GUIDELINES FOR THE PROMOTION OF TEACHER WELLBEING IN A TOWNSHIP PRIMARY SCHOOL

by

BEVERLEY ANTOINETTE FELDMAN

submitted in accordance with the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in Psychology

at the

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

SUPERVISOR: Prof. M.A. Venter

July 2021

DECLARATION

Name: Beverley Feldman

Student number: 08632618

Degree: DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN PSYCHOLOGY

Guidelines for the promotion of teacher wellbeing in a township primary school

I declare that the above thesis 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.

I further declare that I have submitted the thesis to originality checking software and that it falls within the accepted requirements for originality.

I further declare that I have not previously submitted this work, or part of it, for examination at UNISA for another qualification or at any other higher education institution.

<u>28 July 2021</u>

Signature   Date

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to the teachers in this country, who carry on and do the best they can, sometimes under difficult conditions, for the sake of educating our children...

…and to the memory of 'Bonny' - a research participant who joined late but contributed much. She sadly passed away not long after our last encounter, a great loss to the teaching fraternity.

May her soul rest in peace.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

An endeavour of this nature is made easier by the encouragement and support of significant people, of whom, I count and thank the following:

- My supervisor, Prof Rienie Venter, for her gentle yet strong guidance; for bringing me back when I wandered too far and for opening my mind to dialectical thinking, instead of the binary pitfalls into which I often fell. Thank you for the interesting journey, throughout my postgraduate studies.

- My husband, Kevin, for the stimulating conversations, shared information, support and encouragement as we journey towards our 'paradox'. Soon we will be there.

- My 'laatlammetjie', Jordan, for teaching me a thing or two about 'pride' and being true to yourself; for understanding when I postponed 'movie night' for the 25th time because I needed to work and for waiting patiently for me to complete this study. Thank you, it is done, and we have lots of catching up to do.

- My grown-up 'boy and girl', Joshua and Jamie, for enabling my peace of mind, by being sensible, self-sufficient, supportive and marvellous children. You make me proud.

- My wonderful family, Ady, Chi-wah, Jade, Jessi, Jodi, Gillian, Ma, Avron, and Ms Merle, for your presence, love and support. I appreciate you all.

- My friends and colleagues, for the supportive conversations, research *'indabas'* and mentorship that gave me fresh insights, clarified my thoughts and encouraged me to complete this study. Thank you.

- My employer, UNISA, for study assistance, without which I would have had difficulty completing my studies and for making available grants such as the MDSP, which covered the additional research costs of my study.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to gain insights into the state of teacher wellbeing in a township primary school and develop guidelines to promote it. Literature was reviewed to situate township schools socially, historically and politically and to explore the role of teachers as significant input resources in education systems. Process and content pathways to wellbeing were explored through perusal of literature related to theories, models and strategies that promote wellbeing from an asset-based perspective. Such asset and values-based approaches, including Positive Psychology and the PERMA+ model of wellbeing, formed the conceptual framework of the study and served as a baseline for the exploration of pathways to wellbeing. The empirical research was conducted in three phases at the same school with a set of fifteen participants in Phase 1 and seven participants, who were a subset of Phase 1 participants, in Phases 2 and 3. The purpose of the three phases was to penetrate the study from broader context analysis, to participants' awareness, exploration and personalisation of factors that promote their own wellbeing. The results of the study highlighted the systemic influences on teacher wellbeing and has implications for considering teacher wellbeing from personal, professional and institutional perspectives. Furthermore, the asset-based process and content pathways explored were found to be beneficial in the promotion of teacher wellbeing. Guidelines from the findings of the study were developed for the Department of Education, the school and its management and other structures as well as for teachers, for whom this research was conducted.

KEY TERMS:

Teacher wellbeing, township schools, asset-based approaches, salutogenesis, Positive Psychology, PERMA+, content pathways, process pathways, threats, resources.

SAMEVATTING

Die doel van hierdie kwalitatiewe gevallestudie was om insig te kry in die stand van onderwyserswelstand in 'n township-laerskool en riglyne te ontwikkel om dit te bevorder. 'n Literatuuroorsig is gedoen om townshipskole sosiaal, histories en polities te plaas en om die rol van onderwysers as belangrike insethulpbronne in opvoedkundige stelsels te ondersoek. Proses- en inhoudsbane na welstand is ondersoek deur insae in literatuur te kry wat verband hou met teorieë, modelle en strategieë wat welstand vanuit 'n bategebaseerde perspektief bevorder. Sulke bate- en waardegebaseerde benaderings, insluitend Positiewe Sielkunde en die PERMA+-model van welstand, vorm die konseptuele raamwerk van die studie en dien as basislyn vir die verkenning van roetes tot welstand. Die empiriese navorsing is in drie fases uitgevoer by dieselfde skool met 'n groep van vyftien deelnemers in Fase 1, en sewe deelnemers wat 'n deelversameling van Fase 1-deelnemers was, in Fase 2 en 3. Die doel van die drie fases was om die studie vanuit breër konteksanalise binne te dring tot by deelnemers se bewustheid, ondersoek en verpersoonliking van faktore wat hul eie welstand bevorder. Die bevindings van die studie beklemtoon die sistemiese invloede op onderwyserswelstand en het implikasies vir die oorweging van onderwyserswelstand vanuit persoonlike, professionele en institusionele perspektiewe. Verder is bevind dat die bategebaseerde proses- en inhoudsbane wat ondersoek is, voordelig is vir die bevordering van onderwyserswelstand. Riglyne is uit die studie se bevindings ontwikkel vir die Departement van Onderwys, die skool en sy bestuur en ander strukture sowel as vir onderwysers op wie hierdie navorsing gerig was.

<u>SLEUTELTERME:</u>

Onderwyserswelstand, townshipskole, bategebaseerde benaderings, salutogenese, Positiewe Sielkunde, PERMA+, inhoudsbane, prosesbane, bedreigings, hulpbronne.

ISIFINGQO

Inhloso yalol ucwaningo olusebenzisa ukuhumushwa kwesigameko kwabe kuwukuthola ukuqonda ngesimompilo sothisha esikoleni samazinga aphansi saselokishini kanye nokusungula imigomo enokulandelwa ukuthuthukisa isimompilo sothisha ezikoleni. Ukuhlaziywa kwemibhalo kwenziwa ukuze kubukwe izikole ezisemalokishini ngokwenhlalo, ngokomlando Kanye nangokwezombusazwe, kuphinde futhi kuhlolwe indima engadlalwa wothisha njengezinsizakusebenza ezibalulekile ezinhlelweni zezemfundo. Kwabuye futhi kwasetshenziwa ukuhlaziywa kwemibhalo ukuze kucwaningwe nemigudu kanye nokuqukethwe yizindlela ezibheke kwisimompilo. Kwahlaziywa imibhalo eyayiqondene nezinkolelo-mbono, neyayiqondene namamodeli kanye namasu akhuthaza isimompilo ngasohlangothini lolubheka lokho umuntu asuke enakho. Lendlela yokubheka lokho umuntu asuke enakho kanye namanani akho ihlanganise ne-positive sayikholoji kanye nemodeli yesimompilo ebizwa ngokuthi i-PERMA+, yiyona eyabumba uhlaka lolucwaningo abuye yaba yisisekelo socwaningo kwemigudu ephokophele kwisimompilo. Ucwaningo lwezobuciko lwenziwa ngezigaba ezintathu, lenzelwa esikoleni esisodwa. ESigabeni sokuqala kwathathwa ababambiqhaza abayishumu nanhlanu. ESigabeni sesibili Kanye naseSigabeni sesithathu kwathathwa ababambiqhaza abayisikhombiza kwababeyingxene yababebambe iqhaza eSigabeni sokuqala. Inhloso yalezi zigaba ezintathu kwakuwukwenza ucwaningo kusukela ekuhlaziyweni komongo okubanzi, ekuqwashiseni kwababambiqhaza, ukuhlola nokwenza ngezifiso izinto ezithuthukisa impilo yabo. imiphumela yocwaningo igqamise ukuthonywa kwendlela esimwenimpilo sothisha futhi inomthelela ekubhekeni isimompilo yothisha ngokubheka komuntu, kobungcweti nangomumo wezikhungo. Ngaphezu kwalokho, inqubo esekelwe empahleni nezindlela zokuqukethwe ezihloliwe zitholwe njengezinenzuzo ekukhuthazeni inhlalakahle yothisha. Imihlahlandlela yokutholakele kulolu cwaningo yenzelwe uMnyango Wezemfundo, isikole nabaphathi baso nezinye izinhlaka kanjalo nothisha, lolu cwaningo olwaqhutshwa ngayo.

AMAGAMA ABALULEKILE

Isimompilo sothisha, izikole zasemalokishini, izindlela ezisuselwa kulokho abantu ababakho, umsuka wezempilo, Isayikholoji Yokuyikho, i-PERMA +, izindlela zokuqukethwe, izindlela zokucubungula, izinsongo, izinsiza

LIST OF ACRONYMS

4IR	Fourth Industrial Revolution
AEP	Awareness Exploration and Personalisation.
ANC	African National Congress
APA	American Psychological Association
CAPS	Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement
CoC	Circle of Concern
CoI	Circle of Influence
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Unions
CDE	Centre of Development and Enterprise
CRA	Centre for Risk Analysis
CSTL	Care and Support for Teaching and Learning
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DoE	Department of Education
EAP	Employee Assistance Programme
EAPA	Employee Assistance Professional Association
EWB	Emotional wellbeing
GDE	Gauteng Department of Education
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GPLMS	Gauteng Primary Language and Mathematics Strategy
GST	General Systems Theory
HoD	Head of Department
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council
IQMS	Integrated Quality Management System
IRR	Institute of Race Relations

JD-R	Job Demands-Resources
LOC	Locus of Control
LoLT	Language of Learning and Teaching
MHC	Health Continuum Model
NCS	National Curriculum Statements
NEPA	National Education Policy Act
NCES	National Center for Education Statistics
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OBE	Outcomes Based Education
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PAR	Personal Action Research
PBIS	Positive Behavioural Interventions and Supports
PERMA	Positive Emotion, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning and Accomplishment, or Achievement
PIRLS	Progress in International Reading Literacy Study
PP	Positive Psychology
PsyCap	Psychological Capital
PWB	Psychological/Personal Wellbeing
PWBW	Psychological Wellbeing at Work
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SADTU	South African Democratic Teachers Union
SASAMS	South African School Administration System
SASA	South African Schools Act
SBST	School Based Support Team
SGB	School Governing Bodies

SSISA	Sports Science Institute of South Africa
SMT	School Management Team
SSE	Sai Spiritual Education
SSEHV	Sathya Sai Education in Human Values
SWB	Social wellbeing
SWB	Subjective Wellbeing
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SGB	School Governing Body
SIAS	Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support
SNA	Support Needs Analysis
TALIS	Teaching and Learning International Study
TIMSS	Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study
TWB	Teacher wellbeing
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UK	United Kingdom
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNISA	University of South Africa
US	United States
USA	United States of America
WSE	Whole School Evaluation

KEY CONCEPTS

The following key concepts are clarified, explored and defined throughout the thesis

1   Asset-based approach

2   Dual economy

3   PERMA+

4   Positive psychology

5   Psychofortigenesis

6   Psychological capital

7   Resilience

8   Salutogenesis

9   Values-based approach

10   Wellbeing

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTORY ORIENTATION

A teacher affects eternity, he can never tell where his influence stops

Henry Brooks Adams

1.1   INTRODUCTION

Haim Ginnot (1995) perfectly described the influence of a teacher when he wrote:

> *I've come to a frightening conclusion that I am the decisive element in the classroom. It's my personal approach that creates the climate. It's my daily mood that makes the weather. As a teacher, I possess a tremendous power to make a child's life miserable or joyous. I can be a tool of torture or an instrument of inspiration. I can humiliate or heal. In all situations, it is my response that decides whether a crisis will be escalated or de-escalated, and a child humanized or dehumanized.*

Familiar stories such as those of Plato and Aristotle, Anne Sullivan and Helen Keller attest to life-changing power and influential relationships that exist between teachers and their students. There are numerous lesser-known stories, and each of us have our own, about the good, bad, ugly or inspiring roles played by teachers in our education. I spent twenty-four years of my career as a classroom-based teacher, nine in a township school and the rest in what is known in South Africa as a former model C school. This research was motivated by my deep appreciation for the work done by teachers, and the growing body of research on the importance of teacher wellbeing in the face of challenging educational contexts. The responsibility they have as educators and shapers of society, often under adverse conditions, possibly explains why teaching is high on the list of most stressful professions (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2016; Vazi et al., 2013*)*. A search of the literature finds more documented research on the

1

prevalence and extent of teacher stress, than evidence-based research to manage it. Given the significant role played by teachers in society, a growing body of research, including this research study, explores ways in which teacher wellbeing may be promoted, or improved. Besides improving teacher efficacy (OECD Report, 2018), teacher mental health and wellbeing also influences learner mental health and wellbeing (Harding et al., 2019; Oberle & Schonert-Reichl, 2016).

This thesis documents an instrumental case study journey with a group of teachers at a township primary school, as I sought to explore their meanings of their state of wellbeing and pathways to improving it.

1.2   BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH

The myriad ills plaguing the ailing education system in South Africa need no further exposition since they are regularly exposed in the media. The gloomy portrayal of South Africa's teachers as contributors to what is being termed 'the crisis in education' (Motshekga, 2016; Spaull, 2013), is alarming. As learner achievement remains low, teacher competence is frequently brought into question with teacher stress reportedly on the increase and the high rate of teacher attrition of concern (Chirese & Makura, 2014:125; Pitsoe, 2013). Moreover, many schools have increasingly become unsafe environments in which teachers and learners face physical, emotional and psychological threat (Le Roux & Mokhele, 2011; Moon, Morash, Jang & Jeong, 2015). Not surprisingly, many teachers appear to be in crisis, given historically orchestrated deficits in their training and development through apartheid legislation, the mounting pressure on them to perform and the need to deliver an often changing and overloaded curriculum. In addition, they are called upon to address varied needs and abilities effectively in large over-crowded classes as well as mediate the increasing swell of social ills pervading society and complete a comprehensive paper trail as evidence of their competence in executing all the above. It is simultaneously important yet discouraging, to acknowledge that not all South African teachers and learners are entrenched in the education crisis - it seems that most of those who were previously disadvantaged, continue to be disadvantaged this way, as depicted in the concept of

the dual economy (Shalem & Hoadley, 2007; Spaull, 2013), discussed further in Chapter 2.

Schools that continue to be affected and disadvantaged by inequality are generally rural and township schools. Since the situation experienced at many rural schools is so dire, much research has been conducted at rural schools. The Department of Basic Education (DBE) considers it critical enough that a special directorate exists to focus on and address challenges specific to rural contexts. While rural contexts have unique challenges, township schools similarly have challenges unique to them in their urban contexts. I, therefore, elected to conduct this study in a Johannesburg township, whose challenges and culture I am relatively familiar with. Under the Population Registration Act (1950) and the Group Areas Act (1950) of apartheid, the population was racially separated and segregated into different residential areas. Black people were forcibly designated to townships and locations, while white people lived in suburbs. Under the apartheid education system, legislated inequality ensured that township schools were deliberately designed to be under-resourced with no sport facilities, libraries, laboratories, school halls and other facilities necessary for holistic education, though these were characteristic of suburban schools. Following the advent of democracy in South Africa, racial segregation was abolished, but the geography and demography of townships remain largely unchanged. Townships are beset with high rates of unemployment, poverty, low levels of education, social scourges of every form, drug and alcohol abuse, violence and gangsterism, what Maringe and Moletsane (2015) refer to as multiple deprivation. Teachers at township schools engage with learners from these social conditions daily, often switching roles between teacher, social worker and counsellor, among other roles. This is in addition to the occupational stress related to being in civil service, especially in schools with high job demands, risks and needs, but low resources (Ebersöhn, Loots, Eloff & Ferreira, 2015).

Returning to the crisis in education, frequent allusions are made to this crisis in South Africa, as most learners underperform academically against national outcomes and international benchmarks. In systems thinking, this powerful feedback loop informs observers of problems in the system. Such problems may relate to difficulties evident

between the connections of inputs and outputs of the education system, as well as variables influencing and being influenced by the system as it interacts with other systems. This study focuses, inter alia, on the teacher as a significant input resource (I am reluctant to say mechanism in reference to a human) in the system called education. In South Africa, teachers are implicated in the worrying state of educational affairs, and while some of the issues of which teachers are accused may be viewed as being indefensible, it cannot be ignored that their task is by no means easy. This study is motivated by a growing awareness that research done with South African teachers consistently reflects issues of low morale, high levels of stress (Johnson, 2013; Lawrence, 2019; Pelser, 2015), negativity, and feelings of being unheard, unsupported and challenged (Feldman, 2014; Lessing & De Wit, 2007; Pereira, 2011). Such research is a disturbing portrayal, given teachers' influence and the critical roles that they play in society. In view of some of the challenges inherent in the education system, the purpose of this study is to engage with a group of teachers in a vulnerable setting. Firstly, to uncover participating teachers' perspectives on their wellbeing and then explore, with them, asset-based pathways, interventions and strategies, for the sustainable improvement and promotion of their wellbeing.

Seemingly the state of education in many developing countries is not optimal, and as such, countries battle poverty, post-colonial restructuring and numerous other factors that militate against the provision of quality education (Biesta, 2004). Even within such a group of countries, South African children perform at the lower end of the scale. For varying reasons, the situation in some developed countries is not significantly better (OECD, 2018). Different or similar as education systems may be, the role players remain the same with teachers being instrumental in the implementation of the ideals of the system. Since the provision of quality education is largely dependent on the efforts of classroom-based teachers (UNESCO, 2015), and since the challenges in education increase, endeavours to improve the quality of education are possibly, best levelled at teacher support and development.

I used to believe that adequate curriculum policies and development, provision and delivery lay at the heart of the challenge in education. My view has since evolved to

focus on the significance of the human systems that facilitate these functions, particularly the teachers responsible for education provision at ground level. If teachers, as significant role players, do not function optimally, dysfunction within the education system is likely to be a natural consequence. It seems almost redundant to say that capacitating teachers will strengthen the efficacy of education, yet this logical assumption appears too simplistic, given the apparent difficulty in its amelioration. The gap seems to sit in 'How?', which this study seeks to explore.

Globally and locally, policies and action plans adopted by organisations, such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), government departments, including the Department of Basic Education (DBE) and other organisations, express their intention to support teachers as part of the broader objective of improving the quality of education. Embracing the global goal of quality education for all, this research study seeks to contribute to breeching the distance between intention and realisation by focusing on the teacher as a significant role-player in the provision of education, particularly in vulnerable settings, such as schools located in townships. My premise is that teachers are human, before they are teachers; therefore, support and development of the teacher, must begin with understanding, support and development of the human as person, then as professional.

The Department of Basic Education (DBE) has prioritised teacher development and training, and generally appears to focus on professional development, with a strong emphasis on acquiring didactic skills to improve teacher effectiveness in the classroom or subject. This is indeed vital, but could it be that prioritising teachers' professional competence above their personal development and wellbeing reduces their capacity to cope with the demands of 21st Century teaching and learning, compounded by the challenges presently facing education in South Africa? Whilst education remains in crisis, it may warrant considering a different approach to improving teacher practice and efficacy, particularly in schools where learners and teachers are most vulnerable and at risk. Developing competent teachers may require greater endeavours to acknowledge and develop more aspects of their personal development, than simply

their didactic skills. This research explores, on the ground (bottom up), action and exploration as professional development of and for teachers (James, 2006), in contrast to the top-down approach to teacher professional development, decided by education department officials, or other entities outside the school context.

It may be prudent to mention here that even though it is not the primary aim of this study to promote teacher efficacy, it will be interesting, for future research, to explore the kind of impact improving teacher wellbeing has on teacher efficacy, and classroom practice, as Wissing (2014) suggests. Research confirms the importance of personal wellbeing in the efficacy of role and task execution, including professional functioning. Even though feeling good and performing well are two different constructs, they are related and can influence each other (Wissing, 2014:8), and as held by Huppert and Johnson (2010), that when people feel good, they perform better, expressed as 'feeling good and functioning well'.

Threats to teacher wellbeing have been well-documented, globally and locally. Teacher stress or distress as discussed further in chapter 2, section 2.5.2.2, however, remains prevalent and teacher wellbeing continues to be compromised. This study seeks to determine which strategies improve teacher wellbeing, and what teachers can do to sustain a state of relative wellbeing over time or when they are feeling depleted, and the benefit, if any, of intentionally improving their personal development and self-care practices. The current picture is that teacher wellbeing is under threat, so against the backdrop of the problems that beset the South African education system, it is critical that efforts towards solutions, however big or small, be compounded to propagate positive change for the sake of enabling teachers to practise their craft well, giving more South African learners the educational experiences, they deserve. The schools where learners and teachers are most vulnerable and at risk, are generally situated in poorer urban and rural environments, including previously racially segregated areas, historically referred to as townships and locations (Lebesa, 2015).

1.3   PRELIMINARY ENQUIRY

The preliminary inquiry sought to determine the legitimacy of the problem, through a preliminary literature review and a contact session with the principal of a township primary school. The principal was deeply concerned about the wellbeing of teachers at the school, amid increasing stressors and demands on their capacities.

Literature explored sought mainly to determine the state of teacher wellbeing in the South African context, the nature of wellbeing, definitions and approaches, as well as theories and concepts that together frame the study and lastly, an appropriate conceptual framework that aligns well with the envisioned research purpose. These are discussed more fully in Chapters 2 and 3.

There is no shortage of literature on teachers, learning and teaching, successes and failures in education, particularly the challenges faced by teachers, including teacher stress (Ladbrook, 2009; Nel *et al.,* 2011; Vazi *et al.,* 2013). Much of the literature dedicated to the wellbeing of teachers is often conducted in rural settings (Ebersöhn, 2014; Ferreira & Ebersöhn 2011; Hansen, Buitendach & Kanengoni, 2015) and other countries (Paterson & Grantham, 2016; Wong & Zhang, 2014). South African township schools in low income to impoverished communities, have a unique set of challenges which this study partly seeks to acknowledge.

Statistics and reports lead one to deduce that the majority of South African learners are not adequately educated, supported or developed to achieve more of their potential or national and global learning outcomes. A mounting body of research highlights, inter alia, learner academic underperformance (DBE, 2013; PIRLS, 2016; TIMSS, 2017), increasing school dropout and youth unemployment rates (Weybright *et al.,* 2017), a growing economic divide between rich and poor, based on levels of education and employability (Spaull, 2015) and the poor standard and quality of education for most black learners (DBE, 2013). Fitting reference to the crisis in education is attested to by the woeful depiction of teachers as well as the emerging research on how the right of every South African child to basic education (Constitution of South Africa, Bill of Rights,1996), is not upheld (Veriava, Thom & Hodgson, 2017).

Whilst learner performance is neither the focus nor the variable upon which this study acts, one should remain ever mindful of the significant relationship between teaching (teachers) and learning (learners).

