during the week.*" With integrated assessments she can identify learners that did not grasp certain concepts. She pays attention to these learners the following week, ensuring they grasped the concept. Learners complete cycle tests at the end of the term from these cycle tests she provides feedback to the parents in the form of a report. She communicates with parents regularly, especially when a learner is struggling. The learners in Roses' classroom follow classroom rules, as the learners are still young. Rose are lenient concerning these rules. I observed that the learners in the classroom are well behaved. Due to the ages (three and four) learners in Roses' class are not required to do formal assessments. She sends progress reports to the parents at the end of each term, informing the parents of their children's progress during the term. She mentioned, "*I keep the reports positive and encouraging.*"

During the all the observations, I found the learners to be well disciplined and eager to participate in classroom activities. The classroom assessments were appropriate

for the different grades and continuous feedback is being provided to both the learners and the parents.

Photo 4.10: Sunflower's classroom rules

Photo 4.11: Daisy's classroom rules



4.4.3.3 Classroom interruptions

While I observed the participants in the classroom, there were constant knocks on the classroom door. A learner would enter and ask the teacher for “something” the other teacher needs in their classroom. These items ranged from pairs of scissors, paper, pencils and glue. These constant interruptions cause the learners and teachers to lose focus on their work. The learners took some time to settle after these interruptions. My observations regarding this category were as follows:

Most of the participants lack planning files, alike Sunflower. During interruptions in the lesson, I observed that the participant lost their sequence of thought and do not continue the lesson after the interruption. Sunflower’s classroom experienced the most interruptions during the observations, as she comprises the most resources at her disposal, most of the resources are supplied by Sunflower herself. Interruptions indicate frequent occurrences during lesson times.

During Daisy’s classroom observation, the interruptions felt unnecessary; learners are disrupted. Daisy took additional time to continue with her lesson, recapping what was already said.

Because of his dual role, interruptions occur regularly in St Joseph’s classroom. These interruptions are sometimes unavoidable since teachers or parents need to see him.

Daffodil feels that classroom interruptions cause her learners to lose focus; it takes a few minutes to get learners settled after the interruption. Most of the interruptions can be avoided and teachers should have respect for each other’s teaching time.

Rose is unfortunately one of the teachers who cause interruptions. The other teachers normally send a learner to ask another teacher for some type of resource. Rose leaves her classroom and learners unattended to find stationery. The reason why she does this is because her learners are still too young to go to other teachers and ask for resources. By leaving her classroom during a lesson, her learners feels confused and wait for her to return before continuing with their work.

During the second interviews, the participants revealed that these classroom interruptions are sometimes necessary because they cannot continue their lesson. These interruptions are mainly caused due to the lack of resources, especially stationery. I personally feel that these interruptions can be minimised if teachers do more intensive planning and arrange with other teachers to borrow stationery prior to the lessons.

4.4.3.4 Teachers' creativity, innovations and initiatives

Due to the lack of resources in the case study school, these participants need to be creative, innovative and indicate initiative. They plan to conduct a lesson in a specific way but while conducting the actual lesson they need to deviate from the proposed plan to complete the lesson. I observed the following:

During my observation of Sunflower's classroom, I found her to be extremely creative. The posters she created on her walls are reflective of the themes of her lessons. She stated, "*I make my own posters to match the themes of my lessons*." Sunflower used learners' own classwork as displays, hanging them from the ceiling. This gesture motivates learners to do their best work, since it will be on display for all to see and serves as learning aids (Photo 4.12). I found this idea innovative. Sunflower has brilliant initiatives to promote the careful use of resources. She utilises available resources to the maximum and found different uses for items such as, polystyrene food containers (Photo 4.13).

During my observation of Daisy's lesson, I found her to be somewhat creative but her creativity was not memorable. She asked learners, "*Close your eyes and image the uses of water*." The topic of the observed lesson was water. She relies on the textbooks and her entire lesson is based on what is reflected in the textbook. By the end of the lesson, learners seem to be disengaged from the topic. I found no indication of innovations during her lesson and initiatives were lacking.

St Joseph uses creative ideas to teach terminology to the younger learners. He stated, "*I have written a poem and a song for younger learners to remember the terminology, they love to sing*." I experienced during classroom observations, learners are excited to say the poem and sing the song. St Joseph stated, "*I like to*

follow a holistic approach in teaching my subject I include other subjects." St Joseph produced drama that will be showcased at the Grahamstown Art Festival using the learners portray a "Fees must Fall" theme from an entrepreneurial perspective. I found this play to be creative and innovative. St Joseph used initiative to encourage learners to work on entrepreneurial projects to use their own knowledge, creating sellable products and earn money that can be distributed amongst their families and the school. Learners enjoy participating in these projects and can use classroom knowledge in real life. I found St Joseph to be creative, innovative and full of initiative.

During my observation of Daffodil's lesson, I found her to be creative in a sense where she teaches the same topic but on two levels to accommodate both Grade 2 and Grade 3 learners. She improvises her lessons, indicating knowledge on what she needs to teach and relies on the learners on how she will convey the concept. I did not experience Daffodil to be innovative, as she relies on Internet worksheets and textbooks for learners to complete exercises. She sometimes uses little whiteboards for learners to write answers on. I did not experience Daffodil displaying various initiatives to convey context. Daffodil stated, "*The method I use in my classroom works and I do not want to change it*."

Rose indicates creativeness as she uses concepts taught in the classroom during learners' playtime outside, to reinforce a concepts. During the classroom observation, the learners learned all different types of shapes, for example a circle. During the playtime, outside she asked learners to use their fingers and draw these shapes in the sand. In her classroom, she wanted to create a "fantasy corner", this space would allow learners to imaging and play creatively. I found the idea of a "fantasy corner" a good initiative. Rose incorporates learners' clothing into her lesson, for example when she is teaching about colours. She stated, "*My learners feel that they are part of the lesson*." I found her ideas to incorporate items around her innovative.

During the first interview, the participants revealed themselves to be creative, innovative and to have initiative. I observed only some of the participants to fulfil these aspects in the classroom. Those indicating creativity, innovations and initiatives are admirable since it contributes to a more positive learning environment.

4.4.3.5 Summary of theme three

Once teachers have obtained proper training (formal or informal) it is important to understand how this training knowledge are relayed to the classroom. Teachers engage in their daily classroom practice with planning but must be able to adapt to changes should it be required. Aspects, such as, discipline, assessments and feedback to both learners and parents form a crucial foundation based on training.

The effect of classroom interruptions formed an important aspect in this research and the effect indicated on teachers and learners. Due to the lack of resources in the classroom environments - creativity, innovations and initiative play an important role.

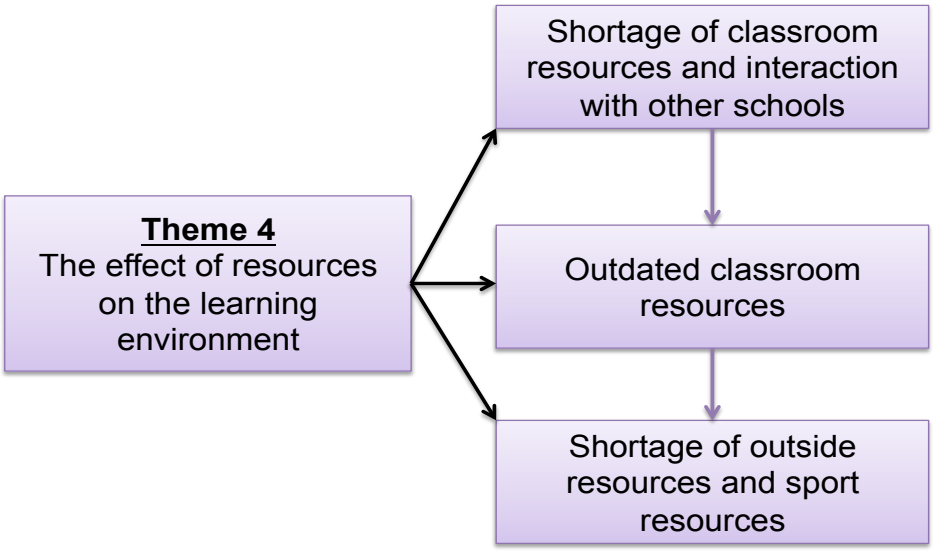
Photo 4.12: Sunflower's innovative idea

Photo 4.13: Combining and re-using available resources

4.4.4 Theme 4 – The effect of resources on the learning environment

From the data collected, this theme is divided into three sub-themes or categories. (Figure 4.4).

