An exploration of Life orientation educators' knowledge and the teaching of study skills in further education and training phase high schools in Ekudibeng Cluster, Gauteng East

By

REVIVAL BONGEKILE GAMA

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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

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I declare that **AN EXPLORATION OF LIFE ORIENTATION EDUCATORS' KNOWLEDGE AND THE TEACHING OF STUDY SKILLS IN FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING PHASE HIGH SCHOOLS IN EKUDIBENG CLUSTER, GAUTENG EAST** is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

_____ _____

SIGNATURE **DATE**

(Miss R. B. Gama)

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

CAPS	Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DOE	Department of Education
FET	Further Education and Training
LO	Life Orientation
NCS	National Curriculum Statement
NEEDU	National Education Evaluation and Development Unit
TIMSS	Trends in Mathematics and Science Study
PIRLS	Progress in International Reading Literacy Study
SACMEQ III	Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality
SCK	Subject Content Knowledge
PCK	Pedagogical Content Knowledge

ABSTRACT

This study aimed at exploring the Life Orientation (LO) teachers' knowledge and teaching of study skills in high schools, Ekudibeng cluster, Gauteng East. The Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) is the most recent curriculum policy (Department of Basic Education [DBE], 2012) and serves as an action plan to 2030 for the South African education system in order to address some of the origins of underperformance in South African schools (Nicolson, 2013). Life Orientation (LO) can be described as a learning area within the educational context that promotes the holistic development of a child. The educational context refers to all processes at school level involved in training children's minds and abilities so that they can acquire knowledge and develop skills to succeed in life. Life Orientation integrates subjects, such as life skills, career guidance, health education, physical education, human rights studies and religious education (Pillay, 2012). According to the Life Orientation 2011 CAPS document, Life Orientation teachers are expected to teach study skills to learners starting from grade 10 – 12 (Further Education and Training (FET) Phase (DBE, 2011).

Learning or study skills carry over into other areas of life and beyond school. Study skills are therefore critical tools that ensure that learner achievement leads to success. Furthermore, effective study skills need effective interaction between teachers and learners (Gettinger, & Seibert, 2002). The teacher is a social agent and should make study skills accessible through the process of teaching in the classroom. This implies that the teacher is a central tool for equipping the learners with the necessary study skills which can aid in the unlocking of their future potential (Sasikala, 2012). As such, it was considered important to explore the knowledge and skills for teaching LO as well as the challenges faced and their needs for further development. Three schools in Ekudibeng cluster, Gauteng East were purposefully selected for this purpose on the basis of their results in the previous year' matric exit examinations. Qualitative case studies of the Further Education and Training LO teachers' experiences at each of these schools were undertaken utilising semi-structured interviews as a data collection tool. The data were analysed via qualitative content analysis techniques.

The findings of this study emphasise the need for a focus on study skills teaching and teacher proficiency in the high school education system. The South African Education System role-players need to take LO seriously and have teachers qualified to teach LO, and to meet their needs through study skills training workshops. Comprehensive continuous improvement in learner

performance requires a constant determination of trained LO teachers, qualified for the subject and properly equipped with relevant knowledge to cascade it to learners and cooperative community members, where parents are involved/hands on in shaping their children's' future.

KEY WORDS

Life Orientation teachers' knowledge, Further Education and Training Band, study skills, schools' performance, subject content knowledge (SCK) and pedagogical content knowledge (PCK).

CHAPTER 1: ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This study is aimed at exploring the Life Orientation (LO) teachers' knowledge and teaching of study skills in high schools, Ekudibeng cluster, Gauteng East. South African school learners perform below scholastic achievement expectations. Teachers' knowledge and their teaching practices are explored from the perspectives of the teachers themselves in the form of their own constructions of study skills and personal reflections on how they teach them South African school teachers generally exhibit poor subject knowledge and consequently an incomplete understanding of both the requirements of the curriculum and how to enact it in their classes. Poor subject knowledge on the part of the teachers at every level of the system is evidently widespread. Apart from teachers' difficulty in implementing the curriculum, learners may struggle with actual learning processes (Taylor, 2012). The point of departure for this study is an awareness of the role that study skills may play in South African learners' achievement and acknowledgement of the need to explore how study skills are taught. Proper educational interventions may have a positive effect on learners' school performance. The improvement of learners' learning through the teaching of study skills to them may empower learners to attain success in their educational endeavor. Educational interventions such as study skills may have a positive contribution in improving the pass rates of historically underprivileged learners (Sikhwari, Selepe & Maluleke, 2012).

Study skills should be developed to form an integral part of the study programme, and be assessed. This might address the intricacy of skills comprehensively and in a holistic manner where the provision of learning opportunities for all learners will be provided progressively throughout their schooling life. The broader view of study skills is that their use is not only limited to school education, but also for the learners' lifelong personal and professional development (Wingate, 2006). High school education should introduce study skills aiming at the development of an adequate fit for learners between high schools and higher education institutions, in both the content covered as well as in the teaching and learning approach which will result in the diversity of study skills that are needed for success. Study skills prepare learners with time management and learning skills and they have a positive impact on learners' learning behaviour and academic achievement (Jansen & Suhre, 2010).

This chapter commences with the discussion of the background of the study (1.2), and the research problem in the context of shifts in the South African education system (1.3). This is

followed by the problem statement and the rationale for the study (1.4). An indication of the study's aims (1.5) is then provided with an overview of the research questions posed for the study and consideration of the potential contribution of the study. Then, section 1.6, presents the definitions of key terms for the study. The chapter concludes with the outline of chapters for the rest of the study (1.7).

1.2. BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

The South African education system introduced the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) in 2002. The National Curriculum Statement (NCS) Grades 10-12 is the policy statement for teaching and learning in South African schools set for the Further Education and Training band (FET) (Department of Education [DoE], 2003a). Various concerns regarding challenges in the implementation of the NCS have been raised by teachers. The Minister of Basic Education confirmed those challenges and pointed out that they served as pressure points that negatively impact on the quality of teaching in South African schools. The Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) was then proposed to serve as the mechanism that might address these challenges (Department of Basic Education (DBE), in 2011 and adopted in 2012. The Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement is a single, all-inclusive, and succinct policy document which has replaced the Subject and Learning Area Statements, Learning Programme Guidelines and Subject Assessment Guidelines for all the subjects listed in the NCS. The Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement provides details of what content teachers should teach and assess on a grade-by-grade and subject-by-subject basis. There are clearly outlined topics for each subject and a recommendation on the number and type of assessments per term. Outcomes and assessment standards are now called topics and themes and learning areas are called subjects (DBE, 2012). These curriculum changes are recent and it is very important that they make a positive difference on learning outcomes in the country given the history of poor learning outcomes in the system.

The vast majority of children are enrolled in primary schools in the country and a high percentage of learners progress to high school education. Although enrolment is therefore high, the quality of educational outcomes is of major concern. In 2004 nationally, 72% of all Grade 6 learners failed a national literacy test. In mathematics, the figure is substantially higher, with 88% of all Grade 6 learners failing to achieve the curriculum standard. Given the central problems of reading, writing and arithmetic, all further learning and most jobs in the formation of South African economy become affected (Taylor, Fleisch & Shindler, 2007). The poor performance of South Africa’s

primary schools in providing the basic education constitute one of the country's most urgent problems.

This demonstrates that the majority of Grade 6 learners who are failing to achieve the curriculum standard due to reading, writing and mathematics challenges acquired in primary schools are not only penalised in terms of further learning in high schools, but in terms of success in their adult lives, impacting the country's economic development. Learners' progress from primary to high schools without adequate academic preparation results in educational failures and drop outs without matric certificates. The mean score on the Trends in Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) in 2003 placed South African Grade 8 learners at the very bottom of 50 participating countries. Similar trends are evident in other cross-national studies of quality, where South Africa performs badly compared to a number of much poorer countries. For example, the TIMSS reports from 1995 to 2006 presented that in the past decade, while the number of high school learners that pass mathematics and physical science at the standard grade has grown, the number passing these subjects at higher grade level has remained more or less static after the decline in 1996. Out of a population of 980 000 Grade 12 learners doing mathematics, less than 140 000 passed and only 25 000 (2.5%) passed the subject at higher grade. While inadequate mathematics, language teaching and sources at high schools undoubtedly contribute to the poor output, it is self-evident that a major contributor is the poor foundations that the vast majority of learners received from their primary levels of schooling lives (Taylor, Fleisch & Shindler, 2007). Teaching strategy issues, content knowledge and understanding, motivation and interest, laboratory usage and syllabus non-completion are proposed as influential factors in the educational crisis in South Africa (Makgato & Makgato, 2006).

There are numerous factors that place many South African learners at risk. The introduction of the subject LO was an effort by the Department of Education (DoE) to intervene in this situation and make a difference in learners' lives (Prinsloo, 2007). LO is compulsory for all learners in the Senior and Further Education and Training phases of Basic Education. It offers opportunities for equipping South African learners with the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that cultivate confidence within themselves and lead them toward becoming responsible citizens. LO can be described as a learning area within the educational context that promotes the holistic development of a child. 'Educational context' refers to all the processes, at school level, entailed in training children's minds and abilities so that they can acquire knowledge and develop skills to succeed in life (DoE, 2002).

LO is one of the four central subjects which is the prerequisite for the National Senior Certificate, which means that it is mandatory for all learners in Grades 10, 11 and 12. This is a exceptional subject because it employs a holistic approach to viewing the learner. The LO curriculum inspires the development of a composed and assertive learner who can contribute not only to him or herself but also to the democratic society, a productive economy and an improved quality of life for all. LO as a subject comprises the following six topics in Grades 10 to 12: the development of self in the society; social and environmental responsibility; democracy and human rights; careers and career choices; study skills, and; physical education. The matters dealt with in each topic are connected with other issues covered in the other five topics of the subject. Owing to the interrelated and holistic nature of the subject, the six topics of LO function interdependently and are considered to be of equal importance. The time spent on each topic may vary and should not be used as a measure of the importance of the topic (DBE, 2012).

Since LO teachers are expected to teach learners strategies of studying their work they require specific knowledge, skills, values and attitudes so that they can make positive contributions in their schools. LO teachers should be the keystone teachers in schools. Many social issues in South Africa justify the need for highly trained and specialised LO teachers, especially because they are expected to contribute to the holistic development of learners. Subject knowledge and experience are central factors to consider with regard to LO teachers, but to be effective they then need to be trained to teach LO (Pillay, 2012).

There are numerous reasons why LO teachers struggle to teach LO and study skills to learners in secondary schools, FET phase. According to Prinsloo (2007), LO teachers struggle to understand the life world of learners from different cultures in one classroom. Teachers who are lacking in terms of training and skills automatically lack motivation and confidence. Furthermore, they have little influence on the learners' formation of values and are unable to modify the learners' behaviour. They struggle to maintain the learners' interest in most of the topics prescribed on the LO programme, specifically study skills. Environmental factors such as the learners' backgrounds, for instance children being heads of their households and poverty, can cause barriers in the manner of teaching and learning. Those learners who struggle for survival on a daily basis end up losing interest in the information that would be of use to them in the future (Prinsloo, 2007).

1.3. PROBLEM STATEMENT AND RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

The lack of knowledge of study skills and teaching methods cause problems not only for the teachers, but also for the learners (Mihrka, 2014). The effectiveness of any planned curriculum programme depends on the extent to which the curriculum is implemented. Thus the implementation of the LO curriculum demands knowledgeable and quality teachers with requisite skills that are informed by the subject philosophy (Prinsloo, 2007). Life Orientation is often taught by teachers who have not received specialised training in the learning area. Some teachers who teach LO lack sufficient support, are not sufficiently qualified, and are often frustrated by the limited time allocation for the learning area (Christiaans, 2006). This can be a contributing factor for learners' underperformance. This study aims to explore the LO teachers' knowledge and teaching of study skills. The main focus is on the LO teachers' experiences of their own competency in study skill knowledge and in conveying this to learners in the FET.

The 1994 democratic elections led to a new perspective of looking at society and re-organizing the education system in South Africa. There were new challenges facing the education system of the country as it had to change and curricula had to be redesigned to meet the 21st century challenges that learners faced globally (Skosana, 2010). Change in the education system as a whole requires changes to teaching and learning which must be implemented by teachers. The question is are teachers equipped with knowledge for implementing that change? The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act no. 108 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996, stipulates that all South Africans have democratic rights, such as that of human dignity, equality and freedom. Most of all, the Constitution further grants the right to access to basic education and places responsibility upon the government to make education available and accessible to all. Educational transformation took center stage with teachers serving as vehicles to support the shift from a content-based to a learner-centered education system in South Africa. Thus LO was introduced in Grades 10 to 12 to fulfill the goals of educational transformation (DoE, 2005). This implementation of LO presented the need of high-quality and focused teacher development to upgrade the pedagogical and didactical skills of Grades 10 to 12 LO teachers to the professional level that was required to successfully implement the LO through the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) (Marumo, 2010).

The problem is that there does not appear to be empirical evidence that any of the pre-service or in-service professional development programmes prepared LO teachers enough to teach learners LO and study skills that will help learners to develop holistically so as to be able to make sound

decisions for their lives and to become responsible citizens. It seems that despite many efforts on the part of government to provide teacher training for the new curriculum, learners in schools are performing dismally below the expectations of the DBE (Spaull, 2013). Moreover, academics in higher education institutions are complaining about learners' lack of preparedness on their entry to higher education institutions. The South African school system is continually producing learners who are inadequately prepared for higher education studies and who do not easily succeed in higher education (Sikhwari & Pillay, 2012).

Study skills seem to be one thing that most learners need and can benefit from, as attested to in the scholarly research. Many instructors and professionals believe that learners are not prepared or taught appropriate study skills prior to entering higher educational institutions (Simon, 2006). Simon (2006) states that in the United States of America (USA), learners often graduate from high school without having to study hard or give their all in order to pass. As a result, many learners enter higher levels of education with a severe lack of essential knowledge and the ability to study effectively. Many first year students drop out or fail to continue with their educational goals. There can be numerous reasons or factors that can contribute to the learners' failing to pass and succeed at high school level and in at post-secondary levels (Simon, 2006). The transition from primary to high school is the time when learners are expected to become independent learners with less guidance from teachers. New demands such as managing multiple teachers and assignments require learners to have organizational skills such as time management and self-management strategies. Teachers cannot assume that learners are able to manage all of these demands and must provide clear instruction in the area of study skills (Paulsen, 2014).

Nicolson (2013) discussed a study that was released by the National Education Evaluation and Development Unit (NEEDU) in their 2012/13 National Report. The study was called "The state of our education system" and revealed that teachers' lack of knowledge of the content they are trying to teach is a key problem in the nation's education system. A good teacher is one who engages her/his learners' cognitive attention through a set of activities and interactions with text and other materials. The teacher knows the subject well, and understands the level at which to pitch it for the grade being taught and the steps required to build up each concept. The problem is not the reluctance of the teachers to teach but their incompetence. South African teachers exhibit generally poor subject knowledge and that is a weakness which carries over as teachers without the necessary proficiency are promoted up the line. The report showed that many teachers simply do not know what they are teaching. Teachers need better training and capacity-building. Over the last two decades the government has invested billions of rand towards a wide range of

programmes designed to teach teachers. The problem is that it has not worked and the strategy of training teachers needs to change (Nicolson, 2013).

1.4. AIMS OF STUDY, RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND POTENTIAL SIGNIFICANCE

1.4.1. Aim of study

The purpose of the study was to explore secondary school LO teachers' knowledge and teaching of study skills in Ekudibeng cluster, Gauteng East. Since lack of study skills could be a contributing factor to underperformance in schools. The aim was to explore the LO their knowledge and teaching of study skills, to gain insights on the teachers' challenges of and on teaching study skills and their needs, which can be used for reflection and to enhance curriculum planning and implementation linked to study skills. Therefore, teachers' knowledge and their teaching practices are explored from the perspectives of the teachers themselves in the form of their own constructions of study skills and personal reflections on how they teach them. To gain such insight, the following areas were explored:

- Understanding of teachers' knowledge and their experience of teaching study skills to learners;
- Strategies that teachers use to teach study skills to learners;
- The challenges encountered by the teachers during the process of teaching study skills.

1.4.2. Main research question and sub-questions

Given the above-mentioned aims, the main research question for the study is:

- ***What are Life Orientation teachers' understandings of and teaching practices for study skills in FET Phase high schools in Ekudibeng Cluster, Gauteng East District?***

To assist in answering this main question, the following sub-questions have been formulated:

- What are Life Orientation teachers' knowledge in relation to the teaching of study skills in the Further Education and Training phase?
- How do LO teachers teach study skills as part of the Further Education and Training Life Orientation curriculum?

- What challenges do Life Orientation teachers experience which hinder the teaching of study skills in the Further Education and Training phase?
- What do Life Orientation teachers consider as important needs for the teaching of study skills in the Further Education and Training phase?

1.4.3. Significance and potential contribution of the study

The results of this study may provide Department of Basic Education policymakers, curriculum designers, LO specialists (facilitators) and researchers with insight into the role of study skills in the FET phase in schools. The DBE Specialists may gain insight which may improve their content and pedagogical knowledge of the subject. Lastly, researchers in a variety of disciplines can use the results of this study to conduct similar research studies in an attempt to enhance knowledge of other factors that contribute to the accomplishment of teaching LO and study skills specifically.

1.5. DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS FOR THE STUDY

This section (1.5.1- 1.5.4) defines terms used throughout this dissertation.

1.5.1. Further Education and Training Band

The Further Education Training (FET) band, is part of the secondary school phase of South African schooling. It comes after the General Education and Training band and comprises grades 10, 11 and 12. The FET band offers subject choices from amongst Mathematics, Languages, LO, Physical Science, Life Sciences, History, Geography and Tourism and others. Learners are expected to take seven subjects three of which are compulsory: two languages and LO (DoE, 2002).

1.5.2. The Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement

The Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) is the recent curriculum policy (DBE, 2012) that serves as an Action Plan to 2030 for the South African education system and was introduced by the DBE with the purpose of addressing some of the root causes of underperformance in South African schools. The CAPS is a single, all-inclusive, and succinct policy document, which has replaced the Subject and Learning Area Statements, Learning Programme Guidelines and Subject Assessment Guidelines for all the subjects listed in the

National Curriculum Statement Grades R - 12. The CAPS is the policy document that stipulates the aim, scope, content and assessment for each subject listed in the National Curriculum Statement Grades R - 12 (DBE, 2012), and provides details on what content teachers should teach and assess on a grade-by-grade and subject-by-subject basis. There are clearly outlined topics for each subject and a recommendation on the number and type of assessments per term. Outcomes and assessment standards are now called topics and themes and learning areas are called subjects for example according to LO programme, during the second term LO teachers have to teach study skills to learners in the FET phase (DBE, 2012).

1.5.3. Life Orientation

The National Department of Education (2003b:9) defines the subject Life Orientation (LO) as the study of the self in relation to others and to society. It is a subject concerned with the personal, social, intellectual, emotional, spiritual and physical growth and development of young people. Life Orientation is the school subject/Learning area that was introduced by the DBE with the aim of fulfilling the goals and principles for NCS implementation. Life Orientation is a learning area that is compulsory for all learners (DoE, 2003c).

1.5.4. Study skills

According to *American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, Fifth Edition* (2011, s.v. “study skills”) the concept study skills refers to the “abilities that can be learned to improve study habits. Learning these skills helps improve the ability to learn, take tests and excel academically. Studying is a skill that can be mastered like any other by first understanding the process and then by developing appropriate habits through active involvement. Study skills are procedures and approaches that help a learner to read or listen with determination so that they can remember” (American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, Fifth Edition, 2011). The term study skills covers a variety of skills needed for obtaining recording, organising, blending, remembering and using information presented. When learned and applied correctly, these skills allow learners to become effective, efficient and independent learners (Alderman, 2013).

1.6. CONCLUSION

Chapter 1 provided an overview of the study. The background to the study, the research problem and purpose, research objectives, research questions, significance and rationale of the study, and definition of key terms were presented in this chapter. The aim of the research presented in the rest of this dissertation is to explore LO teachers' knowledge and teaching of study skills to learners in FET secondary schools. The issue of teachers' subject content knowledge is vital for the success of the learners. In this case LO teachers are the targeted sample due to the fact that the DBE has entrusted LO teachers with shaping and developing learners holistically.

1.7. CHAPTER OUTLINE FOR THE REST OF THE STUDY

The first chapter introduced and provided a brief background to the study, the statement of the problem, specific research questions and aims of the study. The significance and the contribution of the study and the definitions of the terms were also presented.

Chapter 2 presents a review of the literature related to the study. It discusses the research results of other related research studies to the current study an exploration of LO teachers' knowledge and the teaching of study skills. In this chapter the following topics will be explored: The South African Further Education and Training Landscape, the importance of the development of learners' study skills, the teachers' subject content knowledge (SCK) and pedagogical content knowledge (PCK), and the theoretical framework for the study which includes psychological and sociological considerations.

Chapter 3 focuses on the research design and methodology with specific emphasis on the constructivist and interpretivist paradigms. This chapter further presents the research design, the sampling techniques, the data collection methods and the methods of data analysis. Ethical issues are considered and the methodological norms for qualitative research are addressed.

Chapter 4 presents findings from the data analysis for the qualitative case studies on teachers' knowledge of teaching study skills. This chapter the findings linked to purposively selected schools through their achievement profiles are considered. The data presented in this chapter is an incorporation of findings collected from the analysis of semi-structured interviews conducted with the FET phase Life Orientation Head of Departments and participating Grade 10, 11 and 12 teachers from the three selected schools, with two teachers and one HoD per school.

Chapter 5 presents and discusses the summary of the research process undertaken, an overview of research design implemented, summary of the research process, summary and discussions of the research findings, recommendations and closing thoughts.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines the literature related to learning challenges impacting learning performance, the overall curriculum of LO, and teachers' knowledge of and teaching of study skills in the high school FET phase in South Africa. Firstly the South African education and training landscape is considered (2.2). Thereafter the importance of the development of study skills is presented (2.3). This is followed by a discussion of the of the teachers' subject content knowledge (SCK) and pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) (2.4.). Next section (2.5), the theoretical framework for the study is presented where psychological and sociological perspectives on the research issue. Finally the chapter will be concluded (2.6).

2.2. THE SOUTH AFRICAN FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING LANDSCAPE

In this section, three subsections are presented as follows: consideration of South African learners' scholastic achievement is presented in 2.2.1. Following is the answer towards the question on what are the potential causes of FET learners' achievement challenges. In 2.2.2 Lastly in this section is the discussion of the expectations of South African learners in the FET in relation to Life Orientation in 2.2.3.

2.2.1. South African learners' results in exit examinations as well as local, regional and international assessments.

This subsection discusses South African learners' results in exit examinations and Regional and international assessment performance.

2.2.1.1. Annual national matriculation examinations

Grade 12 is the exit point of formal high school education in South Africa. Therefore the process of standardisation is implemented by Umalusi who is the body that serves as a watchdog in basic education, before the formal release of the matric examination results into the public sphere. This standardisation process is intended to correct possible fluctuations in performance that might be the result of factors within the examination processes, rather than in the knowledge and abilities of the learners. Overall, the number of learners writing the matriculation examination in South

Africa has increased and the pass rate has steadily moved up from 47% in 1997 to an all-time high in 2004 of 73%. Results in 2008 after the introduction of the National Senior Certificate (NSC) showed that there was a general improvement in the South African education system in terms of the number of learners writing the final matriculation examinations and gaining university admission (20% of Grade 12 learners who passed their final examination in 2008 compared to 16% in 2007). However, such a low rate of university admission passes is still unacceptable and a betrayal of generation after generation of learners. The tragedy is that patterns of achievement after apartheid are effectively the same as the patterns of achievement under apartheid (Mouton, Louw & Strydom, 2012).