In view of the national crisis in education (Motshekga, 2016; Spaull, 2013), the imperative of developing a capable and efficient teaching corps cannot be undermined. A substantial percentage of the national budget is allocated to education and there is a constant endeavour to provide training and development for teachers (Mkhize, 2016). Possibly, part of the problem is an over focus on development of didactic skills, as mentioned previously, and not enough support and intervention at the level of improving personal wellbeing, including managing stress and building self-efficacy and resilience. More recently, efforts have certainly been made to acknowledge, specifically, the psycho-social needs of learners, and to a degree, teachers. An example would be the DBE's Care and Support for Teaching and Learning (CSTL) action plan, is a step in this direction, as it commits to the creation of enabling environments within the education system for other stakeholders to support learners and teachers, (DBE and MiET Africa, 2010).

Killen (2015) suggests that to teach effectively, one needs four types of knowledge, namely: knowledge of the subject (content), knowledge about how people learn (learning) and knowledge about how to teach (teaching). The sum of these three equal Shulman's (1987) concept of pedagogical content knowledge to create the fourth type of knowledge. I agree that these are essential, but I feel that the important aspect of teacher self-knowledge is absent from the equation. Aguinis and Kraiger (2009) refer to the value of declarative and procedural knowledge (what and how respectively) but concur that enhancing a person's self-efficacy or self-management skills can improve their performance. Pedagogical content knowledge is undoubtedly important for curriculum delivery, yet much as the curriculum is central to education, the role of the 'hidden curriculum' is equally, and at times, of greater importance than the curriculum (Alsubaie, 2015). The hidden curriculum reflects the very soul and nature of the teacher, including his or her attitudes, beliefs, values, as well as the teacher's

experience of wellbeing. My view is that what happens incidentally, in classrooms, has greater potential to influence than that which happens intentionally.

In the corporate sector, a growing awareness of the importance of valuing personal development has led to the promotion of an entire industry that seeks to develop human capital. Programmes, institutions and people providing such training include the Franklin Covey Institute, Dr Jon De Martini, The Pacific Institute's Investment in Excellence Programme, amongst others. There is a strong shift in more progressive companies to move away from the Industrial view of people as mainly a means to an economic end which values their productivity above their humanity. This labour process model or perspective is reductionist in that it diminishes people's humanness and prioritises their functionality above their existence. Hargreaves (2000:814) contends that "emotions should not be reduced to technical competences". Sidney Hook (2013) suggests that "Everyone who remembers his own education remembers teachers, not methods and techniques. The teacher is the heart of the educational system". I argue for the importance of an effective teacher, as an extension of being an effective person.

Paterson and Grantham (2016) consider the view that education and wellbeing are separate entities, to be a historical notion. They declare that contemporary research demonstrates the potentially important impact of teacher wellbeing on learner wellbeing and academic performance. This study looks specifically at wellbeing among teachers in the context of a primary school in a Gauteng township. Wellbeing is defined by Dodge, Daly, Huyton and Sanders (2012) as the balance between one's psychological, social and physical resources and the psychological, social and physical challenges, or demands, that one may be confronted with during the course of one's life. It has typically been defined in terms of Western and North-Atlantic psychology discourses; however, while these serve as a definitive guide, a growing body of research begs for the acknowledgement of an African perspective in African contexts. Further literature reviewed will therefore approach the issue of wellbeing from both a Western and African perspective, to find common ground and illuminate differences, where possible.

9

In seeking to improve wellbeing, most literature seems to support an asset-based approach, best defined as maintaining the salutogenic view of what causes health and wellbeing, rather than what diminishes it (Hopkins & Rippon, 2015). Asset-based approaches, in the context of this research are presented in greater detail in chapter 3, section 3.5. Some literature also presents values-based education as expedient in the promotion of wellbeing for teachers, learners and the greater school community (Dasoo, 2010; Hawkes, 2005). The literature explored in Chapter 3, therefore, focuses on asset and values-based approaches to promoting wellbeing.

1.4 RATIONALE AND STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The important influence teachers have on the lives of the learners with whom they engage, cannot be overstated. Apart from increasing negative publicity tarnishing the teaching profession and other public sector professions, fewer teachers seem to feel passionate and excited about their jobs, which must certainly impact their creativity, resourcefulness and enjoyment of the important work that they do. The metaphor of an empty emotional tank seems appropriate when considering data collected from teachers (Feldman, 2014; Lebesa, 2015; Naidoo, Botha & Bisschoff, 2013). I wanted to find pathways to help teachers refill their emotional tanks by developing and discovering a sense of being empowered to counteract the feeling that they are victims of 'the system' and improving their sense of wellbeing. Such empowerment and wellbeing may develop through ensuring that the self is preserved and cared for, to be better able to care for others, to actively engage with the challenges, seek solutions to changeable problems, and acquire and develop coping mechanisms for those challenges or problems that cannot be changed.

A scientific principle holds that if the pressure exceeds the resistance, the vessel will burst. Reports of teacher stress, burnout, stress-related illness, teacher attrition and violence in schools evoke images of a bubbling pot, ever on the brink of explosion. Contrast this to the more desirable image of teachers influencing eternity positively, as ripples on a pond. Optimistically, this study similarly seeks to begin ripples of improved teacher wellbeing in a vulnerable school community, towards becoming a community guided by an ethics of care (Noddings, 2002).

Based on the background and preliminary literature review, the research problem may be captured as follows:

- Teacher wellbeing (TWB) is important.

- TWB is continuously at risk of being depleted / compromised.

- Sustainable strategies/interventions/pathways need to be found to promote and improve TWB.

1.5   RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND AIMS OF THE STUDY

The overarching research question, emerging from the problems as stated above, is: *How can the wellbeing of teachers in a township primary school be promoted or improved?*

1.5.1 Research sub-questions

Bearing in mind the overlap and emergence that occurs in the process of collaborative inquiry, characterising this instrumental case study, the sub-questions implied by the main research question include the following research sub-questions:

Research sub-questions explored in the literature review:

1. What is the social, historical and political context of township schools?

2. What factors have been found to contribute to teacher stress and compromise teacher wellbeing, internationally and in South Africa, particularly in vulnerable and under-resourced schools?

3. What are the factors, including types of interventions, models, theories and strategies that have been found to promote wellbeing, and teacher wellbeing (pathways to wellbeing)?

Sub-questions explored in the empirical research:

4. What are the participating teachers' perceptions of wellbeing?

5. What personal and professional factors do teachers consider, to threaten their wellbeing?

6. What personal and professional factors, do teachers consider, to promote their wellbeing, in the context of the school engaging in the study?

7. What factors need to be considered in seeking to promote teacher wellbeing?

1.5.2 Aims and Objectives of the Study

The purpose of this study is to explore how teacher wellbeing can be promoted. The aim of the study is to develop guidelines for the promotion of teacher wellbeing. In achieving the aim, the objectives of the study are firstly, to gain insight into teachers' perceptions and awareness of wellbeing; secondly to determine threats to their wellbeing, as well as resources and factors that promote their wellbeing and thirdly, to consider and acknowledge the factors that influence the operationalisation of an intervention to promote teacher wellbeing in a township primary school, thus informing guidelines for the implementation of such an intervention. I considered an instrumental case study, discussed further under Section 1.6, to be the most appropriate design for the exploration of these research aims.

Bearing in mind the overlap that may occur in the phasic process of the research, the following objectives are consequently implied by the main aim of the research:

Objectives achieved in the literature review:

- Situate the township school in its social, historical and political context.

- Explore factors contributing to teacher stress and compromising wellbeing, both internationally and in South Africa; particularly in vulnerable and under-resourced schools?

- Explore factors, including types of interventions, models, theories and strategies that have been found to promote wellbeing, and teacher wellbeing (pathways to wellbeing).

12

Objectives achieved in the empirical research:

- Ascertain the perceptions of teachers in a township primary school, regarding wellbeing.

- Determine the personal and professional factors, participating teachers consider, to threaten their wellbeing.

- Determine the personal and professional factors, participating teachers consider, to promote their wellbeing, in the context of the school engaging in the study?

- Consider the factors that influence the implementation of an intervention to promote teacher wellbeing in a township primary school.

1.5.3 Research Assumptions

The following empirical assumptions guide the research questions and aims:

❑ The majority of South African teachers are experiencing work-related stress, burnout and job dissatisfaction of alarming proportions (Ngobeni, 2006; Shalem & Hoadley, 2009).

❑ Personal or professional teacher training and development is insufficient and often serves to confuse teachers more (South African Democratic Teachers Union [SADTU], 2014).

❑ Teachers are not sufficiently engaged with to determine their training and development needs (SADTU, 2014). I include, teachers' wellbeing needs.

My assumptions as researcher are that…

❑ Teachers are an 'extraordinary resource' and need to be valued.

❑ Teaching is a stressful profession and teacher stress is increasing.

❑ Teacher morale and wellbeing is generally low.

❑ There is insufficient psycho-emotional support for teachers

❑ Teachers in township schools are at greater risk due to pervasive historical inequality (dual economy).

1.6   RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

Each major new section needs a brief introductory sentence to signpost for the reader.

1.6.1   Research Paradigm

This research study is approached from the paradigmatic perspectives of interpretivism, social constructivism and pragmatism. It acknowledges the social constructivist view that people seek understanding of their world and develop varied and multiple, subjective interpretations and meanings of their experiences, based on their context (Creswell, 2014a:8). Through the pragmatic lens, it further seeks to explore applications and solutions that work in the context of participants' lived experiences (Creswell, 2014a:10).

1.6.2   Research Design

The approach and research design of this study is best described as a qualitative, instrumental case study (Stake, 1995), further classified as exploratory (Yin, 2003). In a case study, a researcher selects a case, bounded by time, place or activity, generating "…an in -depth…understanding of a complex issue in its real-life context" (Hamilton & Whittier, 2013). This definition relates to this case study in that it sought to engage with a group of teachers at a township primary school, focusing only on the issue of their wellbeing but also exploring determinants of and factors promoting their wellbeing, in collaboration with the teachers participating in the research study. Qualitative methods were used to collect, analyse and interpret data, within the framework of the instrumental case study design.

The envisioned outcomes of the study are to develop guidelines for the implementation of an intervention to promote teacher wellbeing in a township primary school by engaging with a group of teachers in such a vulnerable setting. In contemplating

pathways to improved teacher wellbeing, this study aimed to initiate a process of exploring the state of teacher wellbeing in the context of their work environments.

1.6.3 Selection of Research Setting and Participants

A township situated relatively close to me was selected, thus making its location convenient. I then made a list of ten primary schools in the township, thus schools were conveniently and purposefully selected (Creswell, 2014a). The selected school would be a primary school, situated in a township, that was easy to access. A further selection criterion applied, in that, at the selected school, teacher wellbeing should be considered a concern, otherwise there would be no reason to conduct the research.

The context of the township is described under background to the research (Section 1.2) and more specifically under sections 4.3.1 and 5.2. All teachers were invited to participate, but only those who were willing or available on weekday afternoons, were selected.

Participant selection was therefore, also convenient and purposeful, (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010), as participants were from the teaching staff of the selected township primary school, described in the previous paragraph.

Ethical clearance to conduct the research was obtained, and the required permission sought to begin the research process. The first phase of the research began with a group of fifteen teachers who agreed to complete the qualitative questionnaire.

1.6.4 Description of Phasic Process

This thesis reports on three phases of the research engagement, though iterations of this process will extend well beyond the completion of this study. The school with whom I collaborated in this research, may be viewed as the entry point of a continuing process extending to other schools and education settings, longitudinally. The phasic nature of the study may raise the question of why action research was not chosen as a design. Institutional and Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) processes for engaging in ethical research, typically require that decisions relating to research

questions, methodology, data collection and analysis be made before permissions are granted, thus, precluding much of the collaborative and participatory aspects of action research. May it be said, however, that my engagement and attitude towards participants is always from the perspective that we are research partners and equals in knowledge production. An overview of the three phases is illustrated in Figure 1.1.

Phase 1
Preliminary Research Phase (Awareness)
- Context analysis and literature review
- Qualitative data collected from 15 teachers at a township primary school (N-15)

Phase 2
Group Engagement Phase (Awareness and Exploration)
- Group engagement and information sharing about concepts, strategies, pathways relating to wellbeing.
- Qualitative data collected from a group of teachers - subset of N-15 in Phase 1 (n-7)

Phase 3
Individual Reflection Phase (Personalisation)
- In depth participant reflections
- Qualitative data collected from 7 teachers - subset of teachers in Phases 1 and participants of Phase 2 (n- 7)

Figure 1.1: Description of phases and data collection

The research process is briefly outlined below but is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 4.

Phase 1: Preliminary Research Phase

During this phase, a context analysis of the wellbeing of participating teachers at the school was conducted. Literature was reviewed both before and subsequent to data collection.

The research was presented to the staff at the school. Fifteen teachers were available to stay after school and complete the qualitative questionnaire, to provide context analysis about teacher wellbeing, factors influencing stress and wellbeing; self-care practices and strategies used to improve wellbeing.

The data obtained from the qualitative questionnaires were used to provide content for further engagement with a smaller group to explore the promotion of wellbeing in their context.

Phase 2: Group engagement and information sharing

All fifteen teachers, who had participated in Phase 1, were invited to participate in the small group of teachers to participate in this phase. Seven teachers were available and willing to participate in Phase 2, which they agreed would be conducted on Thursday afternoons, after school (Subset 2, n-7). The process of Awareness, Exploration and Personalisation was utilised to engage with the group of teachers, where asset-based approaches and strategies, including aspects emerging from data collected in Phase 1, were explored to promote teacher wellbeing. We met for weekly sessions for a period of six weeks, but when the term ended, we were prevented from further engagement by GDE regulations that research at schools may not be conducted in the fourth term of the school year, nor in January of the following year. Due to the school being engaged in athletics during Term 1, resumption of the research programme was scheduled for Term 2, 2020. Unfortunately, schools were closed early due to the COVID-19 pandemic and Phase 2 was delayed for several months due to Lockdown regulations. Phase 2 resumed in October 2020, with a one-day workshop and focus group discussion session, with a follow up focus group discussion two months later. Data collected during this phase informed most of the guidelines for the development of an intervention to promote teacher wellbeing.

Phase 3: Individual, in depth participant reflection

With a view to penetrating the issue of teacher wellbeing more deeply, to enter into more personal engagement with individuals and for purposes of triangulation, the participants of Phase 2 (seven teachers) were invited to participate, individually, in Phase 3. In-depth qualitative data collected were collected from the seven teachers in the form of guided personal reflections. Only six participants were able to submit their reflections.

Since Phases 2 and 3 comprised the same participants, the difference between them is distinguished in their responses and sharing, first in a group (Phase 2) and then individually and personally (Phase 3), engaging in personal reflection characteristic of the personalisation aspect of the self-discovery process.

1.6.5 Data Collection Techniques

Data were collected across the three phases, using the following tools and techniques in each of the phases:

1.6.5.1 Phase 1: Preliminary Enquiry

The practical aspect of this preliminary enquiry, as described previously, served to determine the relevance of this research endeavour in the selected school and context. This exploration occurred, initially, through the medium of informal conversation, or 'talk', considered by Hassen (2016) to be a meaningful research activity, and thus a useful qualitative data collection tool. Fifteen participants responded to a qualitative questionnaire.

In order to determine the needs and context analysis to inform the plan (model and/or intervention) as a possible means of addressing the identified issue, qualitative a questionnaire was used as follows:

(a) Qualitative questionnaire

i)   Description and motivation for using a qualitative questionnaire

Since personal, qualitative information needed to be collected from a relatively large group of teachers, a qualitative questionnaire (Eckerdal & Hagström, 2017) seemed best suited for this type of data collection. I sought specific qualitative responses from participants and used the qualitative questionnaire as a self-reflective diagnostic activity for participants as an entry point or start of their process (*cf.* Appendix I). This open ended, semi-structured qualitative questionnaire sought to explore teachers' perceptions of their emotional state at the time; challenges (risk factors), resources (protective factors) and their self-care practices. Such questionnaires have also been

18

referred to as 'questerviews' due to their usefulness as interviewing groups of participants in written, narrative forms (Adamson, Gooberman-Hill, Woolhead & Donovan, 2004).

ii) Data collection process

The questionnaires were completed by all participants agreeable to participating in the study. An arrangement was made with the school principal to meet with all the teachers for an hour after school. During the first thirty minutes of this session, the background, process and objectives of the study, including subsequent phases, were explained to teachers. Teachers were invited to participate in the study and were assured that it was not compulsory and that those who chose not to participate in Phase 1, were welcome to leave, with no fear of consequence. This was followed by a short tea break, during which teachers could approach the researcher with any questions or inquiries related to the study. The break also provided an opportunity for teachers who did not wish to participate, to leave. Teachers who wished to participate in Phase 1, remained after the break and were taken through the explanation and signing of consent forms. They then proceeded to complete the qualitative questionnaire, which was collected at the end of the session.

iii) Data analysis

All Phase 1 data were analysed qualitatively, using content analysis to achieve comprehensive data analysis and interpretation (Hamilton & Corbett-Whittier, 2013). The exact procedure was different for each data collection strategy, but followed the same broad pattern or steps proposed by Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Painter (2006), which includes familiarisation and immersion, inducing themes, coding, elaboration, interpretation and checking. This is elaborated on in Chapter 4.

1.6.5.2 Phase 2: Group engagement and information sharing

Following reflection, including data analysed in Phase 1, the next phase was to explore targeted, evidence and asset-based strategies to improve wellbeing, as gleaned from the literature and the collected data. This data would be used to develop guidelines

for the content and process of an intervention to promote teacher wellbeing in the township primary school. Input and suggestions were continually invited from participants. It was hoped that data could be collected seamlessly, without making participants feel like objects of investigation, so talking and observation predominated, but was not the only data collected during this phase. This is discussed more fully under ethical considerations in Chapter 4. Data collection in this phase included the following data collection techniques:

(a) Qualitative questionnaire (semi-structured feedback questionnaire)

i)   Motivation and process for using a qualitative feedback questionnaire

The qualitative questionnaire has already been described under Section 1.6.4.2. In this phase, however, a short questionnaire was used to refine the content for an intervention and is termed a feedback questionnaire, in this context. After each of the six sessions, in addition to the informal discussions, participants were requested to give written feedback in the form of a short semi-structured feedback questionnaire. This created an opportunity for participants to reflect on the usefulness of the intervention for them personally and record their perceptions and experiences of particular sessions and the programme in general. They were invited to explore thoughts, actions and behaviours that they could control or change to minimise their experience of stress and improve their wellbeing. The purpose of this task would be to enable participants to experience their own agency in promoting their own wellbeing. This feedback informed both the guidelines and recommendations for the intervention.

ii)   Data analysis

This short feedback questionnaire (*cf.* Appendix J), administered immediately at the end of each session, was analysed using content analysis. Nieuwenhuis (2016:111) describes content analysis as being useful for enabling researchers to sift through data systematically, or discovering and describing actions, context, people, places or events that reveal both manifest and latent meanings conveyed by participants. The purpose of this feedback was used to refine and improve the intervention, as well as

provide important information in the development of the guidelines for an intervention programme aimed at promoting teacher wellbeing in a township primary school.

(b) Observation

i)   Description and motivation for using observation to collect data

It is important to note that my observation notes doubled as a self-reflective journal kept as researcher (*cf.* Appendix K), and is reported from, as such, during the presentation of data. Reflective journals are described in more detail under Phase 3 and in Chapter 4. Returning to observation, Nieuwenhuis (2016:90) defines it as the systematic process of recording the behavioural patterns of participants using the senses and intuition, to gain a deeper insight into and understanding of the phenomenon being observed. Considering the risk that observation may be highly selective and objective, the researcher nonetheless wished to observe how participants experienced the process of engaging in the suggested activities and strategies. Furthermore, this data was collected to understand the context in which participants work, how they interact, how they feel on a regular day, what they talk about, verbal and non-verbal responses and behaviours of participants during their participation in the six-week intervention sessions and subsequent workshop.

ii)   Data collection process

During Phase two, participants were observed by the researcher in her role as observer-as-participant. Such observation included informal conversation interviews as an essential aspect of participant observation (Ferreira, 2014), sensory observation (Nieuwenhuis, 2016:90) and notes that included anecdotal and running records (Nieuwenhuis, 2016:91). The researcher followed a semi-structured observation protocol, refined after the first session.

iii)   Data analysis

In agreement with Jorgensen (2015) that analysis and interpretation of data collected through observation is like that of other forms of qualitative data, I analysed and

interpreted it using coding, filing, sorting, sifting, constructing and reconstructing the data in search of features, patterns or meaning. This fits well within the five-step model suggested by Terre Blanche *et al.* (2006:322).

(c) Focus groups

i)   Description and motivation for using focus group discussions

Focus groups are useful for having a discussion with a group of participants, usually moderated by the researcher, on a particular issue or topic (Gumbo & Maphalala, 2015). Some researchers refer to them as focus group interviews (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010; Niewenhuis, 2016), and collective conversations (Kamberelis & Dimitriadis, 2011). Typically, in-depth qualitative data are collected from a small, relatively homogenous group of participants (Nieuwenhuis, 2016:96). This is through skilful facilitation by the researcher, who stimulates discussion to elicit perceptions, attitudes, experiences and opinions of participants, often producing rich detail, sometimes including unexpected comments and new perspectives (Nieuwenhuis, 2016:95-96). During this phase, I was interested in the group discussion and dynamics, that may add depth to my understanding and would simultaneously be more efficient than interviewing seven individuals on the same topic.

ii)   Data collection process

Three focus groups were conducted with the same group of participants during Phase 2.

iii)   Data analysis

Focus group discussions were audio recorded and then transcribed. Transcriptions were analysed using thematic analysis, following the steps suggested by Terre Blanche *et al.* (2006).

1.6.5.3 Phase 3: Individual, in depth participant reflection

(d) Guided personal reflections

i) Description and motivation for using guided personal reflections

The guided personal reflections used in Phase 3, may be considered a combination between a qualitative questionnaire and a guided reflective journal. As a research tool, this provides an opportunity for researchers to hear the voices of participants as they express their thoughts and experiences as part of the research process (Dunlap, 2006). Bashan and Holsblat (2017) refer to the value of using personal reflective journals for ''developing metacognitive abilities and for promoting their self-orientation and responsibility for the processes of their personal learning''. Critical to enabling participants to develop greater self-awareness and awareness of their process, I sought to create the opportunity for participants to intentionally reflect on their process, creatively explore their own wellbeing needs and practices and contemplate their suggestions for promoting teacher wellbeing sustainably.

ii) Data collection process

At the end of Phase 2, after the last focus group, participants were given the questions guiding their reflections, to contemplate for a period of two weeks. Participants wrote their reflections and I collected them on an agreed-upon day, while some were returned via emailed.

iii) Data analysis

Data from the guided personal reflections collected from participants in Phase 3 were analysed qualitatively and interpreted within the coding and thematic structures of all data collected during this study. After each phase, all analysed data were captured and written in a summative qualitative report for that phase, which was compiled into a comprehensive report at the end of the research process and is presented in Chapter 5.