Figure 4.4: Theme 4



4.4.4.1 Shortage of classroom resources and interaction with other schools

Resources play an important role in the classroom. According to UNESCO (2015) is a budget allocation for resources is limited in schools in South Africa and globally. Resource in the classroom is pivotal to improving education (UNESCO, 2015). Schools in low income areas should manage with the resources available or borrow resources from neighbouring schools. The participants in this research experienced the following:

According to Sunflower, Grade R learners do practical learning, indicating they learn by doing: it is therefore important for her to have resources available for learners to learn by doing. She teaches her learners about resources and how to use recycled items as a resource to learn. Sunflower does not utilise textbooks for Grade R (learners cannot read). She relies on the Internet (personal account), to access worksheets for the learners in her class. Sunflower stated, "*I make copies of worksheets I find on the Internet relating to my theme and have them printed, there are no printers available at the school*." Basic stationery in the classroom, such as pairs scissors, glue, crayons, paint, paint brushes, colouring pencils and colouring books are scarce and she sometimes needs to borrow from other teachers to conduct her lesson (classroom interruptions). Sunflower mentioned. "*I tear out the pages of the colouring books I have bought, try and find similar pictures for the learners to colour in*, *if the school has a photocopy machine I could make copies and all the learners will have the same picture."*

Sunflower mentioned that parents provide a basic stationery pack at the beginning of the school year, but it does not last long. Sunflower entertains various learning activities in her classroom (creative) such as puzzles, educational board games and painting. Most of these activities are provided by Sunflower, she however stated, "*I do not have enough age appropriate puzzles for each learner in my class*." To accommodate the shortage of activities in the classroom, she divides learners into groups and allows each group to complete an activity before rotating them to another activity (innovative). Sunflower uses polystyrene plates (meat packaging plates) to place paint on during the painting activities, allowing measured paint for learners to paint with, ensuring the paint last longer. Sunflower revealed, "*I need play dough for*

learners to develop fine motor skills." She has a clear understanding of what learners need to do to develop skills, but lacks the resources. Sunflower feels that each learner in her classroom should have their own desk (each learner has a chair) since the Grade Rs activities require space. She stated, "*My classroom is growing term by term with new learners arriving but I do not desks and chairs for the new learners and I need to borrow from other teachers*." Sunflower decorated her classroom walls with posters she created (creative). These posters reflect what she teaches in class. The reason she created these posters: to provide a visual stimulation to learners. While she is conducts a lesson, she can refer learners to these posters to understand the context better. Sunflower relies on friends at other schools for assistance with resources; she borrows these items and returns them upon the completion of her lessons. She sometimes feels embarrassed to borrow items but she needs to do it because it is for her learners. Sunflower said, "*Stationery is the most difficult part of my everyday teaching and learning as we have limited stationery. Sometimes we find that we do not have pencils when we need to write something, we do not have colours if we need to colour, we do not have glue, we do not have paints!*"

Daisy's main concern regarding classroom resources is the lack of sufficient desks and chairs. She feels learners, especially Grade 1, should have their own desk and chair. Daisy stated, "*Form a development point of view, in this grade learners learn to write and it is important to have the correct posture and necessary space when learning this skill*."

There are insufficient textbooks in the class and learners need to share these textbooks. If she provides homework, some of the learners need to copy the homework to complete is at home. She stated, "*Sometimes the learners copy the homework incorrectly from the whiteboard and have difficulty to complete homework at home*." For extension work, she uses the whiteboard, indicating these learners do not have paperwork to study for tests. At times, she uses old photocopy paper and allows learners to write on the back of these papers to complete classroom activities. Daisy stated, "*I made some posters for my classroom walls but I feel these posters should be laminated in order to preserve them*"

Due to the nature of the subject taught by St Joseph, no suitable textbooks are

indicated. He uses the Grade 7 EMS CAPS document as guideline, but provides all the content and context in the classroom from personal knowledge. St Joseph stated, "*A textbook for the entrepreneurial subject will be very useful but there are none available that includes a holistic approach to the subject*." It will benefit learners in this subject, to have Internet access but due to the lack of computers and Wi-Fi this learning activity is impossible.

Daffodil teaches a combination class of Grade 2s and Grade 3s, because of an apparent lack of teacher to teach either grade. This indicates a concern to this participant. She feels concern regarding the size of her classroom. Daffodil's class comprises, eleven old school wooden desks (Photo 4.14) to accommodate twenty learners in her classroom, indicating two learners on one desk. She stated, "*Two kids per desk is fine but the classroom space is small, the desk are too close together*." She needs to divide her classroom in two parts, placing the Grade 2s on the left and the Grade 3s on the right. She needs to divide her whiteboard into two sections to accommodate the work for each grade. Daffodil mentioned, "*I have no space to put cupboards the books are lying all over the place and the books get lost*." The learning aids (posters) on the classroom walls were created by Daffodil (Photo 4.15). The textbooks available are shared amongst the learners in the classroom. Daffodil stated, "*I cannot give homework from the textbooks there are not enough textbooks for the kids to take home*."

Learners need to copy their homework from the whiteboard, written by Daffodil from the textbook to complete their homework. If Daffodil wants to make copies of a worksheet for learners to complete, she handwrites each of the worksheets. She would like to have a projector for her classroom; this will cut down the time she spends on writing information on the whiteboard for learners to copy. She will have time to walk between the learners to ensure they are copying the information correctly. The only challenge she might experience with the projector is the power it uses. She mentioned, "*The school has a generator but it rarely works*."

Basic stationery is a great concern for Daffodil. Learners all lose their pencils. She attempts to collect all the pencils at the end of the day and keep them in the classroom to use the following day. In mathematics, these learners do not have

calculators, forming part of the mathematics curriculum. Daffodil taught her learners a method, using their fingers calculating the 9X timetable (creative). She stated, "*I would like my kids to have access to the Internet in order to get some worksheet and do some extension work*."

Learners are not allowed cell phones at school, but Daffodil feels cell phones might be a good resource in the classroom. The challenge might be the connections to Wi-Fi. Daffodil would like to increase the learning aids on her classroom walls. She said, "*You have to put something (on the walls), kids have to learn, kids they have to continuously learn the same thing for them to understand*."

Rose attempts to use everything available in her classroom as a resource. On the day of the observations, she covered the theme of clothing. She used what the learners wore on the day, as a resource (innovative).