Mouton et al., (2012) fear that standardisation of Grade 12 results is creating an obstruction with regard to the original results and adjusted results and this is raising questions concerning the reliability of the schooling system and readiness of learners for university studies but such commentary is not necessarily based on empirical evidence. Although, internationally, Grade 12 school results are generally taken to be reasonable predictors of the first year academic success at university, there is still no barometer or benchmarking of the NSC examination which was written in South Africa for the first time in 2008. Thus, great uncertainty exists with regard to the standard of the final examination as the final exit point at school level and entry point to first-year tertiary level. Learners in their first-year level at university experience difficulties in adapting to the university environment as they find themselves deprived of the essential basic knowledge needed for their studies emanating from the weakness of the level of education they possess. The quality of the teachers at high educational level is equally challenged, with many learners subsequently falling into the unprepared category (Mouton *et al.,* 2012).

A leading academic, Professor Jonathan Jansen, in the Sunday Times on the 7th of January 2014, said that no matter what pass rate was announced for the Grade 12 national senior certificate for 2014, those results were exceptionally misleading. The matric pass rates are still calculated on the bases of 40 percent for one home language and mathematics as subjects and then 30 percent for all other subjects. He raised his concerns about a process he named a "culling process" in which about 500 000 learners who started Grade One dropped out before matric (Grade 12). The matric rate springs up and gives no idea of how the 50% that fall by the roadside (during the learners' educational journey before grade 12) are doing. Jansen feels that the culling process has left behind half a million South African young people with little or no proper education at all. The learners' dropout rate has the significant impact on matric results. Jansen's 2011 report revealed that 60% of youths are left with no qualification at all beyond the Grade 9 level. He

suggested that “We should begin by raising the pass mark for all school subjects to 50 percent” and further admitted that 50 percent pass rate is still low. He highlighted a problem with new policy that forbids learners from failing a grade in the FET (Grade 10-12) phase for more than once. Therefore failing a grade once means that a learner will find himself/herself being automatically promoted the following year(Jansen, 2014). According to the Beeld newspaper (21/ 01/2013), Jansen said that he is ashamed of South African education. He was quoted saying this, “It’s an absolute disgrace that you can pass matric with a mark of 30 percent” (Jansen, 2013).

Jansen (2014) strongly believes that using the matric pass rate as a measurement of national performance is a flaw, considering that thousands of learners drop out of school long before they reach their final year and that dropout rate is not taken into account in the matric final pass rate. The results only account for about half of those who entered school together. South Africa’s high dropout rate means that many learners will never get the chance to write their matric examinations, let alone pass them. Secondly learners choose the easier subjects, whether as a result of the school’s pressure or learners’ individual choice that is still a question. Nonetheless, the fact remains that learners are increasingly taking easier subjects. In 2010, 263,034 full-time learners wrote mathematics, this decreased to 241,509 learners in 2013. Contrariwise, numbers of full-time learners writing mathematical literacy, the easier subject, increased from 280,836 in 2010 to 324,097 in 2013. Thirdly, the overall schools’ good performances slant the average rate of matric results. The matric results also disguise the underperformance of the majority of learners who write the examinations. Strong performances in a minority of schools mask the poor performance of the majority of schools that are identified as dysfunctional. This skews the average of matric results, and does not present a true reflection of the most learners’ real performance. If the 20% of top schools are removed this is referring to mainly former white, advantaged schools from the national averages, then a very dark picture of mainly the black and underprivileged school system performing far below what the combined results show will surface. He further argues that the matric results are not a good measure of academic achievement in the education system as the DBE has acknowledged that the matric results are not designed for yearly comparison or to be a reflection of academic achievement in the education system (Jansen, 2014).

2.2.1.2. Regional and international assessment performance

South Africa has participated in a number of regional and international assessments of educational achievement, for example, the Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality (SACMEQ), the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study

(TIMSS) and the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS). The Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality (SACMEQ III) has conducted three major education policy implementation research projects which South Africa participated in. The main goal of the SACMEQ III Project was to collect information that may be of use to the departments of education to follow developments in the general conditions of schooling, the reading and mathematics achievement levels of learners and their teachers (Chetty & Moloi, 2010).

In South Africa Grade 6 learners scored relatively low for both literacy and mathematics in SACMEQ III. South Africa came tenth for the reading ability of pupils tested which was behind Tanzania, Seychelles, Mauritius, Swaziland, Kenya, Zanzibar, Botswana, Zimbabwe, and Namibia. Five countries (Uganda, Mozambique, Lesotho, Malawi and Zambia) scored lower in mathematics than South Africa. SACMEQ III did not identify any statistical improvement in South Africa's Grade 6 mathematics and language performance between 2000 and 2007 (DBE, 2014). In many cases the SACMEQ III report has confirmed, in an empirical way, some of the challenges which continue to undermine the DBE efforts to change people's lives. The report reveals that the levels and quality of educational results achieved by South African learners are evidently still far below the national targets despite some of the highest educational investments in sub-Saharan Africa. The foundational skills of reading and numeracy are a critical goal that needs intensive attention in schools and continuous support from parents. Beyond the overall learners' under-performance, there are severe performance gaps which tend to run along poverty lines where schools with poorer performance tend to be at the lower end of the socio-economic scale. Learners' knowledge of basic concepts is far below the appropriate levels. It is important that society joins hands with the Ministry of Education to ensure that school becomes the heart of holistic development which stimulates intellectual, social and emotional development (Chetty & Moloi, 2010).

South Africa has also participated in a number of cycles of the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS). TIMSS is a cross-national trend study that measures trends in mathematics and science achievement at Grade 8. It has been conducted every four years since 1995. Results from these tests can be compared over time and between countries. It has been described as the gold standard when it comes to testing techniques. These studies provide information about the wellbeing of our educational system; so that we could better manage and improve our systems. In most countries TIMSS tests are taken in Grade 8, but in South Africa, Botswana and Honduras the tests are taken by Grade 9 learners because it was found to be too

difficult for those who are doing Grade 8 to comprehend these tests These tests are an opportunity to assess and benchmark South African mathematics and science performance in an international study. In TIMSS 2011, 45 countries participated at the Grade 8/9 level. In August 2011, the HSRC administered the TIMSS 2011 mathematics and science instruments in 285 schools to 11969, Grade 9 learners. For TIMSS 1999 and 2002, the average score remained the same possibly because of the basic and educational changes in the country since 1994 (Reddy, Prinsloo, Arends, Visser, Winnaar, Feza, Rogers, van Rensburg, Juan, Mthethwa, Ngema, & Maja , 2012).

The results of TIMSS between 1995 and 2003 showed no significant improvement in the average Mathematics performance. However, there appears to be a significant improvement between the 2003 and 2011 cycles. This significant improvement could be due to policies and curriculum changes implemented by the Government after 1994 in an attempt to rectify the inequality between schools as a result of the legacy of apartheid. It is important to note that the average improvement witnessed in 2011 is, however, still below the international centre point of 500, implying that South Africa still has to improve the quality of education provided to learners so that scores in studies like TIMSS can improve beyond the centre point. The improvement witnessed in the 2011 TIMSS results shows that the initiatives implemented by the Government has had positive outcomes; however, there is still a long way to go to ensure that quality improves and that an improvement for this sample reflects further into the education system which so far it does not seem to have done (Reddy, et al. 2012).

The Progress in International Reading Literacy Study 2006 was an international assessment study of reading literacy in which 40 countries worldwide participated and was the third in a set of trend studies. The study is conducted every 5 years and is guided by investigation into how well Grade 4 learners read and cross-country comparison of learner reading literacy achievement (Zimmerman, Howie & Smit, 2011). South Africa participated for the first time in the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS, 2006) at Grades 4 and 5. A nationally representative sample of more than 30,000 South African Grade 4 and 5 learners were assessed. Results advocated that South African learners are struggling and having a big challenge to develop the reading literacy capabilities needed to make an effective conversion to using reading as an instrument for learning that is needed for their educational success (Zimmerman, Howie & Smit, 2011).

2.2.2. What are the potential causes of FET learners' achievement challenges?

The pass rate can be swayed by a number of factors such as comprehension of instructions, and inadequate learner preparedness. LO teachers play an important role here because pass rate may also be swayed by the learners' subject choices with some subjects experienced as being easier to others. As a result matric pass rate is not a reliable point of reference for education quality in South Africa (Spaull, 2013).

This subsection presents some of the potential causes of FET learners' achievement challenges including: grade and phase transitions; the pressure of subject selection for Grade 10 learners; the problematic emotions and behaviour of learners; classroom teaching and learning factors; learner-teacher ratio and; parental involvement.

2.2.2.1 Grade and phase transitions

Each subject failed in Grade 8 increases the probability of non-progression from Grade 9 to Grade 10 by 16%. Grade/phase transition learners who are older than the expected age when they enter high school are normally at high risk of not progressing to the next grade (Christie & Zinth, 2008). Different grades and phases in schools are accompanied by various functions of education for both learners and the teachers, such as progressing from one grade and phase to another. South African learners' transition through the schooling system may pose a challenge to learners' achievement in the FET phase due to the grade needs and expectations. It is expected of FET learners that they are able to comprehend the work load of their grades (10 - 12). If learners progress from one grade to the next grade or phase due to age cohort and not academic results then the meaning of school attendance changes, since some learners are not prepared enough to cope with the workload of the next grade. Progressing learners who for whatever reason are struggling and realistically have no chance to succeed in their schooling achievement, is disadvantaging their chances of a bright future because the schooling workload increases and the coping ability gap accumulates hence struggling in the next grade (Trow, 2005, Fraser & Killen, 2003).

The importance of transitions in knowledge, understanding, skills, approaches to learning, social and cultural integration, and the learners' self-concept is very important in an adolescent learner. Transitions take two forms in the educational environment: personal transition (teenage-hood stage) and educational process, where a learner is jumping from the General Education and

Training (GET) phase to the FET phase. Transitions must form the basis of the curriculum design and delivery of the FET phase (Hussey & Smith, 2010). The creation of awareness to help learners in making adjustments to the new grade (Grade 10) by placing them in cohort groups, and letting them study together, might help the learners' performance (McKenzie, 2008). Most learners arrive in the FET phase without basic skills. It is important that educational channels for the successful transition be developed earlier in the learners' educational life from their primary schooling (Fields, 2001). Most learners are able to make it through the transition process, while some learners struggle, and die in silence, due to the fear of coming out and seeking help from teachers that will help their performance (Redmond, Quin, Devitt, & Archbold, 2011).

When learners arrive at the FET phase in high school there is an assumption that they will be able to cope with the subjects they choose and successfully complete their phase (pass Grade 12) and move on to higher education institutions. The transition which occurs in schools is related to the changes in motivation and the performance for a number of learners in the FET phase. The transition of learners within grades and phases, the challenges they face with regard to the changes in personal achievement of their goals, the awareness of their classroom's goal structure, and supposedly unproven educational capability is concerning. In GET phase learners are exposed to goals of the activities/task given to them by the teachers and they perceive their classrooms as more focused on the activities and assignments. In the FET phase they become exposed to performance goals and they realise that their classrooms are now more focused on learner performance. The transition process really affects learners' educational capabilities. Thus the year-end grade results might deteriorate during the transition period. With the lower achieving learners this might be the greatest setback than for higher achieving learners (Anderman & Midgley, 1997).

2.2.2.2 Pressure of subject selection for Grade 10

Schooling years are intended at equipping learners with skills, knowledge and nurture them to meet their needs for future citizenship and contribution in economic life (including employment and careers). Conclusively, learners are currently experiencing a more multifaceted schooling system than previous generations: one that presents them with more choices and decisions to be made with regard to choices of subjects, that in turn are connected with post school options and future life career choices. Teachers in schools are aware of their role in assisting learners to make informed decision with regard to subject choices, future careers and work options during their various stages of their educational journey. Such assistance may be indirect, in terms of

establishing curriculum structures that allow learners to make choices with established alternatives, or direct, in terms of career education or less formal advice given to learners to individually assist them in making their subject choices and/or decisions about post school destinations and career choices. There is a relationship between subject selection and the learners' identities. Learners make choices based on their constructions of their own abilities, strengths and aspirations and these curricular choices in turn provide them with opportunities to develop certain expertise in certain areas as well as limit (or open new) possibilities for their future (Atweh, Taylor & Singh, 2005).

A major challenge facing learners in Grade 10 is the pressure of selecting the right subjects that a learner has the possibility to make a success out of in Grade 10 for their future careers. They are having the responsibility towards their own self-fulfillment. Choosing a subject means that a learner is laying a foundation for his/her career. Thus it is essential that the learners have enough information and knowledge of their strengths and limitations and the knowledge of requirements of different careers which may be the fields of their interest during their educational journey aimed at reaching their goals. Learners' pressure during subject choices time originate from the challenges they face since there are certain factors which may affect their decision making for the subject they want to choose for their future careers (Bertol, De Mesa, Martin, Mestosamante, Reyes IV – St. Timothy, Zaguirre, 2010).

Those factors and limitations may be: the learners' ability to comprehend that particular subject (intellectually or physically). Parents and peer's expectations (society) where some parents decide on taking over the planning of their children's futures. Nevertheless they tend to ignore their children's ability and desires Peer pressure also has an impact on learners choosing subjects. Some learners choose subjects because his/her friends have chosen those subjects. Lack of self-knowledge where a learner is not aware of his/her interests. A learner has to answer questions like: "Which subjects do I like the most? What am I capable of? Am I making the right decision? Which in turn puts the learner under pressure of decision making etc. Learners' abilities make a great impact on their decision regarding which subjects they will choose in their grade 10 FET phase. Generally, virtuous decision-making is an essential skill for learners' future career success (Bertol, De Mesa, Martin, Mestosamante, Reyes IV – St. Timothy, Zaguirre, 2010).

Foundations include learning habits, skills such as organisational skills, and self-discipline. A teaching and learning approach that is based on an engagement where the teacher will be guiding the learners on how to engage themselves to their learning can help in activating the three

domains of learner engagement which are: the cognitive domain: consisting of beliefs and values; the emotional domain: which consists of motivation and feelings and the behavioural domain: which consists of habits and skills. Learners struggle with learning and need to be stimulated and be taught on how to engage themselves in their classroom activities. Teaching learners how to engage with their learning provides learners with a firm foundation for an overall learning process (Jones, 2008). Due to the pressure of subject choices or the choices made in terms of choosing the suitable subject for learners' ability, learners develop a strong sense of anxiety resulting from the challenge of the new grade and the phase expectations. The subjects' learning programmes, work load, learning and teaching styles and expectations in Grade 10 are so different to Grades 8 and 9. Learners who are clearly not prepared/ready for the new grade/phase are at risk for future failure; when they are performing below their potential they sometimes resort to dropping out of school (Christie & Zinth, 2008).

2.2.2.3 Problematic emotions and behaviour of learners

Christie and Zinth (2008 state that) learners' behaviours both in and out of school pose a challenge to their learning achievement. An individual learner's behaviour may affect his/her own and as well as the other learners' learning performance. Behaviours that affect one's own performance are: the amount of time spent doing homework, the amount of television watched on weekdays, and absenteeism from school. Behaviours that influence teaching and learning in the classroom and school environment are: the amount of time teachers spend maintaining discipline in the classroom, learners' perception of their own safety and the threat of weapons in their schools. Two additional risk-taking behaviours outside of school that affect learners' learning performance and completion of high school l are learners' use of alcohol and pregnancy. Then the question is, are there sufficiently trained, skilled and qualified teachers available to teach and guide these learners with basics like life and study skills (Christie & Zinth, 2008).

Learners experience emotional problems which they do not normally talk about to other people but personality changes surface such as self-doubt, lack of confidence in themselves, the need for assurance, feelings of being unsure and the need for affirmation. Emotional problems such as these cause learners to struggle in their learning and achievement (Moore, 2003). There is a relationship between teaching and learning which links content taught to the learners and their performance. Education is more to do with the forms of teaching and learning, in settings which are conducive to learners. It also involves the relations between the teacher and the learner, where they engage with the content of the curriculum in a learner centred approach. Learners learn better

if they are feeling physically secure and emotionally stable. Therefore it is important that their teaching and learning practices are in a structured educational environment (Klaar & Öhman, 2014).

2.2.2.4 Classroom teaching and learning factors

There is sufficient validation in the literature on teaching and learning to submit that factors such as teaching strategies, the learners' motivation, the learners' approach to studying, the interaction between learners and educational endeavors and the social systems of the school, cultural expectations, and psychosocial factors are likely to influence learners' success at school (Fraser & Killen, 2003). Other factors include engagement to learning, lack of learning skills, learning and teaching approach, pedagogy and learning relationships (Jones, 2008). All these factors contribute to the struggle of learners' educational/learning achievement in the FET phase.

In the FET phase, there seems to be more teaching challenges facing teachers in their classrooms. Fulfilling learners' needs and their expectations is every teacher's goal regarding the effective learning and development of learners. Teachers generally take into consideration that there is a big gap between the GET phase (Grade 7 - 9) and the FET phase (Grade 10 - 12). Most learners have gaps in their knowledge and skills due to different approaches to learning and teaching in the two different phases. Some learners have received inadequate basic skills and are not properly prepared for the FET phase in terms of relevant skills, concepts and knowledge (Clark, 2003). Many FET phase learners are incompetent with regard to reading and comprehension which are essential skills for learning achievement. The majority of learners have problems with understanding what they are reading. The majority of learners do not perform according to their potential but that is not because they did not study but because they do not understand what they are reading or the language is too complex to comprehend (Beekman, Cilliers & de Jager, 2012). Strong positive relationships are critical to the education process. Learners attend class more often when they have strong relationships with their teachers. Most learners do not do their best in classes when they feel that teachers do not have an interest in them or care about their future (Jones, 2008). Other challenges faced by FET learners are cultural issues such as some learners having to go to an initiation cultural school in the middle of their schooling year while they are in the FET phase. Some learners lack interest and care due to lack of finance or influence of peers (DBE, 2013). South African learners acquire learning deficits early on their schooling journey. Since learning deficits are left for too long unattended or sometimes

unidentified, the reality is that such learners are certain to experience further failure in their high school education (Phelps & Schilling, 2004).

As indicated in Chapter one, despite the influential and socialisation role that LO plays in the school curriculum, its implementation is surrounded by challenges that are pedagogical (Christiaans, 2006; Van Deventer, 2009). Klaar and Öhman, 2014 stated that one of the barriers to learning achievement is the pedagogy/teaching approach where there is the lack of rigorous and relevant instruction. Learners often do the minimal amount possible in order to receive the grade. Some learners openly avoid doing any work that is not tied to a grade. In this situation, learners see their learning experiences as meaningless activities, but they have to get good grades to move on toward the next grade/phase so as to move on with their lives. This gross misunderstanding of the importance of grades is the result of how teachers have misguided learners as to what is important. Also, many learners feel labelled. Learners with prior experiences of being labelled in school see little reason or none at all to improve their efforts. Grades are not a motivation to these learners, who are comfortable with completing very little of their work or skipping it altogether (Jones, 2008).Teachers' ability to interact with learners is very important for each learner's development and learning processes in the school setting. Teaching methods can be referred to as multi-dimensional, in a sense that teachers need knowledge and understanding in various areas, such as how to sustain children's learning and development. Teachers' education comprises of an overall knowledge of educational customs and learning theories, as well as the specific knowledge about the subjects they are teaching (Klaar & Öhman, 2014).

2.2.2.5 Learner-teacher ratio

In South Africa, the average ratio of learners to teachers is 30.4: 1, which includes educators paid for by school governing bodies. Without those extra posts, the ratio would be 32.3: 1. Public schools generally have larger classes than those of independent schools (DBE, 2013). Blatchford, Bassett and Brown, (2011) added that working in small groups as expected by LO teaching methodology is hardly possible with large classes where there are 60 learners, limited space for facilitation of group work and no teacher assistants to help manage large classes. Individual learners remain unseen in larger classes; it is impossible for the teacher to completely understand some the learners in the class. Smaller classes are widely believed to benefit all learners because of individual attention from teachers, particularly where the content level is more challenging. Learners in large classes drift off task because of too much instruction from the teacher to the whole class instead of individual attention, and low-attaining learners are most affected. Longer

periods in small classes result in greater increases in learner achievement for all the learners while in a large sized class it is the opposite where learners' achievement is severely decreased. In reading and science, low achievers benefit more from being in small classes (Blatchford, Bassett & Brown, 2011).

2.2.2.6. Parental involvement

Parental involvement is either supporting learner's educational learning and achievement, or participating in school-initiated functions. Parental involvement implies being involved in the learner's school activities (schooling life) and at home. It may take many forms, such as volunteering at the school (school governing body [SGB] members), communicating with teachers, assisting with homework, and attending school events, such as performances or parent-teacher meetings (Bower & Griffin (2011). Parent-child discussions about school work help to improve academic achievement and to reduce problematic behaviour (Makgopa, 2012). Most learners are in need of their parents' involvement in their learning and educational development. Learners are more likely to make a personal commitment to engage in rigorous learning when they know teachers, parents, and other learners care about how well they do (Jones, 2008).

2.2.3. Expectations of South African learners in the FET and the LO teachers role in relation to Life Orientation

This sub section presents the role of LO teachers in terms of teaching study skills as part of LO programme in 2.2.3.1. Thereafter the Curriculum expectations in the FET band in South Africa in terms of Life Orientation are then discussed in 2.2.3.2.

2.2.3.1. The role of LO teachers in terms of teaching study skills as part of LO programme

As it has been stated above in this study that Life Orientation is one of the fundamental subjects in the FET band and is a compulsory subject for all learners in the FET (Grades 10 - 12). It helps in preparing learners for their future. It is compulsory for all teachers to teach LO as well as their specialised subjects. It is then expected that learners learn LO. In this phase LO includes study skills and career-oriented education. This is aimed at preparing learners for post matric school life education (DoE, 2005). Education systems are expected to prepare learners for high and post-high school learning and to help them face life issues (McCabe, 2000). Learning or study skills carry over into other areas of life and beyond school. Study skills are therefore critical tools that

ensure that learner achievement is successful. Furthermore, effective study skills need effective interaction between teachers and learners (Gettinger & Seibert, 2002).).

The teacher should make study skills accessible to learners through the process of teaching in the classroom and develop the skills for change to the learning situation (Sasikala, 2012). The teacher is central for equipping learners with the necessary study skills which can unlock their future potentials. Equipping learners with effective study skills is non-negotiable since the skills are convenient and useful to other domains of life and for their lifelong learning. Life Orientation was introduced to schools to prepare learners for practical life skills that will assist them to respond to challenges and play an active role in the economy and in society *(*Gildenhuys & Orsmond*,* 1998*).*

2.2.3.2. Curriculum expectations for Life Orientation in the FET band in South Africa

This sub section presents LO expectations in terms of teaching study skills where the role of LO teachers in terms of teaching the LO programme will be presented. Following this will be the time allocated and topics for teaching study skills will be presented as well as a specific curriculum outline.

- The role of teachers in teaching the LO curriculum

The educational context in LO refers to all processes at school level involved in preparing, teaching and redirecting learners' attentions and abilities so that they can acquire knowledge and develop skills to succeed in life (Pillay, 2012). Teaching in multi-cultural classrooms is challenging for teachers who are not sensitive towards the diverse cultural perspectives from which the learners are coming from. Thus an LO teacher needs to be highly knowledgeable about the society in which the learners live and maintain the values of the South African constitution (Tlhabane, 2004).