1.7   ISSUES OF TRUSTWORTHINESS

Research generally must meet the requirements of reliability and validity, criteria mainly used in statistical data. The former refers to the degree to which research results can be repeated (Terre Blanche *et al.,* 2006:92), while the latter refers to the extent to which the findings are accurate or credible (Hamilton & Corbett-Whittier, 2013). In qualitative research, a different set of criteria, initially proposed by Guba (1981), best describe aspects of reliability and validity or trustworthiness of the research. Guba's four criteria, namely, credibility (congruence between findings and reality), transferability (demonstrating the applicability of findings to other contexts), dependability (clear descriptions of design decisions, choices and memoing of the research process to enable consistency of findings if the study were replicated) and confirmability (degree of neutrality and extent to which research is shaped by participants and not the bias of the researcher), ensure trustworthiness in qualitative research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Nieuwenhuis, 2016:123-5). The researcher is responsible for ensuring trustworthiness by using strategies such as data triangulation, member checking, coherence between research aims and design, thick description, clarifying biases, prolonged time in the field, peer debriefing and presenting discrepant information (Creswell, 2014a:201-203; Hamilton & Corbett-Whittier, 2013). To increase trustworthiness in this research study, the research question is explored through different data collection strategies during three distinct phases, as has already been described under Section 1.6.3. Detailed description of how I applied these strategies and procedures during each phase, is fully presented in Chapter 4.

1.8   ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

A broad perspective on ethics relates to our moral conduct, thus research ethics provides guidance to researchers on how to conduct research in a morally defensible way (King & Hugh-Jones, 2019). Sotuku and Duku (2015) speak of the freedom that researchers have to conduct research on human beings, and plead for researcher integrity, underpinned by principles and values that match such freedom with appropriate responsibility to protect those who participate in research. Ethical considerations and responsibilities include informed consent, beneficence

(maximising benefits), non-maleficence (minimising harm), respect for anonymity (if desired) and confidentiality, respect for dignity and privacy, and the right to withdraw (Sotuku & Duku, 2015:114). In view of undertaking psychological research, King (2019:42) adds the important aspects of assessing risk of harm, appropriate debriefing, boundary setting and clarifying the researcher's role, use of incentives (where relevant), honesty and integrity in the research process, and complying with research governance and ethical review processes.

Approval for this research was applied for from the University Research Ethics Committee, in compliance with ethical protocols and principles of informed consent, confidentiality and professional integrity (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:113). The Gauteng Department of Education (GDE), the District Director, the School Principal and the School Governing Body (SGB) Chairperson were approached for permission to conduct this research in the appointed school. Participating teachers were requested to give their informed consent, as well as sign confidentiality agreements before participating in the intervention sessions, to protect information shared in confidence. Participants were also asked permission for focus groups and discussions to be recorded and for photographs to be taken during Phase 2. The researcher remained committed to being sensitive to principles of beneficence, justice, respect for participants, protection of vulnerable groups and social betterment, seeking to advance the aims of the community and to promote individual and social welfare of the persons and groups involved in the research (Strike, 2006:71-72). Philosophical principles guiding research, as outlined above, were upheld throughout the research, notably autonomy and respect for the dignity of persons, non-maleficence, beneficence and justice.

1.9   RESEARCH CONTRIBUTION

The research contribution that this study seeks to make is…

- to explore workable solutions to make teaching more tenable for this group of teachers in a vulnerable setting, since they are an extraordinary resource in achieving transformation, particularly in such disadvantaged communities and

need to be valued and nurtured. Possible solutions will be written up as guidelines for the promotion of teacher wellbeing in a township primary school.

- to employ a salutogenic and fortigenic, or asset-based approach to focus on what promotes wellbeing amongst participants, presented as a conceptual framework in chapter 3, section 3.5. This is likely to benefit participating teachers directly, while an indirect benefit will be the knowledge they contribute to this area of research. Findings will result in recommendations for a proposed programme to promote teacher wellbeing.

1.10 ORGANISATION OF THE THESIS

This thesis is structured in the following way:

Chapter 1: Introduced the study, presented the background to and rationale of the study. A brief preliminary study of the literature was given, and the statement of the problem was offered. The research questions with the subsequent aims of the research were presented. The research methodology and design, which included the research approach, site and participant selection, data collection and analysis of each of the phases was outlined. Issues of trustworthiness of the study were briefly outlined and ethical issues were considered. The penultimate section contemplated the potential (envisaged) contribution to research. The chapter ended with an outline of the research report and a summary.

Chapter 2: Reviews the available literature, particularly situating the study and site in its social, historical and political context, looking at the significant role played by teachers in education systems and exploring factors contributing to teacher distress and compromising their wellbeing, as documented in global and local research.

Chapter 3: Reviews the available literature on evidence-based practices, interventions, strategies and information that have been found to promote teacher wellbeing. The conceptual framework of the study is presented in this chapter through the exploration of theories and concepts relating to wellbeing including the asset and values-based theories and strategies underpinning the study (particularly Positive

psychology, Seligman's PERMA+ theory and the values inherent in the Ubuntu philosophy).

Chapter 4: Presents the research design and details of the research methodology and elaborates on the outline of the phases of the research given in Chapter 1. Process pathways as methodological strategy are also presented in this chapter.

Chapter 5: Presents the data, as analysed and interpreted across all three phases of the research programme.

Chapter 6: Presents the findings and conclusions drawn from both the literature reviewed as well as the empirical investigations as they relate to the research questions and the aims of the study. It furthermore integrates the findings and the subsequent recommendations and guidelines that accompany them, describing the limitations of the study and suggesting possible areas for future, related research.

1.11   SUMMARY

This chapter presented a summary of the research study, introducing the topic of research into proposing guidelines for the promotion of teacher wellbeing at a township primary school in Gauteng, South Africa, using data collected from a township school. An introductory background, the awareness of the problem and motivation for the study, contextualised the research undertaken. A preliminary review of the literature was presented, followed by the main research question and its related sub-questions, subsequently translating into the aims of the research. As a preamble to further discussion in Chapter 4, the research design, including reference to participant selection procedures, data collection tools and methods of data analysis was presented, and issues of trustworthiness and ethical considerations were briefly outlined.

An elaboration of pertinent literature reviewed, as well as the conceptual framework underpinning this study, are presented in Chapters 2 and 3 respectively.

CHAPTER 2

EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA AND THE STATE OF TEACHER WELLBEING

Acknowledging the shadow…

2.1   INTRODUCTION

Chapter 1 provided an introductory overview of this research study, including a preliminary literature review on the state of education, as the system in which teachers operate, in South Africa. Maintaining a systemic view, this chapter provides an extension of that review, moving from the broader education system to a focus on teachers, who are central to this study, as significant input resources in an education system.

Based on the premise that research is conducted within historical, political and social contexts, that inevitably impact the research (Sullivan, 2019), local context is created by means of a short background exposition of South African education. It contemplates the roots of what is being termed the 'crisis in education' which includes the aftermath of apartheid and perspectives from critical psychology. A brief philosophical look at the purpose of education systems, including its role in promoting political ideology, amongst others, as it relates to South Africans, is undertaken. Typical teacher roles are examined, particularly in relation to learners, whereafter specific focus is directed to the recognition of teacher wellbeing (TWB), including the state of TWB globally, but more emphatically, in South Africa. This exploration includes documented challenges, risk factors and threats impacting the wellbeing of teachers. This chapter concludes with a case for promoting teacher wellbeing.

Protective factors found to promote teacher wellbeing are discussed in the next chapter, since many programmes, practices and theories abound, deserving of an entire chapter, as will be presented in Chapter 3.

In this chapter, I may seem to indulge negative aspects of the South African reality, incongruent with a salutogenic approach. I ask the reader to regard this as a brief acknowledgement that the present is shaped by the past; and that the reality of education in South Africa is certainly shaped by the negative and the positive. Acknowledgement of the past must not be confused with a problem-solving view seeking the root causes of problems; its intention is to present a systemic view of the possible influences on current contexts.

2.2   A WORD ON SYSTEMS

Education, as it presents in the school in this study, is viewed through a systems-thinking lens, bearing in mind the perpetual disparity in education settings and contexts in South Africa, as presented later in the chapter.

Systems thinking emanates from Systems Theory, originated by Ludwig Von Bertalanffy in the early 1940s (Hammond, 2019). It has since kept growing and evolving into a body of knowledge, perspectives and subsequent theories and approaches such as inter alia, the Bio-ecological Theory (Bronfenbrenner, 2005) and Systems Thinking (Senge, 2006; Stroh, 2015). These interrelated theories explain the interdependence and connection between virtually all aspects of life as systems that influence and are influenced by each other (Bronfenbrenner, 2005). This suggests that it is naive to approach problems, particularly ones involving human systems, from single-minded or binary perspectives, without consideration of the many variables, interactions, influences, connections and interdependencies inherent in their individual, environmental and other contexts.

In the context of this research, systems thinking is considered from three perspectives, or specific theories that interrelate within systems thinking and link with the three contemplations discussed in Chapter 4, namely personal, professional and institutional perspectives on wellbeing. These views presented, including historical sources, are the education system applying Cybernetics (Wiener, 1948, reprinted in 2019), the school as an organisation applying Senge's (2006) five disciplines for

improving organisations, and the individual (teacher) within the system applying Bio-ecological theory, (Bronfenbrenner, 2005).

Furthermore, in light of the research questions explored in the literature, it is important to acknowledge the possible and obvious systems operating within the context of this study, further acknowledging that there may be implicit systems of which we may never become aware.

2.2.1 Systems Thinking in relation to the Education System: Cybernetics

Von Bertalanffy (1968) sought to replace the mechanistic foundations of science with a holistic vision with his General Systems Theory (GST). This placed GST within the realm of a general science of 'wholeness' (Capra & Luisi, 2015). At the same time that Von Bertalanffy was working on changing perspectives of science from mechanistic to the view of open systems, Norbert Wiener and his contemporaries, from the perspective of several disciplines, sought to address problems of communication and control, arriving at the term Cybernetics (Wiener, 1948) to describe their theory (Capra & Luisi, 2015). Cybernetics embraced the concepts of patterns of communication and control that are common to animals and machines and, in fact, are a key characteristic of life. Both theories paved the way for later systems thinking, which enable a more holistic view of reality, developing an understanding of the communication, control and self-regulating characteristics of systems.

Since the dawn of democracy in South Africa, government departments and systems, inter alia, education, health and social services, have undergone significant change towards the goal of improving access and services for the benefit of all South African citizens. Current reports affirm that this goal is far from being reached. In education specifically, the system reportedly still fails the majority of learners. The Department of Education's efforts to improve the system, as described later in this chapter, seems almost deficient. Stroh (2015:1), a renowned Systems Thinker captures it well when he says, "You do things to try to improve them (the systems) and they essentially continue to operate as if your input makes no difference. Organisations and social systems do in fact have a life of their own". He suggests that if one wants to achieve

sustainable change, it is helpful to understand the dynamics at play within and across systems, so that one may consciously work with them instead of unconsciously working against them. Exploring change within the broader system is decidedly ambitious for a single study such as this; however, the school and teachers participating in this study, as a microcosm of the bigger system, may offer a glimpse into the system (or multiple systems) in which teachers operate professionally and manage personally.

In terms of the 'crisis in education', the cybernetics concepts of feedback, self-regulation and self-organisation as applied to the education system, may point, on a simple level, to problems in the system either at the level of input, process or output. Several input mechanisms, including the constitution, curriculum, policies and stakeholders, such as teachers, work together within the education system (process), to produce the outcomes of education, including learner performance and youth development. The input, after being processed, will determine the output; with feedback loops between each stage, providing feedback on the efficacy, communication and other factors influencing the success of the system.

Cybernetics theory holds that systems seek to maintain their homeostasis and autonomy; which is achieved through self-correction when deviations occur. However, 'self-correct' does not mean they correct their internal errors to become more functional or more just; a system will strive to maintain even dysfunctional equilibrium in order to maintain its autonomy. The system does not, therefore, seek to improve itself but to maintain control (Moore, 1997:566). Stated differently, just because it is a system and there is a systemic feedback loop does not guarantee that the right decisions will be made next time. So even though there is a system, the right input needs to be implemented – it does not happen by itself

2.2.2 Systems Thinking in relation to the School as a Learning Organisation: The Fifth Discipline

The Harvard Business Review (2020) describes Peter Senge, as the person who popularised learning organisations in his book *The Fifth Discipline*. He describes

organisations as places where people continually expand their capacity to create the results that they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning how to learn together. Senge (2006) suggests that this can be achieved by applying or using five components, namely, systems thinking, personal mastery, mental models, shared vision and team learning.

Teachers cannot be viewed in isolation from the organisations and communities in which they work. Senge's application of systems thinking to organisations (schools in this case), is insightful and appropriate when understanding and locating teachers within their work systems. Senge (2006: xiii) draws parallels between the world of work and school, as the one extends into the other. He considers the fundamental units in an organisation to be the working teams, or people working together to produce an outcome, suggesting a high focus on personal development, relationships and team work. The five disciplines need to be viewed as an ensemble, in that all are important for the success of the system. Interestingly, Senge's five disciplines, illustrated below, link well with some of the theories and ideas explored in the following chapter, as promoting wellbeing, including relationships, meaning and purpose and subconscious beliefs. The five disciplines are:

> Personal Mastery – suggests a personal level of proficiency, enabling the person to consistently realise the results they value most deeply. Senge (2006:7) defines it as "the discipline of continually clarifying and deepening our personal vision, of focusing our energies, of developing patience, and of seeing reality objectively".

> Mental Models – refers to the deeply ingrained assumptions, generalisations and even pictures individuals may have that influence the way they understand the world and their subsequent actions and behaviours. For example, a teacher may unconsciously hold the belief that learners from poor socio-economic circumstances are not capable of achieving high levels of excellence. Senge (2006:8) believes that working with mental models involves learning to unearth our mental models, bring them to the surface and hold

them up to scrutiny. This includes the "ability to conduct 'learning' conversations, where people expose their own thinking effectively and make that thinking open to the influence of others" (Senge, 2006:9). This aspect of Senge's theory connects well with the Awareness aspect of the AEP Process that is discussed in Chapter 4.

➢ Building Shared Vision – the value of binding people together around a common identity and sense of destiny, often depicted in a company slogan, has been proven in leading organisations the world over. Senge (2006:9) posits that people excel and learn, where there is a genuine vision, not just a vision statement; because they buy into the end goal, not because they are told to, but because they want to.

➢ Team Learning – relates to teams developing extraordinary capacities for co-ordinated action where they learn together. When this happens, Senge (2006:9) maintains, not only do such teams produce extraordinary results, but the individual members grow more rapidly than could have occurred otherwise.

➢ Systems Thinking – this is the fifth discipline, according to Senge (2006:12) and the one that integrates the other four, "fusing them into a coherent body of theory and practice". Systems thinking enhances the other disciplines, mindful that the whole can exceed the sum of its parts. Moving from part to whole thinking is an important shift from a mechanistic view of life, to a systems view (Capra & Luisi, 2015). It enables individuals to perceive themselves in relation to their world, creating a mind shift, from seeing the self as separate from the world and seeing problems as caused by someone or something 'out there', to seeing how one's actions can create the problems experienced, becoming aware of the power to create one's own reality, and how to change it. This is quite a powerful concept when seeking ideas on how to enable people to improve their own state of wellbeing.

2.2.3 Systems thinking in relation to Individuals within Systems: Bio-Ecological Theory and School Ecologies

Bronfenbrenner's Bio-ecological theory (Bronfenbrenner, 2001) is a human development theory that evolved from an ecological systems perspective (nested systems) to one that includes and acknowledges the process involving the fused and dynamic relations between the person and the context (Lerner, in Bronfenbrenner, 2005), the unique character of the person, the context in which the person develops and the multiple dimensions of the temporality of time. These four properties (proximal process, person, context and time) constitute the chronosystem that moderates change across the life course (Bronfenbrenner, 2005). The relevance of the theory for this research lies in expanding our perspective of the teacher participants within their socio-historical systems, as individuals either born during the apartheid era, or shortly before its demise and therefore classified as non-white, growing up and being schooled in townships or locations. This means poor to low middle class, racially segregated settlements, growing into democracy and its changes, working in a township, working as teachers, experiencing significant change including economic, political, professional, personal change, as these and other factors influence and shape their current psychosocial spaces. An illustration of Bronfenbrenner's bio-ecological theory, as presented in Figure 2.1, conceptualised by developers of the website Developmental Standards (2021), shows the functions and entities as they exist as subsystems of the chronosystem. The theory locates the teacher, as individual, within the family, school, community, religious affiliations, peers (microsystem), expanding into and influenced by the broader economic, political, education and other systems (exosystem); further influencing and influenced by the overarching beliefs and values of underpinning the macrosystem.
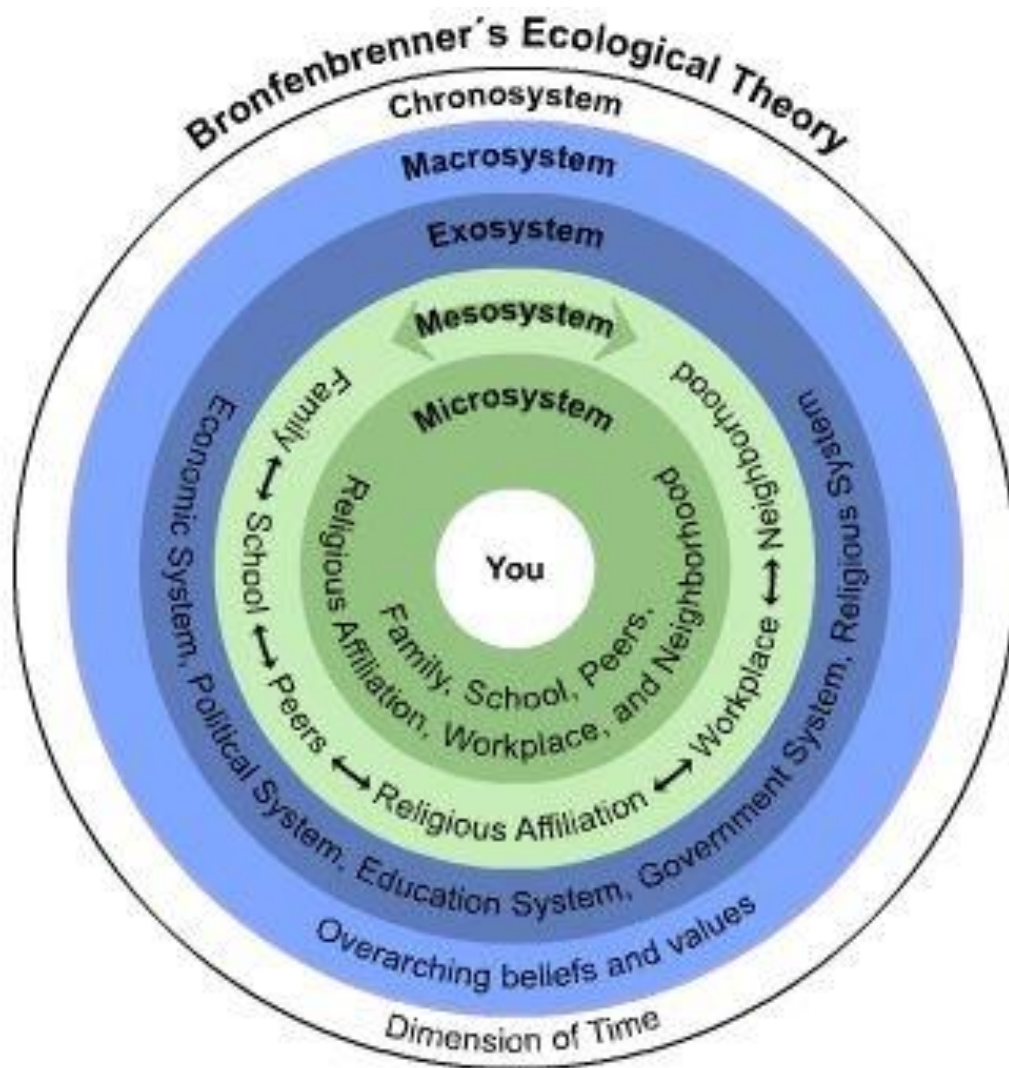
Figure 2.1: Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Theory

Similarly, other socio-ecological theories point to the influences between people and the environments in which they exist and advance the improvement of systems for the improvement of outcomes for all. In literature related to building resilience, for example, mostly learner resilience, reference is made to the role of school ecologies (Liebenberg *et al.,* 2016; Theron, 2016) in promoting resilience. McCallum and Price (2015) opt for the overarching concept of 'positive school ecology' to frame their approach to promoting wellbeing in educational settings. This enables them to include the community and school/education site in promoting the social, emotional, physical,

spiritual and cognitive dimensions of wellbeing. To conclude, the purpose of exploring literature on systems thinking, was to illustrate my view that teachers cannot be separated from the systems and contexts in which they function. The mutual influence between and within systems begs acknowledgement.

In the sections that follow, some of these systems are explored, beginning with and progressing from the education system in South Africa, situated within the exosystem, influenced by the macrosystem over time, to, and influencing the meso and microsystems, in which teachers, as individuals, reside (Bronfenbrenner, 2005).

2.3   EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA: 'CRISIS IN EDUCATION'

Having established the systems thinking permeating this research, this aspect of the literature review serves to locate the prevalent challenges in the current education system in South Africa and its roots in the past, particularly the existence of a dual economy and the implications thereof for teachers in a township school. Furthermore, the relationship between psychology and politics is explored, bearing in mind the role of an education department and its teachers, who are both agents and subjects of government policies and ideologies.

What many, including the current Minister of Education, Mrs. Angie Motshekga, have called the 'crisis in education' (Motshekga, 2016; Spaull, 2013; Vavi, 2011), stems from the proliferation of evidence and reports detailing challenges within the education system. These include government, country, international, media, research and other reports emanating from information and statistics on, inter alia, learner performance (Taylor & Taylor, 2013), teacher competence (Beckmann, 2018), results of national and international benchmarking tests (Howie *et al.,* 2020), school dropout and youth unemployment rates (De Lannoy, Graham, Patel & Leibbrandt, 2018; Le Roux, 2020;), poverty indicators (Fransman & Yu, 2019; David *et al.,* 2018); lack of resources and school dysfunction (Spaull & Jansen, 2019). The roots of this 'crisis', however, lie deep within this country's past.

2.3.1 Background: Colonial to 1994

For the majority of South African citizens, deprived of education is not a new phenomenon. This crisis began centuries earlier, certainly with colonisation, but more specifically with apartheid legislation, which institutionalised racial segregation and discrimination, enforcing white domination over other race groups and forcing the "different racial groups to live separately, and develop separately and grossly unequally…" (Drum Social Histories, nd).

2.3.1.1 Education in South Africa, as instrument of apartheid ideology

Paulo Freire (1970) in his seminal publication, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, attests to the malignant power of oppression through education. A demonstration of such power is evident in the effects of apartheid policies of separate and unequal education, designed to keep black citizens poor and uneducated, and white citizens empowered with good education and opportunity. In South Africa, the politics of apartheid (separateness), an ideology based on the separation and segregation of people based on their race as designated by the apartheid government, was a powerfully oppressive system of governance, under the National Party from 1948 to 1989, (SA History online, nd). Apartheid enabled the domination of a white minority of people over a vast black majority, by strategic legislation and education, within a militarised state. In 1953, , Hendrik Verwoerd, then Minister of Native Affairs, introduced the Bantu Education Act to parliament with the following notorious words…

> *I just want to remind the Honourable Members of Parliament that if the native in South Africa is being taught to expect that he will lead his adult life under the policy of equal rights, he is making a big mistake. The native must not be subject to a school system which draws him away from his own community, and misleads him by showing him the green pastures of European society in which he is not allowed to graze…*
>
> *… What is the use of teaching the Bantu child mathematics when it cannot use it in practice? That is quite absurd. Education must train people in*

accordance with their opportunities in life, according to the sphere in which they live.