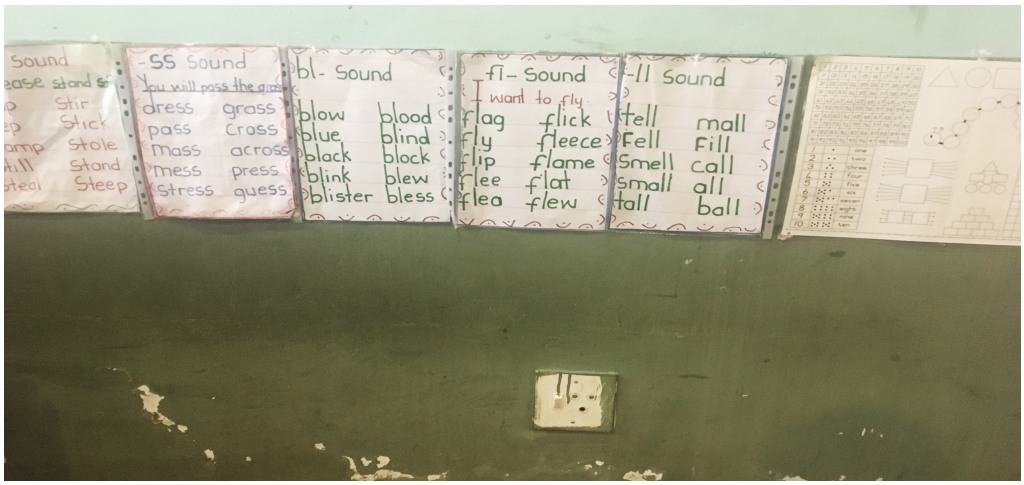
Rose relies on her friendship with a teacher of neighbouring school, to obtain resources for her classroom. She used these resources to update her book corner and placed toys received in the fantasy corner. Rose would like to reciprocate this to her friend but is not able to do so. Rose is contempt with the size of her classroom. She stated, "*I would like heater, a mat, some blankets and mattresses for my classroom*." Her ideas to improve her classroom, like the fantasy corner, are not becoming a reality, since she cannot find the resources to make it effective. Rose sometimes brings food from home because some learners do not have food at break time. She mentioned, "*I need to borrow stationery from other teachers because I do not have enough in my classroom*." Rose has a few puzzles in her classroom and learners need to take turns to build these puzzles. She contacted the parents of her learners to ask for additional stationery but the parents were unwilling to contribute. I experienced Rose to have wonderful ideas about how learners can learn through playing, but due to the lack of resources in the classroom, these ideas cannot be implemented. Rose stated, "*I change activities in my classroom because I do not have stuff to do the activities with*."

Although resources play an important part in education, these participants indicated how they cope without these resources and learning is still taking place. They found

alternative ways to deal with the lack of resources. These alternative ways include: creating their own posters, handwritten worksheets and borrowing from neighbouring schools. I have found the participants to be creative regarding this category.

Photo 4.14: Daffodil's old school wooden desks.

Photo 4.15: Daffodil's learning aids on classroom wall



4.4.4.2 Outdated classroom resources

According to most of the participants, the resources available at the school, mostly textbooks are outdated and irrelevant to what they are teaching in the classroom. I have visited the library at the case study school and found the library books to be old, outdated and chaotic. There is no order and to find one specific book is virtually impossible. Participants mainly rely on English and Mathematical textbooks, these textbooks are not in line with the CAPS guidelines. Participants experienced the

following:

Sunflower uses the books in the school library during story time to read to the learners. She found the books in this library to be old, stuffy and not age appropriate for Grade Rs. There is a limited number of books: learners in the class will not be able to have a book in front of them when she reads to them. Sunflower stated, "*There are not books in the library available relating to themes, for example transport where learners can look up picture about trains, aeroplanes and buses*." Daisy relies on using textbooks in the classroom. Daisy feels that textbooks available to learners are outdated. Daisy still uses these textbooks, but only the sections she feels relate to the curriculum. She stated, "*Jumping around in the textbooks causes confusion and frustration amongst the learners because they get lost*." Daisy states that the English language textbooks are inadequate and needs improvement.

St Joseph uses the library to conduct his lesson. Teaching a subject on innovations and creativity requires more relevant resources, such as computers, iPads and cell phones. The school resources are outdated and an upgrade became essential to improve learning.

Daffodil mentions that the textbooks available for Grade 2s and Grade 3s are outdated. She mentioned, "*I need to use two types of textbooks namely Oxford and Platinum in order to cover the curriculum*." Both these textbooks are outdated according to Daffodil.

In Rose's classroom, I observed her book corner. These books in the book corner, comprise outdated, non-relevant (to the age group) magazines.

During the second interviews, all the participants expressed they can still cope with not having enough textbooks but outdated textbooks is a great concern. They feel that the content in the textbooks are irrelevant to what they teach in the classroom and not adhering to the CAPS document.

4.4.4.3 Shortage of outside resources and sport resources

Resource outside the classroom is just as important as resource inside the

classroom. All the learners in this case study school are in the development phase of their education. The participants feel the need for outside resources are crucial to develop skills such as, gross motor skills and to practise skills taught inside the classroom. Sports also forms a part of developing skills, the lack of sport resources was clear. Participants reflected on this category as follows:

According to Sunflower, her Grade R learners need to participate in the compulsory sport sessions weekly on Tuesdays and Thursdays. During these compulsory sports sessions, she needs to occupy the learners for one hour with sport. Sunflower stated, "*I do not have any sport training and there are no stuff available to do these sport sessions*." There is no formal planning done on what types of skills need to be developed during these sport sessions. Sunflower believes the Grade R learners should develop gross motor skills outside of the classroom, but there are no resources available to develop these skills. She said, "*I would like bikes, shooter and hula-hoops for the learners to play and learn with*."

Sunflower would like to take her learners on excursions. She uses transport as an example. Most of the learners in the classroom have never travelled on a bus or a train. She believes if they can experience these activities, they will understand and learn more. She stated, "*By taking the learners outside the classroom I will be able to expand their learning by their own experiences*."

Due to the lack of outside resources, Daisy allows mainly free play for the Grade 1s with no planned learning or teaching activities.

St Joseph feels that learners will benefit from learning outside, but the shortage of outside resources make it impossible. He stated, "*For the sport activities, just upgrading the netball courts and soccer field will be an improvement*." He feels most of the resources indicated are needed in the classroom, but understands that upgrading outside learning activities are important for the holistic development of learners.

Daffodil revealed, "*Learners should be learning outside the classroom as well because they can practice what they have learned inside*." Due to the lack of

resources outside the classroom, these learning activities cannot occur. Since Rose's main idea of teaching is "*learning through playing*", the lack of outside resources makes this idea difficult for Rose.

During the "*playtime*" observations, the learners seem to be looking for something to do. They run around aimlessly, trying to find an activity to do. The participants' role during these activities seemed to be one of supervision rather than teaching.

4.4.4.4 Summary of theme four

This theme relates to the resources in the school environment, both inside and outside the classroom. Resources are necessary for teachers to complete their function of teaching learners. If resources are lacking, the function of the teachers becomes more difficult and causes stress for teachers. Teachers need to rely on themselves (buy their own) and contact with other schools (borrow or receive) to obtain resources for their classrooms. Most of the resources at this school is outdated and of little value to the teachers. The teachers indicated creative ideas but need the resources to fulfil these creative ideas. Some teachers would like to take the knowledge given to learners in the classroom beyond the classroom and implement knowledge outside the classroom allowing learners to experienced what was taught and learned in the classroom. Learners participate in extramural activities like netball, soccer and athletics but the facilities and equipment are lacking.

4.5 Summary of this chapter

In this chapter, I analysed the data according to theme analysis described by Braun (2006) in Chapter 3. The themes were clearly identified and I used sub themes to describe each theme in detail. I constantly moved between the data and the analysis as suggested by Engelbrecht (2016). Theme one focused on teachers having empathy towards learners and showing understanding for learners. Some learners indicate vulnerabilities in the classroom and teachers need to be empathetic towards them. Learners were diverse: teachers needed to encourage differences and allow learners to develop at their own pace. It takes time to teach and to learn teachers allowing themselves and their learners enough time to develop. Showing an understanding for learners by encouraging differences and making time for learners to learn teachers can make a difference in these learners' lives.

Theme two focused on the teacher as the most important resource in the classroom environment. Teachers as individuals need to focus on their own training, their future development, learning from each other and personal motivation to sustain teaching in the classroom.

Theme three focused on classroom practices to create learning environments conducive for learning. Proper planning, discipline, continuous assessments and feedback enable teachers to create such environments. Factors, such as, classroom interruptions causing learners to lose focus should be avoided. To create positive learning environments taking into consideration the low resources, teachers need to use creativity, innovations and initiatives to ensure learning.