LO teachers fulfil diverse roles. The primary responsibility of the LO teacher is to teach and effectively implement the LO learning programme. The LO teacher should take a proactive step in creating a healthy school environment that extends beyond the classroom. The LO teacher's role includes firstly the role of being a teacher, be a counsellor, a remedial teacher, a communicator and a social worker in a school setting. The LO teacher as a counsellor needs to help learners to make subject choices and with their career choices. The LO teacher as a remedial teacher makes educative interventions. Learners are equipped with study skills through LO

subject. Therefore it is the LO teacher's responsibility to help learners to develop and employ study skills in their learning and as a communicator, communicate with parents. LO teachers must work with learners, guide them in their journey to self-discovery. They must work towards development and nurturing tolerance on learners and cooperation in the classroom by adapting study skills and learning styles according to the individual learners' cultural backgrounds and the learners' individual needs. LO teachers should be open and approachable so that learners would feel comfortable to unburden themselves in them. Effective LO teachers are able to collaborate with other colleagues as part of a team that is concerned with the welfare of learners and the school as a whole (Jacobs, 2011).

Like all the best teachers, LO teachers must be interesting, knowledgeable, experienced, compassionate, inspiring, and flexible plus still have serious principles to maintain. The personality of the LO teacher is extremely important and it must show integrity. The word 'integrity' refers to the quality of possessing and constantly abiding by high moral values or professional standards. Additionally teacher as a communicator, it is the responsibility of the LO teacher to involve parents, in fact they have to go out of their way to include them at all levels of intervention (Jacobs, 2011). It is essential that they do their best to establish strong internal support bases by ensuring that the different subsystems within the school context work together, for example, ensuring the school management team (SMT), school governing body (SGB) and the school based support team (SBST) working collaboratively to manage substance abuse at the school. The LO teacher does not entirely depend on external support but tries to organise support within the school to address relevant issues (Prinsloo, 2007).

- The time allocated and topics for teaching study skills as part of LO

According to the FET LO CAPS curriculum (DBE, 2011), study skills are scheduled to be taught to Grade 10 learners in term 2 during weeks 1 - 3. The allocated time for the teaching of study skills is 3 hours per cycle. The recommended resources for teaching study skills are: Textbook, newspaper articles, resources on careers and study skills. During study skills periods teachers are expected to teach learners different types of study skills like listening, reading, comprehension, concentration, memory, organisation and time management study skills. Learners are also taught on how to engage in the process of learning and to be able to retain information taught in the classroom, so study methods: like: note-taking, mind-mapping, selecting important concepts and content, assignment and essay construction and making comparisons are presented by the LO teacher in the classroom. Furthermore, learners are trained to use critical, creative and problem-

solving skills. Grade 10 LO curriculum teachers are also expected to expose learners to assessment process help them understand how internal and external assessments work and be prepared for internal and external assessments. It also expected that the LO teacher teaches the learner on how to design their annual study plan (DBE, 2011).

According to the FET LO CAPS curriculum (DBE, 2011), study skills are scheduled to be taught to Grade 11 learners in term 2 during weeks 1 - 4. The allocated time for the teaching of study skills is 4 hours per cycle. The recommended resources for teaching study skills are: The textbook, resources on study styles and strategies. Teachers are expected to teach learners the strategies of applying their own study skills, styles and their study strategies. They are also expected to teach learners the study skills that help learners to examine how learning takes place and to be able to reflect on the effectiveness of particular study styles and study strategy as the preferred way of approaching specific tasks in the light of the perceived demands of the task given. It expected the teachers teach learners the examination writing skills and the process of assessment. Teachers need to equip learners with study skills such as time management skills and annual study plan, Goal-setting skills like personal development also the goals regarding study, health and fitness.

According to the FET LO CAPS curriculum (DBE, 2011), study skills are scheduled to be taught to Grade 12 learners in term 1, during weeks 6 – 7 and term 4 in weeks 1-2. The allocated time for the teaching of study skills is 2 hours per cycle for both 1 and 4 terms. In term 1, during weeks 6 – 7 it is recommended that the teachers use the textbook and the resources on study skills for teaching study skills to grade 12 learners. During this study skills teaching period teachers are expected to teach learners how to reflect on the process of assessment, how to apply examination writing skills, revise their own study skills, strategies and styles and also revise examination writing skills where they read the question, plan the response, answer the questions. Teacher have to make learners aware of the importance of School Based Assessment and the importance of obtaining the National Senior Certificate (NSC) thereby assisting in developing a study plan for Grade 12. During term 4 in weeks 1-2, it is recommended teachers use Textbook and resources on tips for success for teaching study skills to learners. The teachers are tasked with preparing learners for success by teaching them strategies to follow in order to succeed in the Grade 12 examination. The revision of own study skills and the revision of examination writing skills also occurs (DBE, 2011).

2.3. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF LEARNERS' STUDY SKILLS AND THE NEED TO IMPLEMENT THEM

This section of the literature review focuses on the importance of the development of learners' study skills. It begins by providing insights into the background to and history of study skills. (2.3.1). Next effective and ineffective study skills (2.3.2.) are presented. Finally, section in 2.3.3 the value, the need for and the importance of study skills are discussed

2.3.1. Background to and history of study skills

This subsection presents the background to the use of study skills in schools (2.3.1.1), study skills, study methods and study habits in 2.3.1.2 and the themes of Study Skills in 2.3.1.3.

2.3.1.1 Background to the use of study skills in schools

The climax of any educational system is to achieve the intended goals of education which are to equip learners with skills and knowledge to enable them to develop themselves and contribute to the development of their society. The South African education system's priority is the effective learning of learners hence the acquisition of study skills in learners rank highly in terms of achieving the goals of education. Effective study skills create an effective interaction between teachers and learners and create a set of values and beliefs which in turn enrich the views of reality in using study skills. This implies that through effective study skills learners are empowered to freely participate in learning beyond the classroom, as creators of knowledge (Sasikala, 2012).

Study skills have developed through application and appreciation of learning theories and a great deal of trial-and-error, into the process of facilitation of "learning to learn". Study skills or learning to learn are a core aspect of all educational work in schools. More importantly, they are the essence of many aspects of post school work: further and higher education, vocational choice, home finding, domestic problem solving, and the pursuit of leisure and recreation (Irving, 1998). Study skills have been essential since 1900 onwards. Learners should be given free reign to read widely on subjects of interest. There is a relationship between study skills and reading, therefore learners should be taught to study while they read. Study skills include organising skills such as note taking, underlining, outlining and summarising. Study skills may be the main useful attainment of schooling achievement (Richardson, Robnolt & Rhodes, 2008).

- *Study skills, study methods and study habits*

Studying is a skill that can be mastered like many other skills, firstly by understanding the process and then by developing appropriate habits through active involvement. The study skills that are mastered in the FET phase at high school or, for some learners, earlier when studying in Intermediate and Senior phase before FET phase at school, are central to what will help the learner through the rest of their schooling and later in their careers (Allan, 2009). It is more important for learners to maximise the time they spend when they are studying. Difficulties are especially common in the areas of listening, note-taking, test-taking, time management and organisational skills. Study skills are an essential part of independent learning, it is important that high school teachers incorporate study skills in their instructions so that all learners acquire these necessary skills (Lambert & Nowacek, 2006). Teaching study skills to learners to prepare them for further educational achievement is important. Study skills intervention programmes need to be designed to enhance learners' learning in order to identify components that will improve their learning and performance. Study skills programmes need to be grounded in cognitive-behavioural theory (Brown, 2000).

Study skills have little to do with being naturally clever, but owe much more to awareness, strategies, confidence and practice, leading to an overall development in learning (Cottrell, 2008). Study skills are defined as the application of intellectual abilities to the attainment of knowledge. They are the techniques and strategies that help a person to read or listen for specific purposes which can be an intention to recall information. There is a difference between study tactics which are a sequence of steps or procedures and study strategies which are the learner's overall approach of selecting the best tactic for an activity that need to be studied by the learner (Richardson, Robnolt & Rhodes, 2008). The terms 'study skills', 'study habits' and 'study methods' can to a large extent be used interchangeably. These are alternative terms; studying is the process of acquiring knowledge by the application of mental effort. What emerges from an analysis of the three is that 'study skills' is more of an inclusive term and includes both study methods and study habits. Study skills also points to the relationship between the study activities and the outcomes of learning (Irving, 1998). Through study skills education, learners learn necessary skills to succeed in various spheres of life. For many learners, the difference between grade/phase progress and being retained in the same grade in FET phase in school may be found in the deficits of knowledge and usage of study skills or sometimes in the incapability to apply acquired study skills to different spheres of their education and learning (Hammill & Bartel, 2004).

2.3.1.2. Themes of Study Skills

Introduction of the study strategy known as SQ3R (Survey, create Question to guide, Read, Recite and Review) in 1946 by Robinson, is historically important because it was designed to put learners in charge of their own study content material. Learners were to survey the material, create questions to guide their reading, then read, recite and review material they have read. Richardson *et al.* (2008) point out that this strategy led the way to other related study strategies that were presented over the next several decades, such as Preview, Question, Read, Reflect, Recite, Review (PQ4R) by Sanacore in 1982. Study skills were an early and important topics in reading; however, since the 1970s they have received relatively little research attention. Richardson *et al,* 2008, mentioned that the authors systematically analysed the research conducted on study skills from 1900 to the present-day. A review of literature from 1970 to the current decade reveals several themes:(a) motivation and affect; (b) activities described; (c) meta-cognition;(d) programmes described; (e) assessment created and (f) the use of study skills in electronic environments. The final theme has made an impact on how learners learn. The authors made a case that learners must learn how to study in different environments, specifically the electronic environment, to be competitive in today's world. Recommendations were made for continuation of research for the 'perfect' study skills programme and the perfect activities to continue. The field of education has experienced a significant shift in thinking about the nature of human learning and the conditions that best promote various dimensions of human learning. As in psychology there has been a paradigm shift in designed instructions: from behaviourism to cognitivists and now to constructivism. The reader constructs meaning by relating new material to the known, using reasoning and developing concepts. The review of the history of study skills indicates that almost all themes that have been discussed about study skills have been recycled. The earlier decades discussed the same issues which are being discussed today (Richardson *et al.,* 2008).

2.3.2. Effective and ineffective Study Skills

This subsection presents discussions with regard to effective study skills in 2.3.2.1. and ineffective study skills in 2.3.2.2. A number of specific techniques (some of which were briefly considered above) are discussed in detail in the rest of this section.

2.3.2.1. Effective study skills

Effective study skills offer tried and tested recommendations and guidance on the essential educational and study skills that learners need throughout school, university and beyond. Effective study skills include: effective management of time and stress; learning strategies for getting the most out of the teacher and support classes; improving revision skills and examination performance; mastering critical thinking, argument and analysis; developing successful reading and note-taking strategies; essay planning and writing techniques; working in groups; effective presentation of assignments and projects (Mufti & Peace, 2012). Some specific techniques are listed and discussed below.

- SQ3R Study skills

There are two popular study strategy methods which include SQ3R and Predict, Organise, Rehearse, Practice, and Evaluate (PORPE) study skills. The most popular and well-researched study plan, to date, is the SQ3R method. In fact, some would argue that no discussion of study strategies would be complete without some mention of SQ3R. The sequential components of the study system are Survey, Question, Read, Recite, and Review. Learners are first advised to survey their reading material by identifying the text structure and subject headings and by scanning illustrations. Learners then produce questions that they predict can be answered from reading the text. Learners next read the material, reflect (recite) upon that reading and their questions, and review and summarise the information. One benefit of SQ3R is that it offers learners an efficient approach to studying because when left to their own skills, most learners utilise ineffective strategies. Another benefit of SQ3R is that it is an independent reading method, learners may go through the steps with a set of materials at the pace most appropriate for them. Several weaknesses of SQ3R have been identified. One weakness is that there is no way to ensure learners actually used the different steps of the system. Learners might skip several steps and teachers are not able to determine if students indeed used the system's steps in the intended sequential order. A major weakness of SQ3R is that research shows that it does not improve learning (McCormick, & Cooper, 1991, Dharmananda, 2009).

- PORPE Study skills

PORPE is an acronym that stands for Predict, Organise, Rehearse, Practice, and Evaluate. The PORPE study method has become a popular study skill which intends to improve learning by engaging learners in cognitive processes used by effective readers, also recommended by reading specialists. The description of effective readers as those who: (a) understand the purposes and task demands of a reading, b) recognise and focus on key points in a reading rather than trivial information, c) engage in self-questioning and other meta-cognitive activities to assess their comprehension of the material, and d) take action when they detect a failure in understanding. It is intended as a study skill used in preparation for essay tests. PORPE guides learners through a series of five steps. First, learners predict possible essay questions from their readings and notes. Second, learners organise key ideas by using maps, charts, and outlines. Third, learners rehearse the organisational structure they created in the previous step. Fourth, learners practice writing essays based on their predicted essay questions. Fifth, learners evaluate their responses using a checklist to assess completeness and accuracy of their answers. There is a lack of consensus on PORPE's effectiveness; recent studies reveal no gains from using the PORPE method. The effectiveness of PORPE is compared to another popular study method used by learners, namely, SOAR which seems to be more effective (Ngovo, 1999; Jairam, 2009; Kiewra, 2009).

- SOAR Study skills

The SOAR method is a systematic study plan that addresses the weak strategies commonly used by learners. Each letter of the system stands for a corresponding study strategy: Select, Organise, Associate, and Regulate. SOAR helps learners select information to improve note-taking strategies, organise information by creating graphic representations, associate ideas, and regulate learning by creating practice test questions. The SOAR study skills are based on Mayer's (1996) Select, Organise and Integrate (SOI) study skills. Both SOAR and SOI are theoretically rooted in the information processing view of cognitive psychology and stress similar cognitive processes). SOI system to include the regulate component. Regulate is an essential addition because it relates to the meta-cognitive process. Meta-cognition is arguably the most important cognitive process because it serves to guide the other cognitive processes mentioned above (Jairam, 2009; Kiewra, 2009).

The theoretical foundation of the SOAR study skill is rooted in a modern cognitive psychology perspective that blends aspects of information processing and cognitive constructivism. Below is a brief discussion of information processing, cognitive constructivism, and the transition to the modern cognitive view. This is followed by a discussion of how SOAR closely aligns with modern cognitive psychology. Information processing is arguably the most thoroughly researched viewpoint of human learning. The theory describes how information enters the human memory system, is selected and organised for storage, and then later retrieved. Early interpretations of information processing portrayed human learning and thinking as analogous to the way computers operate. For example, both humans and computers take in information and apply operations to that information intending to store and later retrieve it. However, the human/computer analogy is far too simplistic to explain human learning and does not adequately take into account the complexity of humans' active cognitive processing. A major contribution of the information processing model is the compartmentalised structural design of the human memory system (i.e., sensory, working, and long-term memory). Most researchers agree that the three-component model of memory provides the best way to explain how human memory works. Stimuli are first received by sensory memory and information that gains our attention is passed along to working memory. Once in working memory, information has reached conscious attention and can be sent to long-term memory through the cognitive process of encoding. However, the active cognitive processes that occur while learning are better described by the cognitive constructivism view (Jairam, 2009, Kiewra, 2005 & McPherson, 2012).

According to cognitive constructivism, learners assume an active role in learning, rather than receiving information passively. In other words, learners create their own knowledge and unique understanding of a topic. In this manner, cognitive constructivism offers an explanation for learners' unique constructions and misconceptions that cannot be explained by behaviourism or information processing theories. Constructivism holds that learners construct mental representations of information in ways that make sense to them. In that manner, new learning is dependent upon the learner's unique prior knowledge. These two characteristics of cognitive constructivism explain how two learners can come to similar conclusions via two distinct ways of thinking. For example, two learners learning mathematics can use different methods of calculating, but come to the same correct answer. From the perspective of cognitive constructivism, teachers assume the role of knowledge facilitators who guide learners as they construct knowledge, rather than act as knowledge experts. Cognitive constructivism has had a significant impact on education and has swayed the way teachers approach education but, by itself, it does not explain the structural components of memory. In modern cognitive psychology, most cognitive researchers

agree that attention, storage, encoding, and meta-cognition are active cognitive processes that are essential for learning. The attention process serves as a metaphoric gatekeeper as learners select which information is sent forward for further processing; it incorporates aspects from both information processing and cognitive constructivism (Dharmananda, 2009).

The integrated SOAR method closely aligns with the modern cognitive view of learning because it incorporates the four major learning processes. Important ideas are selected and sent to working memory (attention). Once in working memory, information is organised (storage) and associated (encoding), and sent to long-term memory. Later, information is retrieved into working memory through regulation (meta-cognition). Empirical support for SOAR as an integrated study skill. emerged from a study in 2009 which tested for fact and relationship learning by comparing the performance of learners who take notes in writing and those who takes notes through cut and paste from the computer. The results showed that learners who wrote their notes outperformed learners who made their notes through copy-and-paste, because those who wrote their own notes were more likely to paraphrase and summarise ideas, and doing so required more cognitive processing compared to simply copying ideas word for word from the text book (Flippo, David & Caverly, 2008, Jairam & Kiewra, 2007).

2.3.2.2. Ineffective Study Skills

Learners' study problems centre around their use of the following four ineffective methods: (a) recording incomplete notes; (b) organizing information in a linear fashion; (c) relying on piecemeal learning; and (d) failing to regulate learning. Firstly, learners often have difficulty identifying significant from insignificant information and write mainly incomplete notes that are missing about 70% of important facts. Incomplete notes are a problem because they are related to low achievement. Secondly, learners make lists and outlines and the linear format of these methods hide relationships and hinders learning. Thirdly, learners learn information one fact at a time, which results in poorer achievement than relating facts. Lastly, learners rely on rehearsal strategies such as reciting and recopying and these methods are allied with poor performance. Due to learners' weak study skills, it is not surprising that 73% of learners report difficulty in remembering information for a test or an examination (Kiewra, 2002; Kiewra, 2009).

There are two reasons that might explain the development of ineffective study skill: one reason is that learners may not have been taught the study skills they need. In a recent study that included over 1 500 teachers across 40 schools, only 20% of teachers reported that teaching learners study

strategies was essential. Teachers admit that they are more concerned with teaching to the test to meet government standards which means that they focus on core subjects like mathematics and science. Another possible reason for the existence of study skill problems is that learners are guided toward ineffective methods of studying. Learners are sometimes prompted to use popular methods such as highlighting and rehearsal even though research has shown that such methods are ineffective (Dharmananda, 2009).

Learners develop ineffective study skills because they execute tasks that require intellectual ability and they do not engage necessary reasoning learning processes. Cognitive load theory pertains to how we use our mental resources during the period of learning activities. Learning is impaired when learners do not use their cognitive learning resources. Learners' weak study skills (e.g., recording incomplete notes, relying on lists/outlines, relying on piecemeal learning, and failing to regulate their comprehension) all impose unnecessary cognitive load and then ruin their learning. Learners' incomplete and incompetent undeviating study materials with unconnected facts impose on their intellectual ability when they are using use their resources searching for relevant information and combining information from different sources or situations (Kiewra, 2005, McPherson, 2012).

In addition, learners apply intellectual resources with rehearsal when they are repeatedly processing information. In terms of learning processes, learning does not occur through absorption, but rather through active interaction with the material. Most cognitive researchers agree that attention, storage, encoding, and meta-cognition are active cognitive processes that are essential for learning. Attention is the process of selectively focusing on the stimuli deemed important. Storage refers to learning, memory, and recall of information by organising content. Encoding is the process of improving learning by making information more meaningful. Lastly, meta-cognition refers to students monitoring their learning and comprehension. Optimal learning occurs when students engage the four key cognitive processes (i.e., attention, storage, encoding, and meta-cognition). Unfortunately, learners passively interact with material and typically fail to engage these cognitive processes adequately. Learners always report difficulties with attention, organisation, association, and regulation. It is clear that learners need study skill remediation because they use ineffective skills that inflict cognitive load and encourage passive interaction with material. Consequently, learners' learning and achievement are impaired. Learners need a structured study method that is: a) easy to learn, b) easy to use, and c) activates cognitive processes central to learning (i.e., attention, encoding, storage, and meta-cognition).One such method that has great promise is SOAR (Kiewra, 2002).

2.3.3. The value, the need for and the importance of study skills

Study skills are the abilities for achievement while study styles are the practical actions themselves. A learner may have all kinds of the study skills that are required to achieve his/her educational goals, that is he or she may be able to take good notes in class (possession of a study skill) but simply sits in class scribbling (the lack of a study behaviour). Study skills are viewed as educational enablers for learners' success, thus effective study skills and learning manners function as critical learning tools. Effective studying involves a number of coordinated cognitive skills and processes that enhance the efficiency of learners' learning along with the application of essential activities and behaviors. Definitely, the knowledge and application of effective study skills has long been associated with an overall educational achievement, but these effective study skills and study actions often need to be explicitly taught to most learners. There is a positive relationship between study skills and educational success. This relationship reveals itself through achievement, which is defined as the comparison of learner performance and learners' responsibility. In order for achievement to take place, learners need to be equipped with knowledge and understanding of the subject, the application of study skills, and have determination. Self-regulated learners take it upon themselves to create a technique for their thinking processes, organisation, and study manners. These learners have a selection of goal-specific plans and implement them in an efficient order (Armstrong, 2010).

The comprehensive list of strategies and cognitive processes that learners individually implement while participating in the study groups in order to understand and recall information were established after Armstrong, (2010) looked on to the several studies about the value and the importance of study skills. One of those strategies was the verbal practice for reading where learners recognise and discuss strategies that they have used before, during, and after reading. During that study it was reported that the use of study skills and study manners correlated with homework completion and the achievement assessment performances. Therefore homework completion is directly related to examination performance since it has a direct effect on the learners' self-awareness of their preparedness in the class and of the quality of their school work (Armstrong, 2010). Study skills, study comportments, and other self-regulatory behaviours can be taught to primary school and high and post-high school learners too. Teachers can use the following instructional strategies for self-standing activities or integration into other learning activities: Cognitive modelling, Meta-cognition and Study Skills and Study Behaviour Intervention. Meta-cognition is the learners' knowledge and beliefs regarding their own cognitive processes as well as their attempts to regulate their cognitive processes to maximise learning and memory.

Additionally, knowing how to study is a skill that must be taught to learners (Armstrong, 2010). Study skills research in general suggests that there is a solid relationship between study skills and educational achievement. In order to increase learning and attainment, lower accomplishing learners need to develop effective study skills, especially those that encompass higher order/critical thinking skills (Thorpe, 2010 & Yip, 2007).

Differing learning styles can lead to a mismatch between the teacher and the taught. There are two extreme types of learning and teaching styles: the serialist where one accumulates information sequentially in small steps, each step building upon the previous one until the topic is complete and the holist where one acquires knowledge more globally by looking across what is to be learned to gain an overview, then pursuing elements to establish relationships using analogy and personal experience to clarify meaning and understanding. Thus, if the serialist teacher has to present to a holist learner there may be a conflict. In the light of the above one can argue that it would benefit learners if educators have knowledge of teaching study skills (Buchmann, 2007).Therefore in order for the relationship between educational achievement and the use of appropriate study skills and study manners to be optimal, teachers must modify the level of learners' use of these study skills and comportments. Even if teachers find it difficult to teach learners to use more appropriate study skills. The relationship between study skills, study comportments, and learners' achievement would serve as an indicator of learners' who might be at risk of experiencing scholastic difficulties. However, this relationship would be much more useful if there were some intervention programs that could be used to remediate the problem (Amstrong, 2010).