The Bantu Education Act of 1953 instituted an education system designed for inequality, through the creation of a separate education department for each of the four designated race groups, namely Black, Coloured, Indian and White. Further ethnic differentiation saw the creation of nineteen education departments, in total. Each department was created to be different in every respect, including per capita funding, curricula, resources, buildings and facilities, teacher training, teacher-learner ratios, and learner-classroom ratios, amongst others. State expenditure on education was scaffolded from highest on white education to lowest on black education. This heralded the start of a process so powerful in its design, that 25 years of democracy has not yet revoked its trajectory. Amnesty International is currently embarking on a *Signthesmileoff* campaign, imploring the government to do something about the crisis in education (Joe Public United, 2019). Their campaign slogan reads "If we don't get behind education, we are fulfilling his legacy. Sign the smile off his face to ensure this never happens". This is in reference to the smile on Verwoerd's face, if he should see how little progress has been made to improve education for the majority of people in this country, exactly as he had intended, and predicted.

Figure 2.2: Amnesty International's Sign the smile off campaign, 2019

2.3.1.2 The politics of apartheid and the psychology behind it

In 1948, the National Party (NP), led by Dr D. F. Malan came into power, ushering in Apartheid legislation. Hendrik Verwoerd represented the NP in the Senate. In 1950 he was appointed as Cabinet Minister of Native Affairs where he began the slow transformation of Black reservations into autonomous states (Bantustans) and the displacement of Africans to townships, (SA History Online, nd). Before his entry into politics, Hendrik Verwoerd was a lecturer in Psychology at the University of Stellenbosch. (Moodie, 1975). According to Marx (2013), Verwoerd received his doctorate *cum laude* and was awarded a scholarship to study abroad. His international studies included three semesters in Germany and three months in the United States of America. Scholars have speculated that the seeds of apartheid were germinated during his studies in Germany, linking it to possible Nazi influences (Moodie, 1975). Marx (2013), however, contends that the time he spent at the Psychological Institute in Leipzig, with a particular interest in Ethnopsychology and cultural relativism, as advocated by Wilhelm Wundt (1832-1920), may have caused him to contemplate the existence of cultural differences, to a degree that possibly led to his determination, as president of South Africa, to institutionalise the separateness of racial and cultural groups (Marx, 2013:94). Teo (2015), incidentally, refers to Wundt's practices as 'laboratory psychology', not rooted in the realness of humanity.

While acknowledgement of differences and subsequent separateness may be understandable and perhaps even tolerable, it is the institutionalisation of inequality and dehumanisation within that separateness that is so abominable. The entrenched racism and inequality legislated by Apartheid, has stunted the development and progression of generations of people and communities designated as Black, Coloured or Indian. According to researchers such as Nsamenang, Fru and Browne, 2007; and Parades-Canilao *et al.,* 2015, a segment of Western psychology propagated the idea of natives in colonised countries as genetically, mentally and behaviourally inferior or 'backward'.

Of relevance to this research is the awareness of the relationship between psychology and politics, as Hook (2001:3) declares, "psychology is a political tool". This concept

is important in critiquing the relevance and application of generic psychology within varying social and political contexts. Teo, in Fox, Prilleltensky and Austin (2009) notes that mainstream psychology shows little awareness of psychological perspectives from other cultural traditions and refers to Western psychology as a 'local psychology', clearly excluding perspectives that are not local. In seeking an approach in psychology, that acknowledges the political and cultural, amongst other influences on people, I encountered Critical Psychology, and considered it an appropriate voice, in expressing the possible effects of past politics, on present psychological contexts.

2.3.1.3 Critical Psychology as lens on psychology in African education contexts

In contemplating how the identities and beliefs, thoughts and behaviour of the teachers participating in this study may have been influenced and shaped either directly or generationally by apartheid, as groups of people previously disenfranchised, oppressed and disadvantaged by apartheid laws and policies, my interest in critical psychology was piqued. The participants in this research study are from the race groups designated as Black and Coloured and both groups have been shaped by that experience. Their experiences, thoughts, identity and behaviour may be different to that of teachers in Germany, or wealthy or white American or South African teachers, for that matter. Furthermore, from a systemic perspective, consideration of the kind of socio-historical identities developed among key stakeholders in the education system, particularly learners and parents (families who live in townships), is important.

Though Positive Psychology, which is discussed in the next chapter, forms part of the conceptual framework for this research, Critical Psychology cautions against applying mainstream Western and North Atlantic theories of psychology in broad strokes with participants in environments that have complex contexts, cultural diversity and richness. Cognisant of this tension, I reviewed some contributions to the literature on Critical Psychology alongside that of Positive Psychology, which is presented in the following chapter. Parham, Ajamu and White, (2016:x) speak of an "intellectual sea of cultural sterility that continues to plague the discipline of psychology". Critical Psychology, difficult to define as it may be, as a diverse, divided and contested field (Parker, 2015), holds some central arguments in support of my endeavour to "develop

a culturally attuned practice that embeds bodily and life experience in social context…; forging alliances between academics, professionals and users of services to build a respectful, empowering and practical approach" (Parker, 2015). Such an approach should acknowledge the history, culture and lived experiences of participants. Sloan (in Fox *et al.,* 2009) similarly cautions that psychological theories should not universalise the values of the culture from which they arise. Fox, Prilleltensky and Austin (2009) describe the central concepts of critical psychology as questioning mainstream psychology's restricted level of analysis, the role of ideology in strengthening the status quo and psychology's false claim to scientific objectivity and political neutrality.

In view of the dialectical position of this study, Critical Psychology serves to caution against a narrow view of participants in their contexts, excluding their perspectives, experiences and world view, when applying psychological theories in an intervention, for example. For this reason, amongst others, this research employs a collaborative approach to acknowledge and incorporate participants' views and worldviews.

2.3.2 Education in South Africa Post-Apartheid

The inevitable move to democracy, under governance of the African National Congress (ANC) and the overthrow of the National Party Government in the first democratic elections in 1994, brought tremendous change and optimism, particularly for previously disenfranchised non-white citizens. Change was imminent as the long-awaited freedom from oppression had arrived and great change was expected. The new South African Constitution (1996), described as being a liberal one (Letseka, 2014; Venter, 2010) was welcomed as the panacea to the inequalities entrenched during the apartheid years. New government departments were expected to execute changes that would revoke the inequality wrought by apartheid policies. The Education Department, for example, faced the immense and arduous task of redressing the social balance to provide equal and quality education for all (Gilmore, Soudien & Donald, 2000). The new system became a unitary one, though decentralised provincially, rather than racially, as was previously the case. The South African education system changed from segregated, unequal education under the apartheid

system of government, to desegregated, theoretically equal, education, as the new Constitution and related state policies promised equality for all. The short-term realisation of such promises proved to be more difficult, as apartheid fault lines are rooted deeply within the South African psyche, geography, demography and most importantly, its systems. Systems thinking, as previously described, attests to the difficulty in changing systems, since there are built-in principles, dynamics and rules that govern how they operate. Systems, once functional, are not easily changed.

2.3.2.1 Government efforts to redress inequalities: a case of intended and unintended consequences

In 1994, the first democratically elected government of South Africa faced the challenge of redressing the inequalities and damage wrought by the preceding government. In education, every subsequent Minister of Education introduced policies and practices in an attempt to level the playing fields by providing equal education, access and improving the quality of education provided in previously disadvantaged schools. In recent years (1994-2021), there has been much fluctuation in the percentage of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) spent on education. It has ranged from as high as 16.5% to 6.5% as it currently stands in 2021 (World Bank, 2021). On average, this is higher than that of other countries, causing analysts to question the return on investment when considering progress made by learners and the current status quo, in relation to money spent on improving the education system (Depken, Chiseni & Ita, 2019).

It is beyond the scope of this thesis to consider all aspects that needed to change to redress the historical imbalances, thus only the most relevant areas are highlighted:

- **Legislation**

It was important for the laws governing education in South Africa to change. Key legislation included the Constitution of South Africa (1996), particularly the Bill of Rights (No.108 of 1996), highlighting the rights of children, The South African Schools Act (SASA, no. 84 of 1996), White Paper 6 (DoE, 2001) and the laws and policies governing every government department in the new dispensation.

- **Curriculum change**

A key priority was to adopt a single curriculum to eradicate the disparity in levels of education. The first attempt at a unitary curriculum was unsuccessful, as the challenges with the National Curriculum Statements (NCS) and Outcomes Based Education (OBE) became evident (Motshekga, 2016). The jury is not yet out on whether subsequent curriculum revisions have been more successful for the majority of learners in South Africa. Chisholm (2012) reports on the public debates that education under apartheid was better than it is now, given the evidence of learner performance and other indicators pointing to the 'crisis in education'. My view, based on my teaching experiences, both during and post-apartheid, as well as research previously undertaken (Feldman, 2014), is that curriculum revision has had the unintended consequence of compromising quality education by driving a curriculum that does not necessarily achieve its intended outcomes, like overloading and pressuring teachers with things such as Curriculum Pacesetters, which requires teachers to provide evidence that they have covered the curriculum as specified. Some teachers perceive this as forcing them to speed through teaching in order to cover the curriculum, but not having time to stop and reinforce concepts, thus compromising effective learning.

- **Access**

Access to schools as another key priority, saw the elimination of race and language as criteria for attending a school (SASA, 1996; National Education Policy Act (NEPA) (RSA, 1996). The Constitutional right of every child to receive quality education saw the development of policies to promote *Education for All* and Inclusive education as an example. In order to relieve poorer people from the burden of school fees, most public schools in South Africa are no-fee schools. In 2019, 87% of schools, accommodating 79% of learners, were no fee schools (DBE Annual Report, 2019/2020).

- **Infrastructure**

Due to the great backlog in infrastructure and a lack of uniform norms and standards to address the school infrastructure problem, it was decided to amend the South African Schools Act (SASA, 1996). This was done to prescribe minimum uniform norms and standards for public school infrastructure. The National Policy for an Equitable Provision of an Enabling School Physical Teaching and Learning Environment, 2010 was published in terms of section 3(4) of NEPA, 1996, providing for long, medium- and short-term plans for improving school infrastructure, some of which continues to be horrific, with pit toilets.

- **Training and development**

Since teaching and learning constitute the core function of education and a key performance area for teachers, it makes sense for teacher training and development to focus on curriculum, teaching and didactic matters. Teacher training was prioritised, especially as curriculum and school policy changes were implemented. However, teacher training continues to be a priority area. As previously mentioned, Vavi (2011) considers this to be a poorly negotiated space, with teachers not being consulted regarding their training needs. Training seems to be didactics focused with little development for the human resources as human.

- **Stakeholder support**

The strong human rights focus on Inclusion and *Education for All* mirrored global and national endeavours to eliminate prejudice and exclusion of people considered to be different and differently abled. Important as they may be, efforts of the Department of Education to support stakeholders, particularly learners, may have some unintended consequences, similar to how effective education has possibly been compromised by a focus on curriculum. Currently, the Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS) policy provides a framework "for the standardisation of procedures to identify, assess and provide programmes for all learners who require additional support to enhance their participation and inclusion in school" (DBE, 2014). Related to this policy, systems and forms to support and document support for learners, such as the previous support forms and current Support Needs Analysis Forms (SNA1 and

SNA2) contribute to the increased paperwork and workload complained about by teachers (Adewumi & Mosito, 2019; Chisholm *et al.,* 2005; Feldman, 2014).

Furthermore, teachers seem to consider that the formal support structures are not as effective, as proposed by policy and educational authorities, and that some of the policies need to be reconsidered (Nel, Tlale, Engelbrecht & Nel, 2016).

Government efforts to support learners and teachers are often derived from global efforts, translated into local versions. One such programme is the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) which exists globally to support the wellness of employees, as the name suggests. In South Africa, the government Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) aims at maximising productivity and effectiveness in the workplace (Rakepa, 2012). The Employee Assistance Professional Association (EAPA-SA, 2021) defines EAP as voluntary work-based intervention programmes, offered as employee benefits, by employers. EAPs are designed to provide support for employees who are experiencing life issues that may impact their psycho-social functioning and productivity in the workplace, which may result in absenteeism and presenteeism amongst other workplace issues.

Research conducted with teachers in South Africa regarding their perceptions and utilisation of EAP services (Chabeli, 2007; Guqaza, 2012; Rakepa, 2012) found teachers to be either unfamiliar with or unsupported by the EAP. The following findings from Guqaza (2012), who conducted research with teachers in the Eastern Cape province of South Africa, resonate with many aspects explored in this chapter, including the threats to teacher wellbeing, lack of support from government, the unintended consequences of transformation in teaching and learning and the lack of awareness of support structures available to them, such as the EAP:

> *According to the findings of this study, most educators are frustrated and demoralized due to various challenges they encounter in both their personal and work lives but, what was outstanding was the fact that they were blaming the new political dispensation for the deteriorating culture of teaching and learning. Among the things they mentioned as the source of*

their frustration were the lack of support by both the government and the parents, lack of learner discipline and commitment, too many curriculum changes, lack of incentives and opportunities for promotion, and lack of resources. It transpired that even though they were faced with so many challenges, they had no coping mechanisms and were not aware of any EAP services available in the department.

Another such programme is the Care and Support for Teaching and Learning (CSTL). The South African Government website (RSA, nd) describes the programme as follows:

The goal of the CSTL Programme is to realise the educational rights of all children, including those who are most vulnerable, through schools becoming inclusive centres of learning, care and support.

Nine priority areas are identified to realise this goal, including: co-curricular support, curriculum support, material support, psychosocial support, social welfare services, safety and protection, infrastructure water and sanitation, health promotion and nutritional support. Notably, all these support areas are directed at supporting learners, yet there is very little mention of the teachers who need to action this range of support at ground level.

Some of the systems put in place to improve the education system, focus inter alia, on improving teacher accountability (Chisholm *et al.,* 2005; Feldman, 2014) and increasing monitoring and evaluation processes. Such systems include the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) to manage employee performance and the South African School Administration System (SASAMS) to update learner and parent information, both managed by teachers at school level, potentially increasing workload.

Further monitoring and evaluation process are conducted through an instrument known as the National Policy of Whole School Evaluation (WSE) (DoE, 2002), seeing to cast a focus on monitoring and evaluation more than it does on the required support. The policy highlights the following nine key areas for evaluation – basic school

functionality, leadership, management and communication, governance and relationships, quality teaching and learning, and education development, curriculum provision and resources, learner achievement, school safety, security and discipline, school infrastructure and parent and community – specifically mentioning areas related to the school and stakeholder development.

The extracts below, taken from the DBE Annual Report (2019/2020), give an indication, though, of just how skewed such support may be, deservedly in favour of learner wellbeing, but erroneously ignoring teacher wellbeing.

4.5.2. LIST OF SUB-PROGRAMMES

Programme Management: Educational Enrichment Services; Partnerships in Education; Care and Support in Schools; and Grant Implementation Monitoring and Reporting.

4.5.3. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- To monitor the provision of nutritious meals served in identified public schools annually to enhance learning capacity and well-being of learners;
- To promote the participation of learners in enrichment and co-curricular activities in order to make a positive impact on learning;
- To monitor the implementation of the National School Safety Framework (NSSF) in order to attain safe, caring and violence-free school environments; and
- To contribute to the reduction of new infections and the impact of HIV and TB by providing a caring, supportive and enabling environment for learners, educators and support staff.

4.5.4. PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

The Programme: Educational Enrichment Services is responsible for developing programmes and policies to improve the quality of learning in the basic education sector. Schools have an important role to play in promoting the overall well-being of learners because it contributes to better learning and also because physical and psychological health are important in themselves. In this regard, schools are used as vehicles for promoting access to a range of public services for learners in areas such as health, poverty alleviation, psychosocial support, sport and culture, as per *Action Plan to 2019: Towards the Realisation of Schooling 2030*. The Programme contributes to the following sector goal on learner well-being:

> **Action Plan Goals on Learner well-being**
> Goal 25: Use schools as vehicles for promoting access to a range of public services among learners in areas such as health, poverty alleviation, psychosocial support, sport and culture.

The realisation of this goal is rooted in the work done within this programme in the core areas of:

- Health and Nutrition;
- School Safety, Sports and Enrichment; and
- Social Cohesion, Equity and Partnerships in Education.

By working collaboratively with PEDs in developing policy, providing guidelines and institutionalising support in these core policy areas, the DBE contributes to the improved quality of basic education with special focus on learner well-being.

Figure 2.3: Excerpt from DBE Annual Report 2019/2020

A search for teacher wellbeing, in the same document, yielded no results, as evident in the excerpt below:
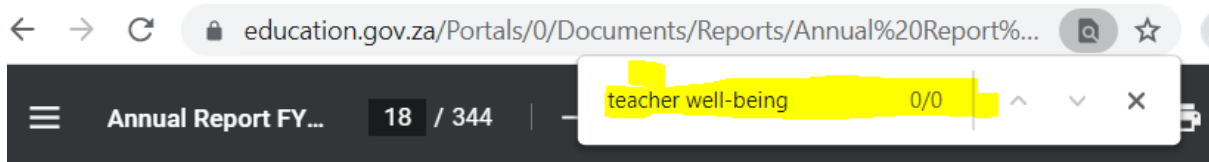
A clear focus on the quality of teaching is evident in the endeavours of state to improve the education system. Since teaching and learning are the key priority areas in achieving quality education, it makes sense that government efforts to achieve the goal, focus on training and development in teaching and learning, particularly on effective curriculum delivery. The provision of quality teaching and learning, however, is highly dependent on the human resources which facilitate it. Quality teaching and learning is likely to be compromised when teachers are burnt out and disgruntled. Failure to prioritise the holistic development, care and support of teachers within the system, is likely to render other efforts futile, especially in high need and high demand environments, such as township schools (Ebersöhn, 2014). The difference between what is referred to as town schools (suburban schools) and township schools, in urban areas, and most rural schools, is illustrated in the next subsection.

2.3.2.2 The dual economy

Under apartheid, racial and social inequality was entrenched in ways so pervasively, however, that it continues to plague the current system (Legetlo, 2014:3) in which a dual economy exists. Turok (2015), Spaull (2013), Shalem and Hoadley (2009) and many other researchers write about the great disparity that continues to exist in South Africa, be it economically, geographically, educationally, socially and more. The unjustly maligned Wikipedia offers the most succinct definition of a dual economy "as the existence of two separate economic sectors within one country, divided by different levels of development, technology, and different patterns of demand."; a concept originally created by Julius Herman Boeke to describe the coexistence of modern and traditional economic sectors in a colonial economy. Despite a new, democratic constitution, this disparity continues to characterise how education is experienced in South Africa. Zwelinzima Vavi, General Secretary of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), articulated it thus, during his address to the South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU) on 28 September 2011, seventeen years after the dawn of democracy.

> *Our education system is in crisis. In fact, calling it a crisis is an understatement. This is a catastrophe. Every day children of the working*

class and the poor are being condemned into a deep black hole with minimal chances of escape… Apartheid fault lines remain stubbornly in place in our education system. Children born to poor parents remain trapped in an inferior education with wholly inadequate infrastructure… the National Planning Commission says 88 % of African schools are regarded as dysfunctional.

In his report for the Centre of Development and Enterprise (CDE), Nic Spaull (2013) comments extensively on the continued divide in South African education, illuminating the dual economy often remnant in colonised countries. His view is that …

While the low-level equilibrium that South Africa finds itself in has its roots in the apartheid regime of institutionalised inequality, this fact does not absolve the current administration from its responsibility to provide quality education to every South African child. After 19 years of democratic rule, most black children continue to receive an education which condemns them to the underclass of South African society, where poverty and unemployment are the norms, not the exception. This substandard education does not develop their capabilities or expand their economic opportunities, but instead denies them dignified employment and undermines their own sense of self-worth. In short, poor school performance in South Africa reinforces social inequality and leads to a situation where children inherit the social station of their parents, irrespective of their motivation or ability.

In his report, Spaull (2013) deliberates his conclusions, that two education systems appear to operate concurrently within the South African public schooling system, with 25% of schools functioning optimally and 75% of schools less so. Figure 2.4 summarises Spaull's (2013) view of the essential differences between the two 'systems', bearing in mind that, whilst its representation here again reflects strong binary dualism, it is probably truer that the figure below may represent the extreme poles on what in reality may be a continuum, as discussed further below.

Table 2.1: Two education systems in South Africa

TWO EDUCATION SYSTEMS	
Dysfuntional schools (75%)	Functional schools (25%)
Weak accountability	Strong accountability
Incompetent school management	Good school management
Lack of a culture of learning, discipline, and order	Culture of learning, discipline, and order
Inadequate Learning and Teaching Support Materials (LTSM)	Adequate LTSM
Weak teacher content knowledge	Adequate teacher content knowledge
High teacher absenteeism (1 month/year)	Low teacher absenteeism (2 weeks/year)
Slow curriculum coverage, little homework or testing	The curriculum covered, weekly homework, frequent testing
High repetition/retention and dropout (Gr 10 -12)	Low repetition/ retention and dropout (Gr 10 -12)
Extremely weak learning: most students do not pass standardised tests	Adequate learners performance (primary and matric)

(Spaull, 2013)

Whilst Spaull's research furthers the case that education is in crisis and that inequality and inefficiency in the education system perpetuate, one should guard against believing that it is this simple and clear cut. As previously mentioned, Spaull's research seems to present a binary view of reality, in that it represents complex aspects as 'either - or'; when in reality they probably lie on a continuum. In the South African context, for example, a school may be strong in accountability, but poor in efforts to build healthy, holistically developed learners, rendering 'adequate' vs 'inadequate' too simplistic a description of 'optimal functioning'. The whole notion of 'optimally

functioning' is relative, probably to curriculum objectives. Other dynamics do exist, for example, some schools may value learner performance above learner self-esteem. In such schools, learners may be performing very well academically, but their sense of self-worth may be compromised by the demands to perform, as found by Benade (2013). In another school, learners may not be achieving curriculum outcomes, but school is possibly a place of safety and care, where learners may receive their only meal for the day. Context gives colour to the picture presented by statistical analysis. A teacher with a class of 35 learners is able to deliver the curriculum more effectively than a teacher with a class of 84 learners (such classes do exist in townships and locations).