Theme four focused on the effect resources have on the learning environment. The learning environment, both inside and outside classrooms, relies on resources to assist teachers with the learning process. Resources need to be borrowed from other school because of the shortage. Some of the resources are outdated and not relevant and irrelevant to the learners.

CHAPTER 5:
RESEARCH FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I discuss the findings from the research and reply to the main research question, indicating: How does teacher work engagement impact on creating positive learning environments for learners in low resource schools? The main purpose of this chapter is to link all the components of the main research question and sub-questions. The value of this study and potential further studies are briefly discussed. The main aim of this study was to establish how teachers in low resource schools attempt to create learning environments, conducive for learning.

5.2 Research Questions

5.2.1 Main research question

How does teacher work engagement impact on creating positive learning environments for learners in low resource schools?

5.2.2 Secondary research questions

- How does resilience (self-efficacy) impact on teachers' work engagement?
- How does the lack of resources impact on creating a positive learning environment?

5.3 Overview of the study

In this study, the engagement of teachers in the classroom was investigated to establish if resilience (self-efficacy) plays a role in creating a positive learning environment where learners can learn considering the lack of resources.

5.3.1 Placing this study in the conceptual framework

The conceptual framework was discussed in Chapter 2. In this section I refer to the placing of this study in the conceptual framework to establish a clear link. The Social Cognitive Career Theory of Lent (1994) was used as conceptual framework. Lent (1994) based his theory on Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory but included the development of careers. Lent (1994) further focusses on how self-efficacy

(resilience), the predictions of outcomes and setting of achievable goals are interrelated in the development of a career. Lent's Social Cognitive Career Theory mentions these three aspects as the primary building blocks for career development.

In this study, these aspects of Lent's Social Cognitive Career Theory are linked to work engagement. Lent (1994) refers to self-efficacy (resilience) as a person's thought process and reaction when confronted with an obstacle. In this study teachers are confronted with the lack of resources daily. For the teachers to ensure learning within the classroom, they need to overcome these obstacles through a process of thought and react accordingly. Lent (1994) states that outcome expectations involve the imagined consequences of performing a particular behaviour. In this study teachers needed to predict what the outcome of a situation will be by their behaviour. If they do not have the necessary resources available to conduct a lesson, the outcome they seek might be different. The teachers need to think sensibly to ensure that all possible outcomes are being considered when planning a lesson. The teachers need to ensure that outcomes are met. The methods to achieve the outcome might vary from their initial imagination. By setting achievable goals, individuals are more organised and their behaviour indicates a guide towards the achievement of set goals (Lent, 1994).

Teachers set goals to achieve outcomes. The interrelations between these two building blocks are clearly demonstrated. In this study the setting of goals for teachers allowed them to properly plan to achieve the desired outcomes. The lack of resources is a reality but by using creativity, initiatives and innovations, teachers can achieve outcomes by setting achievable goals through proper planning. The concept of work engagement is defined as a positive, fulfilling and work-related state of mind, characterised by vigour, dedication and absorption (Schaufeli, 2002). This definition clearly links to Lent's Social Cognitive Career Theory regarding self-efficacy (resilience); setting goals and achieving desired outcomes.

5.3.2 Linking the themes to literature and the conceptual framework

5.3.2.1 Theme One

Schaufeli (2003) states, for a teacher to be engaged in his or her working environment, they need an effective connection with the learners. Understanding learners and being aware of their vulnerabilities, indicates this effective connection. Through the participants learning experience, awareness, understanding the learners and effective connections, they became more engaged in these learners lives, ensuring that they understand these learners' interests, set achievable goals for learners and take the necessary actions to achieve desired outcomes. Being aware that learners are different and accommodating these differences, indicates a constant involvement by teachers in their work. Accommodating these differences can be demanding and provide certain challenges. Teachers involved with their learners, are actively engaging in the learning process. Being actively involved is a positive and fulfilling state of mind and can be characterised by vigour, dedication and absorption (Schaufeli, 2002).

To accommodate different learners, these teachers needed to show resilience. According to Patterson (2004), resilience refers to using one's energy productively to achieve goals, despite challenging conditions. In the conceptual framework, this links to the concept of self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is a changing attribute, allowing the participant to change their performance level, based on the circumstances (Lent, 1994). As shown in Chapter 2, a clear link exists between self-efficacy and resilience. Resilience can therefore be a strong belief by the participants in their own abilities to ensure learning despite the difference they experience amongst the learners. From the data, it was clear that teachers spend voluminous time in the day to ensure learning. Most of the participants allowed time to revise work done the previous day to ascertain if learning took place. These teachers indicated constant engagement with their learners.

Klassen (2012) mentions that engaged teachers display a constant energy and are motivated to complete the impending task, ensuring learning even though "time" places a different demand on them. This relates to self-efficacy. Wheatley (2002) states that self-efficacy is a belief in one's own ability to influence outcomes.

These teachers believed if they spend more time with learners, the outcomes would be more satisfying. In the conceptual framework the “time” used by these participants to achieve the desired outcomes, refers to the “action” participants take (Lent, 1994). These actions allow the participants to ensure learners clearly understand the concepts explained to them and that they (the learners) can apply these concepts in their everyday lives. These participants want to make a difference.

One of the characteristics of work engagement is vigour. Vigour, according to Schaufeli (2004) indicates high levels of energy, being constantly involved and a willingness to put effort in one’s work. These participants indicated high levels of energy. Rose even danced with her learners. Work engagement is also characterised by dedication (Schaufeli, 2004). A sense of enthusiasm and making a difference in learners' lives describes dedication (Schaufeli, 2004). In the conceptual framework by Lent (1994), the sense of making a difference relates to outcome expectation. Outcome expectations refer to consequences experienced by the participants, based on particular behaviours (Lent, 1994). Making a difference can be seen as such a particular behaviour. There is also a link to self-efficacy, if a participant doubts that certain behaviour will produce a certain outcome, they will avoid or alter the action (Lent, 1994).

5.3.2.2 Theme Two

Ebersöhn (2014) states that a teacher is the most important resource available in the classroom. Learning opportunities refer to graduate courses and informal learning opportunities (Richter 2011). Hobfoll (2003) states that personal resources (training) can be linked to resilience and the teachers’ ability to make a difference in their classroom environments. With sufficient training, teachers can identify changing circumstances. Richter (2011) mentions a positive link between teachers’ own learning and work engagement. The more teachers are exposed to their own learning; they can identify situations in the classroom and have a clear understanding of these situations.

Castro (2010) refers to the ever-changing classroom environment situation, where teachers need to constantly adapt to change. Proper training in the form of education

will provide teachers with the ability to change teaching styles to adapt to changing situations. According to the conceptual framework Lent (1994), the concept of training links to learning experiences. These learning experiences allow teachers to predict more satisfying outcomes and increases self-efficacy and the teachers' belief in their own ability to complete the impending task. It allows the teacher to identify goals more clearly and the actions needed to take to achieve set goals.

Macey (2008) mentions that teachers have a relationship with their work and are committed. This relationship allows teachers to gain satisfactions from their work and more importantly, continue to gain satisfaction. If teachers engage in future development of skills, they become more engaged in their classroom and the level of commitment increases. By expanding their personal knowledge, they ensure to keep learners more engaged and become role models for their learners (Lombarts, 2010). In the conceptual framework of Lent (1994), this level of commitment links to resilience (self-efficacy). Brunetti (2006) defines resilience as a quality a teacher has; this quality helps a teacher to maintain commitment teaching despite adverse circumstances. If a teacher were committed to teaching he or she would strive to improve personal knowledge.

Bandura (1994) mentions four sources that influence self-efficacy. One of these sources refers to creating models. This refers to seeing teachers or individuals perceived to be same to oneself succeed by doing things differently encourages oneself (teachers) - the belief that they have similar capabilities to attempt similar activities and succeed. Creating a mentorship programme in a school, allows teachers to support and encourage each other to achieve goals and to understand the different paths to achieve set goals. In the conceptual framework, mentorship links to self-efficacy. Bandura (1999) states that self-efficacy plays a key role in shaping the directions individuals' lives take. The type of activities individuals partake in and the environment influences these directions. Mentorship is such an activity.