An international research study conducted by the Research Institute (reported in Dharmananda, 2009) found that more than 50% of higher institution lecturers report that their learners are under-prepared for higher education workload and that they lack basic learning skills. Findings from the study conducted by Sikhwari and Pillay (2012) show that many prospective learners arrive at university under-prepared for a higher level of academic learning. Wernersbach (2011) investigated the impact of a study skills course on academic self-efficacy in college first years; he recommended that further research examine the ongoing effect of study skills courses at later time periods in order to understand long-term effects (Wernersbach, 2011). Clearly learners need study skills to complete their written assignments and to prepare for their examinations. It is important to acknowledge that consideration of study skills may benefit learners if they are new in a grade, since the skills required are different in every level of study, for example if a learner is moving from one grade to another (Cottrell & Morris, 2012). Study skills are essential and are the complete guide to success. They help learners to be more effective and happy by uncovering different

learning styles and revealing the what, why, and how of learning, studying and succeeding with their education and in life as a whole. Becoming a successful learner is like a bit like learning to drive – study skills and practices can be learned. Good learners are made not born. Bad school experience can make people think that they are not cut out for studying (Burns & Sinfield, 2012).

Learners' educational performance is the product of an inter-play of factors such as effective study skills and habits, good teaching and good-natured teachers, school and home environment. Thus, learners' poor performance in an examination could be attributed to teacher non-performance, and poor study skills and habits and an incompatible learning environment. The mind is active and not passive in the teaching and learning processes and as such, learners also should be held responsible for their poor schooling performance. There is the need to teach study skills to FET phase in secondary school learners so that they can all cultivate good and effective study skills and habits. Learners with poor study skills and habits do not perform well educationally, have a low self-concept, and consequently see little benefit to educationally perform at their real ability. They are unable to plan their study time and do not know how to organise subject material in order to learn and succeed. Without good study skills, a learner will not be likely to succeed. Improvement in basic educational skills can increase the opportunity of achievement and quality school experiences and with this success, raise positive self-concept and attitudes towards school (Nyarko-Sampson & Essuman, 2008).

The knowledge and appropriate usage of study skills is an important factor in educational achievement. It is important for learners to develop study skills at an early age, ideally during early years of schooling, so as to increase their educational achievement during their high schooling years. Teaching learners study skills will help to prepare them to be more independent and more equipped with study skills during their high school years and beyond. While developing study skills at their senior phase of schooling level could lead to higher levels of educational attainment, learners in that stage of development still need a sufficient amount of instruction and monitoring in their educational tasks because the frontal lobe of their brains which control executive functioning and the ability to regulate his/her own behaviour is not fully developed during early teenage years. Therefore, FET phase school learners cannot be expected to have fully developed study skills and to appropriately and consistently use a concrete set of study skills without a significant amount of guidance. They need to receive study skills lessons in which the teachers not only model proper usage of a variety of study skills but also monitor their application to ensure that they select appropriate skills and use them correctly (Thorpe, 2010).

Study skills lessons should be provided prior to learners entering FET phase, when they are in their intermediate phase in Primary School and Senior phase in their high school levels. In doing so, learners would not only develop valuable study skills they could use in their lower grades but skills they could also apply to their future studies (Thorpe, 2010). Many learners are not confident in their ability to study effectively, partially due to the fact that many never received any kind of formalised study skills education prior to high school (Simons, 2006). Using SQ3R study skills can improve learners' reading comprehension and their grades. Applying study skills such as skimming, scanning, annotating, outlining, mapping, comparison contrast chart, Venn diagram to textbook material will help organizing learners' note books and studying (Mather & McCarthy, 2012). Teachers teach, thereby helping learners, but the responsibility of learning ultimately lies with each learner. Study skills help learners to become independent learners. These skills allow people of different ages, backgrounds and interests to study individually and with others as a group, in order to achieve their goals, which is success. Study skills include all the abilities that make it possible to cope with the demands of academic and professional pursuits. For people just embarking on a course of study these skills include being able to deal with all the intellectual, emotional and social challenges that are part of the day to day demands of being a learner (Kneale, 2011).

2.4. TEACHERS' SUBJECT CONTENT KNOWLEDGE (SCK) AND PEDAGOGICAL CONTENT KNOWLEDGE (PCK)

This sub section includes discussion of the importance of teacher knowledge and the knowledge of the content of the subject in 2.4.1, where the teacher knowledge and the teaching knowledge will be presented. Additionally Subject Content Knowledge (SCK) and Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) has been considered in 2.4.2. After that the value and the importance of teachers' knowledge teacher and professional development programmes (in-service training) are considered in 2.4.3.

2.4.1. The importance of teacher knowledge and the knowledge of the content of the subject

The teacher is at the centre of successful curriculum implementation and requires special skills and subject knowledge to effectively teach and produce good results. Subject knowledge and experience is a crucial requisite for LO teachers without which they cannot effectively teach and deliver the subject philosophy as intended by the curriculum planners. The best teachers are interesting, competent, caring, encouraging and flexible yet have demanding standards (Berns

2007). Teachers also motivate learners to learn and reinforce their efforts (Van Deventer, 2009). Thirsty percent of LO teachers in the survey study by Rooth (2005) were not specifically trained in teaching life orientation. As long as teachers who teach LO are not professionally qualified in the subject, quality teaching will forever be a dream and intended goals of the subject will remain abstract (Rooth, 2005).

There is a difference between teacher knowledge and teaching knowledge. 'Teacher knowledge' refers to the common and ordinary knowledge possessed by the teachers and their specialist knowledge as teachers. Teaching knowledge' is knowledge related to the activities of teaching. This does not mean that ordinary knowledge is not complex or that common sense does not interpret the world, but it does suggest that the knowledge teachers use cannot be placed on either side of the boundary between 'specialised knowledge' which particular individuals needs in their occupational role and 'common knowledge' which all adult individuals need to be the members of the community (Lowyck & Clark, 1989).

Voss, Kurnter and Baumert (2011) conducted a study aimed at assessing teacher candidates' general pedagogical/psychological knowledge and recommended that research assessing teachers' knowledge directly is needed, since the conclusion from their study was weak. However there has been little research on teachers' knowledge beyond specific subjects or domains, and tests assessing general pedagogical knowledge directly are lacking (Voss; Kurnter & Baumert, 2011). Voss, Kurnter and Baumert (2011) reflected on earlier researchers who had already emphasised the importance of teaching study skills as early as the learners' primary and secondary school life Mufti and Peace (2012) recommend that the teacher must enter into the learners' point of view, completely relating with the goal in hand and walk with the learner accompanying him/her from truth to truth. Education is a central aspect of the development of our society and the success of our county, and we all whether we study, teach, have children at school or simply are part of society have a vested interest in the educational sector. Educational success benefits all of us and educational failure damages all of us. There is a strong link between the above statement and the LO principles. Thus the focus of this study is LO educators' knowledge of study skills (Mufti & Peace, 2012).

Learners have to be prepared for the tests they are required to write in all subjects. The best preparation for this takes the form of explaining the purpose and the nature of the test and spending time not on practicing past test items, but on developing understanding and skills by using assessment to help learning. Thus teaching knowledge of the subject content that they are

teaching is important (Gardener, 2006). A quality teacher is someone who possesses the following four attributes: some basic level of professionalism (values); love to teach (attitudes and desires); capability to teach (knowledge, skills and pedagogy), and; proficiency to teach (imparting and instilling the knowledge, skills and values learners should be acquiring at school). Clearly someone must have at least one to three characteristics to be a fit teacher (Barber & Mourshed, 2007). Study skills are essential and are the complete guide to success. Teacher knowledge and teaching of study skills is vitally important since there is a relationship between how learners learn and educational achievement or learner performance (Burns & Sinfield, 2012).

2.4.2. Teacher Subject Content Knowledge and Pedagogical Content Knowledge

Globally education systems place a very high value on teachers because they are the chief implementers of curricula and without their proper implementation the intended goals of education cannot be attained. Teachers are, and have always been, the main locus of school systems around the world. Being the single most important component of the education system. The quality of a country's teachers is intimately related to the quality of its education system. Teachers' knowledge of subjects they teach and the pedagogical competence they possess are crucial ingredients of an effective implementation of a subject curriculum. Absence of the skills of teaching has negative impact on quality teaching and subsequent performance of learners (Spaull, 2013). The main driver of the variation of learners' learning in schools is the quality of the teachers. The quality of an education system cannot outdo the quality of its teachers so it is important that as curriculum implementers they possess professional values, love of teaching, knowledge, skills and pedagogy to teach. Without the competency to teach, teachers can fail the school system and the learners they teach. South African teachers across the learning areas have performed below expectations as revealed by findings from research and commissions of enquiry (Barber & Mourshed, 2007).

The most common finding across the studies is the observation that teachers poor conceptual knowledge of the subjects they are teaching is a fundamental limitation on the quality of teaching and learning activities and consequently on the quality of learning outcomes. This implies that teachers in South Africa have been found inadequate in as far as their subject content and pedagogical knowledge is concerned (Prinsloo, 2007). SACMEQ III (2007) results on teachers' competence in Grades 6 Mathematics found that only 30% of teachers had desirable levels of subject knowledge compared to other regional centres which fared better (Kenya 90%, Zimbabwe 76% and Swaziland 55%). These results are a reflection of how South African teachers are

performing according to international bench mark evaluations of their competence (Taylor & Vinjevoldt, 1999). There is a strong case to be made that teachers who lack a basic understanding of the subjects they are teaching can actually do harm to their learners thus teachers' subject knowledge is crucial as it forms the foundation of their confidence and competence in their teaching duties. This study seeks to explore in depth teachers' subject knowledge and pedagogical knowledge of LO especially regarding the teaching of study skills to learners at high school (Spaull, 2013).

Content knowledge can be defined as teachers' understanding of the subject matter that needs to be taught. Effective teachers must possess an in-depth comprehension of the content to be taught to learners and be able to fully conceptualise it. Knowledge is at the heart of teachers' professional competence and affects instructional practice and learners' achievement. Teachers without adequate subject matter are a stumbling block to effective learning and subsequent learner performance. Teachers with misconceptions and fragmented knowledge of the subject they teach have limited response to learner's conceptions and limited ability to create cognitively challenging learning situations. This implies that without in-depth and well-structured content knowledge a teacher can confuse learners and stifle their abilities to expand their learning opportunities in the classroom and beyond it (Ball, Lubienski, Mewborn & Oliver, 2001)

Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) is defined as the compulsory knowledge needed to make subject matter accessible to learners. Pedagogical Content Knowledge is an umbrella term for teaching strategies or methodologies and learning support material that the teacher uses to deliver content to learners (Kleickmann, Richler, Kunte, Elsner, Besser, Krauss & Baumert, 2013). This knowledge has two core facts, namely, knowledge of learners' subject specific understood ideas and misunderstandings as well as the knowledge of subject specific teaching strategies and representation. The citations imply that teachers must possess the professional knowledge of identifying how learners understand and misunderstand particular learning area concepts and the relevant methodologies that they can employ to deliver the subject content in an effective and understandable manner (Ball & Oliver *et al.,* 2001). In the discussion it emerges that SCK and PCK are inseparable but different co-significant concepts which have a symbiotic relationship. An effective LO teacher needs to possess subject knowledge as well as pedagogical knowledge which is the know-how of how to deliver the content to learners (Kleickmann *et al.*, 2013).

2.4.3. The value and importance of teacher professional development programmes

Teachers' knowledge in the process of teaching and learning is crucial for the improvement of the learners 'performance, South African education status as well as the economic status of the country. Professional development programmes for teachers have been criticised as being brief, fragmented, decontextualized and removed from the reality within classrooms and are not likely to improve the standard of teaching. Thus, many models of professional development for teachers are not successful. The principles of learning and the implications for designing the learning environment are equally relevant for both the learner and the teacher in the process of learning. Professional development for teachers (in-service) should thus contain a learner-centred element and be knowledge and assessment centred for optimal teacher knowledge and development. Key features of effective teacher professional development programmes should be geared towards creating learner-centred environments for teachers, simultaneously these programmes should be focused on equipping teachers with knowledge to holistically develop learners. This requires an approach to teacher training development model, which prepares teachers to be empowered professionals: where teacher knowledge of the subject and the realities of classrooms are of central importance; where all teachers (for all subjects) participate in an active learning and teaching processes; teachers who are reflective practitioners and who make informed professional choices that are conducive for learners' optimal learning (Martin, 2013).

2.5. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE STUDY: SOCIOLOGICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL CONSIDERATION

This section presents the theoretical framework for the study, where the sociological perspectives: Social constructivism and bio-psychosocial of learning in 2.5.1 is discussed. This is followed by the consideration of psychological perspectives in 2.5.2.

2.5.1. Social constructivism and the bio-psychosocial context of learning

This study has been framed by Vygotsky's perspective of social and cultural context of children's learning appreciation where an adult role is perceived as central in learners' learning. Social and cognitive development are intertwined and interdependent during the process of learning. The Vygotskian perspective of socio-construction (where an adult is perceived to play an essential role in supporting children's learning in the active learning environment) brought about a shift in thinking away from formal learning and inactive tasks and voiced the need for a more active

approach to teaching and learning (Cottone, 2011). Drawing from this theory, this framework appears to align itself with a combination of adult directed and learner initiated activities and validates integrated pedagogical approaches with educational aspects. This framework positions active learning as an appropriate pedagogy which validates learning and adult responsiveness to children (Hunter & Walsh, 2014). Learner's success in their studies be it at primary school or high school or tertiary college is fundamental as this caps the rationale of setting up educational institutions. Thus, this study of study skills (which are tools for learners' success) is underpinned by sociological and psychological perspectives. The researcher explores sociological perspectives and psychological perspectives and how they inform the study.

Life Orientation as a discipline draws much of its content from the social context on which learners live, learn, work and play. The subject becomes more meaningful if it is taught contextually using examples drawn from the context that learners are familiar with. Proponents of social constructivism, particularly Vygotsky, argue that individuals construct meaning within social groups or as part of a community of learning such as a school or family. Individuals create knowledge in the process of interactions and the relations they create in groups (Cottone, 2011). Individuals interact within ecological systems which are related to each other. The systems are micro (family), meso (neighbours and peers), exo (parents work conditions), macro (belief) norms and values of the society (Bronfenbrenner, 1989; Donald, Lazarus & Lolwana, 2007). The above implies that a LO teacher's knowledge should include knowledge of his or her learners' background which is fundamental in enabling the learners to understand the content and philosophy of the subject. This study is also based on Bronfenbrenner's (1989') eco-systematic theory due to the fact that LO teachers need to understand that learners must be taught holistically taking into consideration the settings that they interact with on a daily basis and how the dynamics within them shape their understanding of what is taught in class. Thus in teaching study skills to learners, teachers need to make an effort not to only understand the content and rationale for doing so but to also comprehend the complex settings and interrelationships which learners go through in their development (Bronfenbrenner, 1989).

2.5.2. Psychological perspectives

This study's focus is underpinned by a consideration of Vroom's Expectancy Theory of Motivation. Individuals have different sets of goals and can be motivated if they have certain expectations. In order for a person to be motivated, efforts of performance and motivation must be linked. Thus in an effective learning experience of LO, learners need to have a high level of confidence in the

skills required for the tasks provided. They need support from teachers and quality material to support learning (Vroom, 1964). Self-esteem, clarity of goals regarding performance, and resources available are key factors that influence expectancy. This means that LO teachers should teach of study skills effectively in order to raise learners' beliefs about themselves and should make outcomes of learning clear and achievable so that learners be motivated to accomplish the given tasks (Eraly, 2009).

2.6. CONCLUSION

The chapter outlined related literature review and how earlier studies in the topic correlate with the current study. Knowledge gaps were identified and how the current study will fill them. Theoretical frameworks of the study have also been discussed and how they relate to the study undertaken. The next chapter outlines the research design and methodology the study adopted and justifications thereof.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the research design for the study aimed at addressing the research questions posed is discussed. In section 3.2, the research paradigm and the research approach for the study is considered. In section 3.3, the research design and methodology for the study is presented. In section 3.4, research ethics considerations for the study are outlined. Lastly, methodological norms are discussed in section 3.5. The chapter then concludes in 3.6.

3.2. RESEARCH PARADIGM AND RESEARCH APPROACH

Paradigms are practices and philosophies that regulate investigation within a discipline by providing structures and procedures through which exploration is accomplished. Therefore, to clarify the researcher's structure of investigation and methodological choices, the consideration of the paradigm adopted for this study will be discussed prior to any discussion about the specific methods employed in this study (Mihrika, 2014). Globally, conducting research is influenced by deep-rooted views about reality, values and current practices of researchers. A research paradigm is a researcher's view of the world based on common expectations, ideas, principles and practices. It is created out of certain speculative assumptions that control and direct thinking and action (Schwandt, 1994). In sub-section 3.2.1, constructivism and interpretivism as philosophical foundations for this research project are discussed. In 3.2.2, the qualitative research approach selected for this research and aligned to these paradigmatic outlooks is outlined.

3.2.1. Constructivism and interpretivism as research paradigms

Constructivism and interpretivism are related theories that are sometimes used inter-changeably to define a paradigm for research (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). These two schools of thought (interpretivism and constructivism) share the goal of understanding the multifaceted world of lived experience from the point of view of those who live it. The world of lived reality, situation and specific meanings that create the general body of investigation is fabricated by social performers (Schwandt, 1994). This research is grounded in a constructivist and interpretivist philosophy of reality and knowledge generation. The basic rules that regulate the constructivist paradigm are that knowledge is socially assembled by those people who are active in the research process, and that researchers should try to understand the multidimensional world of lived experience from the

standpoint of those who live it (Strong, 2005). A fundamental belief for qualitative research is that the world is complex and that there are multiple explanations for human behaviour. Behaviour results from the interaction of multiple factors. It follows then, that the methods that investigate behaviour and explanations need to be sufficiently complex to capture the true meaning of what has occurred. This then leads researchers to examine multiple perspectives, while at the same time qualitative researchers realise that it is not possible to account for all the complexity present in a situation (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010).

The aim of this study is to explore the reality and the lived experiences of FET LO teachers in terms of their approaches to teaching study skills to learners. Thus, in carrying out this study, the researcher aimed to gather the views, experiences and challenges of teachers in the schools that were sampled for the study. Interpretation of the collected views and understanding of research phenomena was done within the constructive/interpretive theoretical perspective.

3.2.2. Qualitative Research Approach

Qualitative research designs put emphasis on collecting data in naturally occurring settings and can be classified as interactive or non-interactive (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). The goal of all constructivist research is to get to know the manner in which the fellow members of a social group validate their particular realities and provide them with meaning, through their participation in social processes. The qualitative approach linked to interpretivist and constructivist paradigms is suitable for this study. Qualitative research seeks to understand a phenomenon by focusing on it in totality. The goal is an in-depth understanding of the whole picture rather than a numeric analysis of data (Ary, Jacobs, & Sorensen, 2010). Qualitative researchers often understand human behaviour as liquid, self-motivated and changing depending on time and place. Qualitative researchers are not interested in generalising beyond particular people who are studied. Qualitative research uses a wide-ranging and profound approach in examining human choices and behaviour as it naturally happens. Qualitative researchers collect data through asking and recording observations to make interpretations (Johnson & Christensen, 2012).

A qualitative approach was relevant for this study because of its intention to explore LO teachers' knowledge and teaching of study skills. This entailed exploring their experiences in the process. It aimed at taking into consideration the situational factors and to be contextually sensitive to the conditions under which LO teachers teach study skills. The focus was on participants'

understanding and their teaching strategies of study skills to FET learners in high schools (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Furthermore this approach was the most suitable approach in trying to understand teachers' knowledge, their roles and their experience towards teaching study skills as part of LO. Therefore it is important to note that this approach was chosen due to the nature of the problem explored. It was aimed at describing the individual and group of teachers' behaviours, their roles, experiences, knowledge and understanding of teaching study skills (Jacobs, 2011).

3.3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

A research design is a plan for accomplishing research goals and for resolving research problems by answering research questions. The design is the main guide that indicates the techniques and processes for collecting and exploring the data. Additionally, it demonstrates whether the information is gathered in a way that is suitable for the questions asked (measures the appropriateness of the method used) (Mihrka, 2014). It is the researcher's plan of putting standards of interpretation into motion and indicates how to proceed in gaining an understanding of a phenomenon in its natural setting (Ntakana, 2013). It involves paying attention to the relationship between inherited ideas, perceptions, and assumptions, and on the techniques and practices used during the process of inquiry (Daly, 2007). The purpose of this strategy is to help clarify exactly who and what will be studied as well as when and how it will be studied. It also helps the researcher to think about how they will analyse the evidence collected (Falk & Blumenreich, 2005). Furthermore it provides in an appropriate manner, the most suitable and defined answers possible to the research question (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; McMillan & Schumacher, 2010).

In this sub-section the following research design considerations for the study are presented: Firstly a recap of research questions to be addressed via the research process is provided (3.3.1). This is followed by 3.3.2, which outlines the case study research design and sampling linked to this. Thereafter, the data collection procedures are given (3.3.3) and data analysis technique discussed (3.3.4).

3.3.1. Recap of research questions addressed via the research process

To recap, as stated in chapter 1, the main research question for the study is:

- ***What are Life Orientation teachers' understandings of and teaching practices for study skills in the FET phase high schools at Ekudibeng Cluster, Gauteng East District?***

To assist in answering this main question, the following sub-questions have been formulated:

- What is LO teachers' knowledge in relation to the teaching of study skills in the Further Education and Training phase?
- How do LO teachers teach study skills as part of the Further Education and Training LO curriculum?
- What challenges do LO teachers experience which hinder the teaching of study skills in the Further Education and Training phase?
- What do LO teachers consider as important needs for teaching of study skills in the Further Education and Training phase?

Each of these will be addressed via use of a case study research design.

3.3.2. The case study research design

In this sub-section the reasons for the design choice are discussed in 3.3.2.1. Followed by the presentation of the sampling for the cases in 3.3.2.2. then followed by the Data collection in 3.3.2.3. and the table of schools and the participant sample for the study.

3.3.2.1. Reasons for the design choice

A research design addresses the key question, for example, what kind of study will be conducted in order to provide suitable answers to the research problem or questions (Mouton, 2003). The research study focused on teachers' experiences and their knowledge in teaching LO study skills to FET learners. Therefore a case study design seemed to be appropriate for this current study.

A case study is generally a qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a bounded system (a case) or multiple bounded systems (cases) through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information. The researcher then reports on the case-based themes

and descriptions. The design is focused mainly on providing an in-depth and detailed account of the case under study enabling the researcher to discover more information (Creswell, 2007). This research study focuses on individual FET LO teachers in selected schooling contexts, and seeks to understand their knowledge, experience and strategies of teaching study skills in order to understand complex social phenomena and to provide a holistic and meaningful picture of real-life events in their journey of teaching study skills in their schools (Denscombe, 2003). Therefore in exploring the knowledge of LO teachers in teaching study skills, their views, experiences and practices were the data used to answer the research questions of the study.