The 75% of schools reported in Spaull's research are generally situated in poor rural and urban environments, including previously racially segregated areas historically referred to as locations and townships. The concept of the dual economy suggests that the provision of optimal, quality education in previously disadvantaged areas continues to be compromised by the effects of historical injustices. The bottom line is that Verwoerd's masterplan and institutionalisation of inequality has not yet been eradicated, despite democratic efforts, policies and a constitution to do so. Research undertaken by the Centre for Risk Analysis (CRA) at the Institute of Race Relations (IRR) was published as a report entitled, *Education, the single greatest obstacle to socio-economic advancement in South Africa* (April 2018) (https://cra-sa.com/products/archive/fast-facts/fast-facts-2018). The report highlights the strengths and failures of the education system as it has evolved within the era of democracy. Despite acknowledging the achievements in education since 1994, the gist of the findings reported are reflected most appropriately in the title of the report. In contemplating the issue of teacher voice and agency, Samuel (2014), reveals that poor performance in poor schools is not a new problem, as he explores research by Coleman as early as 1966. Samuel (2014) agrees with the Coleman Report (1966) which argued that, based on macro-sociological studies, schooling was unable to successfully alter the socio-economic background of learners and that teachers easily became the villains to explain poor performance, despite empirical evidence that the

readiness for school success was culturally loaded against learners from poorer backgrounds.

The preceding discussion briefly highlights some of the broad challenges within our education system, both systemically and contextually. On all accounts, the provision of quality education appears to be most compromised in disadvantaged areas, such as the township where this research is undertaken.

As Shalem and Hoadley (2009) explore the issue of schooling and teacher morale in the context of the aforementioned dual economy, they find that the measures put in place to improve education in disadvantaged areas have the unintended consequences of obstructing progress and sustaining past inequalities. From a systems thinking perspective, this is probably because the changes brought by democracy have had little effect at community level in such areas. The Constitution, policies, curricula, inter alia, have changed, but disadvantaged communities remain largely unchanged. At school level, the teachers, learners, parents' infrastructure, facilities and resources are still mostly the same. Middle- to upper-class families are not likely to send their children to township schools when there are private and former model C schools that are now accessible to them. The mass migration of learners from township schools to schools outside their neighbourhoods have been extensively researched (Msila, 2009; Sekete, Shilubane & Moila, 2001). Mostly learners have been found to move to a school they consider to be a level or more up from what is available in their own communities. Generally, the learners who remain in township schools, are the ones whose parents do not have the finances for transportation, school fee and uniform costs involved in attending a school outside the community. So generally, the disadvantaged schools continue to serve the disadvantaged community, with Verwoerd's legacy of inequality remaining 'stubbornly in place' (Vavi, 2011). This information serves to create context for the work environment or system in which teachers in township schools operate, simultaneously creating awareness of the kinds of demands on their capacities and the expectations of them to improve

2.4   TEACHERS AS SIGNIFICANT INPUT SOURCES WITHIN EDUCATION SYSTEMS

Before focusing on teachers as significant input sources and their role within education systems, it may be interesting to briefly reflect on a description of the purpose of such a system.

2.4.1 The Purposes of Education Systems

In recorded history, education has been described from a variety of perspectives in diverse contexts, spanning the earliest family and community-based teaching between adults and children, to the more sophisticated systems that characterise modern-day education (Le Roux, 2015:7; Wolhuter & Karras, 2015:43-99). Objectives or aims of education from the earlier to more modern times, range from enabling survival by being able to hunt for food, protection by building shelters and developing tools or instruments, perpetuating a sense of community by teaching customs and rituals and entrenching ideologies based on belief and value systems of those in governance (Le Roux, 2015:36).

At the heart of the challenges (crisis) in the South African education system, lie the entrenched ideologies of apartheid, and its acts of dehumanising people on account of their race. This generational legacy of inequality and its implications on education in South Africa today is clear in the dual economy conceptualisations and education related statistics and analyses, presented earlier under Section 2.3.2.2.

As described previously, the aims of education have differed across eras, countries, politics, religions and economies, amongst others. This section briefly explored the modern aims of education, not including the influence of postmodernism on education. What follows, is a brief consideration of what education attempts to achieve, in typical classrooms.

Global reform to improve education has been entrusted to The United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) to lead the Global Education Agenda 2030 through Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4). SDG4

entails ensuring that inclusive and equitable quality education and the promotion of lifelong learning opportunities for all, are achieved. The Education 2030 Framework for Action provides the roadmap to achieving this important goal, globally and nationally, as partisan governments align their strategies with the global agenda. UNESCO views education as a human right for all throughout life and advocates that access is matched by quality.

The ubiquitous Internet, as a well-consulted source of information, offers access to a wide variety of aims of education. One that resonates well with my view is from a contributor's response on *Quora*, a knowledge and information sharing platform, describing the aim of education as being:

> *to grow children into productive citizens that use their knowledge, talents, and learned skills to sustain themselves and help others while pushing the human race forward in areas of equality, equity, and harmony. (Quora, 2020).*

The South African Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) (DBE, 2011) describes the general aims of education as being:

> *to equip learners, irrespective of their socio-economic background, race, gender, physical ability or intellectual ability, with knowledge, skills, and values necessary for self-fulfilment and meaningful participation in society as citizens of a free country* (DBE, 2011:3).

Whichever definitions one may accept, the idea that learners ought to be equipped with knowledge, skills and values, which they must use to become fulfilled and contributing members of society to push forward the human race, are compelling arguments for the importance of education for the advancement or evolution of society. History attests to the fact that advances in knowledge and skills have shaped the world as we know it. It may be debated whether there has been proportionate growth in how values are upheld, considering, for example, the indigenous concept of Ubuntu, which was once second nature to people in communities, but now has to be taught (Letseka, 2013; Maphalala, 2017). Thankfully, the world has, on some levels, become more

aware of human rights and the dignity of all people. The existential questions that may arise from such contemplation, including the purpose of our existence as human beings and evolutionary views, remain interesting, but are not within the scope of this thesis to pursue.

Of relevance to this chapter, is the awareness that regardless of objective, formal, intentional education which typically occurs between an educator and an educatee or educand (teacher and learner), whether that learning happens face-to-face, digitally, through reading, or the many other ways in which teaching, and learning occur. A distinction is made here between formal education and learning, in that learning happens every moment as the individual interacts with and experiences the world; while formal education generally occurs between a teacher and a learner in a pedagogic relationship and setting, such as a school.

2.4.2 The Pedagogic Relationship

Inherent in the aims of education, the idea that effective education essentially hinges on a relationship that appears to have been ever-present in the history of mankind, that between teacher and student, as discussed previously, is referred to as the pedagogic relationship (Bekker, 2015; Van Manen, 2008). The nature of the pedagogic relationship infers a degree of transfer from one to the other and implies that the teacher may be responsible for the transfer of the objective, whether intentionally or vicariously, to the learner. By inference then, the achievement of the aims of education rest precariously on the teacher, the learner and the pedagogic relationship between them, influenced by the systems in which they act and are acted upon, thus determining the nature of education.

The state of wellbeing of the teacher must therefore, be regarded as important, considering the influence a teacher has on the lives of children over the course of his or her career as a teacher. Teachers are vessels that are continuously pouring of themselves onto learners who absorb and are shaped by what they receive. If the teacher's tank is empty, the learner is not likely to be nourished or thrive. This has implications for society, because few are they who have not passed through the hands

of a teacher. A popular quote expressed by Carl Jung says, "An understanding heart is everything in a teacher, and cannot be esteemed highly enough. One looks back with appreciation to the brilliant teachers, but with gratitude to those who touched our human feelings. The curriculum is so much necessary raw material, but warmth is the vital element for the growing plant and for the soul of the child" , (Jung & Adler, 2014).

2.4.3 Teachers as Primary Agents of Educational Systems

The Systems Thinking theories presented in the previous section, particularly Cybernetics, affirms the idea of a teacher as an input source within the education system. In this section, the significance of that source is explored. The Incheon Declaration and SDG 4 – Education 2030 Framework for Action, speaks directly to the perception of teachers as significant input sources in education systems.

> *As teachers are a fundamental condition for guaranteeing quality education, teachers and educators should be empowered, adequately recruited and remunerated, motivated, professionally qualified, and supported within well-resourced, efficient and effectively governed systems. (UNESCO, 2015:24)*

Guadalupe (2010) agrees that teachers are primary agents of educational systems and serve a significant input function in such systems. He asserts that good teachers can ensure successful educational experiences for their learners, even under adverse conditions such as poor curriculum and limited teaching materials. Conversely, he contends that excellent curricula, good textbooks and well-equipped classrooms are wasted resources if teachers do not use them (Guadalupe, 2010). In his view, it is the teachers' daily work that puts its mark on students' experiences. Past and present research confirms the importance of teachers, no less diminished, even in the advent of the fourth industrial revolution (4IR), where the lines between human and technological capabilities are blurring.

In addition to providing educational experiences for learners, teachers also provide psychosocial support to the learners in school ecologies (Hall & Theron, 2016). Ferreira and Ebersöhn (2011) and Malindi and MacHenjedze (2012) point to the

important role teachers can play in limiting or alleviating children's vulnerability. In fact, much research seems to be conducted on the role of teachers in promoting learner resilience (Cefai, 2008; Liebenberg *et al.,* 2016; Theron, 2012, 2016; Ungar & Theron, 2020), with a glaring gap in the literature regarding the promotion of teacher resilience. Teachers are critical for achieving the aims of education, including, inter alia, delivery of the curriculum, provision of quality education, psychosocial aims, inclusion of all learners and the attainment of SDG 4. Considering the significance of teachers, the huge responsibility they have to individuals and society, as well as the expected roles and competencies expected of teachers in South Africa, as discussed further in the next subsection, the implications of diminished teacher wellbeing become salient.

2.4.4 Teacher Roles in South Africa

In addition to the civic duty of rebuilding a nation through its education system post democracy, teachers in South Africa have a list of roles and competencies expected of them. The South African Norms and Standards for Educators (DoE, 2000) identify the expected roles, responsibilities and competencies of teachers in South Africa. An understanding of these expectations is important when considering what is expected of teachers in the context of their daily work, and how they are capacitated to undertake such roles and competencies.

Donald, Lazarus and Lolwana (2010) describe the seven key roles to be fulfilled by educators in their multi-dimensional role in the classroom as follows:

 A teacher ought to be...

- a *learning mediator* – whose primary role it is to mediate the most effective learning in all his/her students.

- an *interpreter and designer of learning programmes* – to interpret and adapt relevant knowledge, information, and skills to design appropriate learning programmes specific to the needs of his/her learners.

- a *leader, administrator, and manager* – to provide goals, direction, structure and guidance for his/her students.

- a *scholar, researcher and lifelong learner* – in order to develop professionally, conduct research on a daily basis regarding teaching and learning processes and model the same to learners.

- an *assessor* – this is a critical aspect of an educator's role since appropriate assessment procedures relative to performance outcomes, need to be integrated into the whole learning and teaching process.

- a *community, citizenship and pastoral* support provider – addressing barriers to learning in the classroom and responding to specific learning needs.

- a *learning area/subject/discipline/phase specialist* – keeping up to date with developments in his field, improving and extending competency.

Each of these roles have been assigned between 12 and 30 competencies, as described in the Government Gazette 20844. These competencies are based on the premise that a competent teacher will integrate knowledge, with skills and values in the diverse situations they encounter. The collective competencies may be grouped into three broad applied competences, as follows:

- *Practical competence:* the ability, demonstrated by teachers in authentic settings, to consider a range of possibilities for action, make considered decisions about which possibilities to follow, and to perform the chosen action.

- *Foundational competence*: the ability to demonstrate an understanding of the knowledge and thinking that underpin the actions taken in the demonstration of practical competence

- *Reflexive competence:* the demonstrated ability to integrate or connect performances and decision making with understanding and with and ability to adapt to change and unforeseen circumstances and explain the reasons behind these adaptations (Killen, 2015).

Harley *et al.* (2000) considered the roles and competences expected of South African teachers to be a considerable demand on teacher skills and professionalism, particularly for those working in impoverished communities. Similarly, Morrow (2007) concurred that these added roles were arguably responsibilities of the system of education and that it was perhaps unrealistic to expect all of them to reside within one individual teacher. Mercer and Gregersen (2020:12) ask an important question: are the many teacher roles in conflict or in harmony with each other? Nonetheless, teachers appear to be taking enormous strain, as is explored in the next subsection, examining the state of teacher wellbeing and making a case for promoting it.

2.5   THE STATE OF TEACHER WELLBEING

Considering the bigger picture of the purpose of an education system, the role of a teacher in fulfilling that purpose, and the subsequent influence of a teacher on learners and the greater society, the importance of preserving the wellbeing of a teacher as a human resource, requires contemplation. The following section looks at the literature on the state of teacher wellbeing, globally and in South Africa, to determine whether there is, in fact, a case for continuing the development of theory and products (interventions) to promote teacher wellbeing.

2.5.1 Recognition of Teacher Wellbeing

At the core of education, the notion of wellbeing should permeate both learner and teacher wellbeing, though favour of the former is necessary, it is equally important to acknowledge that learner wellbeing is not likely to be optimal in the absence of teacher wellbeing. The importance of teacher wellbeing has gained prominence in recent years, though mostly still in consideration of improving learner wellbeing (Aldrup *et al.,* 2018; Spilt, Koomen & Thijs, 2011; Roffey, 2012; Zee & Koomen, 2016) and mostly conducted in countries, other than in South Africa (Acton & Glasgow, 2015; Hwang, Bartlett, Greben & Hand, 2017; Mercer & Gregersen, 2020). In South Africa, the wellbeing agenda is slowly gaining gravity, (Wissing, 2013; Wissing *et al.,* 2017) and specifically building teacher resilience and wellbeing (Collett *et al.,* 2021; Ebersöhn, 2014; Eloff, 2013; Theron, 2013).

Since this chapter deals primarily with the shadow aspects related to the state of teacher wellbeing, the next chapter focuses on the light, and acknowledgement of the importance of teacher wellbeing.

2.5.2 Threats to Teacher Wellbeing (Risk Factors)

Teacher wellbeing is compromised by many and varied factors, challenges and risk factors. First among the challenges are teachers experience of occupational stress, as discussed in this section.

2.5.2.1 Factors found to compromise teacher wellbeing

Globally, teacher wellbeing is being highlighted, as teacher shortages and attrition are raised as concerns. Though contexts differ, similarities are evident across countries. In the United States of America (USA), teacher wellbeing is reported as becoming a major issue as teachers encounter increasing diversity and demands across classrooms and schools (Ross, Romer & Horner, 2012). Risk factors for teacher distress seem to be caused by increasingly diverse learners, challenging school climates, lower socioeconomic resources, and continued change and transformation in education contexts (Ross *et al.,* 2012). Stressors reported on by teachers range from discipline problems with learners, to poor working conditions, to a lack of emotional support, all of which have been linked to teacher burnout and, in many cases, teacher turnover (Ingersoll & Smith, 2003; NCES, 2007; Mitchell & Arnold, 2004; Ross *et al.*, 2012). In British Columbia, Clark and Antonelli (2013) and Naylor and White (2010) found teacher workload and stress to be significant reasons for teacher attrition.

Examining the relationship between teacher workload and wellbeing, evidence from the 2018 Teaching and Learning International Study (TALIS) specifically for England, Australia, Alberta-Canada, New Zealand and the Unites States, Jerrim and Sims (2021) found that…
- Longer working hours are associated with higher levels of workload stress.
- Much of the previous literature on this issue may have underestimated the strength of this relationship due to measurement error.

- The link between working hours and workload stress may be non-linear, with teachers' quality of life declining once they work more than 55 hours per week.
- The time spent marking is found to be particularly detrimental to teacher wellbeing.

The British Teacher Wellbeing Index (2019) documents research conducted by Education Support with 3019 teachers between June and July 2019 on the state of their health and wellbeing. The findings include the following amongst others, presented in Table 2.1.

Table 2.2: Statistics from the British Teacher Wellbeing Index

- 72 per cent of all educational professionals described themselves as stressed – 84% for senior leaders

- 33% of teachers (68% of senior leaders) worked more than 51 hours a week on average

- 74% considered the inability to switch off to be the major factor to a negative work/life balance

- 34% had experienced a mental health issue in the past academic year

- 78% had experienced behavioural, psychological or physical symptoms due to their work

- 57% considered leaving the sector over the past two years

- 71% said workload was the main reason for considering leaving their jobs

- 51% of teachers attributed work symptoms to pupil behavioural issues

- 41% of senior leaders believed that having time off work due to mental health symptoms would have a negative impact on their pupils with 32% saying it would impact on team morale.

- 49% felt compelled to attend work when they were unwell (presenteeism)

- 69% said they did not have enough guidance about mental health and wellbeing at work

- 60% would not feel confident in disclosing unmanageable stress/ mental health issues to their employer

- Worryingly, 9% of teachers reported taking drugs to alleviate/solve their symptoms experienced at work! Six per cent of these were school leaders and 9% teachers with 8% working in other roles within education.

- 19% of teachers had been signed off work for more than six months due to medical symptoms.

- 11% of teachers who are experiencing psychological, physical or behavioural problems as a result of work, have felt suicidal. There were 561 callers to Education Support's free helpline clinically assessed as being at risk of suicide. This was a 57% increase on the previous year.

In South Africa, two large scale studies were conducted by the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) in 2004, with a follow-up study in 2016, to look into the high attrition rate among teachers. Both studies examined the state of teacher health and wellbeing. Some comparative findings are presented in Table 2.2.

Table 2.3: Health and wellbeing survey of teachers in public schools in SA

Findings	2004	2016
Participants	17 088	21 495
% HIV positive of tested participants	12.7%	15.7%
Health status	Poorer than the general population	Poorer than the general population
Most frequently reported diagnoses	Stress related illnesses, such as high blood pressure (15.6%) and stomach ulcers (9.1%)	Non-communicable diseases: High blood pressure (22%)' diabetes (??); stomach ulcers (9.1%)
Overall % teachers considering leaving the profession	55%	34.5%
Reasons for wanting to leave	• inadequate remuneration • increased workload • lack of career development and professional recognition	• inadequate remuneration • Increased workload

Findings	2004	2016
	• dissatisfaction with work policies • job insecurity and lack of choice on where they wished to work	
Prevalence and causes of attrition	The average number of educators in the system declined over seven years between 1997 and 2003. The three main causes of attrition were contract termination, resignation and mortality. The proportion of attrition due to mortality (all causes) increased from 7.0% in 1997/98 to 17.7% in 2003/04. The proportion of attrition due to medical reasons grew from 4.6% to 8.7% over the same period. These findings confirm patterns of educator attrition and mortality consistent with high HIV prevalence in South Africa.	Data unavailable, not specified in the report

(HSRC, 2004; HSRC, 2016)

Other research finds the ever-increasing challenges and demands facing teachers in the profession as contributors to increased teacher stress and compromised wellbeing. In this subsection, threats to teacher wellbeing, including stressors, job dissatisfaction and reasons for teachers wanting to leave the profession, are presented specific to some researcher findings, from the literature. More literature exists, but great similarities exist in the findings, and confirm those presented below. The data is presented chronologically.

Olivier and Venter (2003) investigated educator stressors in five secondary schools in the George region (Southern Cape), to reveal that educators experienced moderate to high stress levels and that low salaries were a significant stressor. Shulze and Steyn

(2007) found uninvolved parents, poor learner discipline, lack of learner motivation, learners' negative attitudes towards themselves, numerous changes inside and outside the school, and lack of self-esteem to be contributing factors. Pitsoe (2013) identified disintegration of discipline, lack of facilities for teaching, severe overcrowding of schools and classrooms, lack of adequate incentives, poor parental participation in respect of both school governance and the disciplining of their children, policy overload, leading to dissatisfaction with time allocation, unbearable working conditions, increases in administrative work and role conflict. Tswanya (2019) reports on the outcomes of the Talis Survey (2017) revealing the need to reduce school class sizes and teacher workloads. Adewumi and Mosito (2019) found lack of parental participation, heavy workload, inadequate training for teachers, multi-grade challenges and a lack of resources as major factors. Discernible themes and patterns can be observed in research findings from different researchers, different geographic locations and over a period of years, in the educational context of South Africa.

2.5.2.2 Teacher stress and negative emotion

An inescapable part of our human existence is the experience of stress, a necessary function for our survival, and ever present in almost every occupation (Kyriacou, 2000). Stress can, therefore, not be eliminated but it can be minimised or managed, and the individual can increase their resources for better coping with distress (Kyriacou, 2000). In the preceding section, stress is frequently cited as a factor compromising wellbeing. In the 1950's, Hans Selye distinguished between positive and negative stress, which he termed eustress and distress, respectively. Eustress motivates and enables one to achieve goals and complete tasks, potentially improving wellbeing (Holmes, 2005). Distress, however, potentially leads to decreased wellbeing as it damages and depletes one's resources (Ferguson, 2008). Lazarus (1966) made an important contribution to stress theories by defining stress as the relationship between the person and the environment. More significantly, he distinguished between eustress and distress based on the person's appraisal of that relationship, that is, whether the person considers the stressor to be manageable or exceeding their resources for coping (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). The degree or severity of stress experienced is

65

potentially determined by the individual's perception of their ability to deal with the stress (Van Eeden, 2017). Kyriacou (2001) described teacher stress as a teacher's experience of unpleasant negative emotions, such as anger, frustration, anxiety, depression and nervousness, emanating from some aspect of their work as a teacher. This leads to consideration of the role of negative emotions and teacher wellbeing.

Koenen *et al's* (2019) search of the literature on the role of teachers' emotions, found research-based evidence that emotions constitute a fundamental dimension of teaching and of being a teacher; that negative emotions have a profound effect on teachers and are related to their feelings of lower competence perceptions, job dissatisfaction, emotional exhaustion and stress. Furthermore, it appears that negative emotions experienced by teachers impair their sensitivity in interactions with learners, potentially undermining teacher-learner relationships which indirectly, negatively impacts learners' socioemotional and academic development (Keller & Becker, 2020; Keller, Chang, Becker, Goetz & Frentzel, 2014; Kelchtermans & Deketelaere, 2016; Koenen *et al*, 2019). Keller and Becker (2020) found that teachers often employ surface-acting strategies to regulate emotions to be more effective, and that this inauthentic emotion expression can be detrimental to teachers' health.

Resources that minimise the effects of stress and negative emotion, are discussed in the next chapter (*cf.* Section 3.3).

2.5.3 A Case for Promoting Teacher Wellbeing

As previously mentioned, it appears that globally, and in South Africa, the preservation and promotion of teacher wellbeing has become an increasingly important agenda (Collett, 2013; Donald, Lazarus & Moolla, 2014; Okeke *et al.,* 2016; Seligman, 2015). There is no shortage of literature in South Africa or abroad, in finding teachers to be stressed and in need of support. Research finds that many teachers are in crisis as they are confronted by the political, economic, psychosocial, personal and myriad other factors influencing the education system, on a daily basis. Literature on teacher stress and burnout, and efforts to increase and promote teacher wellbeing, can be

found in flourishing and languishing economies, proving its occurrence throughout the world.

Teachers are in civil service, or caring, serving professions. Some people call them vocations. Indeed, communities and society thrive, and are often dependent on the provision of such services. By its very nature, such professions require high levels of service to others, and therefore high levels of demand on personal and professional resources of the professional. Many scholars have written about the altruistic nature of such professions (Lam, 2019; Mercer & Gregersen, 2020:12), and it seems that often individuals in such professions, think it self-serving and egocentric to prioritise their own wellbeing (Mercer & Gregersen, 2020:12). Nias (1999) admonishes us to challenge the notion of teachers as 'self-sacrificing' for the good of their learners, and prioritising learner needs and wellbeing before their own, considering such thinking to be misguided. To return to the analogy of the empty tank, even altruistic professionals cannot pour from an empty tank and the tank needs to be replenished and filled. I do not dispute Victor Frankl's view that, in finding meaning in what they do, humans can achieve self-transcendence, in service to others, even in the absence of their basic needs being met (Havenga-Coetzer, 2003). I argue, though, that, if it is possible, for teachers (and other serving professionals) to improve their wellbeing, and thus have greater resources to give to others, then they should, particularly considering it an imperative, rather than a luxury.