Schaufeli (2004) states that work engagement is an affective-motivational state of fulfilment. One of the notions described by Eldridge (2013), is an individual factor that promotes resilience and motivation is linked to this notion. Sinclair (2008) refers to the challenges experienced by teachers every day. When these challenges are

matched to the motivations and teachers' experience to succeed; this indicates motivated teachers show more commitment. In the conceptual framework of Lent (1994) the concept of motivation links to self-efficacy. According to Lent (2008) self-efficacy relates to a person's belief about their ability to perform a goal. To believe in oneself a person needs to have personal motivation. Xanthopoulou (2009) states, the higher the personal resource (motivation), the higher the individual's self-efficacy and their ability to achieve goals.

5.3.2.3 Theme Three

A foundation for learning is critical in any educational setting (Sutliff, 2008). Planning forms part of this foundation. A teacher needs to be prepared when teaching learners. Allinder (1994) states that teachers who display great levels of self-efficacy are more engaged and express high levels of organisation and planning. According to Lent (1994) in the SCCT, choice of behaviour reflects the actions a participant will take to achieve set goals. Planning is a choice of behaviour, allowing teachers to identify what they need to do to achieve specific outcomes.

The concept of self-efficacy plays a role in the planning phase of teaching. Lent (2008) states that self-efficacy is a belief in oneself to perform tasks required to achieve success in one's classroom. Hébert (2014) mentions that teachers are responsible for nurturing the social and emotional development of learners. By providing structure, teachers create a nurturing environment. Being part of a classroom where each learner is valued as a contributing member, helping and supporting each other (Schaps, 2007). In a classroom, with discipline, continuous learner assessment to ensure learning takes place and where both learner and parents are informed of the progress, allow learners to develope.

In the conceptual framework, I linked discipline, assessments and feedback to outcome expectation. According to Lent (1994), outcome expectations refer to consequences of performing particular behaviour. Rakow (2005) states that learners need to be part of a supportive and respectful learning environment. A classroom where interruptions happen frequently, is not a respectful learning environment. Teachers need to respect each other's teaching time and not allow for unnecessary interruptions.

Wright (2014) mentions that a positive culture is also represented in the way colleagues treat each other. In the conceptual framework Lent (1994), classroom interruptions can be linked to the choice of behaviour of the teachers in a particular situation. A teacher can continue to allow these interruptions and these interruptions can become part of the classroom environment, or they can choose to end these interruptions and create a respectful environment, conducive to learning.

According to Vandeyar (2014), a culture rich classroom is identified by various metaphors. When a teacher uses creativity, innovations and initiatives, they create an environment where learners feel a sense of belonging. Purkey (2008) states learners need to feel respect, trust and optimism to feel part of the classroom. Improvisation rather than scripted performances as a framework for curriculum can make classrooms more hospitable for learners (Corbett, 2013). In the conceptual framework of Lent (1994), the concepts of creativity, innovation and initiatives are linked to resilience. Tait (2008) describes resilience as a mode of interacting events in the environment that is activated and nurtured in times of stress. This indicates that teachers become more creative, more innovative and have more initiative when they experience stress factors such as, the lack of resources.

5.3.2.4 Theme Four

According to UNESCO (2015) rural and remote schools globally comprise fewer resources than urban schools. Grubb (2008) states that classroom resources or “simple resources are not a reality in these schools.” Most South African schools lack materials, infrastructural resources and basic services and facilities (Mukeredzi, 2013). UNESCO (2015) further states that availability of textbooks, other instructional materials and facilities is key to improving education.

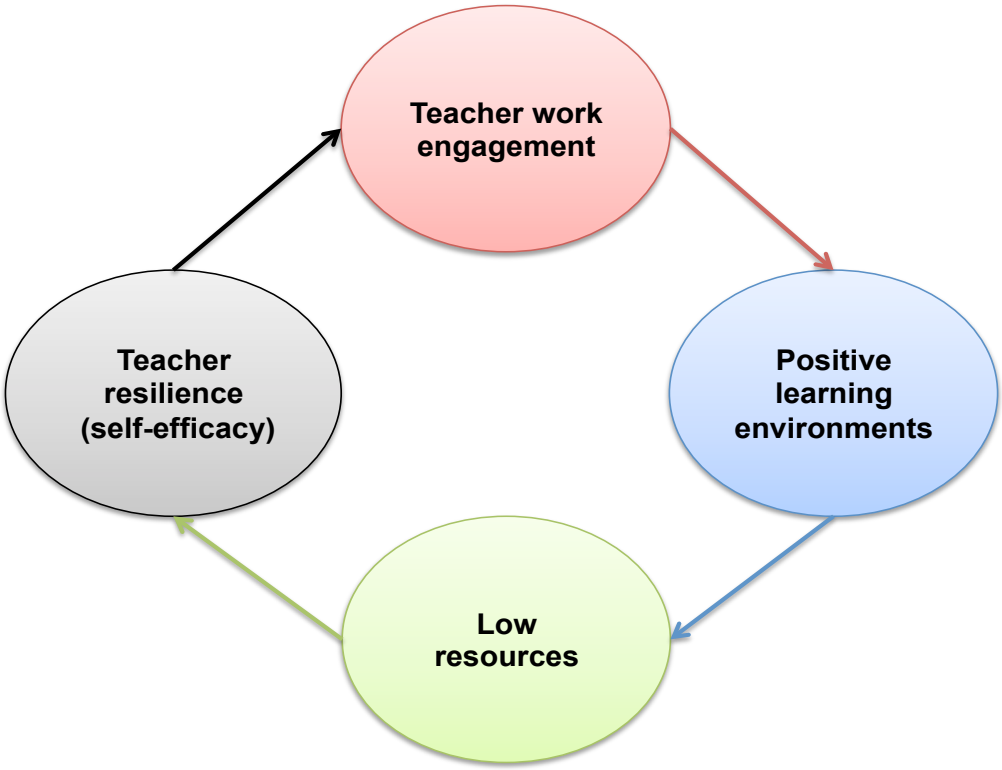
Oswald (2003) refers to resilience as the capacity to overcome environmental stressors (lack of resources) and can “bounce back.” Education is not a priority in several national budgets according to UNESCO (2015). Further according to UNESCO (2015), governments cannot provide services to rural schools, due to financial constraints; this can cause resources at rural schools to become outdated.

For teachers to continue teaching even if resources are outdated, they need to rely on their own resilience to ensure learning in their classroom. In the conceptual framework Lent (1994), this urge to continue despite the lack of proper resources, can be linked to self-efficacy and outcome expectations. Grubb (2008) mentions that several effective resources cannot be bought, referring to money spend on resources in the classroom. The most effective resource is the teacher. These teachers have several great ideas to incorporate learning outside the classroom, but if resources inside the classroom were not sufficient, it would be difficult to accommodate resources outside the classroom. Once again according to the conceptual framework of Lent (1994), this lack in outside resources will link to self-efficacy and resilience.

5.4 Findings of this study

The findings of this study are depicted in Figure 5.1. The concepts of the main research questions are linked through the findings.

Figure 5.1: Concepts of main research question



5.4.1 The link between teachers' resilience (self-efficacy) and teachers' work engagement

Resilience is a quality that enables teachers to maintain their commitment to teaching, despite challenging conditions and recurring setbacks (Brunetti, 2006). Most of the participants were not familiar with the concept of resilience and could not describe the concept. When resilience was explained concerning their behaviour in the classroom, several participants could relate to the concept. The participants understood resilience to be "the thing" that they do in the classroom daily but could not name what they are doing. These participants overcome their personal vulnerabilities and can "bounce back" daily; this describes resilience Oswald (2003). For these teachers to be resilient, they need to understand their circumstances and what influences these circumstances. These circumstances might be influenced by the environment, work-specific or in a personal context (Sammons, 2007). There was a clear understanding amongst the participants that resilience is a necessity in the environment where they teach.