A case study design is particularly appropriate for this study since it is an exploratory and discovery-orientated research study. The purpose is to elaborate the concept and its related subcomponents. This study sought to provide a detailed description and analysis of particular practices, processes and events (Creswell, Eberson, Eloff, Ferreira, Ivankova, Jansen, Nieuwenhuis, Pietersen, Plano Clark & Van der Westhuizen, 2010). The main benefit of conducting a case study lies in the particular details and holistic understanding that the researcher gains from a specific case (Yin, 1993). This case study design might also contribute to policy formulation, implementation and modification (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). That is why it is important for this study to use a case study method because through this method the researcher may understand how LO teachers of the Ekudibeng district perceive the teaching of study skills to their learners and the challenges they face in the process. In this study multiple case studies were employed to allow for exploration of a number of cases to illustrate the various schooling contexts represented in the district. A case study approach was useful to this study because it explored the lived experiences of the participants, their historical background with regard to knowledge and understanding LO as a subject, its purpose, expectations from them as teachers and their role as LO teachers with regard to teaching study skills to learners. For the purpose of the study cases had to be sampled so that information could be gathered.

3.3.2.2. Sampling of cases

Samples can be selected in various ways (Mhrika, 2014). Purposeful sampling was used so as to collect all-inclusive data about the research topic (Johnson & Christensen, 2012). Purposive sampling is a considerate, non-probability and advantageous sampling method. The advantages are: reduced cost, saving of considerable time and getting more detailed information. However, this technique too has limitations of bias and difficulty in selecting representative samples (Mhrika, 2014). The participants, who were selected to form the case-based sample, were LO high school

teachers and HoDs because they were considered to be information-rich in respect of the purpose of the study. Purposeful sampling indicates selecting information-rich cases for a study when one wants to understand something about those cases without needing to generalise the information to all such cases. These participants were sampled because they are knowledgeable and informative about the topic which the researcher was investigating (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). The Gauteng East District was selected as a schooling district from which to select specific high schools. This district was chosen for convenience of access purposes as the researcher resides and works in this area. The matric exit examination performance averages from the district's statistical report for Matric results was used to purposefully select three high schools to approach to request participation of their teachers in this research.

The District statistic report on learner matric examination performance was requested from the Gauteng East District Office after permission had been obtained from the Gauteng Department of Education to request it. Those schools that had been underperforming, average performing and high performing for the past 3 years were then identified by the researcher as potential participants. One low performing school, an average performing school and a high performing school were sought and randomly selected from the list of schools in the district meeting the performance criteria. The schools were approached and for those schools with principals giving consent to approach teachers to participate in the study, two teachers and one HoD from each school were approached to participate. In each school one Grade 10 and one Grade 11 Senior LO teacher were requested to participate. Senior teachers are teachers who have more than 10 years' experience teaching a subject. All grades in high schools have a senior teacher. Interviewing the senior teachers from each of these grades was expected to benefit the study because all lived experiences with regard to teaching study skills as part LO programme were explored. One Life Orientation Head of Department who represented Grade 12 and the LO FET Department as whole was also requested to participate at each school. That led to 9 participants in totality from the three sampled schools. Table 3.1 outlines the final sample for the study.

Table 3.1: School and participant sample for the study

SCHOOLS	PERFORMANCE IN MATRIC EXAMINATIONS. EXPECTED PERCENTAGE IS 80%	LO TEACHER SAMPLE	LO HoD SAMPLE
School A	Above performing (Performing above the expected percentage)	1 Grade 10 teacher	1 HoD for Grade 12
School B	Average performing (Performing according to expected percentage)	1 Grade 10 and 1 Grade 11 Teacher	1 HoD for Grade 12
School C	Low performing (Performing below expected percentage)	1 Grade 10 and 1 Grade 11 Teacher	1 HoD for Grade 12

The contexts of each the three selected schools will be described in detail in Chapter 4 to contextualize each case. Six teachers and three HoDs from three schools participated in the study. There was a challenge with one of the schools where there was only one LO teacher teaching both Grades 10 and 11 and that led to eight participants in totality from the three sampled schools instead of the anticipated nine.

3.3.2.3. Data collection

Data collection consists of the application of a particular research approach to the sample or cases selected for the exploration so as to make new data about the topic available for further processing. There are quite a few methods of collecting data using a qualitative research approach but for this study, semi-structured interviews were employed to explore data from LO HoDs and LO teachers (Mouton, 2003).

An interview is a two-way conversation in which the interviewer asks the participant questions to learn about the ideas, beliefs, views, opinions and behaviour of the participant and the participant chooses to either respond or not. The purpose of qualitative semi-structured interviews is to see the world through the participant's eyes and if they can be appropriately applied, they can be a valuable source of information. The main aim is always to acquire resourceful information that will aid the researcher to answer the research question(s) by seeking to understand the participant's construction of knowledge and social reality (Maree, 2010). Semi-structured interviews are helpful, because every respondent is asked the same questions, which allowed the opportunity for comparison of the answers from all the respondents (De Vos, Strydom, Fouche, & Delport, 2002). De Vos *et al.,* (2002) further maintain that semi-structured interviews are valuable because the researcher has a set of predetermined questions on an interview schedule, but the interview is

guided by the schedule, rather than dictated by it (De Vos *et al.,* 2002) The interview schedule for this study is provided in Appendix C.

The researcher used probing and prompting questions for participants to give more clarity where necessary. The semi-structured interviews were conducted face-to-face, where participants participated in a one-to-one interview. Although intended as a data collection source, permission for viewing curriculum planning documents was not granted except for the lower performing school whose representative said “we are using what the DoE is providing us with so here are the copies”. The school representatives apologised but they did not feel comfortable with sharing their documents since their LO planning documents are personal. The data collected from the semi-structured interviews was then analysed by the researcher.

3.3.2.4. Data analysis

Qualitative data analysis is the logical method of coding, categorising, and interpreting data to provide clarifications on the topic of interest (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Data analysis in a case study naturally involves the following steps: organisation of details, the specific facts about the case are arranged in logical order; categorization of data, where data are clustered into meaningful groups; interpretation of single instances where the information is examined for the specific meanings that they might have in relation to the case; identification of patterns, which is accomplished by scrutinising the data for underlying themes; and synthesis which is when the generalisations of an overall picture is constructed, and conclusions are made (Leedy & Ormond, 2010). There are three steps in preparing data for analysis: scanning and cleaning of the data, organising the data, and representing the data (Vithal & Jansen, 2008). The analysed data was generated from the recorded field-notes. The researcher listened to audio recordings of the interviews, and then transcribed the data verbatim. The research questions served as the guidelines for the analysis of the data. The Computer Aided Qualitative Data Analysis Software (CAQDAS) programme, Atlas.ti, was used to aid data analysis. Through this programme the originally transcribed data was coded into themes; repeated ideas were identified and then classified as themes which were then analysed and discussed to address the study’s research questions.This information was useful in understanding the participants’ similar experiences and challenges as well as their different approaches to the teaching of study skills to learners. The researcher then described the fundamental experience (essence) of the whole group (Johnson & Christensen, 2012).

3.4. RESEARCH ETHICS

Ethics are the principles and guidelines that help us uphold the things that we value. Research ethics is about being clear about the nature of the agreement the researcher has entered into with her/his research subjects or participants (Blaxter, Hughes & Tight, 1996). Problems such as deception and invasion of privacy must be given serious considerations during the research planning. Ethical considerations apply throughout the research. In planning and implementation process of any research, ethics should be an integral part and not viewed as a burden or an afterthought (Shamim & Qureshi, 2010). The researcher in this study considered the basically accepted ethical guidelines that are required for the current qualitative research study. Therefore the researcher has ensured that the necessary ethical and social obligations to the respondents were met. Which was the protection of the participants by ensuring that the anonymity and confidentiality of the respondents principle was followed, and their safety that no harm would be inflicted upon them was the researchers' priority. The permission to conduct the research was obtained from the relevant stakeholders. The researcher made sure that confidentiality and anonymity, caring and fairness was maintained during and after the study to protect participants (Creswell et al., 2010).

3.4.1. Informed consent

Informed consent implies informing the participants in prior the interviews about what will happen in the study and how the results will be used (Abelson, Frey & Gregg, 2004). Informing the respondents about all the procedures and the purpose of the research could influence their involvement in the research. It may influence the results of the research negatively or positively (Ferguson & Bibby, 2004). With this study all the procedures and goals of the research were shared with the participants. The researcher of this study made sure that an informed consent form was signed by the participants before they embarked on the interviews. Starting with the permission for the interview process to be recorded was granted by all participants involved in the study, before the interview started. The participants were informed of the reason for such a request, which was that the recording is for making sure that no significant information is missed during the transcribing of data. Most of all the participants were assured that the recorded information was only for the purpose of the study, nothing else. The participants were further informed that they had the right to withdraw from the study at any time without any kind of penalty if they feel like doing so or if they lose interest. Participants were promised that after the study is

completed, the research results would be communicated with the related interest people in the form of a summary.

3.4.2. Anonymity and confidentiality

One of most important principles of research ethics is anonymity. This implicates that the participants' identity will be kept anonymous or unrevealed throughout the study, if possible, even to the researcher. Confidentiality refers to participants' right to obtain the assurance that identifying information will not be accessible to anyone who is not directly involved in the study. The purpose of anonymity of the respondents is to try to provide the safe platform for the individuals release what they are actually thinking and feeling. This is particularly true when they are asked about sensitive issues (Mihrka, 2014). The participants were assured of confidentiality and anonymity in the sense that their names would not be used in the study; instead, pseudonyms were used in the study report.

3.4.3. Judging the benefits (caring and fairness)

The researcher obtained approval for her research design, including for the data-gathering procedures and the interview protocol, from her promoter, as well as from the Ethics Committee of the College of Education at the University of South Africa. This approval was granted (ethical clearance certificate attached (Appendix: A). All these measures were adhered to, in order to avoid risks and to ensure the safety of the participants. The researcher was confident that the participants did not suffer any physical harm, since they were interviewed at their working environment (schools), which means that they were not travelling to attend interviews. The researcher also made sure that there were no instances where gestures or language could be seen to be offensive by the interviewees (Creswell, 2010).

3.5. METHODOLOGICAL NORMS

Qualitative methodological norms are trustworthiness, credibility, dependability, transferability and confirmability. To enhance the trustworthiness of the data, the researcher has to firstly establish the trustworthiness of her research by addressing the credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability of the study and findings. It must be noted that the researcher will contribute to the trustworthiness of her research and the understanding of it, by addressing descriptive validity, interpretive validity, theoretical validity, and evaluative validity. Validity is the degree to which the

qualitative data collected accurately gauges what the researcher is trying to capture. Trustworthiness and understanding are two common qualitative research terms that will be used to describe validity in this current research study (Creswell & Miller, 2000, Miles & Huberman, 1994). When conducting qualitative research, one can facilitate the trustworthiness and understanding of one's research findings by using a number of strategies. Amongst the strategies that can be used are constructs of trustworthiness such as credibility, transferability and confirmability. Therefore the trustworthiness was guaranteed through the adhering to the trustworthy constructs that are discussed in detail below (Creswell & Miller, 2000).

3.5.1. Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness is considered an important component of any qualitative research study. Unlike quantitative research, which relies on measures of reliability and validity to evaluate the effectiveness of a study, qualitative research can be assessed by its trustworthiness. Trustworthiness is representative of the following qualitative constructs: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Mihrka, 2014). For the purpose of this study only constructs that were employed in this study will be discussed.

3.5.2. Credibility

True value, or credibility, relates to questions such as: Do conclusions of this research make sense? Do conclusions authentically represent the phenomena of interest? Do conclusions adequately describe research participants? These questions pertain to the concept of credibility which is similar to the idea of internal validity in quantitative research (Miles & Huberman, 1994). In this research, the data from the original transcription was interpreted by the researcher. The CAQDAS programme Atlas.ti was also used to create an audit trail which allows the findings to be traced back to the analysis to see from where findings have been derived.

3.5.3. Transferability

Transferability attempts to establish if the results of the current study relate to other contexts and can therefore be transferred to other contexts. Transferability refers to the applicability of the findings to other contexts (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The qualitative descriptions of the findings and context allows others to judge whether the results are meaningful within their settings.

3.6. CONCLUSION

In this chapter the research paradigm and research approach, where constructivism and interpretivism as research paradigms were described. The research design and methodology of the study was explored. The sampling technique, data collection and analysis were discussed. The chapter concluded with research ethics and methodological norms considerations. In the next chapter the findings are presented.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS OF THE STUDY

4.1. ORIENTATION OF THE CHAPTER

In this chapter, findings are presented linked to LO teachers' knowledge and teaching of study skills to FET learners in their high schools. This chapter deals with findings for research question for the study, namely:

- ***What are Life Orientation teachers' understandings of and teaching practices for study skills in FET Phase high schools in Ekudibeng Cluster, Gauteng East District?***

The goal of the chapter is to present and compare characteristics of purposively selected FET teachers' teaching of study skills as part of the LO programme in a range of schools. To recap from Chapter 3, the comparison is based on the sampling criteria for the school selections linked to their performance profiles that is a high performing high school (School A), an average performing school (School B) and a low performing school (School C). The data presented in this chapter are the combination of findings gathered from the analysis of eight interviews with three Life Orientation Heads of Departments and five participating Grade 10 and 11 Life Orientation teachers at each school.

Firstly, in section 4.2, a general overview of the contextual background for each of the case studies is presented. Next in section 4.3, the teachers' knowledge on study skills is considered. This is linked to the conception that teacher competency in the subject taught and the ability to teach it, not only has an impact on learners' performance during their schooling life but into their further education. In section 4.4. Teachers' strategies of teaching study skills, their integration of their pedagogical knowledge and experiences in the teaching of study skills to learners are discussed. Thereafter, teachers' challenges in the context of teaching study skills are presented in section 4.5. Lastly, in section 4.6. Teachers' needs for teaching study skills are presented. Note that for audit trail purposes, each participant comment or quotation is followed by a bracketed reference as to where the data can be found in the Atlas.ti hermeneutic unit in which it is situated. For example, the "P4" in the reference "P4, 4:4" refers to primary document number 4. Direct quotations taken from transcripts of the interviews conducted have been edited where irrelevant words and phrases which hinder readability and/or did not contribute to the content analysis were eliminated. Ellipses in the quotations signify where editing has occurred.

4.2. CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND FOR EACH OF THE CASE STUDIES

This section offers a general overview of the contextual background for each of the case schools and each of the teachers linked to these schools. All the schools are government schools, operating under the rules and regulations of the Gauteng Department of Education.

School A is considered a former Model C English-medium school, serving mostly middle class families. It is situated in an urban residential neighborhood in the Ekurhuleni district of Gauteng. This is a multiracial school having an overall 750 learners and 34 teachers. The teacher: learner ratio ranged from 1: 25 – 37. The school is a quintile 4 school and the school fees for this year are R11, 500 per learner. Prior to the research there were three LO teachers including the HoD. However the Grade 10 teacher had left the school resulting in the Grade 11 teacher also having to teach the Grade 10 year. As such, two LO teachers one of whom was the HoD were interviewed.

School B is also an English-medium former model C school, situated in an urban setting with mostly Black residents surrounded by a large informal settlement and a township area in Ekurhuleni, Gauteng. The school is a quintile 5 school and the school fees for this year are R2, 800. Black, Colored and Indian learners mostly from the surrounding community attend the school. There are 900 learners and 35 teachers in the school. The teacher: learner ratio is 1:40 - 45. The majority of teachers at the school are Indian. Some of the learners are from economically disadvantaged homes and do not speak English as a first language. The Grade 10 - 12 LO teacher from school B stated that their parents are trying very hard to the point that some parents work two jobs per day.

School C is a former model C school, situated in an urban area near industrial areas in Ekurhuleni, Gauteng. The school is a quintile 4 school and the school fees for this year are R2, 000 per year. There are 1021 learners and 35 teachers. Four teachers including the HoD are teaching LO. There is one LO qualified teacher who is sharing her knowledge with all LO teachers in teaching Grade 10 to 12 learners, FET phase. The teacher: learner ratio at the school is 1:33 - 40. Most learners at the school are Black. The learners in the school are primarily the children from townships and countries other than South Africa. Some learners are from low socio-economic status backgrounds, in particular, some learners are from informal settlements. Some of their parents have little or no income at all and are dependent on social grants. Some learners are from child-headed families in townships or informal settlements. Furthermore, when it comes to outside countries, the school has learners from Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Mozambique,

Zimbabwe and Nigeria. According to the teachers, these learners have only been exposed to their vernacular language as home language (African Languages) in their primary schooling life. These learners have never been exposed to Afrikaans and it becomes a new subject when they arrive at high school. These learners were only used to learning English as their second additional language thus it becomes a big shift or turn around for them when it comes to high school life. Highlighting the impact of impoverished educational backgrounds, the HoD also added that most of these learners stay very far from school and distance had a negative impact on the learners' performance.

4.3. TEACHERS' SUBJECT CONTENT AND PEDAGOGICAL CONTENT KNOWLEDGE AND TRAINING EXPERIENCE FOR TEACHING STUDY SKILLS AS PART OF THE LO PROGRAMME

In this sub-section the following themes are considered: teachers' content knowledge of the subject LO and the teaching of study skills (4.3.1); and training experience for teaching study skills as part of LO programme (4.3.2).

4.3.1. Teachers' knowledge of the subject LO and the teaching of study skills

The HoD and the LO Grades 10 -11 teacher at School A said that they have basic knowledge of teaching study skills to learners. Both the teacher and the HoD stated that study skills form part of the curriculum and they do teach learners the way the DBE prescribes. However the HoD does not think that is nearly enough (P2: 25:25). Both the teacher and the HoD believe that it is possible to integrate knowledge, experience and pedagogy in the teaching of study skills to learners. The HoD argued that they are definitely not doing this yet so they still have a long way to go. She further stated that she has some background and knowledge of study skills that she has not passed on to the other teachers yet, therefore there is a huge gap there (knowledge of teaching study skills) (P2: 25:25). They expressed themselves as follows:

> ***The Teacher at School A****: "Study skills form part of the curriculum, so we do teach learners. I think I know enough, I don't need help from my HoD" (P1: 11:11).*
>
> ***The HoD at School A****: "I do know quite a bit" (P2: 44:44).*

The teachers at Schools B and C indicated that they do not have enough knowledge on study skills and expressed their frustration related to this. The HoD at School B argued that there is a

big gap in the level of training teachers on how to teach study skills to learners and the teaching of study skills in FET phase (P3: 40:40). The HoD at School C added that teachers lack pedagogical knowledge of teaching study skills to learners (P7: 4:4).

The Grade 10 LO teacher at School B emphasised that there is a lack of knowledge on how to teach study skills to learners (P4: 53:53). Furthermore the teachers do not feel qualified or well equipped with the knowledge of teaching LO as a subject and the teaching of study skills to the learners. Thus, learners are not adequately taught study skills because the teacher does not have any idea of teaching LO (P6: 20:20). Their expressions are as follows:

> ***The Teacher at School B Grade 10****: "Besides my knowledge from educating myself, No! " (P4: 39:39)*
>
> ***The Teacher at School B Grade 11****: "No workshop (in-service training) ever been done to the teachers on study skills" (P5:50:50).*
>
> ***Teacher at School C LO Grade 11****: "I'm trying my best to teach study skills to the learners but when it comes to that knowledge of teaching them I am still struggling a bit since I have started this year. Actually I'm teaching economics" (P8: 34:34).*

4.3.2 Training experience for teaching study skills as part of LO programme

Teachers at all schools indicated that they do not have training on teaching study skills although they have some knowledge of the skills. Those with limited knowledge have equipped themselves using their own methods such as studying and searching for information. The teacher at School C stated that she is struggling to teach Grade 11 LO due to limited knowledge and workshops on LO as a subject and specifically the teaching of study skills (P8: 37:37). The HoD at School A has noticed that there is a challenge in the context of teaching study skills especially when it comes to the integration of knowledge and pedagogy in teaching study skills since other teachers don't understand what LO is and what the teaching of study skills is about because they don't understand the developmental psychology (P2: 37:37). The HoD at school B, emphasised that teachers do not know how to teach different study skills to different learners because in the class there are high achieving, average and lower achieving learners but teachers also on the other hand do not know how to go about teaching study skills (P3: 36:36). She further stated that she thinks that the lack of training on the part of teachers in their specific subjects deprives learners of guidance on how they should study their specific subjects. She strongly believed that this is one of the contributing factors to learners' poor performance (P3: 27:27). The HoD in School A and

the teachers in School B seemed very frustrated due to the challenge of teacher competency emanating from the lack of training available (P2: 44:44;P4: 39:39;, P5: 50:50). The Grade 10 teacher at School C was concerned that due to the fact that teachers do not have the knowledge of teaching study skills to the learners they will end up imparting the wrong information to the learners, just teaching what they think is correct (P6: 30:30). In sum, the teachers in all schools (A, B and C) felt that they were not trained to teach learners study skills and some of them are even not trained to teach LO as a subject e.g. (P4: 39:39). Examples of this are:

> ***The HoD at School A**: "We were not trained enough" (P2: 44:44).*
>
> ***The Teacher at School B LO Grade 10**: "There aren't workshops done to teach the teachers how to teach study skills to the learners. Actually as the LO department they haven't been equipped with the knowledge of teaching study skills (P4: 39:39).*
>
> ***The Teacher at School C LO Grade 11**: "I am learning on the go and that sometimes poses a challenge on my teaching of LO and study skills in sense that sometimes I wish I started with Grade 8 and then move up bit by bit. I think I would be more comfortable with the subject because now I was just given Grade 11 which is a high grade and I don't know the subject. I don't know what they learnt in previous grades, like in Grade 10" (P8: 37:37).*
>
> ***The HoD at School B**: "The main challenge will be how to go about teaching study skills is due to the lack of training on how to teach study skills. Teachers are having a challenge of how to impart/teach study skills to the learners" (P3: 36:36).*

In the next section, teachers' strategies for teaching study skills are considered.

4.4. TEACHERS' STRATEGIES OF TEACHING STUDY SKILLS

In this section, implementation timing for LO study skills in the FET (4.4.1.) and the teachers' strategies for teaching study skills (4.4.2.) are considered

4.4.1. Implementation timing for LO study skills in the FET

FET Life Orientation programmes were requested and reviewed and the following was revealed. According to the DBE LO programmes, study skills are scheduled for the second term where LO teachers are expected to teach FET learners study skills in Grade 10 (second term). Periods allocated for the teaching of LO in the DoE LO programmes amounts to three hours per cycle. The DBE provide LO programmes and lesson plans to teachers. In School A they have their own programme and lesson plans which they have developed using the DBE program as the

framework. In Schools B and C they use the provided LO programmes and lesson plans where they just write the dates on the provided lesson plans.