I agree with the following sentiments of Mercer and Gregersen in their book, titled *Teacher Wellbeing*:

> *In our experience, teachers have a heart for service to others. While this is admirable, there is a risk of teachers taking their commitments too far and becoming overly self-sacrificing. Being a dedicated … educator should not come at the expense of one's own wellbeing* (Mercer & Gregersen, 2020:12).

They urge teachers to recognise the importance of self-care, not only for them personally, but also for their capacity to teach to the best of their abilities.

2.6 SUMMARY

This chapter explored literature situating the South African education system and the context in which teachers live and work, in its historical, social and political contexts. Threats, or risk to teacher wellbeing, including the state of teacher wellbeing, globally and locally, specifically in the South African context post-apartheid, was examined. The concept of wellbeing, as well as documented or evidence-based protective factors, practices or interventions that have been found to improve resilience, coping and wellbeing, including specifically teacher resilience, coping and wellbeing, are presented in the subsequent chapter.

CHAPTER 3

EXPLORING THE CONCEPT OF WELLBEING AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE PROMOTION OF TEACHER WELLBEING

Shifting into light…

3.1   INTRODUCTION

In response to the research sub-questions, Chapter 2 sought to locate the township school in its social, historical and political educational context, focusing on teachers and factors that contribute to their stress and compromise their wellbeing. This chapter explores the research sub-questions relating to factors, including theories, models, interventions and strategies that both define and promote wellbeing. In expanding the review of the literature on the concept of wellbeing and documented pathways to improving it, I add to and configure it so that a conceptual framework for pathways to wellbeing is constructed, and a contribution to the subject is made.

Since this study is situated in South Africa, African perspectives are highly prized in enriching contextual meaning and understanding and are constructive when exploring human states of being. The reviewed literature includes Western and Africana perspectives, integrated dialectically, since the literature explored often reflects a binary dualism, where inter alia, people, theories, views and experiences are represented as being in opposing corners or in opposition to each other. This kind of thinking represents a modernistic view of reality and seems to support conflict. This literature review approaches the knowledge base, dialectically, for an important reason. Bhabha (2015) contends that the dialectical approach enables other positions to emerge and enables us to leave behind the world of fixed categories and identities. It creates opportunity for cultural hybridity that accommodates difference without a presumed or imposed hierarchy. This view acknowledges the great body of grey existing between assumed territories of black or white, and the dialectic relationships that exist within epistemologies. When examining various theories, rather than only

focus on differences, we may be provided with intersections (intersected theories) that will help us to re-situate our disciplinary approaches to be more inclusive.

This chapter is structured in the following way. The concept of wellbeing, including some broad definitions of wellbeing, related theories, concepts and cultural construal are discussed, for the purposes of better situating wellbeing within the literature, including further immersion in the concepts of personal, communal and professional wellbeing. This is followed by a presentation of the conceptual framework underpinning the research and informing the pathways explored in promoting teacher wellbeing. Though personal wellbeing of teachers is the focus of the research, systems thinking reminds us that we cannot separate personal from professional wellbeing by too large a degree, given their reciprocal influence within the chronosystem, as presented in Chapter 2, and in addition, Adjei (2019) persuades us that the personal cannot be separated from the communal. The chapter ends with consideration of the implications of personal, professional and institutional wellbeing for teachers.

3.2   EXPLORING THE CONCEPT OF WELLBEING

The concept of wellbeing is an age-old concept, with philosophers, researchers, religious leaders, psychologists, educationists and many others seeking answers to important questions related to the meaning of life, our life purpose, our pleasure, pain, joy, sadness, happiness, suffering and what constitutes a good life (Ferreira & Schulze, 2014). These ancient existential questions are not easily answered, though many have shared their views and proposed theories in response to some of the questions. Defining wellbeing appears to be difficult (Dodge *et al.,* 2012; Govender *et al.,* 2019), especially considering that the field is not limited to psychology. There are, inter alia, philosophical, ethical, economic, social, spiritual and medical theories of wellbeing. However, it is beyond the scope of this review to extend beyond the parameters of psychological wellbeing theories.

Some of the blurred lines in defining the concept (Coleman, 2009) lie between whether wellbeing is about happiness (Seligman, 2004), resilience (Hall *et al.,* 2009; Martin & Marsh, 2009), emotional literacy and social emotional intelligence (Hallam, 2009;

Weare, 2013) or material wealth (Eckersley, 2008), to name a few. Furthermore, some of the following questions beg answering: How is it influenced by culture? (Bartels & Salo, 2018; D'raven & Pasha-Zaidi, 2016); Is it an intrapersonal endeavour or is it socially and communally embedded? (Khumalo, Ejoke, Asante & Rugira, 2021; Kpanake, 2018); Is it determined by feelings of pleasure or feeling good alone or does it require a sense of purpose and meaning? (Thorsteinsen & Vittersø, 2020); Is wellbeing the same as wellness? The nuances and dimensions appear to be endless and I found myself easily overwhelmed by the sheer volume and complexity of approaches to wellbeing research. Defining parameters and maintaining focus on the research questions seemed difficult, so I embarked on my own process of awareness, exploration and personalisation in conceptualising the framework for this research. I endeavoured to remain ever aware of the increasingly vast nuances and dimensions of wellbeing pervading the academic space, yet more aware of the pragmatic value of information in the context of this research. I explored in detail only those that seemed relevant to the research questions, and I personalised what seemed resonant with my own and the experiences of others who are or have been teachers in township schools. Therefore, in the next section, only some of the many definitions and approaches to wellbeing are further explored, as a preamble to the conceptual framework for this research. Some overlapping conceptualisations are clarified first.

3.2.1 Wellbeing and Wellness

Wellbeing and wellness are often used interchangeably, though some maintain that wellbeing is more of an overarching concept that includes wellness; for example, as financial wellness may improve personal wellbeing (Gerrans, Speelman & Campitelli, 2014), while others acknowledge a more holistic view, including psychological wellness (Myers & Sweeney, 2008). Hettler (1984) dubbed the 'father' of wellness (Myers & Sweeney, 2008) proposed six dimensions to wellness, namely emotional, physical, intellectual, social (including environmental) and spiritual wellness (Magano, 2018). Wellness definitions do seem to include broader aspects than physical health. Holdsworth (2019) distinguishes wellness as freedom from illness and incorporates a lifestyle of prevention, whereas wellbeing is also wellness, but includes happiness,

which is not explicitly referenced in wellness. Corbin and Pangrazi (2001:3) defined wellness as "a multidimensional state of being, describing the existence of positive health in an individual as exemplified by quality of life and a sense of wellbeing". In the context of this research, my experience of wellness days offered by the DBE's Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) seem to focus on the wellness of employees from a health perspective, in how wellness days are characterised by testing of blood pressure, blood sugar, hearing, vision, weight and other related medical conditions, though counselling and psychological services are provided on request. It appears that wellness and wellbeing are perceived differently by individuals and that, at times, they may be referring to the same idea. In this research, I use the term wellbeing, though not excluding the definitions of wellness as described in this section.

3.2.2 Wellbeing and Resilience

Several related and overlapping perspectives on resilience prevail. Harms, Brady, Wood and Silard (2018:1) distinguish two general meanings of resilience. In the first instance, resilience is understood to mean the ability to withstand adversity or "resist being damaged by destructive forces" (Harms *et al.,*2018:1) In the second, it is commonly understood to mean bouncing back from adversity, or "recovering from destructive forces". Harms *et al.* (2018) regard the first meaning of resilience as the perception, that it is a trait required to survive and the second as regarding resilience as a means of thriving, resonating with Seligman's notions of wellbeing as thriving and flourishing (Seligman, 2012). Kent, Davis and Reich (2013:xiii) view resilience as a process rather than a set of traits, outcomes or risk and protective factors. Weiten, Dunn and Hammer (2013) view resilience as the successful adaptation to significant stress and trauma, as evidenced by a lack of serious negative outcomes. Masten, a pioneer in resilience studies, similarly views it as "the capacity of a dynamic system to adapt successfully to disturbances that threaten system function, viability, or development" (Masten, 2014:6). This adaptive behaviour, growing from inner strength and resourcefulness, is key in coping, and even flourishing, in the face of adversity (Romero, Robertson & Warner, 2018). Di Fabio and Pallazzeschi (2015) concur with Luthans, Avolio, Avey and Norman (2007) that resilience is a key factor in the

wellbeing of individuals. People with a stronger sense of wellbeing are likely to have higher resilience in the face of adversity, challenges or setbacks. Mnguni, Bacon and Brown (2012), however, point out that, in the face of adversity, some people may have high resilience, yet their wellbeing may be very low (such as people coping with poverty or conflict) and conversely, there may be people with high levels of wellbeing, but low resilience (such as privileged people unaccustomed to adversity). Adversity is considered to be stress provoking, giving rise to stress responses. Known stress responses include fight, flight or freeze, to which Ebersöhn has added 'flocking', as an African indigenous resilience theory (Ebersöhn, 2019), which speaks of how supporting each other through positive relationships and collectivist working together promotes and enhances wellbeing. Extensive research has been done in the area of resilience, both in South Africa and abroad (Ebersöhn & Ferreira, 2011; Theron, 2012; Theron & Liebenberg, 2015).

3.2.3 Cultural Construal of Wellbeing

The approach of this study remains one of dialectic openness, promoting the dialectical relationship between knowledge systems and theories, instead of their differences, and acknowledging that, although no culture group is purely collectivist or individualistic, and many different cultures live on one continent, one is prone to find binary distinctions between cultures in literature (Kincheloe, McLaren, Steinberg & Monzo (2018). Questions, therefore, may arise about the dialectical relationship between a collectivist philosophy, such as Ubuntu, for example, and the PERMA+ model, which seemingly focuses on the individual wellbeing. African views on wellbeing relate it to *relational*, *communal* and *environmental* determinants, as discussed in greater detail under Section 3.5.3.3, to avoid splitting or repeating information. In this section, views from some cultures and countries are briefly presented.

D'raven and Pasha-Zaidi (2016) sought to investigate the relevance of PERMA+ in typically perceived collectivist cultures and societies, such as those in parts of Africa and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), which may differ from those of typically perceived individualistic societies, such as the United States (US), where the model was

developed. When the PERMA pathways were examined in the UAE, positive emotions were facilitated by feelings of *belonging*, *conforming* and *ensuring sameness*. Respondents in the UAE also pointed out that, according to Islam, one should not pursue worldly goods (D'raven & Pasha-Zaidi, 2016), whereas Mnguni *et al.* (2012) found material wellbeing to be a strong variable in measuring wellbeing in their research in the United Kingdom (UK). A study with Malaysian respondents found that, in addition to the factors of the PERMA model, Malaysians consider *health* and *spirituality* as important aspects of wellbeing (Khaw & Kern 2014). Based on their research, Uchida, Ogihara and Fukushima (2015) found that in Japan, wellbeing is achieved collectively and is construed as *balance* and *harmony*.

Bartels and Salo (2018) conducted a comparative study of Chinese and Swedish perceptions of how culture influences experiences of happiness and wellbeing. They found that both groups reported *family* as most significant in determining their wellbeing. Furthermore, the Chinese ranked their *health* as the next important factor, while the Swedish ranked *friendships* as the next important factor influencing their wellbeing (Bartels & Salo, 2018). Of relevance is that determinants of wellbeing are different for different people, an important factor when considering the implementation of an intervention to promote wellbeing in diverse contexts.

3.2.4 Broad Definitions of Wellbeing

Ryan and Deci (2001), developers of the Self-determination theory, describe wellbeing as a complex construct concerned with optimal experience and functioning. According to them, wellbeing is generally viewed from two perspectives, viz. hedonic and eudaimonic wellbeing.

Hedonic wellbeing, as the idea of hedonism suggests, focuses on happiness and defines wellbeing in terms of attaining pleasure and avoiding pain (feeling good). Hedonic psychologists such as Diener, Kahneman and Schwarz (Cantor *et al.,* 1999; Diener, Lucas & Scollon, 2006) speak of Subjective Wellbeing (SWB), which comprises the following three components, life satisfaction, presence of a positive

mood and absence of a negative mood, summarised as constituting 'happiness' (Ryan & Deci, 2001).

Eudaimonic wellbeing, in contrast, defines wellbeing in terms of the degree to which a person is fully functional (Ryan & Deci, 2001), and focuses on meaning and self-realisation, also described as functioning well, doing well and finding meaning (Wissing, 2017). Ryff's theory of psychological wellbeing, discussed under Section 3.2.2, embodies a eudaimonic approach to wellbeing. More recent approaches propose a view that is an integration of the hedonic and eudaimonic views, such as the PERMA+ model that forms part of the conceptual framework. Acknowledging the systemic overlap between personal and professional wellbeing, the happiness inherent in the concept of flourishing, may be viewed in terms of two dimensions, namely feeling good (hedonic) and functioning well (eudaimonic) (Keyes & Annas, 2009; Keyes, Myers & Kendler, 2010; Ryan & Deci, 2001; Wissing & Temane, 2013).

As mentioned previously, defining wellbeing has been a challenging task, mostly because it has been easier for experts to describe wellbeing, or focus on the dimensions of wellbeing, than to define it (Dodge *et al.,* 2012). Dodge *et al.* (2012) offer a definition of wellbeing that is relatively easy to understand. They define it as the balance between the psychological, social and physical demands placed on a person, and the psychological, social and physical resources at that person's disposal to deal with those demands, as presented in Figure 2.1. Such resources would include emotional and psychological (cognitive, social and spiritual) resources (Dodge *et al.,* 2012). This definition suggests that if the resources outweigh the challenges, wellbeing is likely to be higher; conversely if the person has more challenges than resources to deal with them, wellbeing is likely to be lower. From the perspective of wanting to promote a person, or group of people's wellbeing, then, it appears they need to find ways of increasing their psychological, social and physical resources to cope effectively with their challenges. The conceptual framework, presented under Section 3.5, is designed with the idea of increasing resources in mind.
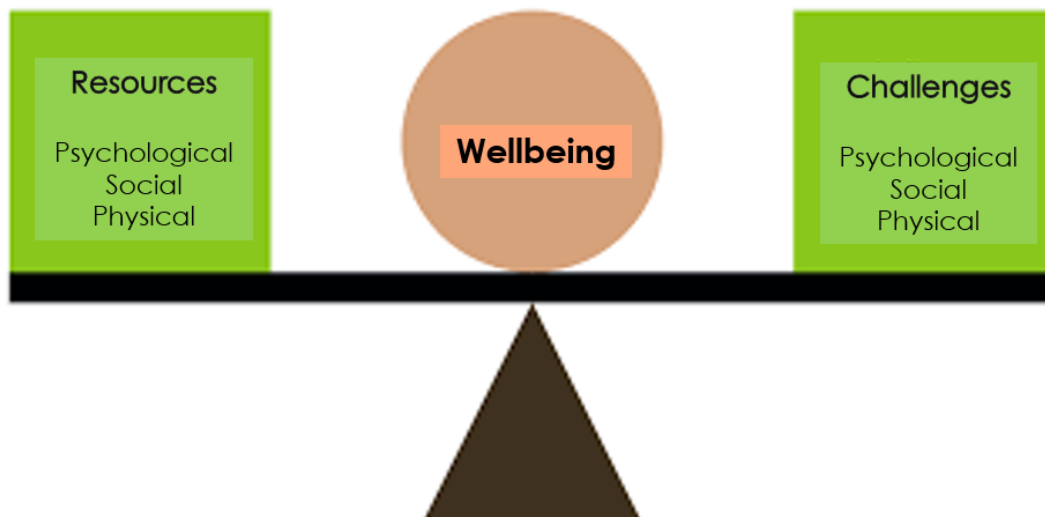
Figure 3.1: Illustration of wellbeing

Other definitions include Robertson and Cooper's (2011a) definition of psychological wellbeing as our ability to handle the stresses of daily life and maintain a positive attitude and a sense of purpose. Like Dodge *et al.* (2012), Robertson and Cooper regard psychological wellbeing as one component of three, which characterise thriving people, with the other two components also being physical and social wellbeing (Robertson & Cooper, 2011a). Robertson and Cooper (2011b) offer insights on professional wellbeing, suggesting that psychological wellbeing can be enhanced by rewarding work, involving good collegial relationships and opportunities to feel a sense of achievement. Conversely, they suggest, "dull and monotonous work, difficult relationships with colleagues, work that is impossibly demanding or lacks meaning damages resilience, physical health and wellbeing" (Robertson & Cooper, 2011b:3).

3.2.5 Personal Wellbeing Theories

As mentioned previously, many and varied are the theories and perspectives on wellbeing, which are beyond the ambit of this thesis to explore in detail. In this section, the work of some prominent wellbeing theorists is briefly highlighted, since researchers change their theories as new information emerges, such as Luyobomirsky, Sheldon and Schkade, (2005), Sheldon and Luyobomirsky (2021), Schwartz (2007, 2017) and

Seligman (2005, 2012). Some researchers develop theories together, then branch and develop their own theories building on the initial ones, such as Ryff and Keyes (1995) then Keyes (2007). So, theories are, seemingly, dynamic and the territory is not without contestation. In the next section, the theory of Ryff, is presented in slightly more detail, followed by Keyes' adaptation of it.

3.2.5.1 Carol Ryff: Psychological wellbeing

Carol Ryff (Ryff & Keyes 1995; Ryff & Singer 2008) is a pioneer in the area of wellbeing, relating more closely to the eudaimonic view of wellbeing. Ryff centred her research on what she called 'psychological wellbeing'. She generated a multi-dimensional model of wellbeing in which she identified six components that collectively encompass degrees of wellness (Ryff & Keyes, 1995). Keyes later built on this theory to develop his own, discussed briefly, further on. According to Ryff, these components seem to exist on a continuum between scoring high or low, as illustrated below. Though, the table below may seem to present a binary division of components, it should ideally be viewed as components on a continuum, and should not be read as fixed, but as dynamic positions, only illustrating the endpoints.

Table 3.1: Ryff's model of psychological wellbeing

Component	High Scorers…	Low Scorers…
Self-Acceptance	Have a positive attitude towards themselves and accept themselves including their positive and negative qualities.	Feel dissatisfied with themselves and do not accept certain personal qualities about themselves. They wish to be different to what they are.
Personal Growth	Feel like they are developing continually and see themselves as expanding or growing. They are open to new experiences and believe that they can realise their potential. They seem to change in ways that reflect greater self-knowledge and they see improvement in themselves,	Seem to be stagnating and do not have a sense of improving or expanding. They feel uninterested and bored with life and feel like they cannot develop new attitudes or behaviours.

Component	High Scorers…	Low Scorers…
	their effectiveness and their behaviour as time progresses.	
Purpose in Life	Have a sense of directedness, goals, and beliefs that give life purpose. They feel that their lives have meaning, and they have aims and objectives by which they live.	Have few goals, direction and have no beliefs that give life purpose or meaning. They lack a sense of meaning in their lives and have no real aims or objectives for living
Positive Relations with Others	Have relationships with others that are warm, satisfying and trusting. They care about others and are able to feel empathy, affection and intimacy. They understand relationship dynamics, that include compromise and negotiation	Find it difficult to share warm, open and caring relations with others and therefore have few close relationships. They have difficulty with the give and take of relationships and end up isolated and frustrated in interpersonal relationships.
Environmental Mastery	Manage everyday affairs competently and have a sense of mastery over their environment. They cope well with controlling a range of external activities and make effective use of opportunities in their surroundings.	Have difficulty managing or controlling their environment and feel unable to change or improve their surrounding contexts. They are unaware of surrounding opportunities and lack a sense of control over the external world
Autonomy	Are independent, have a strong sense of self-determination and are able to resist social pressures to conform to certain ways of thinking and acting. They self-regulate their behaviour and evaluate themselves by their own standards	Make important decisions based on the judgements of others and are governed by the evaluations and expectations of others. They easily conform to social pressures to think and act in certain ways

(Ryff & Keyes, 1995)

Keyes (2007) adapted the theory that he had developed with Ryff, into the mental health continuum model (MHC). Still maintaining its continuum perspective, the MHC

distinguishes between psychological/personal wellbeing, social wellbeing and emotional wellbeing, as follows (Keyes, 2005, 2006):

1. Psychological/personal wellbeing (PWB) - comprising the same six components from Ryff's theory, namely self-acceptance, autonomy, personal growth, positive relations, environmental mastery and purpose in life.

2. Social wellbeing (SWB) – comprising social coherence, social actualisation, social integration, social acceptance, social contribution.

3. Emotional wellbeing (EWB) – comprising positive emotions, interest in life and life satisfaction.

Keyes contends that psychopathology and psychological wellbeing are two negatively correlated constructs of human functioning and further determines three levels of functioning, languishing (low levels of psychological, social and emotional wellbeing), moderate mental health and flourishing (high levels of psychological, social and emotional wellbeing).

3.2.5.2 Complementary wellbeing theories

Lyubomirsky is a researcher in progress, contributing much to theories of happiness and wellbeing, in collaboration with other researchers. She initially followed a construal theory of happiness (Lyubomirsky, 2001) in which she proposed that multiple cognitive and motivational processes moderate the impact of the objective environment on wellbeing. She explored hedonically relevant psychological processes; for example, social comparison, self-reflection, self-evaluation and perception of others. Luyobomirsky *et al.* (2005) proposed a Sustainable Happiness Model, presenting a widely cited pie graph representing the view that 50% of one's happiness is genetically determined, 10% is determined by individual circumstance and 40% by the kinds of activities in which one engages. This theory was revised in 2021, among others, to acknowledge that there are factors influencing the success of 40% activity aspect. They realised that the 40% can be influenced by the person's will to engage in the activity and that the activities needed to be done in a particular way, to be effective (Lyubomirsky, Dickerhoof, Boehm & Sheldon, 2011). Other theories on which

Lyubomirsky worked include the Hedonic Adaptation Prevention Model (with Sheldon, 2012) and The Positive Activity Model (with Layous, 2013).

Barbara Fredrickson's (2001) Broaden and Build theory advances the notion of positive emotions as building blocks in developing greater wellbeing. She proposes that frequent experiences of positive emotion broaden or expand our cognitive and perceptual abilities, stimulates our creativity, increases our resourcefulness and our personal physical, social and mental resources, leading to development and transformation in individuals towards an upward spiral of wellbeing (Fredrickson, 2013; Wissing, 2017). Fredrickson further postulates that positive emotions can undo the lingering effects of negative emotion and that love is the pinnacle positive emotion, stemming from any other positive emotions such as joy, gratitude, interest and serenity, amongst others (Fredrickson & Kurtz, 2011).

Seligman's (2005) PERMA theory, is discussed under the conceptual framework, which is presented later in this chapter. In the next section, some aspects relating to personal wellbeing and personal development are briefly explored.