The participants understood, to be resilience they need to be engaged. All the participants engaged in their classroom, especially concerning their learners. According to Schaufeli (2002), work engagement in the teaching profession is a sense of energy and an effective connection with the learners and the learning environment. These participants understood engagement, as being actively involved in the classroom. Participants showed empathy towards their learners and understood that learners are vulnerable due to their circumstances. They showed commitment to ensure learning and revealed that learning takes time. The participants agreed that they want to make a difference in these learners' lives and that they want their learners to actively take part in their own communities by making a difference.

I found Sunflower and Rose to be most empathic towards their learners. Rose especially, stated that she wanted to provide hope for her learners, enabling them to achieve different goals by approaching things differently. The teachers tried to accommodate each learner's different learning style. All the participants made used of the revision method, indicating that the work taught the previous day are reviewed the following day. This ensures that each learner can review the previous day's work

and, in effect, it lengthens the time it takes to ensure learning. These participants positively contributed to each learner in their classroom by making a difference.

From data collected in this study, there is was clear understanding amongst the participants that to be resilient, they needed to be engaged with the learners in the classroom environment and the content of what is being taught. Klassen (2012) states, being an engaged teacher, teachers need to stay motivated, display energy, complete tasks and deal with complex demands, in one workday. A clear link is present between resilience and work engagement in this study.

5.4.2 The link between teachers' work engagement and creating positive learning environments

Richter (2011) mentions a positive link between work engagement and professional learning. Most of the participants in this study completed a professional teacher's training and received a certificate, diploma or a degree qualifying them as teachers. Some of these qualifications were not obtained within the borders of South Africa and some qualifications are not linked to education. All the participants expressed the need to enhance their qualifications with further studies. Daffodil expressed a need to expand her knowledge in Mathematics and Daisy would like to complete a course in classroom assessment.

Ebersöhn (2014) states that teachers are the most important resource available to ensure effective learning. These teachers need to embark on continuous professional development or further studies to keep abreast of developments in the field of education. The main reason for the lack in continuous professional development or further studies, from the teachers and from the school, is the lack of funds. There are no teacher training or teacher workshops available to overcome the gap in training. Contrary to what is happening in public schools where CPD is an important function of the provincial Department of Education; independent schools are not included in these opportunities or services. The participants have all expressed a need for such training.

Teachers become reliant on each other to cope in this environment. The need for a formal mentorship programmes was mentioned, where teachers can assist each

other when the need arises. All these participants are well motivated to do their best and internal motivation is a strong component of work engagement. For teachers to be engaged in their work, they need to have the knowledge, by having knowledge and continue to learn about the environment will assist these teachers to create learning environments, conducive for learning.

To create a successful learning environment for all learners, teachers need to be responsive to all learners' needs (Blecker, 2010). Vandeyar (2014) states that a classroom should be culture-rich, validating the identity of each learner and allowing learners to learn from each other. During the observations, I experienced the classrooms to be inclusive of all learners. Teachers were aware of learners who might be experiencing learning challenges and accommodated them accordingly.

The classroom discipline indicates, all classrooms are of a high standard and all learners are aware of their place within the classroom walls. Regular assessments occur and proper feedback is provided to parents. Most of the participants have planning schedules, allowing them to conduct their lessons. Sunflower was the most organised and well-prepared for her lessons daily. She had a planning file, which displayed the content and context of her lessons for each term. Planning plays an important role, especially in a low resource school.

Participants in this study understood, to be actively involved in the classroom, they needed to build and enhance their own knowledge as educators. The lack of personal funds and other family commitments restricted the possibilities of making this enhancement of knowledge possible. When the teachers are engaged in their work within the classroom and they have new knowledge, they can improve their classroom as a learning environment. The data collected from these participants, indicate a clear link in this study, between work engagement and positive learning environments.

5.4.3 The link between positive learning environments and low resources

The availability of textbooks, other instructional material and facilities are of pivotal importance to improve education (UNESCO, 2015). Schools in low income areas do not have enough classrooms for learners and portray restricted access to resources

(Ebersöhn, 2012). Some of the poorly resourced schools are lacking in basic infrastructure (Chudgar, 2015).

During the first interview, the lack of proper resources was discussed with each participant. Parents provided a basic set of resources at the beginning of the year but these sets did not last for an entire year. All the participants understood the impact the lack of resources had on learning in their classroom. They understood that they needed resources to develop learners' skills, especially for the younger learners. Sunflower spend approximately R600 of her salary per month to provide resources for her classroom in terms of worksheets printed from the Internet and stationery, such as glue and colouring pencils. Daisy utilised textbooks and she felt these textbooks were outdated and irrelevant to her lessons. Rose believed that learners needed to learn by playing, but resources outside the classroom were lacking, therefore learners could not use skills taught in the classroom to develop it outside of the classroom. During the second interviews, I asked the participants if they had funds available to spend on their classrooms and on what would they spend it. Most of the participants responded that they would buy basic stationery.

There was a clear understanding amongst the participants that the lack of classroom resources is not the only aspect contributing to creating a positive learning environment. The participants were fully aware of the role they needed to fulfil in the in creation of this environment. The concepts of creativity, innovation and initiative assist these teachers in creating an environment, conducive to learning. I found some of the participants to be creative, innovative and some displayed great initiative to ensure learning. Daffodil followed a strict programme in her classroom, but I found the way she teaches two different grades simultaneously, innovative. During Rose's classroom observation, she incorporated the items of clothing the learners wore, to teach learners different colours. I thought it was creative. Sunflower displayed learners' work as learning aids in her classroom, creating a sense of belonging amongst her learners. Sunflower created a classroom inclusive of all her learners (Vandeyar, 2014). Despite the lack of resources in the classroom environment, I found the participants eager to create positive learning environments.

To summarise, participants understood they could not change the shortage of resources in their classrooms, but they still needed to create an environment where learners could learn. Some participants took it upon themselves to buy much needed resources for their classroom to assist learners and themselves to learn and conduct lessons. The participants felt that the lack of resources influenced their classroom activities and the way in which they presented lessons to learners, but they acquired to use creativity, innovations and initiatives to overcome the lack of resources and could still create positive learning environments.

5.4.4 The link between low resources and teachers' resilience (self-efficacy)

Bandura (1994) states, a resilient sense of efficacy requires experience in overcoming obstacles through perseverant efforts. Individuals with high efficacy show great cognitive resourcefulness and strategic flexibility enabling them to manage their environments more effectively and productively (Wood, 1989). These two statements can imply that the "obstacles" to overcome, refers to the lack of resources; and to "manage their environments" refers to the creation of a positive learning environment. The participants in this study indicated a sense of resilience in coping with the obstacles faced. The way they dealt with it, varied from participant to participant.

All participants stated that they wanted to "make a difference" in their learners' lives. To make a difference these teachers needed to deal with various obstacles in a workday. Bandura (1999) mentions that human well-being and accomplishments require an optimistic and resilient sense of efficacy. I found all the participants in the study extremely optimistic and motivated to ensure they provided the best for their learners. Sunflower stated that it is important to believe in oneself and your ability to do a good job. Daffodil mentioned that due to personal motivation, she is more in control of her surroundings. Bandura (1994) indicates, a belief in your own capabilities to produce designated levels of performance exercise influence over events that affect lives, describes self-efficacy.

The reality remains that resources are lacking in this school environment. The teachers cannot change this. The resources available are utilised to their full potential. The ways in which they dealt with the lack of resources are important. Sunflower bought her own resources; Daisy made learning aids for her classroom;

Rose borrowed or received resources from a neighbouring school. These teachers did something about the lack in resources, indicating an important component of the study. By “doing something” these teachers showed resilience. Edwards (2010) states, resilience is the capacity to personally contribute towards and use resources available in any setting to ensure development.