The teachers at School A are more proactive than those at Schools B and C because from Grade 8 they identify learners' learning challenges. Even though the teachers at School A teach according to the DBE LO programme they try to stretch the time allocated for the teaching of LO and the study skills teaching plan. The teachers at School A are having five periods instead of three per cycle. (P2: 10:10). The expression of views as as follows:

> ***The HoD at School A**: "In our school we are working on 7 days cycle, so we have 3 periods of LO excluding physical aid and we have 2 periods for physical aid. In FET phase Grade 10 – 12 are having 3 periods LO, 1 period career guidance and 1 period physical aid and I think that shows commitment to LO in the school (5 LO periods)" (P2: 10:10).*

4.4.2. Teachers' teaching strategies for study skills

The Grade 10 and 11 teacher at School A explained how he integrates knowledge and experience when teaching study skills to learners in the classroom. He concurred with his HoD that they should introduce study skills on learners' arrival in Grade 8 (GET phase). This would mean that learners are taught study skills throughout their high school career in LO. This same teacher was concerned that as much they are introduced early to the study skill, in the FET phase learners are still unable to effectively use study skills (P1:5:5). He expressed his views as follows:

> ***The Teacher at School A**: "I always have a discussion at the beginning of the topic, highlight good methods and create mind maps to explain how to create an effective mind map. I tend to try to use practical examples from other subjects to explain specific skills or techniques e.g. I would create a mind map on Parts Of Speech on the chalkboard to explain how to create an effective mind map" (P1: 23:23). "At my school, we chose to teach the study skills section just before exams so that it seems relevant to the learners immediately rather than something distant and useless. This has helped with the level of interest of the learners this year and I would recommend it as a permanent change" (P1: 50:50).*

Schools B and C had almost the same strategies which are teaching learners study skills like mind maps, revise using previous question papers and how to manage time. The teachers in School B guide learners how to study, teach about being organised and motivate them. Both School B and School C introduce study skills in Grade 10 during the second term as it is stipulated by the DBE LO programme even though some teachers do touch and go in Grade 9 when teaching learning styles which is in the Grade 9 LO programme. (P4:21:21), (P7:29:29), (P7: 34:34), (P7: 40:40). Teachers teach different methods of study skills to learners such as teaching learners how to

answer questions, understanding and differentiating between the types of questions (P4:21:21 and P5:50:50). In School C there is a qualified LO teacher who is then teaches learners how to use study skills such as SQR (P6:50:50).

Importantly, the teachers at all three schools teach learners how to apply study skills to other learning areas. Some teachers give learners past question papers, especially in Grade 12. Teachers in schools prepare learners for examination periods. Both School B and School C LO teachers need to teach learners based on the past experience success and failures so that they will be able to make a choice that will lead them to brighter future (P4:21:21; P6:50:50). The Grade 10 - 12 teachers in Schools B and C believe that LO embraces all learning areas, it is part of all of them. "It is a multi-subject" (P4: 21.21, P5:15:15, 31:31, P6: 50:50). The HoD and the Grade 10 - 12 teacher at School B, emphasised that LO plays a major role in equipping the learners with the basic knowledge on how to study using different types of learning styles like mind maps, acronyms etc. (P3: 21:21, P4: 21.21). The HoDs and teachers in school B and in School C, (except for the Grade 11 teacher in School C) use their past experience and knowledge to teach learners study skills like mind maps, how to use key concepts when they are studying, summarizing, and creative thinking because that is what they may know how to teach to learners. (P3: 21:21, P3: 24:24, P3: 36:36, P4:6:6, P4: 9::9, P4: 21:21, P5:21:21, P6: 4:4, 7:7, 21:21, 23:23, P7: 7:7, 21:21, 23:23, P8: 7:7, 21:21, 23:23). Their strategies of teaching study skills are presented as follows:

> ***The Teacher at School B****: "We use different methods of teaching study skills for an example we use pictures, we use illustration, we put it on the chalk board but when it comes to studying learners are unable to use study skills on their own. If you love LO and love teaching you will find the methods of how to teach it in a manner that can benefit the learners including study skills" (P5:15:15, 31:31, 34:34, 50:50).*

> ***The HoD at School C****: "Teachers prepare learners for exams. I combine my knowledge and experiences and my qualification knowledge to help these learners and they do take it in. We just talk about learning styles and things like that but the actual teaching of study skills is not in the syllabus for Grade 8 and 9. Towards the June exam we teach learners study skills to prepare them for the exams and in September I normally give them the past exam question papers and show them how to tackle questions (P7: 23:23). We teach them how to study for the exams and how to answer the questions which is part of study skills" (P7: 4:4, P7: 7:7), P7: 17:17).*

4.5. THE CHALLENGES IN THE CONTEXT OF TEACHING STUDY SKILLS

In this section, the challenges in the context of teaching study skills are presented. Firstly the curriculum design challenges and teacher attitudes in the teaching of study skills to learners is presented in 4.5.1, furthermore in this chapter the challenge of resources will be presented. After

this, in 4.5.2, learner characteristics and other influential factors that affect the teaching of study skills and contribute to the learner performance will be discussed. The learners' comprehension and performance, learners' competency, the learners' attitudes towards the teaching of study skills, learner drop out of school before Grade 12 and parental involvement will be discussed

4.5.1. Curriculum design challenges and teachers' attitudes toward the teaching of study skills to learners

In this section teachers' experiences of curriculum design challenges will be presented in 4.5.1.1. followed by curriculum implementation in 4.5.1.2. Then the next sub-topic will be the Transition/progression of learners within the grades/phases in 4.5.1.3. Thereafter teachers' attitudes towards the teaching of study skills to learners in 4.5.1.4. and resources in the school impacting teaching and learning will be discussed in 4.5.1.5.

4.5.1.1 Curriculum design challenges

The teacher at School C (FET LO) Grade 10 - 12 reported that there are challenges in the context of teaching study skills to learners due to curriculum design implementation, teachers' attitudes, learners' transition or progression within the phases and grades, resources in the school (P6:27:27).The teacher at school C further emphasised the importance of understanding the learners when teaching them: "An LO teacher needs to get into the learner, understand him/her as an individual being, and from that understanding of a learner as a whole make a sound decision in terms of guiding and helping that which in turn will benefit the learner" (P6:24:24). The teacher also added that teaching learners' study skills prepare them for life. Some of them will not only to use skills in the class but somewhere out there in their lives. It is important to equip learners with study skills for their lifelong learning inside and out of the school (P6:27:27).

4.5.1.2 Curriculum implementation

Teachers at Schools A, B and C seem to have concerns about the implementation of study skills in FET phase specifically from Grade 10. They all share the same sentiment that it is late to introduce study skills in Grade 10 and worse part, during the second term of the year. It is important to mention that according to the DBE LO curriculum study skills must be introduced to learners in schools starting in Grade 10 (P2:6:6). However, the teachers at School A are more proactive than those at Schools B and C because teachers at School A introduce study skills in Grade 8. The

HoD and the LO teacher of School A pointed out that they assess learners as soon as they arrive in Grade 8 for the purpose of identifying learners' learning challenges (P2:6:6). Furthermore, even though the teachers at School A teach according to the DBE LO curriculum programme they try to stretch the study skills teaching plan by introducing study skills in Grade 8 instead of introducing them in Grade 10. They also try to bring enough depth to the subject so that it matters. At School A, the HoD and teachers have developed their own teaching plan out of the departments' framework and their professional expertise for the implementation of study skills in their classrooms. Thus study skills are implemented to learners as soon as they arrive at high school. The HoD at school A still thinks they need to work further on their implementation of study skills in Grade 8 and 9, so that when learners arrive in Grade 10 they already have study skills and then they can just refresh such skills in Grade 11 and 12 (P2: 10:10). The HoD at School A further indicated that previously they have tried offering a specific course on study skills at Grades 8 and 9 levels, which the learners to attend after hours (P2: 6:6).

The teachers at schools B and C introduce study skills in Grade 10, as stipulated by the DBE syllabus and programmes. The HoD at School C further commented that she thinks that this is the only time the learners are ever using study skills (P7:10:10). The HoD at School C and the Grade 11 LO teacher at School B reported that learners are exposed to study skills in the second term so that they can use them for the June exam and also during November exams because these are big exams where they have to sit down and study. The teachers at school B and C do touch on learning styles when teaching LO to Grade 9 learners as per DBE GET curriculum (Grade 7 - 9).

The Grade 10 teacher in School C reported there is a challenge with curriculum delivery in the school where LO is taught by teachers who have no idea of teaching LO, for example a person who is teaching Maths who has not been trained to teach LO. According to the teacher, in that situation the HOD prepares a hand out (information) and provides it to that particular teacher who then passes this on to the learners and gives them activities. She feels that LO curriculum design is a mess and that creates problems in the process of curriculum delivery (P6: 20:20). The teacher's expressed this as follows: "In-service training is a waste of teachers' time because they read for us. They should rather give us those notes we can read them on our own" (P2: 21:21). The teachers and the HoDs in all schools (A, B and C) appeared to be frustrated by the lack of support from the GDE and the challenges posed by the curriculum design where there is a lot of work load and limited time allocated to complete the tasks (P2: 33:33; P2: 41:41; P3: 44:44;P4: 36:36;P5: 37:37;P6:31:31;P8: 10.10). The teacher in School B also reported that the curriculum

does not allow other teachers to fit in the teaching of study skills anywhere in their lessons. Study skills are centralised in the LO programme. LO encompasses all subjects in a school, so LO teachers need to teach how to study different subjects. Time for teaching study skills is allocated for LO teachers only (P4: 33:33), (P5: 37:37). The HoD at School A has noticed the gap in learners' competency when it comes to study skills as well as the importance and the need for teaching study skills during learners' early schooling life (P2:21:21). Their expressions are as follows:

> ***The HoD at School A**: "My biggest challenges is the Department of Education which is snowing me under with the lot of admin work (paperwork), that I have to complete. We have too much work" (P2: 41:41).*
>
> ***The HoD at School B**: "Time is so limited and the load of LO content is big this leads to teachers ending up just browsing through so that they can complete the syllabus" (P3: 44:44).*
>
> ***The HoD at School C**: "The work load is heavy due to the fact that psychological terms used are not at the level of the learners and time is limited" (P7: 41:41).*
>
> ***The Grade 11 LO teacher at School B**: "I think we also have to realise that at Grade 10 - 11 is too late to start introducing study skills" (P5: 20:20).*

4.5.1.3 Transition/progression of learners within the grades/phases

Teachers at Schools A, B and C complained about the impact of learner transition within grades in the process of teaching LO and study skills to learners. They added that the manner in which some learners are passed on to the next grade (progression criteria) is the main contributing factor to learners' poor comprehension, competency, negative attitudes and drop out before Grade 12. However this section is going to focus on the challenges posed by learner transition or progression within grades in the process of teaching LO and study skills to learners. The HoD at School A stated that the Grade 8 and 9 LO curricula are set in terms of a 'baby' curriculum where learners are to a large extent being spoon fed but when they progress to Grade 10 things change drastically for learners because the tasks are from the National DBE and all of a sudden those tasks become really difficult for learners to comprehend (P2: 21:21). The HoDs and teachers in Schools B and C are all presenting the same challenge they encounter due to learner transition in the teaching of study skills to learners. The Grade 10 - 12 LO teacher at School B stated that the manner in which learners progress within the phases and grades creates learner deficits. The teacher explained that the DBE uses age cohort rules where a learner's age determines the grade in which a child must be in, ready or not. She added that those are the learners who cannot read and write and are unable to comprehend the FET workload. She sounded very frustrated with learners'

learning challenges which she felt had been accumulated during the learners' primary schooling life and the misallocation of the subject LO, where LO is allocated to anyone who is a teacher to teach it to learners in a school, without considering qualifications (P4: 36:36). The HoD at School C further emphasised that there is definitely an impact on learners linked to transition from the GET phase to the FET phase and this then impacts learner performance. Learners in Grade 9 are used to working for 25% in the final exam then at FET phase which is from Grade 10 they have to work for 75% in their final exams. So transition within the phases and between grades has an impact on learner performance and they need study skills to manage and handle this overwhelming work load (P7:20:20; P4:1:41; P5:1:41; P6: 6:1:1:41; P8:1:41). The Grade 10 - 12 LO teachers at Schools B and C agreed that there is definitely an impact of learner transition from GET phase to FET phase and learner performance (P3: 27:27, P4: 1.41, P6: 6:1, P7:20:20). These are the teachers' expressions:

> ***The HoD at School B**: "Due to unprepared transition, there is a big gap between GET and FET where learners jump in to Grade 10 without enough foundation of study skills. Learners are unequipped with study skills from previous grade/phase just progressed to the next grade /transition and parents are not involved" (P3: 27:27).*

4.5.1.4 Teachers' attitudes

The teachers and the HoDs in Schools A, B and C complained about the manner in which LO as a subject is treated where it is not seriously recognised as an important subject yet it is internationally examined and its marks compared with all other schools (P2: 10:10, P4:45:50, P4: 55:55, P6: 20:20). The teachers and the HoDs feel that other teachers of other learning areas do not have a positive attitude towards the LO subject because they do not take the subject seriously. The Grade 10 and11 LO teacher at School A stated that teaching LO is a very difficult task as it has been made to appear redundant by public opinion and the attitudes of the teachers in other subjects (P1: 36:36). The HoD at School A added that other teachers' attitude regarding teaching LO emanates from the attitudes of role players in other structures, starting from the DBE, then universities where it is not properly validated. The Grade 10 - 12 LO teacher at School C argued that LO is not taken seriously because it is used to fill up teachers' timetables and to bridge the gaps in the school (P6: 20:20). For example if some teachers of other learning areas are short of periods then the HOD/person in charge will take that particular person to teach LO. Life Orientation as a subject is not taken seriously (P6: 20:20).

The HoD at School A stated that one of the challenges that contributes to teacher attitude is ignorance towards the teaching of study skills as part of LO (P2: 10:10). The LO Grade 11 teacher at School C indicated that the teachers' of other learning areas lack of awareness of the major contribution and influence of study skills on learner performance creates a negative attitude amongst teachers. Thus it is important to make them aware so that they can also reinforce these skills when teaching their subjects, to help their learners with how to study for tests (P8: 39:39). The Grade 10 - 12 teacher at School B and the HoD in School A have identified the gap between LO as a subject and the attitude towards it. It is not taken seriously yet it is nationally examined. They complained that the principals in schools and the DBE do not take the LO subject seriously because they do not have external markers for the subject at the end of the year (P2: 10:10, P4: 45:48). The HoD at school A argued that, "Therefore one can't really trust the results of LO at the end of the year because each school marks its own work", and does not think that marks across schools can compared (P2: 10:10). The teacher at school B thinks that there must be a way to get principals and schools to change their attitude so that they can take LO more seriously because at the end of the day it does prepare the learners during their schooling and their lives beyond high school (P4: 45:48). The Grade 10 - 12 teacher further identified the need for LO to have different topics for different grades, as grades progress (P4: 45:50). These are teachers' opinions:

> ***The Grade 10 - 12 LO Teacher at School B****: "Learners become bored with the same topic and then lose focus because in Grade 11 learners would remember that this is the same conversation we had in Grade 10. They then ask 'but mam you taught this last year. Why are repeating the same topic this year?' (P4:45:50). We also need the DBE to consider teachers' time. When they conduct workshops it mustn't be after schooling hours because we have got a lot of work, since we take work home with us, for an example, marking" (P4: 55:55)*

> ***The HoD at School A:*** *"I think we don't pay enough attention to the study skills. We just see it as another part of the curriculum that we need to implement and learners also do not see LO as important, they often see it as a period where they don't need to work" (P2: 10:10).*

4.5.1.5. Resources in the school

Resources in the context of teaching study skills to learners seem to have a major impact on teaching and learning at School C. The LO teacher at School B added that her challenge was the inadequate resources and class size in the context of teaching study skills to learners (P4: 36:36). The Grade 10 and 11 LO teachers and the HoD at School C complained that they do not have enough resources. They reported that they have a challenge with lack of resources like a library and computers in the context of teaching study skills to learners (P6: 29:29; P8:29:29; P7: 29:29).

The Grade 10 - 12 LO teacher at School C also reported that teacher resources is a problem that contributes to a school underperforming. She stated that there is a shortage of qualified teachers to teach the LO subject and study skills to learners. The teacher seemed frustrated due to other LO teachers' lack of knowledge of LO and the teaching of study skills (P6: 20:20). These are the teachers' expressions:

> ***The teacher at School C**: "Due to the fact that teachers are not qualified in teaching LO I am having more work load. I am doing other teachers' job just helping out because they don't know LO which the mother body of study skills is" (P6:31:31).*
>
> ***The HoD at School C:** "I think if we have computers in the school and the learners do study skills on the computer I think that will help. In our school we don't have any access to any electronic equipment, no running Library where learners can go sit and study". (P7: 29:29).*

4.5.2. Learner characteristics and other influential factors that affect the teaching of study skills

The negative and positive factors which may impact the teaching of study skills and learner performance are explored in this sub-section as follows: learners' comprehension, competency and performance is discussed in 4.5.2.1, followed by the discussion on learners' attitudes towards the teaching of study skills in 4.5.2.2. The learner drop out before Grade 12 is then presented in 4.5.2.3**.** Lastly, parental involvement and social issues is presented in 4.5.2.4.

4.5.2.1. Learners' comprehension, competency and performance

The teachers at schools A, B and C presented their knowledge and experience about learners' comprehension which they believe has an impact on learner performance. Regarding this factor, the HoDs and the teachers of all three schools (A, B and C) agreed on the positive stimulus of study skills. They stated that study skills have a positive power on learner performance for those learners who use them as they were taught. They argue that learners who use effective study skills generally do achieve better in exams. The Grade 10 - 11 LO teacher at School A reported that the determining factor of whether learners have comprehended effective study skills is particularly revealed in the November examinations where learners are examined on the entire year's work. Learners who study 'parrot-fashion' by rote memory learning in June, generally do not remember that work by the time the final exams are being written at the end of the year. He further stated that "results become the testimony that learners who use diverse study skills retain

information better for the long-term and prove that study skills have a positive inspiration on learner performance" (P1: 15:15) The HoD at School C confirmed that study skills comprehension is one of the main factors that affect learners' performance. She stated that there is a huge bearing of study skills on learner performance depending on the fact of whether they use them or not because using them is positively inducing their performance and not using them negatively manipulating their performance (P7: 17:17). The HoD and the Grade 10 - 12 LO teacher at School B said that comprehension in general, plays an important role in the context of teaching and learning. The teacher at school B emphasised that the challenge with learner comprehension is not because that the learner is stupid or anything but because he/she was not taught the skill of how to study and how to comprehend work when they were in the previous phases (P3:18:18).

> ***The Grade 11 LO teacher at School B**: "Even though these learners are in Grade 11 they still battle with English comprehension" (P5: 40:40).*
>
> ***The teacher at School C (FET LO teacher GR11):** "When it comes to the skills learners lack a lot. I can say that learners are still struggling a bit when it comes to study skills" (P8: 4:4).*

In Schools B and C the teachers are experiencing the biggest challenge when it comes to learners' ability to comprehend the FET work load. The learners' competency is perceived as "limited" by the teachers in Schools B and C (P3: 6:6, 9:9, 15:15, P4: 6:6, P5: 9:9, P7: 20:20, P8: 7:7) except for the one LO teacher Grade 10 -12 teacher at School C who was in-between actually not sure (undecided) with the learner competency based on the fact that learners were able to make subject choices for their grade 10. Furthermore the teacher reported that after teaching them study skills as per LO programme stipulation, learners are then able to use them properly because they know what they are supposed to do when they arrive in Grade 10 (P6: 7:7, 14: 14). The HoD at School B emphasised the fact that as learners' study skills knowledge is limited, competency of study skills is very limited too. For example, learners arrive in Grade 10 with the foundation of rote memory which they can be used for specific subjects like history but for maths a learner needs problem solving skills. (P3: 9:9). The Grade 10 - 12 LO teacher at school B added that in her school they have learners who arrive in Grade 10 but cannot read and write (P4: 36:36). She was frustrated that these learners are having learning challenges especially with the knowledge based subjects, and they do not know how to study (P4: 6:6).

Their challenges are in inability to apply study skills taught during the teaching of study skills in the classroom (P4: 15:15). The Grade 11 LO teacher at School B further added that some learners in Grade 11 have essential study skills but a handful do not have these study skills (P5: 9:9). The

Grade 11 LO teacher at School C (P8: 7:7) argued that there would have been definitely a big difference on their performance if learners knew/know how to interpret a question, do problem solving and creative thinking, and summarise their work (P3: 15:15, P3: 15:16). They are voicing their concerns as follows:

> ***The Grade 10 - 12 LO teacher at School B****: "It is expected that learners at FET level are able to read and write but in reality there are learners who are lacking, having missed the learning foundation. We as LO teachers are expected to teach them study skills while the learners can't read and write" (P4: 36:36).*
>
> ***The HoD at School B****: "Definitely I really feel that there is a limited capacity of study skills with the learners. The reason for that is that there is a big gap between the general knowledge, the concept of the general knowledge and problem solving and also creative thinking" (P3: 6:6). "It must be noted that these challenges with learner competency is related to their different backgrounds" (P3: 9:9).*
>
> ***HoD at School C:*** *Their vocabulary is limited sometimes they can't answer because they are not familiar with the words in the question paper as much as they know the answer but they can't because they don't understand. Although they may know the answer they don't know what has been asked because they don't know the language" (P7: 20:20).*
>
> ***The Grade 10 - 12 LO teacher at School C****: "Some of them do have because when they are in Grade 9 they have to make decisions based on subject choices. Briefly when they arrive in Grade 10 they do have the competency but they never been introduced to formal learning of study skills since it is not in their syllabus since it only start in Grade 10" (P6: 7:7).*

The LO teacher at School B further added that challenges with learners' competency emanates from the big gap with their language comprehension. English is the main problem and basically most learners are struggling to understand it. The barrier of English is a big problem (P5: 40:40). The challenges with learner competency was further emphasized by the HoD at School A who reported that, when learners arrive in Grade 8 they are completely illiterate and can't really read or write. The huge gap has been noticed in both in English language and in maths competency (P2:6:6). She further complained that learners don't have the vocabulary to interpret the text in their textbook (P2: 14:14). The HoD at School C also concurred with other teachers from school A and B by adding that learners come with learning challenges which they have acquired from their primary background. Learners' acquired language barriers affects teaching of study skills because language is the tool to convey LO and study skills to learners (P7: 20:20). The teachers at school B and C agreed that if learners are unable to comprehend tasks in the class and do not know how to answer questions, then that learner becomes frustrated and resorts to disruptive behaviour in the class. The Grade 10 - 11 teacher at School A and the Grade 10 - 12 LO teacher

at School B agree that there is a relationship between the learner cognitive level and the application of effective study skills in the teaching process. They have also realised that learners' cognitive level is lower than what it should be (P4: 36:36). Teachers in all three schools experienced challenges with learners' comprehension and ability to use study skills. Furthermore in all schools the teachers and the HoDs are had all associating these challenges with progress or the transition process within the grades and phases, starting from primary school to high school. Teachers indicated the following:

> ***The teacher at School A (FET LO teacher GR10-11):*** *"although they are aware of different study methods, they do not know how to apply them practically to their own subjects (other learning areas).The problem lies in that fact of inability to use them and not that they are unaware of the various techniques that they can use" (P1: 8:8).*
>
> ***The HoD at School B****: "It must be noted that these challenges with learner competency is related to their different backgrounds" (P3: 9:9).*
>
> ***The HoD at School C (FET LO HoD):*** *"When they arrive in Grade 10 they don't have much knowledge of study skills because they were not properly taught in Grade 8 and 9 (P7: 7:7). In Grade 11 they are still not competent with study skills, you struggle to get them to do work, except in girls, because most of them tend to use study skills taught to them in Grade 10" (P7:7:7).*

4.5.2.2. Learners' attitudes towards the teaching of study skills

Learner attitudes towards the subject may not only impact classroom teaching but may also help to determine learners' overall development and progress in the process of teaching and learning. This sub-theme presents challenges of learners' attitude towards the teaching of study skills, as they have been identified by the teachers during their LO periods. It seems that in all three schools (A, B and C) learners are presenting with almost the same attitude towards the teaching of study skills, where they appear to not be keen towards those periods. In School A learners start to lose interest in the FET phase since they have been doing study skills from Grade 8 (P1, P8). In Schools B and C they get bored as the grades progress since they are taught the same topics from Grade 10 to 12, (P3: 12:12, P3: 30:30, P4: 6:6, P5: 12:12, P5: 9:9, P5: 34:34, P6: 20:20, P7:7:7, P7:10:10, P8: 7:7). All teachers and HoDs from the three schools are experiencing the same symptoms where learners seem uninterested, unresponsive and bored, not taking study skills seriously, not eager and experienced as lazy. In some schools learners even try to shy away from the study skills topic and the teachers have to be tactful so as to be successful during the lesson period (P1: 11:11, P1: 33:33, P2: 33:33, P3: 12:12, P3: 30:30, P4: 6:6, P5: 12:12, P5: 9:9,

P5: 34:34, P6: 20:20, P7:7:7, P7:10:10. P8: 7:7). The LO teacher at School A Grade 10 - 11 reported that learners are often disinterested in learning study skills when they get to Grade 11. They become reluctant to do the required tasks unless they are restructured to be specific to content that they are working on in other subjects. This teacher further reported that learners normally do not independently use study skills, unless the teacher specifically gets them to do it in class, in which case they do engage in appropriate study skills and seem to find them useful and helpful (P1: 11:11). Learners are not that interested and seem very bored, continued the teacher (P1: 33:33). The teachers' expressions are presented below:

> ***The HoD at School B (FET LO HoD):*** *"Learners do not take teaching of study skills seriously especially Grade 10 (P3: 12:12). I think they are a bit negative, they find it boring and un-interesting" (30:30).*
>
> ***The teacher at School B (FET LO teacher Grade 10****): "as much as teachers can try to implement study skills to learners' minds but learners do not use them. As I have seen our kids do not study at all. That is also one of our greatest challenges (P4: 6:6). Purely in our school I found the majority of our students don't study" (P4: 6:6).*
>
> ***The teacher at School C (LO teacher Grade 11):*** *"I should say that, but I'm not saying that they are not committed enough but they are not keen to use study skills they don't have enthusiasm. Learners do not take study skills seriously, they just rush things to get it over and done with. Sometimes they don't care that much if they have done it correctly as long as it is done, get rid of it" (P8: 7:7).*

4.5.2.3. Learners dropping out of school before Grade 12

As mentioned above, the HoD at School A stated that the Grades 8 and 9 LO curriculum is designed in terms of a 'baby' curriculum where learners are still treated as babies, being spoon fed. However, in Grade 10 the tasks are from the National Department of Education and all of a sudden those tasks are really difficult (P2: 21:21). As can be expected learners experience a huge gap and they need to make adjustments and adaptations. This sub-theme presents the challenge of learners dropping out of school before they reach Grade 12.