3.2.6 Aspects related to Personal Development and Wellbeing

There are many factors and aspects related to wellbeing and personal development, depending one's area of investigation and interest. While this chapter focused on wellbeing concepts and theories, there are other factors that are significant in the determination of one's degree of wellbeing, such as genetics (Luyobomirsky *et al.,* 2005), personality (MacIntyre *et al.,* 2019), personal strengths and attributes (Peterson *et al.,* 2004), values (Letseka, 2013; Maphalala, 2017; Schwartz *&* Sortheix, 2018), to name but a few. Some of these are discussed throughout this chapter. In the following section the role of personality and locus of control is briefly explored.

3.2.6.1 The influence of personality on wellbeing

From a systems perspective, Mayer (1998) argued that personality may be viewed as a system, a theory which needs to define it, specify its components and account for its development. As an intensely researched area, personality theories are also wide and

varied. Literature explored was often found to be based on older theories such as Cattel's 16 personality factors (Cattel, 1957), Eysenck's three factor theory (Eysenck, 1960) and the one that appears to be most popular, according to Wissing and Van Eeden, (2017) is the Five-Factor Model of Personality (McCrae, 2011). The personality traits defined by these theories, are mentioned here, since most are self-explanatory in the context of wellbeing.

Table 3.2: Cattell's 16 personality factors

	Personality Trait	**Description**
1	Abstractedness	*Imaginative versus practical*
2	Apprehension	*Worried versus confident*
3	Dominance	*Forceful versus submissive*
4	Emotional stability	*Calm versus high-strung*
5	Liveliness	*Spontaneous versus restrained*
6	Openness to change	*Flexible versus attached to the familiar*
7	Perfectionism	*Controlled versus undisciplined*
8	Privateness	*Discreet versus open*
9	Reasoning	*Abstract versus concrete*
10	Rule-consciousness	*Conforming versus non-conforming*
11	Self-reliance	*Self-sufficient versus dependent*
12	Sensitivity	*Tender-hearted versus tough-minded*
13	Social boldness	*Uninhibited versus shy*
14	Tension	*Impatient versus relaxed*
15	Vigilance	*Suspicious versus trusting*
16	Warmth	*Outgoing versus reserved*

Eysenck, critical of Cattell's theory, proposed his own, much simpler theory, considered too simple, by some (Van Kampen, 2009). Eysenck's three-factor theory consisted of Introversion/extraversion; Neuroticism/emotional stability and Psychoticism (Eysenck,1984).

In the Five-Factor Theory of Personality, Costa and McCrae (1995) propose that almost every personality trait identified by previous prominent researchers, is substantially related to one or more of the following five factors. McCrae (2011) contends that agreeableness may be a strong predictor of wellbeing, while conscientiousness may be strongly correlated with life satisfaction and other behaviours that influence wellbeing (Wissing & Van Eeden, 2017). These five factors are agreeableness, conscientiousness, extraversion, neuroticism and openness.

Relating to professional wellbeing, MacIntyre *et al.* (2019) conducted research with an international sample of language teachers to examine correlations among personality, stress and wellbeing. Using a combination of the big five personality traits (McCrae & Costa, 2008), the PERMA model of wellbeing (Seligman, 2012) and two types of stressors (chronic and daily stressors), they found that personality and stress were consistently correlated to teacher wellbeing, though personality and stress did not correlate with each other. Wissing and Van Eeden (2017) suggest that personality traits have stronger influence on wellbeing than age, race, education, and income.

In the next section, locus of control introduced by Julian Rotter, is explored.

3.2.6.2 Locus of control

Social Learning theorist, Julian Rotter (1990) introduced the concept of Locus of Control (LOC), in his Social Learning Theory (1954). Rotter defines Locus of Control (LOC) as the extent to which an individual attributes outcome to factors internal or external to the self. Spector (1982) examined the role of LOC in influencing behaviour in organisations. It has further been linked to self-efficacy and the beliefs people have about their agency and competence (Severino *et al.,* 2011) and as discussed under PsyCap (Section 3.2.7), it reflects the extent to which people believe they have control or power to influence aspects of their life. A question often asked of people, in relation to locus of control is: "Do things happen to you or do you make things happen?", which has implications for how stress and control over situations are managed (Kehoe, 2005).

Rotter (1990) postulated that those with a high internal locus of control would be more likely to improve their situation, and consequently their wellbeing. Griffin (2014) disputes this claim since Rotter bound internal and external LOC within a single construct, instead of measuring their individual effects on psychological wellbeing. Griffin (2014) hypothesised that internal and external LOC would "each predict unique variance in psychological wellbeing" (Griffin, 2014:2). He subsequently proposed that internal and external LOC should be measured as separate constructs, since they found external LOC to be a stronger predictor of wellbeing than internal LOC. Of relevance here is the finding that whether an individual had high or low internal LOC, it had less of an influence on their wellbeing; however, if they had high external LOC, their level of psychological wellbeing would likely be affected. While people generally use both or either at different times in their lives, a high external locus of control is likely to be disempowering and result in negative outcomes (Griffin, 2014).

In Stephen Covey's seminal book, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* (Covey, 1989) he introduces the concept of Circle of Concern (CoC) and Circle of Influence (CoI). These are useful for determining when an internal or external LOC, relating to proactivity is appropriate (Covey, 2004). Covey (2004) acknowledges that we all have concerns ranging from the state of our health, finances, relationships, work, crime in our communities, government, nuclear war, amongst others. If we listed all our concerns in a Circle of Concern and reflected on it, it would soon emerge that some of those concerns are within our power to influence and others not. Concerns relating to the weather, rate of inflation and global conflict, for example, are outside our power to control; whereas we can control or influence concerns relating to our weight, job satisfaction, relationships, for example. Within the CoC we could then separate the concerns we can influence into a smaller circle named Circle of Influence (CoI). Covey (2004) contends that people who focus their energy and efforts in the CoI, will proactively work on the things they can do something about. This will result in them having greater mastery over improving their lives and will consequently cause their CoI to increase. People with a reactive focus, will focus on the weaknesses, the problems and the circumstances over which they have no control. This is likely to result in blaming and accusing attitudes, reactive language and increased feelings of

victimisation, causing their CoI to shrink over time. This relates well to the asset and deficit-based thinking, described under Section 3.5.1.

In view of seeking appropriate interventions to promote wellbeing, the theories of Rotter (1954), Bandura (1977), Covey (1989) and Seligman (2004), presented in various places in this chapter, all seem to point to the relationship between our thoughts (perceptions), feelings and actions (behaviour) and the cyclic and reinforcing relationship between them. This is the basis of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (Westbrook, Kennerley & Kirk, 2011), a psychotherapy aimed at changing behaviour by changing thought patterns and associated feelings. The idea is that what we think about (thoughts) will determine how we feel about it (feelings), which will determine how we act or behave towards it. This suggests that in the context of being a teacher, for example, a teacher who perceives him/herself to be a poor disciplinarian (thinks "I can't exercise control), may feel inadequate, anxious, fearful or angry which may result in behaviour that is either aggressive or non-assertive when confronted with managing a class of children. This reinforces Dagenais-Desmarais and Savoie's (2012) idea of how a teacher's wellbeing may be affected by *feeling competent as a teacher.* This is discussed further under Section 3.2.7.

The discussion on the role of thoughts and its influence on feelings and actions, would be more complete with contemplation of the relationship between Freud's views of the conscious and subconscious minds, but that is a rabbit-hole beyond the scope of this chapter, in which to venture.

3.2.6.3 Character strengths and virtues

Much research continues to be done relating to character strengths and their role in promoting wellbeing (Nel, 2017). Such characteristics are said to make up our constitution or our essential nature. Peterson and Park (2006) proposed that positive traits link with positive experiences, positive social relationships and positive institutions in the field of positive psychology. They further acknowledged the role of certain strengths, such as hope, kindness, perspective, self-control and social intelligence as buffering against the negative effects of stress and trauma (Peterson &

Park, 2006). Peterson and Seligman (2004) designed a Values in Action project where they led a team of researchers into extensive empirical exploration of virtues and character strengths. The outcome was a classification system identifying six primary virtues, namely wisdom and strength, courage, humanity, justice, temperance and transcendence. They considered virtues to be the "core characteristics valued by moral philosophers and that are universally accepted" (Peterson & Seligman, 2004:13). Each virtue was accompanied by a set of character strengths, which they described as the "psychological ingredients or behaviour through which virtues are demonstrated" (Nel, 2017:118). In total, twenty-four (24) character strengths were identified, including strengths such as open-mindedness, persistence, kindness, citizenship, gratitude, spirituality and social intelligence, to name a few (Peterson, & Seligman, 2004; Seligman, 2002).

In the next section, theories and views on professional wellbeing are explored.

3.2.7 Views on Professional and Workplace Wellbeing

Professional wellbeing relates to wellbeing at work, and further implies wellbeing in the profession and wellbeing in the institution in which the professional works. Much research appears to have been done in the area of professional wellbeing, ranging from purpose and meaning in work (Barrick, Mount & Li, 2013), work role fit, the significance and purposefulness of work-related tasks, the influence of satisfying relations with co-workers and beliefs about how work is viewed – either as a job, a career or a calling (May, Gilson & Harter, 2004; Steger & Dik, 2010; Wrzesniewski, 2003, 2012), all contributing to the literature on professional wellbeing. In very early research undertaken by Wrzesniewski, McCauley, Rosin and Schwartz (1997), they suggested that generally people regard their work as either…

- a job (focusing on the financial reward and necessity, not considering it a positive part of life and not necessarily deriving pleasure or fulfilment from it,
- a career (focusing on advancement or promotion), or
- a calling (focusing on the social contribution of their work and finding it fulfilling, meaningful and enjoyable).

The Japanese concept of Ikigai, defined by some as psychological wellbeing (Yamamoto-Mitani & Wallhagen, 2002) or described as 'sense of life worth living' or 'reason for living' (Mori *et al.,* 2017) speaks of finding meaning, purpose and fulfilment in what one does. Kumano (2018) associates Ikigai with eudaimonic wellbeing that may be experienced in devotion to activities that one enjoys and in which one finds fulfilment. The idea is that Ikigai can be found in, for example, doing something that one is good at, something that one loves, something that the world, or one's community, needs or something that one can get paid for, or in combining one's passion, mission, vocation and profession. Though there is some debate about whether the true meaning of Ikigai has been represented in these four components, or whether these components are a westernised version of Ikigai, it still remains worthwhile contemplating these aspects in one's professional life.

In Canada, research undertaken by Dagenais-Desmarais and Savoie (2012) led to the development of a grounded conceptualisation of Psychological Wellbeing at Work (PWBW) based on a work frame-of-reference and linked to a reliable and valid measure. They posit that PWBW may be conceptualised through five dimensions, namely…

- Interpersonal Fit at Work
- Thriving at work
- Feeling of Competency at work
- Desire for Involvement at work
- Perceived Recognition at Work

Rothmann (2017) reports on studies conducted in South Africa, focusing on the wellbeing of people in organisations. He reports that people who were flourishing at work (high professional wellbeing), compared to people who are not flourishing…

- are more satisfied with their jobs,
- have a lower turnover intention, that is, they intend to stay at their jobs as opposed to people who are constantly contemplating resigning,
- show better organisational citizenship and are more willing to help colleagues and clients,

- show lower counterproductive behaviour,
- show greater commitment at work, and
- are more productive at work.

The Job Demands-Resources theory (JD-R) explores job demands, such as workload, disciplinary challenges, deadlines and time pressure, and job resources, such as perceived autonomy, support, opportunities for professional learning and collegial relationships, influencing employee wellbeing (Granziera, Collie & Martin, 2021). The phrase, 'work-life balance' has become popular in organisational and personal approaches to wellbeing. Difficult as it may be to balance, especially in demanding professions such as teaching, some form of integration between personal and professional life is essential, so that the one is not compromised by the other. In this regard, Kelliher, Richardson and Boiarintseva (2019) advise that when employees have a sense that their employer is concerned about their work-life balance, greater organisational attachment is encouraged. In an education system, the employer does not have a personal relationship with the employee, but the school principal and the School Management Team (SMT) do, and they are also the initiators of promoting a culture of wellbeing within the school, at institutional level (Bhengu & Mthembu, 2014; Eberlein & Zhichao, 2014; Itumeleng & Oupa, 2014).

3.2.7.1 Institutional wellbeing

While Holmes (2018) suggests that teacher wellbeing is a personal matter, Mercer and Gregersen (2020) contend that there may be faults in the system that undermine teacher wellbeing and that ideally, real change for wellbeing addresses structural and systemic levels of change and is not just a matter for individual teachers to cope alone. In the absence of the employer, who is the Department of Basic Education, having influence on the direct school context insofar as the work environment is concerned, it falls to individual principals, school management teams (SMT) or school governing bodies (SGB) to create the kind of work environments in which teacher wellbeing can be prioritised, as alluded to in the last paragraph of the previous section on professional wellbeing.

According to Mercer and Gregersen (2020:13), "Institutions can have positive traits just as people can, and these virtues need to be part of the enduring institutional culture, as opposed to being merely reflected in the actions of one or two dedicated individuals". They further advise that, in order to enhance employee wellbeing and promote staff retention, a harmonious 'person-culture' fit should be established. To do this, "Institutional level values must be actively cultivated through practical, concrete, recognizable actions and structures, beyond simple lip service" (Mercer & Gregersen, 2020:13), so that stakeholders know what the values are, connect with them and contribute to the envisioned organisational culture (Mercer & Gregerson, 2020). Values, as pathway to wellbeing, are discussed more fully under Section 3.5.3.3.

Leiter and Cooper (2017:1) hold that "It is not enough to do no harm; responsible employers design work to enhance employee's health and fulfilment at work. Despite evidence of this gaining traction globally, it is a long way from becoming reality", as we can well testify to in the South African context. In the context of South African teacher and learner performance, Harter, Schmidt and Keyes (2003) view workplace wellbeing and performance not as independent, but complementary and dependent on components of a financially and psychologically healthy workplace.

3.2.7.2 Psychological Capital (PsyCap)

Related to the concept of positive psychology, Luthans, Avey, Avolio and Petersen (2010) declare psychological capital (PsyCap) to be a key construct in the promotion of individual and organisational wellbeing. Luthans *et al.* (2007) take these motivation and positive psychology theories into the workplace, to see how positive outcomes can be determined and enhanced. According to Rothmann (2017), PsyCap is derived from explanatory mechanisms in developing theories on work motivation, including Positive Psychology (Lopez & Snyder, 2009), Bandura's Social Cognition (1997) and agentic theories (Rothmann, 2017). Luthans *et al.* (2007) define PsyCap as a positive state of individual psychological development characterised by hope, resilience, self-efficacy and optimism. These four constructs, in combination, meet the inclusion criteria for PsyCap (Luthans *et al.,* 2007; Lorenz, Beer, Putz & Heinitz, 2016) as

illustrated in Figure 3.2. Research undertaken by Luthans *et al.* (2007) suggest that appropriate training can improve psychological capital.
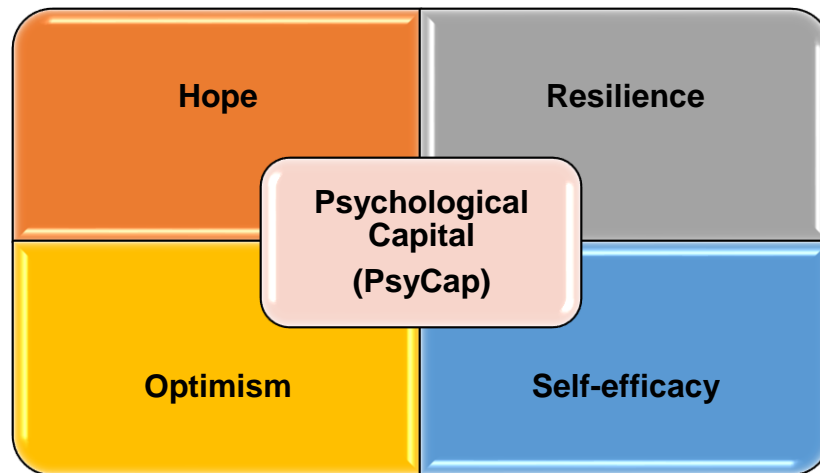
Figure 3.2: Components of Psychological Capital (PsyCap)

Hope: In 1969 Stotland (in Nel, 2017) defined hope as having a greater than zero expectation of achieving a goal. Snyder (1995) built on Stotland's theory by intensifying and extending the concept of hope as having two interrelated components, namely successful agency and pathways to achieving goals (Nel, 2017). In other words, as later proposed by Snyder, Irving and Anderson (1991:287) hope develops when one has a goal in mind or sets out to achieve something, one then determines a path or route to achieving the goal (pathway) and finally, one has the belief that one can use the pathway to reach the goal (agency). The last aspect of agency is the motivational component that reflects the "goal-directed determination that drives the movement towards the goal" (Nel, 2017:129). At present, hope is considered an important indicator for wellbeing, hence its inclusion in criteria for PsyCap (Luthans *et al.,* 2007). Hope has been linked to happiness and positive adjustment, as it may serve as a motivator for action to change, improve or achieve goals (Nel, 2017:128).

Resilience has already been discussed under Section 3.2.2. In the context of professional wellbeing and as a component of PsyCap, Luthans, Vogelgesang and Lester (2006) propose proactive and reactive human resource development strategies

for promoting resilience, as increasing psychological assets, decreasing risk factors and facilitating processes that enable employees to strengthen their resilience. They acknowledge, broaden and build theory (Fredrickson, 2004) as improving positive emotion, self-enhancement, external attribution and hardiness as key in determining human resource professional wellbeing and efficacy (Luthans *et al.,* 2006).

Optimism is discussed in greater detail under the PERMA+ model (*cf*. Section 3.5.3.2). In the context of optimism as a component of PsyCap, however, Luthans (2002) describes optimism as a generalised positive expectancy and an optimistic explanatory style. Realistic optimism is necessary to ensure that one can realistically accomplish a task or goal in a particular situation (Rothmann, 2017). Beard, Hoy and Hoy (2010) explored the importance of academic optimism in school contexts, which relates to teachers' expectations about learner achievement. Such research findings are relevant given the socio-historic contexts of township schools, as discussed in Chapter 2.

Self-efficacy is derived from Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory (1977) which posits that people learn from each other through processes of observation, imitation and modelling. Bandura (1990) defines self-efficacy as a person's belief in their own capability to perform a specific task or reach a specific goal, as well as the belief that they can overcome obstacles and accomplish difficult tasks (Jansen & Van der Merwe, 2015). Mahatma Gandhi illustrated the value of our personal beliefs as follows:

> Your beliefs become your thoughts,
> Your thoughts become your words,
> Your words become your actions,
> Your actions become your habits,
> Your habits become your values,
> Your values become your destiny.

> Mahatma Gandhi (Gandhi u.d.)

Bandura (1994) posits that, to accomplish goals and experience positive wellbeing, one needs to be optimistic about one's own personal efficacy. Pessimism regarding

one's own abilities reduces one's perseverance in overcoming challenging situations, causing one to give up easily in the face of life's challenges. Two aspects of Bandura's theory of self-efficacy are important with regard to wellbeing, namely the four main sources of influence on how we develop our self-efficacy beliefs and the four major psychological processes through which self-efficacy beliefs affect human functioning. Herein lies the connection between self-efficacy and wellbeing, since wellbeing refers to a state of *optimal human functioning* (Ryan & Deci, 2001; Seligman 2011). Bandura (1994) explains the two aspects of self-efficacy as firstly, the four main sources of influence on one's self-efficacy beliefs and then the four major psychological processes through which self-efficacy beliefs affect human functioning.

The four main sources of influence on one's self-efficacy beliefs include:

a. *Mastery experiences* – one's own experiences of success. Experiences of success foster the belief that success is possible, enhancing the belief in one's own capabilities to succeed.

b. *Vicarious experiences* – observing the success experience of others (social models), including one's peers and those of similar social standing, age, gender, and so on. It enhances the belief that 'if they can do it, so can I'.

c. *Social persuasion, also called verbal persuasion* – hearing, or being told that one is capable of doing something motivates one to exert greater effort and sustain it.

d. *Emotional and physiological (somatic) states* – sometimes people judge their capabilities based on how they feel, emotionally or physiologically. For example, a person who experiences physical symptoms associated with anxiety (for example, a dry mouth or trembling legs), may be more prone to doubting their ability to succeed; than someone with a positive mood, who does not experience these symptoms. Such a person is more likely to feel energised and able to succeed (Bandura, 1994).

The four major psychological processes through which self-efficacy beliefs affect human functioning include:

a. *Cognitive processes* – forethought or thinking (cognitive processes) precedes goal setting and possible visualisation of success or failure.

b. *Motivational processes* – when people believe in their ability to achieve the goal, they are more likely to be motivated to achieve it.

c. *Affective processes* – This sense of self-efficacy perceived as 'I can', or 'I can't' evokes an emotional response, which may translate into cognitive, emotional or physiological responses

d. *Selection processes* – Once people have thought about the task or goal and believe that it is within their capabilities to achieve, they are motivated to action, accompanied by positive feelings associated with achieving the task or goal; they now seek to select tools, actions, environments, and whatever they need to make completing the task or attaining the goal, possible (Bandura, 1994).

The idea that wellbeing can be improved in the presence and development of certain intrinsic characteristics and other *resources* (Luthans, Avey & Patera, 2008) and practices or *activities* (Luyobomirsky & Layous, 2013), bode well for the intentional promotion of wellbeing, as this research endeavours to explore. A wide range of determinants and aspects related to the improvement of wellbeing emerge, some of which have been explored in previous sections of this chapter. What follows, is the conceptual framework for this research, beginning with a brief overview of the progression from a deficit, or medical model to an asset-based, salutogenic, fortigenic or psychofortigenic approach to wellbeing. Some notable wellbeing theories and concepts are then presented, related to and supporting the conceptual framework for this research.

3.3   FACTORS FOUND TO PROMOTE TEACHER WELLBEING

As mentioned previously, wellbeing may be improved or promoted through evidence-based pathways to wellbeing, including resources inherent in the person, culture or society (Luthans *et al.,* 2007, Seligman, 2004; Luyobomirsky *et al.,* 2005). Stress and the experience of negative emotion have been found to be key diminishers of wellbeing (Kyriacou, 2001). Baumgardner and Crothers (2010) and Taylor (2011) found that the effects of stress (distress) and negative emotion can be mediated by an

increase in psychosocial resources such as the positive emotion experienced during social engagement. Ferguson, Mang and Frost (2017) agree, that usage of social support, such as discussing their stressful experiences with family, friends or colleagues were a useful resource in managing the effects of occupational stress.

Other resources found to promote wellbeing include aspects such as resilience, optimism, a sense of meaning or purpose, for example. Sheldon and Luyobomirsky (2021) maintain that there are activities one can engage in, that contribute to improved wellbeing. Activities include aspects such as engaging in physical activities, meditation or other moments of quietude, good sleep, creative art, self-car and practising mindfulness. Resources may develop from activities designed for the promotion of wellbeing through the implementation of interventions, schoolwide approaches, individual or team strategies or activities. Some of those not explored elsewhere in this chapter, are highlighted in this section.