I realised that for teachers to cope with the reality of a lack of resources in their classroom environment and school environment, they need to show resilience to remain positive and motivated and to continue teaching. Due to the circumstances indicated in this study, the lack of resources in this school will not be resolved soon. Teachers need to utilise the resources available. Hobfoll (1989) indicates, teachers need to obtain, retain and protect available resources. By protecting the available resources, teachers ensure the continuous use of these resources. The problem occurs when these resources run out, such as stationery. There is no funding available to purchase stationery. This is when teachers rely on themselves or others to obtain more stationery for learners to continue the learning process. This is where teacher resilience plays an important role. What to do when you do not know what to do?

5.4.5 Main research question: How does teacher work engagement impact on creating positive learning environments for learners in low resource schools?

The concept of work engagement in the teaching profession is a sense of energy and an effective connection with the learners and work activities conducted in a learning environment (Schaufeli, 2003). In this study, I have observed Sunflower to have an effective connection with her learners; she indicated empathy towards learners and was fully aware of every learner’s ability in her classroom. Daisy and Daffodil indicated a keen interest in connecting with learners during work activities. They were actively involved by constantly walking through the class during the lesson to ensure all their learners participated in the learning activity. Rose indicated a great sense of energy. She believes learners learn the best through imitating their teachers. Rose jumps, runs and sings using hand signals to encourage learners to learn by imitating her. St Josephs’ learners were passionate about his subject because he connected with his learners by transferring his passion to them. Work engagement is

characterised by vigour, dedication and absorption according to Schaufeli (2002). The teachers (participants) in this study displayed most of these characteristics.

A positive learning environment can be described as a psychological atmosphere that nurtures and shapes learners' attitudes about their own identities, classes, school and learning (Major, 2008). I observed that the teachers aim to create a learning environment where all learners are included. Sunflower displayed learner projects as part of learning aids to make learners feel included in each lesson. Daisy taught her learners a song that learners sung to each other if a goal was met. Daffodil allowed learners to learn from each other by encouraging group work. Rose assisted learners when mistakes were made to correct them and then provided paper stars on a chart, indicating achievements. St Joseph allowed learners to actively construct problems and find workable solutions to these challenges. Learners in these classrooms were all nurtured and encouraged to find their own identities, while learning.

Rakebe (2015) states that basic inputs, such as a textbooks and learning aids, positively affect educational outcomes for inadequately resources schools. The understanding is clear that resources in the classroom affect learning. Ebersöhn (2014) refers to the teacher as the most important resource available. I observed in this study that teachers are an important resource in low resource schools. The way they handle obstacles to ensuring learning in the classroom, is commendable. This school is a low resource school, remains a fact and it is not going to change soon so teachers need to use creativity, innovations and initiatives to ensure learning. Sunflower utilised the Internet and own funding to ensure learners had appropriate worksheets to work from when conducting her lessons. Daisy used recycled paper for learners to do exercises on. St Joseph encouraged learners to produce their own product they can sell to obtain other resources. Daffodil handwrote all her worksheets for learners to complete after she presented a lesson. Teachers in this low resource environment decided to do whatever it takes to work around the resources and ensure learning takes place in their classrooms.

I have therefore reached the conclusion that low resources affect learning in the classroom. Even if teachers are prepared to conduct a lesson and they do not have

the required resources, they cannot convey the content in such a manner that learners can understand. Learners use all their senses to learn; if all the senses are not stimulated, learning cannot fully occur.

The participants in this study were fully aware of their circumstances but were still willing to make a difference. They made a difference by being fully engaged in their work and involved with their learners. They attempted to create an environment conducive to learning and enabled learners to be fully included in this environment. The process of being involved on such a level creates hardship and despair for these participants. Sometimes they felt like giving up and walk away but as Sunflower stated "*When I look at my children, walking away is not an option*." I gained great respect for these participants.

5.5 Significance of the study

Literature discussed in Chapter 2 indicates all the components of the main research question. This research question was not new to the literature but the participants in this study became more aware of the impact they as teachers have on the utilisation of the resources in their classrooms and the necessity to create a positive learning environment. A positive learning environment allows learners to feel safe and included in a place where they can learn. These participants fully grasp the socio-economic backgrounds of the learners in their classroom and show a great sense of empathy towards the learners. A sense of empathy allows these participants to accommodate all the learners in the classroom and assists the learners with their specific learning styles and learning difficulties. The participants also reflected on their qualifications as educators and identified areas where they as individuals, need to improve. All the participants indicated a keen interest in pursuing further knowledge to assist them to improve themselves.

For the first time participants had the opportunity to discuss what they do in their classrooms, providing them with a sense of acknowledgement for making a difference. The participants were aware that the lack of resources affected the learners in the classroom; they could not change this situation. They were therefore compelled to do something themselves to deal with the situation. The participants needed to be creative, innovative and use initiative to ensure learning. Sometimes

they felt out of their comfort zones, but by placing themselves in new zones they could develop as educators. The ability to do something about the situation provided them with an internal motivation to continue to attempt changing their situation and the learners' circumstances. Participants realised that they were the only ones who could effectively change these circumstances and they were willing. This study became a workshop, allowing the participants to self-discovery and to better understand themselves and their circumstances.

5.6 Possible further studies

5.6.1 How does the curriculum provided by the Department of Education (CAPS) impact on teacher work engagement in low resource schools?

During the first interviews, the participants all referred to CAPS as guideline for the content taught in the classroom. This CAPS guideline does not take into consideration the resources available at schools. It provides details of the content that should be taught to learners at a certain level or grade. If I take Science as an example, in the CAPS there are certain experiments that need to be completed to explain a concept. These experiments often include certain apparatus and materials. Low resource schools do not have these apparatus or materials to conduct these experiments. Teachers in low resourced schools often need to improvise to complete these experiments. When they improvise to do these experiments, do they still convey the same content as described by CAPS? In some cases, teachers avoid these experiments due to the lack of resources. Learners might not understand the concept due to experiments not being conducted. When teachers avoid these experiments, does it mean there is a lack in work engagement or is teacher attempt improvising these experiments, actually showing increased work engagement? These aspects deserve more detailed research to explore the ways in which this could be addressed.

5.6.2 How does the curriculum in low resource primary schools impact on learners when they attend better resourced high schools?

Several of the learners who completed their primary school education in a low resource school, attend better resourced high schools when entering Grade 8. UNESCO (2015) mentions that non-salary expenditure is mostly allocated to

secondary education, indicating little funds are available for pre-primary and primary education. These learners completed their primary education in a school where resources were low and the content of the curriculum might have been lost since teachers needed to use improvisation to convey knowledge. These learners might not be equipped with the relevant knowledge to successfully start their high school career. The primary school forms part of the foundation phase in education and should lay a solid foundation for learners to build their education on. This might place these learners at a disadvantage when attending a better resourced high school. More research on this transition challenge is needed.

5.7 Conclusion

In the conclusion of this study I would like to reflect on resources playing an important role in the education of learners. Schools globally and especially in South Africa, experiences the lack of resources. This reality is not going to change and teachers need to cope with this daily. Teachers are compelled to manage with the resources they have and ensure the protection of these resources for future use. This duty places additional pressure on teachers; if they do not protect the resources available, there might be a time that they do not have any resources. Constantly coping with this stressor, teachers also need to ensure they can create positive learning environments where learners can learn and they can teach despite the lack of resources, putting more pressure on teachers. The question arises: How do teachers do this? Teachers coping with these stressors daily create positive learning environments and ensure learning, show resilience as a special characteristic. A sense of continuing despite all the challenges, make them "*resilient teachers*." In this study, I found the teachers to be resilient in the sense that they are passionate about teaching; they want to ensure that learners can learn and they want to make a difference. The teachers are committed and they want to achieve the best possible outcome for each learner. The teachers use creativity, innovations and initiatives daily to assist them to achieve these outcomes. From a personal perspective, this study inspired me in my teaching career to be aware of my surroundings and not to take the resources that I have available in my classroom for granted. It also allowed me the opportunity to meet exceptional teachers and learn from them.