Teachers at all three schools (A, B and C) agree on the same potential factors which might lead to learners dropping out of school. Those issues seem to be the challenge with language comprehension, unprepared transition within the phases and grades and poor or inadequate knowledge and use of effective study skills and the lack of qualified teachers to teach learners LO and effective study skills, leading the leaners to develop weak/ineffective study skills.

The School A HoD and the LO teacher reported that learners are not interested, seem bored due to the fact that they have been doing this since Grade 8, but most of all they have noticed that learners do not take study skills seriously because the teachers themselves do not pay much attention to LO as a subject because it is like a neglected subject. However the teachers at School A also concur with School B teachers in that learners are lazy sometimes and that there is a challenge with language comprehension. They also all agree that transition has an impact on learners dropping out of school before Grade 12 because learners arrive at high school with a load of learning deficit accumulated during their primary schooling life, which makes it difficult for some learners to recover as a result of failure in FET grades then drop out because of shame and embarrassment and fear of facing or sharing the grade with the younger learners.

These schools have made more emphasis on limited study skills and poor language comprehension as having an enormous impact on learner performance and on learners dropping out of school. Teachers from these schools argue that if learners do not have the skill to handle the FET work load, and if they do not know how to study their tasks and do homework, they decide to leave the school. They have also realised that at Grade 10 - 11 is too late to start introducing study skills (P1: 19:19, P3:15:15, P4: 18:18, P5, P6, P7:20:20, P8: 20:20).

The HoDs and the LO teachers at Schools B and C are in agreement that learners drop out because of the lack of and the inability to use effective study. Furthermore most learners drop out when they are failing again at the end of the year after failing Grade 11 (P3:15:15), (P4: 18:18), (P5, P6), (P7:20:20), (P8: 20:20). The Grade 11 teacher at School C and the Grade 10 - 11 LO teacher at School B agree that there is likely a link between poor study skills and dropping out of school before Grade 12. The Grade 10 - 11 LO teacher at School B emphasised “that the learner drop out before Grade 12 seems to be a real one”. The teacher at School A explained that he believes that this is because much of the curriculum in Grade 11 and 12 is built on the foundation that is laid in their Grade 10 year. Therefore if Grade 10 foundation is not strong learners find themselves struggling in Grade 11 and as a result they tend to drop out of school after failing Grade 11 because the work load appears to be too much to handle (P1: 19:19). The HoD at School B argues that it is definitely because of the lack of study skills (P3: 18:18). Furthermore due to frustration that a learner cannot comprehend language and not having enough study skills to tackle the work load they decide to drop out of school saving themselves the embarrassment of failing the grade maybe for the second time (P3: 18:18). The teachers’ statements are:

***The Grade 11 LO teacher at School B**: "Challenge with learner drop out due to limited study skills and the introduction of study skills late in Grade 10 and 11 (FET phase) (P5: 20:20). Maybe there is a problem with them adapting to the load of work and how to deal with it. Then drop out because of the inability to apply study skills and grasping all the work to be" (P5: 20:20).*

***HoD at School C**: "I think the reason why learners are dropping out and also underperforming it is because of the language. Workload, learners are struggling with FET work load: The work load in Grade 10 is heavy as compared to Grade 9 (GET phase). There is a lot of work in FET phase" (P7: 20:20).*

4.5.2.4. Parental involvement and social issues

Learners' parental involvement does not only impact classroom teaching but may also help to determine learners' overall development and progress in the process of teaching and learning. School A did not report anything about parental involvement. In School B and C many challenges were presented with regard to parental involvement. The LO Grade 10 - 12 teacher at School B believes that parents need to be involved: she further reported that the school has decided to be proactive since the school is planning to educate parents about the study skills and methods and careers so that they can help the learners to choose the correct path and also help them with studying at home because nowadays parents do not have time to sit with their children when studying because of their work. The teacher at School B (FET LO teacher Grade 10 - 12) reported some home factors that affect the teaching of study skills and influencing learner performance such as: home situation/background, teenage pregnancy emanating from the exposure at home leading to confusion to a teenage learner of what is moral or not (P4: 27:27). The teacher at School B further reported that they have big drug problems in the school which she believes inhibits mental capacity and learners' ability to study. It makes them feel like they do not need to study. Lots of learners are doing drugs not in that school only (P4: 27:27). That was confirmed by the Grade 10 - 12 LO teacher at School C, who also reported that in her school there is a drug problem: learners are smoking marijuana.

The HoD at School C reported that there are lots of environmental factors they are experiencing like learners staying far from school, travelling long distances which are having an impact on the study skills teaching and learners' learning (P7: 29:29). They also have learners who are from child headed families who don't have time to stay and study after school because they need to rush home to see if things are okay, take care of their sibling, worrying about what to be eaten at home and the cleaning of the home (P7: 34:34). Some learners do not have the place to sit and study at home (P7: 40:40). (P7: 41:41). According to the teachers, Schools A, B and C do not

have parental support. There is a lack of cooperation from parents (P4: 36:36, P5: 9:9, P8: 40:40, P8: 48:48, 12:12, 9:9, P3:36:36, P4: 27:27, P4: 36:36, P5: 31:31, P7: 29:29, P7: 34:34, P7: 40:40, 48:48, P7: 41:41, P6: 40:41, P8: 25:25, P8: 39:39, P8: 40:40, P7: 41:41, P5: 37:37, P6: 40:41, P8: 48:48). The teachers' presentations are as follows:

> ***The HoD at School B**: "We have learners in Grade 11, who can't read and write, we called the parents but they never pitched" (P4: 36:36).*
>
> ***The Grade 11 LO Teacher at School B**: "Lack of parental involvement. They don't cooperate" (P5: 9:9).*
> ***The HoD at School C**: "few parents are cooperating the rest do not bother even if you invite them to school. Even the SGB is not functional. T" (P7: 41:41)*

4.6. TEACHERS' NEEDS FOR TEACHING STUDY SKILLS

In this section teachers' needs for teaching study skills are presented in terms of their competency requirements and their needs for empowerment. Teachers' needs are important because they serve as tools for teachers in their endeavor of teaching learners.

Almost all the teachers and the HoDs from the three schools reported that they need training on how to teach study skills to learners, and even on how to teach LO as a subject because even for CAPS they were never trained and were just given documents (work schedules and lesson plans). Some teachers have been exposed to NCS LO in-service training which they feel was not real training because the trainer was reading slides to them. Nonetheless, the Grade 10 - 11 LO teacher at School A said he feels that he is adequately knowledgeable on study skills and does not need any assistance from his HOD. The HoD at School A expressed the need for teachers' training but she also expressed that it would only be useful if it was real training (P2: 21:21). School B and C also share the same sentiments regarding teacher training. The teachers and the HoDs from all three schools reported that they are in need of intensive training for teaching LO and study skills to learners (P3: 42:42, P5:20:20, P7: 48:48, P8: 37:37)., except one teacher from School A who said he is okay and he does not need help from his HoD regarding the teaching of study skills (P1: 1:1, 5:5). The HoD at School A believes that there is a need for teaching study skills to the learners but does not think that it must start at Grade 10 because by then it is already too late. She feels that LO should be taken seriously and that study skills should be introduced as early as the foundation phase even from Grade 1. She thinks that it can benefit the learners and schools if it could start in Grade 1 foundation phase (P2: 14:15).

The Grade 10 - 12 LO teacher at School B is concerned about the need for teachers to improve their knowledge on how to teach study skills and thinks that there must be a person coming in to teach all teachers on how to teach study skills not only the LO teachers but all the teachers. This will help them to know how to get the learners to study their subjects (P4: 42:42). She stated that teachers lack knowledge on how to teach study skills to learners and need help (P4: 53:53). The Grade 11 LO teachers at Schools B and C concur with the Grade 10 - 12 teacher at School B regarding the dire need for teachers' workshops (P3: 42:42, P5:20:20, P7: 48:48, P8: 37:37). The Grade 10 - 12 LO teacher at School B thinks it will benefit learners if the schools can be workshopped. She thinks that everybody needs to be equipped with the knowledge so that they can be empowered enough to equip the learners with the knowledge of studying their specific subjects (P3: 42:42). The Grade 11 teacher from School C stated that new LO teachers should be given lower grades. Her motivation was that she needs to be workshopped so that she can be equipped with more knowledge on the subject of LO and be developed on how to tackle the subject then she will be comfortable with teaching the subject especially study skills because at the moment she is learning on the go. She seemed frustrated and added that (P8: 37:37). The HoD at School C emphasises that teachers need in service training because it will help them. She added that she definitely believes that if teachers can be equipped with the knowledge of teaching study skills this can help to improve the learners' performance. She feels that there is also a need for learners to practice study skills, sit and engage in study skills (P7: 51:51). Hence it is important to arrange Saturdays for learners' workshops on study skills so that they can sink in and become part of their lifestyles (P7: 48:48). Teachers' expressions are:

> ***The Grade 10 - 12 LO teacher at School B****: "We need the DBE to come and equip us with knowledge of teaching study skills" (P4: 53:53)*
>
> ***The Grade 10 -12 LO Teacher at School C****: "We need to be trained, qualified, we need knowledge on how to teach learners study skills (P6: 20:20). It is important because some teachers never been workshopped even with CAPS but they are just given the schedule (P6: 54:56). Teachers need the DBE to employ qualified teachers to equip learners with relevant knowledge and skills. Actually study skills should be applied in all learning areas and in all the grades. At the moment it is centered in LO subjects (P6: 37:37). Time is limited (P6: 41:41). We need enough periods, we have 3 LO periods (3 times a week) (P6: 46:47). …We need workshops for teaching study skills (P6: 47:49). Study skills are wonderful only if they are taught by the person who is trained to teach LO, having the ability to teach/implement study skills to the learners" (P6: 24:24).*

In all three schools (A, B and C) the HoDs and the teachers agree that it is late to introduce study skills in Grade 10 second term and that there is a need to introduce study skills early in schools, and there is a need for enough time to teach LO and study skills to learners and the need for

parental involvement on the building up the learners' future. The HoD at School A has noticed the gap in learners' competency when it comes to study skills, concluding that there is an essential need for teaching study skills early during learners' schooling life. This concurs with School B and C HoDs and the teachers where they are all in agreement that study skills should be integrated with all LO programmes in all the grades. The HoD at Schools A, B and C emphasise that there is definitely a need for integration of study skills starting from primary schools' LO programme. School A also thinks that study skills should form a huge part of the learning that is implemented in Grade 8 and 9 curriculum programme. It should be part of every lesson teachers are teaching (P2: 21:21, P5: 20:20, P5: 12:12, P8: 48:48). In Schools A, B and C all the HoDs and the teachers agreed that they need more time to get the learners to grasp study skills and to really use them (P7: 47:47). They have experienced that there is not enough time allocated for the teaching of study skills (P5: 20:20) and that there is a need for parental involvement (P5: 12:12, P8: 48:48). The HoD at School C further indicated that teachers need technology to teach learners study skills. She emphasised that teachers need computers for effective teaching of study skills to learners. The following are the teachers' expressions:

> ***The HoD at School B**: "Probably to integrate more study skills in the LO programs staring from Primary school (P3: 43:43). In-service training that is definitely a must have" (P3: 47:47).*
>
> ***The Grade 11 LO Teacher at School B:** "I think it has to be an effort where parents are also involved to assist us with the studying at home (P5: 12:12).I think study skills need to be taught the moment they enter High school in Grade 8 and 9" (P5: 20:20).*
>
> ***The Grade 11 LO Teacher at School C**: "We need parents to be involved in the process of teaching and learning of their learners: parental involvement in monitoring their children at home (P8: 48:48).*
> **The HoD at School C**: *"If ever we have computers learners' interest will be triggered when they are doing something modern rather than to sit and write and make notes" (P7: 40:40).*

4.7. CONCLUSION

This chapter presented the findings linked to the FET LO teachers' knowledge and teaching of study skills to FET learners in their high schools. This chapter dealt with the findings which were aimed at answering the research questions with regard to the LO teachers' knowledge of teaching study skills. The following chapter will summarise and discuss the findings of the study and present the recommendations for future studies.

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

5.1. INTRODUCTION

The aim of the study was to explore LO teachers' knowledge of and teaching of study skills to learners in the secondary school FET phase. Once again as mentioned above, Teachers' knowledge and their teaching practices were successfully explored from the perspectives of the teachers themselves in the form of their own constructions of study skills and personal reflections on how they teach them. The aim for this chapter was to present the findings for the purposively selected schools. Therefore, this chapter presents a summary of the research process that was undertaken for this study in 5.2. Followed by the discussion of the research findings linked to the analysed data from the qualitative case studies on teachers' knowledge and teaching of study skills in 5.3. Other sections of this chapter are also presented which are: The summary of the research findings in 5.4. Followed by the contribution and the significance of the study in 5.5. The next section then presents the recommendations of the study in 5.6.and the limitations of the study in 5.7. The last section of the chapter is the conclusion in 5.8.

5.2. SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH PROCESS UNDERTAKEN

In this section a brief overview of the research design implemented (5.2.1) and summary of research methods (5.2.2) utilised for the study are presented.

5.2.1. Overview of research design implemented

This study comprised data that was collected through semi-structured interviews using the case study research design within a qualitative research approach. The main research question for the study was: What are Life Orientation teachers' understandings of and teaching practices for study skills in FET Phase high schools in Ekudibeng Cluster, Gauteng East District?

To assist in answering this main question, the following sub-questions have been formulated:

- What are LO teachers' knowledge in relation to the teaching of study skills in the Further Education and Training phase?
- How do LO teachers teach study skills as part of the Further Education and Training LO curriculum?

- What challenges do LO teachers experience which hinder the teaching of study skills in the Further Education and Training phase?
- What do LO teachers consider as important needs for teaching of study skills in the Further Education and Training phase?

5.2.2. Summary of the research process

Information about key factors related to LO teachers' knowledge and teaching of study skills to FET learners was collected from the LO teachers and the LO HoDs through a semi-structured-interview schedule. The interview schedule pursued information regarding the LO teachers' knowledge of teaching study skills to FET learners, their strategies in teaching study skills to learners, the challenges they encounter/consider as hindrances in the process of teaching study skills to learners and their needs as teachers that they think can enhance the teaching of study skills to FET learners. The interviews were transcribed and analysed through qualitative content analysis (atlas ti) as it was stated in chapter 3.

5.3. THE SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

In this section the discussions of findings from the study will be presented in 5.3.1. then the summary of the theoretical framework for the study is provided to illustrate the link of how ideas flow and how they relate and support what the theoretical and conceptual ideas are for purposes of this study in 5.3.2.

5.3.1. Summary and discussion of the findings

A number of main themes emerged in the analysis of the data for the three case studies' schools. The main themes as summarised in this sub-section are: a general overview of the contextual background for each of the case studies and each of the teachers (as in section 4.2 of chapter 4); teachers' knowledge on study skills (4.3); teachers' strategies for teaching study skills, their integration of their pedagogical knowledge and experiences in the teaching of study skills to learners (4.4). Section 4.5 presented the challenges in the context of teaching study skills. This theme presented sub-themes: learner competency (4.5.1); learners' attitudes towards the teaching of study skills (4.5.2); other influential factors which affect the teaching of study skills and those that contribute to learner performance (4.5.3) and teachers' needs for teaching study skills (4.6). Given the performance profiles' variation of the samples, it was surmised that there will be

differences and similarities with regard to knowledge and the teaching of study skills to learners in secondary schools. Nonetheless, there were mainly commonalities between the cases for a number of themes. Each of these key themes from the data are considered in 5.3.1.1 to 5.3.1.5.

5.3.1.1. A general overview of the contextual background for each of the case studies and each of the teachers

Teachers complained about their experience with regard to teaching LO as a subject due to the following reasons: the HoD and the LO Grade 10 and 11 teacher School A complained about a lot of administrative paperwork that they have to complete and the attitude of other teachers and the DBE with regard to the teaching of study skills. Teachers from Schools B and C complained about learner transition between the phases and within the grades because they felt that the readiness of the learner is not considered and the DBE curriculum designers design programmes with terms that are used in psychology (language that can only be understood by someone who is familiar with psychological terms) which are not at the level of the learners.

The teachers in schools B and C further expressed their concerns about the learners' environmental background and the challenges regarding language comprehension which may possible affects their performance. They believed that language is the main barrier, and learners come to high school having acquired learning challenges from their primary school life. They also believe that there are also challenges with class sizes and lack of parental involvement or cooperation. The HoD at School C further presented the issue with the lack of teaching resources like library and computers in the context of teaching study skills to learners, and non-functional SGBs.

All teachers (schools A, B and C) complained about work load and the limited amount of time allocated to teach the subject. They all believed that LO is not fully appreciated and the DBE does not take the subject seriously. They further agree that the introduction of study skills in Grade 10 does not benefit learners because it is too late by then, hence the negative impact the learners' further learning. Furthermore, they cite the fact that study skills topics are similar across the FET phase as the reason and the cause of learners' negative attitude towards the teaching of study skills which is likely to create boredom and non-interest for learners.

Findings on contextual challenges are linked to the literature review presented in Chapter 2 that argued that several school characteristics may stimulate effective achievement, including a safe

climate, positive teacher attitudes and expectations toward learners, an emphasis on teaching, teacher training, careful monitoring of both learners' progress and teacher evaluation, strong parent involvement, and an emphasis on the importance of school achievement (Becker & Luthar, 2002.). Furthermore, findings on contextual challenges revealed many issues that affect teaching and learning such as big classes. For example, children who attend schools with a lower learner-teacher ratio and better educated teachers appear to perform better than learners who attend big learner-teacher ratio schools (Konstantopoulos & Chung, 2009). Those learners whose education takes place in schools where resources are limited perform poorly (Card & Krueger, 1996). Literature on learner transition suggests that most learners are able to make it through the grade and the phase transition, whereas others struggle, and may not have the confidence to seek help when required (Redmond, Quin, Devitt & Archbold, 2011).

5.3.1.2. Teachers' knowledge of the subject LO and the teaching of study skills

In this section the findings for the research study are summarised to answer the research sub-question, which is:

What are LO teachers' knowledge in relation to the teaching of study skills in the Further Education and Training phase?

The findings on a number of LO teachers interviewed, revealed that their knowledge (understanding and the teaching of study skills) is limited. In comparison with other schools, the School A HoD and the LO Grade 10 - 11 teacher had a basic knowledge of teaching study skills to learners. They are also integrating knowledge and pedagogy in the teaching of study skills to learners. In Schools B and C most teachers lack knowledge of teaching learners study skills. The findings on LO teachers' knowledge in relation to the teaching of study skills to learners, revealed that many teachers are struggling to teach learners' study skills because they are not qualified as LO teachers and they never received any training and that on its own may defeats the purpose of teaching learners study skills in the classroom. In terms of being equipped with knowledge of teaching study skills to learners, the teachers in all schools (A, B and C) are all in agreement that they were not workshopped, and no training was provided to teachers on how they must teach so they had to find their own way in the process of teaching learners study skills. This finding is supported by Topping (2013) who argues that one of the potential explanation for the lack of significant achievement improvements despite increased economic resources is that, concerted efforts must also be taken to ensure that teachers and school leaders receive essential

professional development experience, which allows them not only to be effective teachers, but also to be sensitive to the developmental needs of high school learners (Topping, 2013). This finding is further supported by Spencer, Smith, and Thelen, (2001), who state that if teachers are not well equipped with knowledge of teaching the subject, they are often unable to maximise their considerable teaching role (Spencer et al., 2001). In addition, Martin (2013), stated that teachers' professional development programmes for teachers have been criticised as being brief, fragmented, decontextualized and removed from the reality within classrooms and are not likely to improve the standard of teaching. Thus, many models of professional development for teachers are not successful and that needs to be changed for the better (Martin, 2013).

5.3.1.3. Teachers' strategies of teaching study skills and their integration of their pedagogical knowledge and experiences in the teaching of study skills to learners

In this section the findings for the research study are summarised to answer the sub-question, which is:

How do LO teachers teach study skills as part of the Further Education and Training LO curriculum?

Findings linked to strategies teachers use and the manner in which they integrate their educational knowledge and their experiences in the teaching of study skills to learners. In comparison with the other schools, the teachers at School A are more proactive than the teachers at Schools B and C because they adapt the curriculum for the needs of their learners instead of blindly following it as it is presented by the DBE. As much as they follow the DBE LO curriculum programme they also stretch and build out of the DBE Curriculum framework for the benefit and success of their learners. The teachers at School A thus had the most comprehensive strategy of implementing study skills in their school. In School A as learners arrive in Grade 8 the teachers assess them and identify learners' learning difficulties and they then introduce study skills in Grade 8. At School A, the HoD and teachers have developed their own strategies from the DBE framework using their specific skills and knowledge or so-called "teachers' expertise" in teaching study skills to learners. Recognising the importance of study skills, they had also stretched the teaching time from three periods to five periods per cycle. Other schools such as B and C have teachers who introduce study skills in Grade 10 and are reliant on following curriculum directives. They used curriculum documents for planning, and the lesson plans provided by the DBE with the HoD monitoring curricular coverage. They also used books prescribed by the DBE. However it

must be mentioned that according to the DBE programme study skills must be introduced in Grade 10. Given the learner achievement difficulties in the South African education system this seemingly late introduction requires further interrogation and reflection. However, in all three schools teachers are teaching learners mind maps, how to use previous question papers so as to revise their school work and help them prepare for exams. They also motivate them and teach them how to get organised.