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7. ANNEXURES

7.1 ANNEXURE A: Informed Consent

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION AND INFORMED CONSENT

How does teacher work engagement impact on creating positive learning environments for learners in low resource schools?

Research conducted by:

Mrs. H. Venter (14417317)

Cell: 083 616 0836

Dear Participant

You are invited to participate in an academic research study conducted by Heidi Venter a student from the Department of Education (Humanities) at the University of Pretoria. The purpose of the study is to investigate the impact of teachers' work engagement in terms of creativity, improvisation and initiatives, using their own resilience to create positive learning environments for learners in low resource schools.

Please note the following:

- This is an anonymous interpretive qualitative research case study, as your name will not appear in the transcribing of interviews. The information you give will be treated as strictly confidential as you cannot be identified in person based on the information you give.

- Your participation in this study is very important to me. You may, however, choose not to participate and you may also stop participating at any time without any negative consequences.

- The research study will consist of 2 interviews (each interview is approximately 60 minutes), 1 lesson observation (for the duration of your lesson) and 1 final

interview (of approximately 60 minutes). All the above-mentioned will be video or audio recorded. These video or audio recordings will be treated with the strictest of confidentiality and will be solely used for research purposes.

- During the two interviews with you (the participant) I will asks some semi-structure questions in order to establish a basis for our conversation. We will discuss your classroom practices, your available resources, how you create, improvise and initiate learning in your classroom taking into consideration the low resource you have available in your school environment. These interviews will be done over the duration of the research study.

- During the duration of the research study I will be conducting one lesson observation. In this observation I would like to observe your actions in your classroom. If the data you have provided during your interview are the same as what you do in your class. This observation will consist of the following categories: demeanour, verbal behaviour and interactions, physical behaviour and gestures, personal space, utilisation of creativity, improvisation and initiatives in a low resource classroom. I would like to read through some of your lesson plans (if available), prescribe books and relevant documents that you use during your teaching process to make research notes. This observation will ensure that the data collected from you is authentic.

- A final interview will be conducted on completion of the data analysis and transcriptions. Transcriptions will be made available for you to review. During this interview final feedback from you (the participant) will be received. This is a final opportunity for us to ensure that all data provided is true reflection of your experiences and contributions to create a positive learning environment for the learners in your classroom taking into consideration your low resources.

- The benefit of participating in this research study is that it will afford you the opportunity to reflect together with me (the researcher) on your practices and professional development as a teacher.

- A possible negative consequence of taking part in this research study is that you might be confronted with a negative self-discovery while reflecting on your practice. In the unlikely case that this happens I will arrange for an appropriate debriefing with a qualified person.

- The results of the study will be used for academic purposes only and may be published in an academic journal. I will provide you with a summary of the findings on request.

- If you have any questions or comments regarding the study please contact me personally on the number provided or my study leader, Dr. S Coetzee, on 012 420 5555 or on sonja.coetzee@up.ac.za

- Please sign the informed consent on the following page and hand it to me (the researcher).

Regards

_____

Heidi Venter

Researcher

0836160836

Informed Consent

How does teacher work engagement impact on creating positive learning environments for learners in low resource schools?

Research conducted by:

Mrs. H. Venter (14417317)

Cell: 083 616 0836

Please sign the form to indicate that:

- I (the participant) have read and understood the information provided by the letter of introduction.
- I (the participant) hereby give informed consent to participate in the above-mentioned research study on a voluntary basis.
- I (the participant) acknowledge that I may withdraw from the research study at any given time.

_____

Participant's signature

_____

Date

7.2 ANNEXURE B: Basic information sheet

BASIC INFORMATION SHEET

How does teacher work engagement impact on creating positive learning environments for learners in low resource schools?

Dear Participant,

The information you provide by completing this page will help me understand who you are and where you come from. It will also help me to structure the research process in such a way that it suits your preferences. The information will never be known to belong to you specifically because when I write the findings of the research I will not use your name unless you give me permission to use your own name.

Name: Surname:

Gender: Age: Nationality:

Where did you grow up?

Your contact number(s):

In which town do you currently live?

Which language(s) do you speak at home?

Which language(s) do you speak at school?

Your contact number:

Are you currently studying? YES NO

If "Yes", please state the course name:

How do you rate you're your English language ability?

Reading in English:	Average	Good	Excellent
Writing in English:	Average	Good	Excellent
Speaking in English:	Average	Good	Excellent

Which grades are you teaching at the moment?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

Please list the subjects that you are currently teaching:

Which grades have you taught in the past? (Past experience)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

Please list the subjects that you have taught:

How long have you been teaching in a low resource school?

Less than 2 years	Between 2 to 5 years	More than 5 years

Describe your classroom, please?

Describe your school, please?

What resource-constraints do you have in your classroom?

Why do you teach?

7.3 ANNEXURE C: Interview schedule

INTERVIEW ONE

Participant Number

1	2	3	4	5

Date:	
Venue:	
Time started:	
Time ended:	
Interviewer:	
Observation:	
Video Code:	

Baseline questions.

1. Do you consent freely to participate in the video recorded conversation interview?
2. Give me a memory of your personal school experience.
3. Have you had any other profession before becoming a teacher?
4. When did you decide you wanted to be a teacher?
5. Where did you study to become a teacher?
6. What qualifications have you obtained?
7. How long was your Diploma or Degree?
8. Are you currently studying? Y/N - Details
9. Do you attend any staff training or courses? (School based or on your own).
10. If you had opportunities to attend staff training or courses, will you attend?
11. Do you think there are benefits in staff training, courses and further studies for yourself?
12. How long have you been teaching? This school and previous schools.
13. What grade are you currently teaching?
14. Describe you a typical day in your classroom.
15. What resources does your school provide for your classroom?
16. What resources do you provide for your classroom?

17. What resources do you think will make a drastic change in your classroom and why?
18. How do you use creativity, improvisation and initiatives to create learning in your classroom? Please provide some examples.
19. Does your school provide learners with opportunities to excel themselves?
20. How do you contribute to create these opportunities? Give some examples.

7.4 ANNEXURE D: Observation guidelines

OBSERVATION GUIDELINES

Participant Number

1	2	3	4	5

Date:	
Venue:	
Time started:	
Time ended:	
Interviewer:	
Observation:	
Video Code:	

The observations will vary from participant to participant since each observation will be different. Each participant (teacher) will be observed in his or her classroom environment. The focus of these observations will be to establish if the information the shared during the first interview is inline with the classroom practices. The researcher will observe the participant in order to establish how the participant creates a positive learning environment. The participant's utilisation of resources will be observes as well as how they use creativity, initiative and improvisation in order to ensure learning takes place. Consent will be obtained from each participant to video or voice record the observation.

Checklist.

1. Do you give consent to freely participate in the video or voice recorded observation?

YES	NO

2. The appearance of the participant (clothing, age, gender, physical appearance, dress code, etc.)
3. Verbal behaviour and interactions between participant (teacher) and learners.
4. Physical behaviour and gestures.
    - What does the participants do?
    - Who does what?

- Who interacts with whom?
- Who is not interacting? And Why?
- Body language.
- Voice control.
- Emotional relation to learners.

5. Personal space – relationships and interaction with learners.
6. Human traffic during the lesson – other teachers entering (classroom interruptions) and learners leaving the classroom for the bathroom.
7. Participants that stand out and why.
8. The use of resources in the classroom.
9. Preparation of participants.
10. Creativity – what does the participant do that is different?
11. Improvisations – how does the participant improvise when the classroom situation changes?
12. Initiatives – what personal initiatives does the participant reveal?
13. Creating a positive learning environment – is this environment conducive for learning?
14. Will the participant teach different if resource were sufficient?
15. Any other observation that is memorable.