5.3.1.4. Challenges teachers experience in the context of teaching study skills

In this section, the findings are revealing the number of challenges experienced by the teachers in the context of teaching study skills to learners in the classroom and school. There are so many challenges that are possible affecting the teaching of study skills in schools. Challenges may mostly emanate from: the curriculum design, the challenge of resources, the learners' characteristics such as the learners' comprehension and performance, learners' competency, the learners' attitudes towards the teaching of study skills, learner drop out of school before Grade 12 and parental involvement. Findings linked to curriculum design and implementation challenges, transition/progression of learners within the grades/phases and learner drop out before grade 12, learners' attitudes towards the teaching of study skills, parental involvement and teachers' needs for teaching study skills are summarised below to answer the sub-question, which is:

What challenges do LO teachers experience which hinder the teaching of study skills in the Further Education and Training phase?

- Curriculum design and Curriculum implementation challenges

The teachers in all schools presented that they experience challenges in the context of teaching study skills to learners due to curriculum design and implementation particularly in terms of lack of emphasis and time. Teachers stated that they are expected to implement study skills only during the second term in grade 10 and 11, except for grade 12 where they are scheduled to be taught during the first and the fourth term but still like in other grades the time is so minimal. According to the teachers, this situation really hinders the proper implementation of teaching study skills to learners. This complaint is supported by Gettinger and Seibert, (2002) and Armstrong, (2010) who argue that the knowledge and application of effective study skills has long been allied with an overall educational achievement, but these effective study skills and study actions often need to be explicitly taught to many learners.

- Transition/progression of learners within the grades/phases and learner drop out before grade 12

There are numerous studies on the negative effect of learner transition on performance; there is a severe decline in performance that takes place with the transition to high school (Hussey & Smith, 2010). Teachers in all schools complained about the impact of learner transition within grades and phases in the process of teaching LO and study skills to learners. They added that the manner in which some learners are passed on to the next grade (progression criteria) is the main contributing factor to learners' poor comprehension, competency, negative attitudes and drop out before Grade 12. As argued by Field (2001) most learners arrive in the FET phase without basic skills. It is important that educational channels to successful transition be developed earlier in the learners' educational life from their primary schooling. Most learners are able to make it through transition, while some learners struggle, and die in silence, due to the fear of coming out and seeking help from teachers that will help their performance (Redmond, *et al.,* 2011).

- Learners' attitudes towards the teaching of study skills

It appeared that in all the schools (A, B and C) teachers are experiencing the same problem where learners are presenting a negative attitude towards the teaching of study skills. Teachers were concerned that learners' attitudes towards the teaching of study skills have a major contribution to their performance. Kennedy (1997) states that learners may pursue certain detrimental behaviours to gain a positive reputation among their peers. Teachers can help learners by targeting those behaviours that are putting learners at risk of negative performance and promote those behaviours that lead to educational success (Kennedy, 1997).

- Other influential factors that affect the teaching of study skills and those that contribute to learner performance

The teachers at School A did not report anything with regard to this sub-theme except agreeing with other schools that study skills may have positive and negative influences on learners' performance. Study skills may benefit learners if they are used effectively. The teachers at schools B and C reported that ineffective use of study skills may yield negative experiences such as learner failure and then learners dropping out of school before they reach Grade 12. Teachers at all three schools are of the opinion that there is a relationship between study skills and learner drop out.

These teachers reported that limited study skills and poor language comprehension have a major impact on learner performance and learners dropping out of school. Lastly they presented that learners dropping out of school may be due to various reasons but the emphasis was on: attitude, apparent laziness to engage in scholastic tasks, lack of study skills, lack of ability to apply study skills taught, language comprehension issues emanating from the unprepared transition between the Grades and Phases then give birth to challenges on learners' competency and the negative attitudes towards their education. Learners do not have the skill to handle the load of studying. All these factors lead to learner failure then learners lose hope and drop out of school before they even reach Grade 12. These findings are supported by research that has shown that retention and social promotion practices for improving learner achievement without matching high expectations and support can be counterproductive because repeated experiences of failure and punishment often lead to a sense of learned helplessness among students. Negative school experiences cause many students to feel powerless over their own learning capacity or potential) and have been shown to encourage students' disengagement from the academic realm (Ross & Broh, 2000; Thomas, 2000). Word reading accuracy insufficiencies leads to comprehension challenges. Many learners have inadequate reading ability. The crucial goal of every reader is the comprehension of the text. Difficulty in reading comprehension has terrible consequences not only to learner's school achievement but also for the learners' future educational and occupational opportunities (Cutting, Materek, Cole, Levine & Mahone, 2009). The knowledge of how to develop oral language and background knowledge to nurture reading comprehension remains limited. Attention is needed for learners' basic comprehension skills development (Butler, Urrutia, Buenger & Hunt, 2010). The metacognitive strategies used in both the execution of study skills and comprehension may be beneficial to learners.

- Parental involvement

The teachers at schools B and C said that they are experiencing parental involvement challenges where parents are not cooperative. Teachers try to involve parents in their children's educational journey but they seem to be uninterested and unresponsive. Teachers believe that **l**earners' parental involvement does not only impact classroom teaching but may also help to determine learners' overall development and progress in the process of teaching and learning. This finding is confirmed by Makgopa, (2012), where the following is presented: Parent-child discussions about school work help to improve academic achievement and to reduce problematic behaviour (Makgopa, 2012). Jones (2008) added that most learners are in need of parental involvement in their learning and educational development. Learners are more likely to make a personal

commitment to engage in rigorous learning when they know teachers, parents, and other learners care about how well they do (Jones, 2008).

5.3.1.5. Teachers' needs for teaching study skills

In this section the findings for the research study are summarised to answer the sub-question, which is:

What do LO teachers consider as important needs for teaching of study skills in the Further Education and Training phase?

In School A the HoD and the Grades 10 - 11 LO teacher feel that they are adequately knowledgeable regarding study skills. They feel that in-service training is a waste of teachers' time because facilitators read notes to them. Teachers in School B and C wanted to be equipped with knowledge related to teaching learners study skills. All three schools reported the need for having enough time to finish the workload allocated. This finding is linked to the study by Weiner (2002), where he argues that implementing higher standards without focusing comparable attention on improving teacher sensitivity is not only unwise but also unjust. Teachers must receive professional development experience, which prepares them to educate and understand learners whose values, cultures, and life experiences may be different from their own (Weiner, 2000). This finding is further supported by Martin, (2013) where he argues that teacher professional development programmes should be geared towards creating learner-centred environments for teachers, simultaneously these programmes should be focused on equipping teachers with knowledge to holistically develop learners. Teachers need to be prepared to be the empowered professionals: where teacher knowledge of the subject and the realities of classrooms are of central importance; where all teachers (for all subjects) participate in an active learning and teaching processes (Martin, 2013).

5.3.2. The summary of the theoretical framework for the study: The theoretical reflection to findings

Life Orientation is a discipline that draws much of its content from the psychological and social context in which learners live, learn, and play. Therefore as a subject it becomes more meaningful if it is taught contextually using examples taken from the context that learners are conversant with (Cottone, 2011). This study has been framed by the theoretical perspective on the social and

cultural context of children's learning appreciation where an adult role is perceived as central in learners' learning. Social and cognitive development are intertwined and interdependent during the process of learning (See Chapter 2). A number of issues impacting learning were derived from the analysis for this study, namely, contextual issues, parents and social issues and teacher and learner competency.

Teachers' characteristics such as their attitudes toward the teaching of study skills to learners, learner characteristics such as learners' attitudes towards the teaching of study skills affect the teaching of study skills. These findings illustrate the link to the theoretical framework where the theory presents that individuals interact within ecological systems which are related to each other. The individual is interconnected to systems such as family, neighbours and peers, parents working conditions and the beliefs, norms and values of his or her society (Bronfenbrenner, 1989; Donald, Lazarus & Lolwana, 2007).

Some LO teachers in schools may have limited knowledge of teaching of study skills to learners, emanating from being not qualified to teach the LO as a subject. Lack of teachers' training and experience for teaching study skills as part of LO programme from the DBE was also presented. Further presented by the findings is the challenge of learners' comprehension, competency of study skills, especially grade 10 learners in FET phase. These findings seem to align themselves with the theoretical framework where the combination of adult directed and learner initiated activities is needed for learning. The framework positions active learning as an appropriate pedagogy which validates learning and adult responsiveness to children (Hunter & Walsh, 2014). Any challenges experienced by either teachers or learners will impact the quality thereof.

Findings from this study illustrate the high possible need for study skills, teaching competency and training for the teachers to be equipped with skills to teach learners holistically. This demonstration aligned itself with the theoretical framework which emphasises that LO teachers need to understand that learners must be taught holistically taking into consideration the settings that they interact with on a daily basis and how the dynamics within them shape their understanding of what is taught in class (Bronfenbrenner, 1989). Findings presented teachers' expression of their concerns about the learners' lack of interest in study skills, lack of motivation in learners and the learners' need of guidance and support to achieve their goals. Furthermore the findings revealed that teachers' frustration emanates from the inadequate knowledge and strategies for teaching study skills to learners. These findings are linked to Vroom's Expectancy Theory of Motivation (1964), where he emphasised that learners need support from teachers and quality material for

the supportive learning. Self-esteem, clarity of goals regarding performance, and resources availability are key factors that influence expectation. The link of the findings to the theory is further illustrated where Vroom (1964) emphasises that in order for a person to be motivated, efforts of performance and motivation must be linked with the outcomes. Thus in an effective learning experience of LO, learners need to have a high level of confidence in the skills required for the tasks provided (Vroom, 1964). Findings further clarified that learners in the grade 10 classes were not motivated. In grade 11, some learners from the schools tried to be serious with their work AND in grade 12 they are then motivated and work hard and show commitment.

5.4. SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

In this section the findings for each of the research sub-questions are integrated and then summarised to answer the main research question, which is:

What are Life Orientation Educators' understandings of the teaching of study skills in the FET phase in secondary schools at Ekudibeng Cluster, Gauteng East District?

This research question mirrors the established relationships between LO teachers' knowledge (competencies of study skills from both teachers and learners) and learners' performance, LO teachers' teaching strategies, the challenges that hinder the process of teaching study skills to learners and teachers' needs that can help to enhance the effective teaching of study skills to learners (see Chapter 4). Lack of knowledge of teaching study skills to learners and the learners' competency, attitudes and other contextual factors that may enable or hinder teaching of study skills to learners and learner achievement were considered. The main findings are summarised as follows:

- There does not seem to be enough emphasis placed on the importance of study skills either within the LO curriculum or in other high school subject areas.
- Teachers' knowledge of teaching study skills: the findings presented the challenges faced by the teachers. They do not have enough knowledge, and are in need of such knowledge. For some teachers even the understanding and the knowledge of teaching LO as a subject is a challenge.
- The strategies of teaching study skills to learners: on this theme the findings showed that teachers just read from books and then give learners activities, some use their experience to maneuver around teaching learners study skills. Teachers are doing the best they can

to teach study skills using strategies they assume are essential and will benefit the high school learners, like mind maps and using previous question papers to study and doing some revision. Teachers did not specifically give any details as to what they are doing and this could be due to a lack of subject and pedagogical content knowledge linked to study skills teaching specifically.

- Challenges experienced by the LO teachers which affect the teaching of study skills to learners and the contributing factors to learner performance:

    - Transition: findings presented that, the focus and priority of many schools is more on FET phase since Grade 10 forms the foundation of Grade 12. So more attention is given to FET learners so as to prepare them for their exit (Grade 12). This means that the GET phase receives less attention even though it determines the success in high school learners' lives as well as the kind of decisions they can make about subject choices and their post-secondary school lives (career choice).
    - Lack of parental involvement: findings showed that some parents have no formal or encouraging educational experiences, thus it becomes difficult for them to properly guide their children in the process. Some schools are planning to educate parents about the importance of their involvement, which may help the process of teaching and learning.

- Teachers' needs: on this theme, the findings revealed the great need for teachers' training, the need for being equipped with knowledge and expertise to teach LO and study skills to learners. Participants emphasised their frustration due to lack of knowledge and competency of teaching study skills.
- The fact the teachers were not comfortable to give access to their documents raised questions and left the candidate wondering why. Why are they not confident to show their tools? Is it because of inferior quality, because they simply does not exist, or some other reason. Do they really believe that work schedules and lesson plans are personal documents?

5.5. CONTRIBUTION AND THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study was designed to provide information with regard to teachers' knowledge and the teaching of study skills to high school learners (FET Phase) at Ekudibeng, Cluster Gauteng East. The purpose to explore the LO teachers' knowledge and teaching of study skills was to gain insights on the teachers' understanding and the teaching of study skills, their challenges and their needs, which can be used for reflection and to enhance curriculum planning and implementation linked to study skills. The results of this study provide DBE policymakers, curriculum designers, practitioners (facilitators) and researchers with insight into teachers' experiences and understandings in teaching study skills. Policymakers may use these findings during the course of the development of LO FET policy statements for secondary schools. Curriculum designers can also use these findings for the development of LO FET curriculum programmes and also in considering teachers knowledge and the level of learners' ability in high schools. Practitioners can use these findings to make programmatic decisions that improve teachers' content and pedagogical knowledge of LO by conducting effective workshop on the subject and guiding teachers on how to implement those topics stipulated by the subject programme like the teaching of study skills to learners in FET high schools.

5.6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Professional development for teachers is aimed at improving competency, and can assist teachers in improving academic outcomes. Martin (2013) is of the idea that professional development for teachers (in-service) should thus contain a learner-centred element and be knowledge centred, assessment centred for optimal teacher knowledge and development (Martin, 2013).

Practice and policy recommendations resultant from the findings for this study are:

- The DBE Officials to support schools by providing them with qualified LO teachers to teach LO subject and appropriate LO facilitators to empower and support teachers in schools. Furthermore, to evaluate the LO readiness to be an externally examined subject.

- Professional development for teachers aimed at enhancing and improving LO teachers' knowledge and competency of teaching study skills.

- The DBE policy makers and curriculum designers to be cognizance of the learners' grade and the cognitive developmental level of maturity when designing LO curriculum.

- Designing of more LO topics to accommodate different grades to ease learner boredom out of the same topic.

- Introduction of study skills early in the GET phase to bridge the gap between Grades 9 and 10.

- Mindfulness workshop targeting non LO teachers aimed at creating an understanding and the acknowledgement of the importance of study skills across all subjects in the school.
- The principals to give LO subject equal respect like all other subjects, not to treat it as the substitution to fill-up time-table in the school.

- DBE to afford equal attention and support to GET phase as it is done in FET phase.

- The DBE to reassess their learners' progression criteria to the next grade or phase versus the learners' readiness for the next grade and the grade workload.

- The DBE to device means of preparing learners successful transition earlier on the learners' educational life from their primary schooling, especially within the phases in the school. For example, allocation of resources that will help teachers to support and manage the Grade 9 to 10 transition. Workshops to teach parents about the importance of the transition between grades and phases especially GET phase (Grade 9) to FET phase (Grade 10).

➢ Recommendations for further research are:

- A comparative study be conducted where the focus will be on township schools and then the results be compared. For example similar studies to this one, but the one that would be on a narrow scale where township schools will be the focal point and also on a wider scale (at regional and country levels) to be the future consideration for researchers.

- Use of experimental designs to compare teachers in schools with teachers who knowledge for teaching of the effective study skills to teachers in schools who have limited or have no knowledge of teaching study skills to learners. Also a validation study of the learners' Attitude towards Study Skills Scale is needed.

- Further studies in respect of other stakeholders' attitudes towards study skills starting with the teachers, the parents and DBE officials at Ekudibeng Cluster, to identify limitations that impede teaching of study skills in schools which leads to underperformance of some schools in the Gauteng East District.

- Further studies in respect of other stakeholders' attitudes towards study skills (DBE Facilitators at different districts) to identify constraints that impede teaching of study skills in schools which leads to underperformance of schools in the country.

- Further study to look into the attitudes of the teachers of other subjects/ Learning Areas towards LO and study skills in the future.

- Further studies of learners' attitudes towards study skills as part of LO.

- Further research study focusing on the teachers' experiences, using the data collection method of mixed study design, for the purpose of investigating the actual classroom practices through lesson observations during teaching periods in the classroom, analysing the LO teaching document for example: work schedules, lesson plans and learners' workbooks.

5.7. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Several limitations must be considered when reviewing the results of this study. The study was geographically restricted to Ekudibeng Cluster, Gauteng East District Secondary schools. Therefore, one must be careful not to generalise the results to other geographic areas, as well as to private or independent schools especially as the goal of this research was not to generalise findings but qualitative exploration so that others can decide the transferability of the findings to their own contexts.

This research study was carried out by making use of a suitable sampling technique at Ekudibeng Cluster schools, FET LO teachers and HoDs of Ekurhuleni Gauteng East District. Thus, the generalisation of the results is limited to the selected sample, although there are many similar schools and districts. The sample that was purposefully selected turned out to be the former model C schools only. Township schools were not part of the sample from which data was collected. Thus the findings cannot be generalised to all schools in Ekudibeng Cluster, Gauteng East District.

The interviews were used as instruments to collect data and through that instrument the researcher has identified some limitations. For instance, some of the participants may have been overwhelmed and answered superficially or in a contradictory fashion. They may also have shifted focus from the important issue (purpose of the research) or may misinterpret the question asked and sometimes respond to impress/over presentation of themselves. Moreover, the teachers were not comfortable for their planning documents to be reviewed meaning that triangulation in terms of this curriculum source was not feasible.

5.8. CONCLUSION

As stated at the beginning of this study, there are various factors that contribute to learner performance, some of which this study did not directly investigate. The findings of this study did however emphasise the need for a focus on study skills teaching and teacher proficiency in the high school education system. The South African Education System role-players need to take LO seriously and have teachers qualified to teach LO, and to meet their needs through study skills training workshops. Comprehensive continuous improvement in learner performance requires a constant determination of trained LO teachers, qualified for the subject and properly equipped with relevant knowledge to cascade it to learners and cooperative community members, where parents are involved/hands on in shaping their children's' future. The heart of improvement lies in changing teaching and learning practices of teachers and learners, and this requires focused and continuous effort by all parts of the education system and its partners.

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Appendix A: PERMISION LETTER FROM THE GDE: DISTRICT

GAUTENG PROVINCE
Department Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Enquiries : Phumla Nhlapo
Sub-directorate: HOD
Contact No: 011 736-0887

TO : **REVIVAL BONGEKILE GAMA**
STUDENT NUMBER: 35251107

FROM : **MAUREEN MTHIMUNYE**
DISTRICT DIRECTOR

DATE : **24 APRIL 2015**

SUBJECT : **PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A STUDY: AN EXPLORATION OF LO TEACHERS' KNOWLEDGE AND THE TEACHING OF STUDY SKILLS IN EKUDIBENG CLUSTER, GAUTENG EAST: EUREKA, SPRINGS SECONDARY AND SPRINGS GIRLS' HIGH**

This matter has reference

Your request to conduct your research work was approved by GDE, based on that the approval is supported.

Schools report to Circuit Manager and Cluster Leaders, ensure that you communicate to the managers to be aware of the schools you selected.

Thank you

M. MTHIMUNYE
DISTRICT DIRECTOR

she must identify based on the past. of school.

Making education a societal priority

Office of the District Director: Gauteng East
Corner 5th Avenue & 7th Street, Springs. 1560
Private Bag x 9, Springs, 1560. Tel: (011) 736 0887 Fax: (0 11) 736 0805
Email: Johannah.Nhlapo@gauteng.gov.za
Website: www.education.gpg.gov.za.

= CL1.

Linda 082 576 9425

Appendix B: ETHICS PERMISSION LETTER

UNISA

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION RESEARCH ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

15 April 2015

Ref#: **2015/04/15/35251107/18/MC**
Student #:Mrs RB Gama Student
Number#:35251107

Dear Mrs Gama,

Decision: Approved

Researcher
Mrs RB Gama 22 Hagart Avenue Selection Park Springs 1889
Tel: +27 78 411 2138 rbQamass@omail.com

Supervisor
Dr L Zimmerman
Department of Psychology of Education College of Education Tel: +27 12 4294210
zimmei@unisa.ac.za

Proposal: An exploration of Life Orientation teachers' knowledge and the teaching of study skills in Ekudibeng Cluster, Gauteng East secondary schools

Qualification: M Ed in Guidance and Counselling

Thank you for the application for research ethics clearance by the College of Education Research Ethics Review Committee for the above mentioned research. Final approval is granted for 2 years.

For full approval: *The application was reviewed in compliance with the Unisa Policy on Research Ethics by the CEDU ERC on 15 April 2015.*

The proposed research may now commence with the proviso that:

1) The researcher/s will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and

:

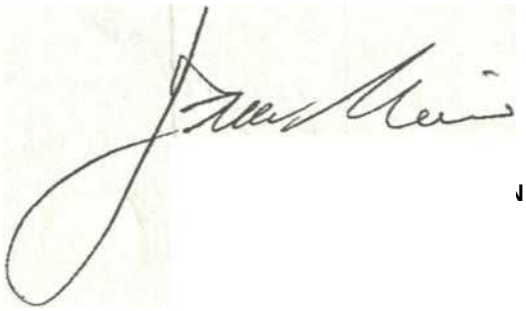
relevant to the ethicality of the study, as well as changes in the methodology, should be communicated in writing to the College of Education Ethics Review Committee. An amended application could be requested if there are substantial changes from the existing proposal, especially if those changes affect any of the study-related risks for the research participants.

3) *The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to any applicable national legislation, professional codes of conduct, institutional guidelines and scientific standards relevant to the specific field of study.*

Note:

The reference number [top right corner of this communique] should be clearly indicated on all forms of communication [e.g. Webmail, E-mail messages, lettersJ with the intended research participants, as well as with the College of Education RERC.

Kind regards,



Dr M Claa$s€ns CHAIRPERSON: CEDU ERC

mcdtc@netactive,co.za

Appendix C: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

QUESTIONS FOR THE INTERVIEW

1) How can you explain your knowledge and understanding of teaching study skills to learners as the FET Life Orientation?
2) What is your understanding of teacher knowledge and teacher pedagogical knowledge?
3) How do you integrate your pedagogical knowledge and your experience as a Life Orientation teacher into your teaching of study skills?
4) How does the integration of your experiential knowledge, content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge influence the teaching of study skills to learners?
5) Deducing from you teaching experience, how much influence do you think the study skills might have on learner achievement?
6) Describe your views and /or experiences about the challenges you encounter in teaching study skills, that might regard as the hindrances during the process of teaching and learning study skills?
7) What do you as LO teachers consider important in teaching of study skills?
8) Do you sometimes think that there is a relationship between study skills and learner achievement/performance? Please support your answer.
9) Do you think there is a relationship between learner dropping out of school before they reach grade 12 (between the grades 10 and 11), learner's achievement and study skills? Why?
10) What is your view on learners' transition in between the grades in terms of their learning styles and their performance?
11) Based on your experience, how often do you think learners engage in appropriate study skills?
12) In your own experience what are learners' attitude towards the period of teaching study skills?
13) How can it be possible to establish that learners are equipped with the effective study skills before they write their examination?
14) Based on your experience as Senior Life Orientation Teacher/the HOD what will you like to change or add in the Life orientation Programme, which you think improve learner performance?
15) What are your views on the teachers' in-service training?