Positive school climates have been shown to support teachers' emotional wellbeing and sense of competence and in turn improve learner performance (Grayson & Alvarez, 2008; Jennings & Greenberg, 2009; Ross, Romer & Horner, 2012). Schoolwide behavioural support, such as implementation of the Positive Behavioural Interventions and Supports (PBIS) programme, has been recommended as a means for supporting teachers to manage classroom and schoolwide learner behaviours more positively (Oliver & Reschly, 2007; Ross et al., 2012;). Seligman (2013) found the Positive Psychology approach successfully improved the wellbeing of teachers in American and Australian schools. In South Africa, Ebersöhn's (2012) indigenous resilience theory, 'Flocking', refers to people supporting each other through positive relationships and collectivist working together, especially in adversity. Flocking together promotes and enhances wellbeing. Gu (2014) found that despite high demands on teachers' resources, they are able to sustain their resilience and educational purposes through their vocational approach and commitment to making a difference for the learners in their care, social and professional relationships with colleagues and support and recognition from school leadership. In their research, Mnguni et al. (2012) ranked the strongest predictors of wellbeing, as being related to

a person's subjective perception of their financial situation, level of confidence, employment status and emotional state.

Activities found to promote wellbeing have been mentioned at various points throughout this chapter, as related to theories and models presented. This section serves to summarise some of them, in relation to the conceptual framework for this research. Activities may range from enhancing positive emotion, doing more of the things we love, intentionally building stronger, more supportive relationships, contemplating what gives meaning to our lives and accomplishing goals that we have set for ourselves. (Emmons & Mishra, 2011; Guse, 2017; Seligman, 2014). Activities further include mindfulness (Jennings, 2015), strengthening our biological base through physical activity, healthy nutrition, sleep, rest and relaxation (Guse, 2017; Hefferon & Boniwell, 2011).

Positive psychology activities are too numerous to mention, but some include creating a self-care vision board, sensory awareness, gratitude by mental elimination, writing letters of gratitude, benefit in finding and reading poetry, the signature strengths action plan, identifying personal character strengths and values, writing a strengths-based life story, progressive muscle relaxation exercises, to name a few (accessed at https://positivepsychology.com/positive-psychology-exercises). In addition, focusing on the present moment, quietude, silent sitting and mindfulness activities can also be used with great success in many settings (Brani *et al.,* 2014; Scherer, Talley & Hill, 2021). Loving kindness meditations have been found to increase social connectedness (Hutcherson, Seppala & Gross, 2008) and building personal resources such as open heartedness and the experience of positive emotion (Fredrickson *et al.,* 2008).

In this age of technology, any activity for the development of any asset or resource to improve wellbeing, may be accessed on the internet. Attempting to present a comprehensive picture here, would be limiting the parameters of available resources.

3.4 IMPLICATIONS OF PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL WELLBEING FOR TEACHERS

The high levels of stress and demands related to working in the teaching profession is undisputed (Ferguson, 2008; Holmes, 2005; Legotlo, 2014), as is the case in other caring or civil occupations. When considering the significant role of teachers in the education system and in society, as explored in the previous chapter, the promotion of teacher wellbeing should become a growing priority. Deliberation of the literature explored in this chapter, may raise the question of the implications of the presence or absence of wellbeing. This section explores some of the literature on the effects of the absence or presence of wellbeing, specifically in the context of teaching.

3.4.1 Implications of High Teacher Wellbeing

Teacher wellbeing seems typically viewed in its relationship to learner performance and wellbeing (Roffey, 2012; Noble & McGrath, 2012), since its reciprocal relationship cannot be disputed. Taylor *et al.* (2000) advise that using an asset-based or positive psychological approach in education, fosters a sense of competence, confidence and optimism, which generate a greater sense of agency in learners. Seligman (2014) responds that these elements serve to create a sense of wellbeing and general happiness. Studies in neurology and neuroplasticity have traced the effects of positive emotions, experiences and a sense of wellbeing on neurotransmitters and cognitive functioning compared to deficits in such experiences and a prevalence of negative emotions (Wang *et al.,* 2020; Lövheim, 2012). Teachers who have high wellbeing, are likely to perceive themselves to be personally and professionally well, and their sense of self-efficacy is likely to be high (Owen, 2016; Mercer & Gregersen, 2020). Their efficacious thoughts are likely to influence their feelings towards their profession positively, in turn creating the behaviour that promotes efficacy and wellbeing.

3.4.2 Implications or Consequences of Low Teacher Wellbeing

When teacher distress reaches levels that deplete teacher wellbeing, burnout and associated physiological and health conditions may occur (Chang, 2009; Maslach & Leiter, 1999; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2010). Burnout is a common condition experienced

in high demand professions. It is characterised by loss of emotional energy, interest and motivation, especially noticeable in people who previously worked with drive and commitment (Holmes, 2005:26). Burnout has three identifiable components, described by Pietarinen *et al.* (2021) as:

- Emotional and psychological exhaustion (lack of energy, feeling strained and tired at work)

- Depersonalisation and cynicism (detachment from work, including from learners, parents and colleagues, loss of empathy)

- Sense of professional Inadequacy or lack of a sense of accomplishment (feeling inadequate with regard to teaching and learning, learner support and performance)

Pietarinen *et al.,* further view teacher burnout as a serious occupational hazard and a global epidemic. An absence of wellbeing, or teacher burnout has personal implications for the teacher's physical and mental health (Park & Shin, 2020). It also has serious consequences for the quality of learning and teaching (Burić, Slišković & Penezić, 2019; Dupriez, Delvaux & Lothaire, 2016), and has an impact on the school community, including early retirement, teacher attrition and high staff turnover (Nygaard, 2019; Scott, 2019).

3.5 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

In seeking to promote teacher wellbeing, it is necessary to have an evidence base for approaching the process and possible intervention. The conceptual framework underpinning this research is derived from several related theories and models, to give an evidence base to the research. The process pathways that form part of the conceptual framework, are presented in Chapter 4, since they form part of the methodological process.

The conceptual framework is best summarised as a hierarchical structure with an overarching salutogenic and psychofortigenic approach, which is asset-based (also referred to as strengths-based) and seeks to determine what can improve people's wellbeing by following process and content pathways towards promoting personal,

professional and consequently, institutional wellbeing. The conceptual framework is illustrated in Figure 3.2, following which a more detailed explanation is presented.
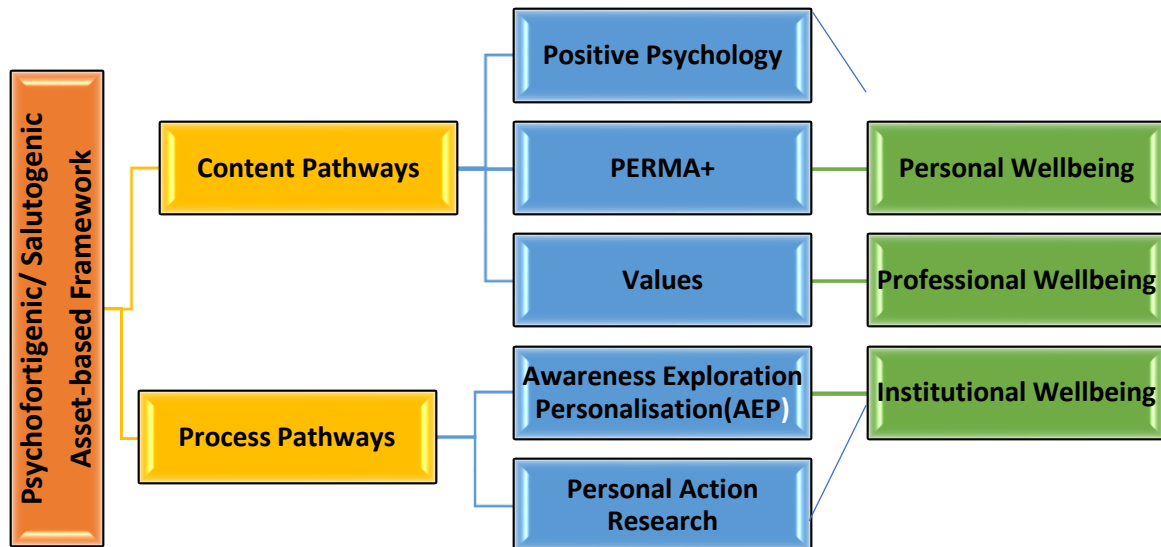
Figure 3.3: The conceptual framework

3.5.1 A Psychofortigenic/Salutogenic, Asset-Based Framework

People may often be given to focusing on the problems in society, in others, in themselves, their places of work, their governments and the world. Possibly we have been conditioned to be this way, or it may be symptomatic of the medical model of the world that looks at 'what is wrong with people' (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2014). Certainly, the identification of a problem is necessary if it is to be addressed, but energy and resources have historically been disproportionately focused on deficits, as opposed to building and focusing on strengths (assets). This deficit perspective is pervasive, particularly in the health sciences and professions, such as Psychology, which appears to hinge on psychopathology, the study of the disease (pathology) of the psyche. The most recent Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5), classifies mental health disorders largely according to biological factors (APA, 2013:10); neglecting the role of biopsychosocial factors necessary for the promotion of psychological or mental wellbeing, as Gintner (2014) suggests. A

biopsychosocial approach, or interactionist model (Van Eeden, 2017) acknowledges the multi-determined, complex and interrelated nature of biological (physical), psychological (mental) and social factors influencing one's personal wellness or wellbeing. King (2016) considers these factors to be in constant interaction with each other, none more, or less important than the others. She further contends that these factors combine to produce our unique experiences and behaviour (King, 2016). Dodge *et al.* (2012) include emotional and spiritual factors as resources promoting wellbeing.

Regardless of the historic medical model focus on deficits, a much-needed shift in focus occurred as scientists and researchers began to seek a more positive approach to the study of people and their wellbeing (Feldman, 2017). Thankfully, mental wellbeing is no longer viewed exclusively from a disease perspective but rather by recognising the things that individuals are good at and can cope with, in their life, work, personal and family challenges, in ways that enable them to make valuable contributions to their communities (Smith 2014). This, more optimistic or asset-based view of the human condition, focuses on the strengths and wellness (fortology) of humans, instead of their illness (pathology), and suggests that conditions for wellbeing can be created and promoted (Eloff & Ebersöhn, 2001; Whiting, Kendall & Wills, 2012).

A brief history of the expansion of asset-based thinking, reveals that Bradburn's (1969) research on psychological wellbeing was instrumental in shifting from diagnosing psychiatric cases, to exploring the psychological reactions of ordinary people and how they cope with daily difficulties. His postulation was that a person's emotional state or affect could be a good predictor of their degree of wellbeing, since those with a more positive affect were more likely to have higher levels of wellbeing than those who were more negative in their outlook. The concept of Salutogenesis (the origins of health), as introduced by Antonovsky (1979), further influenced this asset-based approach as he focused on what causes health, rather than what causes disease.

In South Africa, Strumpfer (1995) extended this idea into the idea of Fortology, focusing on the origins of strength, not only in terms of health, but also at other end points such as psychological wellbeing. Wissing and Van Eeden (2002) further

extended the concept into Psychofortology, focusing on the "nature, manifestations and ways to enhance psychological wellbeing and develop human capacities" (Feldman, 2017:206).

The idea of a positive approach to psychology took root globally as scholars and mental health professionals sought to find what enables people to flourish and thrive, as opposed to what causes their illness and dysfunction. The term Positive Psychology, as a new field in psychology, was introduced by Martin Seligman in 1998 in his opening speech as President of the American Psychological Association (APA). This field brings together the shift in focus from 'what is wrong with people' to 'what people can do that is right' and seeks to promote wellbeing. This earned Seligman the title as the Founder (or 'father') of Positive Psychology, even though ideas relating to improving wellbeing or promoting happiness or positivity in life had been proposed by many scholars and philosophers before him and was growing globally. He was, however, the first to bring those and his own ideas together in this new branch of psychology (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000) as discussed later in this chapter.

3.5.2 Process Pathways

In reaching the objective of finding pathways to improving or promoting the wellbeing of teachers in a township primary school, it is important to acknowledge that teachers may have different wellbeing needs and that a potential intervention cannot follow a one-size-fits-all approach. Different people will benefit from different content, strategies, activities or approaches to improve their wellbeing. The process pathways in this framework, enable each participant (or person in general) to follow these processes to personalise what they require to enhance their wellbeing, not assuming that I know what is good for anyone else, or even assuming that there is anything wrong with the way in which they live their lives. Personal choice is of critical importance, as these processes attempt to ensure. These process pathways are explained in detail in Chapter 4, since they formed an integral part of the methodological process engaged in in this research. To briefly introduce and summarise them, however, the processes are named the AEP process which stands for Awareness, Exploration and Personalisation (Vogel, 2009) and the Personal Action

Research process (adapted from Lewin's Action Research Cycle (Kemmis, 1980). The AEP process begins with becoming aware of one's own state of wellbeing and making a decision to improve it or not. If one decides to improve it, awareness extends to what resources are available, or needs to be done, to improve it. Self-awareness plays an important role in this stage, and will develop, if it is lacking. Exploration of options then follows, much like surveying and testing the selection at a buffet. One then decides what one wants from the selection, and because it is a very personal process, this stage is called the Personalisation stage, in customising the content to suit one's wellbeing needs. The second process would typically be conducted during the Exploration stage of the AEP process. I call it a Personal Action Research process, following the processes of identifying a problem (wellbeing need), devising a plan to address the problem (fulfil the need), acting on the plan (trying new behaviours, thoughts, actions, feelings), then observing the plan in action (collecting data) and then reflecting on whether the plan has worked or not. If the plan has worked, the problem may be addressed, and one can continue with the plan. If the plan has not worked, devise a new or amended plan, or reformulate the problem. The purpose of these processes is to give participants agency in the promotion of their own wellbeing, and consequently to extend that wellbeing to others and to their environment, like ripples on a pond, as metaphorised in Chapter 1. I considered these process pathways suitable for enabling participants to engage with the content and contribute their own content, as we embarked on this research programme together, in which I sought to develop guidelines for the promotion of their wellbeing.

3.5.3 Content Pathways

A plethora of knowledge exists on the content, strategies and activities that can promote wellbeing (Fava & Ruini, 2014; Guse, 2017; Seligman, 2012) and, specifically teacher wellbeing (Acton & Glasgow, 2015; Ferguson, 2008; Holmes, 2005; Kyriacou, 2000; McCallum & Price, 2010). For the purposes of this research programme, however, the content pathways in this conceptual framework are based on Positive Psychology (Seligman, 1998); the PERMA + model of wellbeing (Seligman, 2018) and

Values based approaches (Dasoo, 2010; Maphalala, 2017) and the strategies and activities associated with them.

3.5.3.1 Positive psychology

Positive Psychology (PP), as briefly introduced previously, is a relatively new approach to the field of psychology that focuses on factors, tools and insights that contribute to a happy, fulfilling life to promote flourishing, as opposed to just coping (Seligman, 2013). Seligman describes it as "the scientific study of optimal human functioning that aims to discover and promote the factors that allow individuals and communities to thrive" (Seligman, 2011). PP is prominent as an asset-based approach, focusing on the strengths in people, and seeking ways to enhance those strengths and to promote wellbeing and flourishing. Capturing well the essence of what wellbeing may be described as, Seligman (2012:13), says…

> *I used to think that the topic of positive psychology was happiness. I now think that the topic of positive psychology is wellbeing, that the gold standard for measuring wellbeing is flourishing, and that the goal of positive psychology is to increase flourishing.*

According to the website of the Positive Psychology Center at the University of Pennsylvania…

> *The field is founded on the belief that people want to lead meaningful and fulfilling lives, to cultivate what is best within themselves, and to enhance their experiences of love, work, and play* (Positive Psychology Center, 2021,para:2).

Based on this idea, Seligman developed a measurement and model of wellbeing, called PERMA theory, later evolving it into PERMA+ as is described in the next subsection.

3.5.3.2 PERMA+ wellbeing model

Seligman's PERMA+ theory is a prevalent wellbeing model, as it is asset-based, and provides a gauge for measuring wellbeing, simultaneously suggesting pathways to attaining wellbeing. Seligman's seminal theories, which he described in his book *Authentic Happiness* (Seligman, 2004), and later expanded in his book *Flourish, a visionary new understanding of happiness and wellbeing* (Seligman, 2012), essentially convey the idea that humans can and should flourish or thrive, instead of merely coping with or surviving the challenges of everyday life experiences. The PERMA model (Seligman, 2004), stands for the five pathways in which Seligman suggests, one can attain or pursue happiness, summarised in the acronym PERMA, which stands for Positive emotion, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning and Accomplishment, or Achievement. The PERMA model has been found to have wide application and relevance in various settings, as both a measure of and pathway to wellbeing (D'raven & Pasha-Zaidi, 2016; Kern, Waters, Adler & White, 2015). An explanation of the model follows:

P – Positive emotion speaks largely to hedonic feelings of happiness, such as amusement, hope, joy, interest, love, compassion, gratitude and pride. Seligman (2004) cautions against seeking happiness in the absence of character building, to avoid the potential harm inherent in pleasure seeking without a strong moral compass or value base. Fredrickson's broaden-and-build theory (Fredrickson, 2004) posits that positive emotions may foster more wellbeing by developing our physical, intellectual and social abilities. She suggests that over time, this broadening effect can build skills and resources. Though some people are naturally more positive than others (Lyubomirsky, 2001), Seligman (2012) contends that each person has the ability to purposefully experience more positive emotion. This suggests that wellbeing can be improved by the deliberate creation of moments and experiences that ignite these emotions in us.

E – Engagement refers to feeling connected to activities or organisations; for example, being interested, engaged with or absorbed in something. Being so absorbed in an activity that one enjoys or is good at, where time seems to stand still, is being engaged,

(Csikszentmihalyi, 2002). Nakamura and Csikszentmihalyi (2014) suggest that a good life is characterised by complete absorption in what does, resonating somewhat with the Japanese concept of Ikigai (*cf.* Section 3.2.7). In positive psychology, this is referred to as 'flow' by Csikszentmihalyi (2002), who suggests that we experience flow when we use our highest strengths or skills to engage in challenging tasks. Peterson and Seligman (2004) contend that when the work we do correlates or uses our highest strengths (*cf.* Section 3.2.6), we are more likely to be engaged and experience wellbeing relating to our work.

R – Relationships, positive relationships, refer to feeling cared about and supported, and being integrated with others socially (Seligman, 2012). Relationships are central to wellbeing, and as articulated by Wissing (2017), our close relationships are both the sources of our greatest joy and most meaningful experiences, yet also sometimes the source of our greatest sorrows. Lefa (2015:5) considers that "each individuals humanity is ideally expressed in relationship with others" and Bartkus and Davis (2010) argue that it is only through connection with others that people's deepest needs and goals can be fulfilled. These include relationships with family and friends, relationships at work and the broader community. It is in our relationships with others that we experience love, joy, acceptance, belonging, compassion and many other positive emotions so important to wellbeing (Gross & John, 2003) and includes our social and professional networks and support systems. This links well with Ebersöhn's (2012) 'flocking' resilience theory, that people also flock together, as a protective factor in adversity. This means that people connect with or create a network of positive relationships with others to support them and increase their resilience. It reminds one of the descriptions of personal resilience according to the African approach, where personal resilience is enhanced by the experience that one's pain and challenges are carried by the community (Okpalaenwe & Odigwe, 2018). This is one way to promote wellbeing - by creating balance between our resources and the challenges, we experience.

M – Meaning relates to feeling that one is connected to something meaningful and that life is valuable or purposeful (Seligman, 2004). Victor Frankl (1969) declared that

people's hearts are restless until they have found, and fulfilled, meaning and purpose in life. Such meaning can come from different sources that make us feel that we are doing something valuable and worthwhile. Seligman (2012) suggests that this involves belonging to or serving something that we believe is greater than we are, and that people are generally altruistic by nature. Hirsch, Nsamenang, Chang & Kaslow (2014) consider Spiritual wellbeing, including religious and existential wellbeing, to be a well-established predictor of mental health. Kashdan and McKnight (2009) found that people, who have discovered purpose in their lives, generally live longer, are healthier and have greater life satisfaction than people who have not. Seligman (2012) proposes that a strong sense of purpose or meaning improves confidence, feelings of self-efficacy and feelings of resilience in the face of obstacles and challenges. Finding meaning and purpose in our lives, whether in the service of others, for a worthy cause, in a caring profession, a religious or spiritual belief, a hobby, creative endeavour or anything else that gives meaning and purpose to our lives, strengthens us in times of adversity, builds our resilience and improves our wellbeing. Frankl (1946) agrees with Nietzche who reportedly proposed the idea that when a man has found a 'why' to live, he will bear with almost any 'how'. In the context of being a teacher, this infers that if teachers have found meaning and purpose in what they do (why), their wellbeing is likely to be strengthened, even in the presence of adversity (how).

A – Accomplishment refers to progress towards goals, feeling capable and experiencing a sense of achievement (Seligman, 2014). Kehoe (2005) suggests that we are goal orientated beings, continuously seeking to achieve something or extend frontiers, and Locke and Latham (2019) assert that such goals may be either team goals, promoting cooperation, collaboration and interdependence or individual goals, promoting competition or personal accomplishment or achievement. Accomplishment, achievement, competence or mastery is important in promoting our sense of wellbeing. It evokes a sense of success in achieving goals set, enables appreciation for efforts, skill, self-discipline and perseverance. It builds our self-efficacy and strengthens our belief that we are capable (Bandura, 1994). Every person needs to experience success in accomplishing something, however small it may be. Such experiences enhance wellbeing over time (Brunstein, Schultheiss & Maier, 1999). In

the context of a school, accomplishment may be related to contingent rewards such as remuneration, promotion, recognition (Locke & Latham, 2019). Achievement for a teacher can be that they are enabled to do their work to the best of their ability and experience a sense of accomplishment, especially with regard to learner success.

PERMA+ (PERMA PLUS)

In 2012, following continuing research and input from fellow researchers, Seligman extended the PERMA theory to the PERMA+ theory, which includes *physical activity, optimism, nutrition and sleep* as further pathways to wellbeing (Khaw & Kern, 2014). As multi-dimensional beings, aspects of our being include more than psychological aspects. This means that in order to improve wellbeing, it needs to be cultivated and developed in all the aspects of our being. PERMA+, therefore, seeks to include pathways to wellbeing that embrace a more holistic approach to building resilience and wellbeing (Seligman, 2012). Four pathways have been added to the PERMA model, namely physical activity, optimism, nutrition and sleep, discussed as follows:

Physical activity or physical health is equally important for the promotion of psychological wellbeing. Engaging in physical activity reduces the occurrence of conditions such as Type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure and obesity and plays a key role in the prevention of neurological conditions such as Parkinson's disease (Loprinzi, Herod, Cardinal & Noakes, 2013). Physical activity also improves cardiac health and increases the production of feel-good chemicals, serotonin, thus reducing conditions such as depression and improving wellbeing (Lee & Russell, 2003; Lubans, Plotnikoff & Lubans, 2012.) Furthermore, participation in sport, for example, creates opportunity for experiencing positive emotions, being engaged in the activity of one's choice, building relationships with others through social engagement, finding meaning and purpose in physical pursuits and experiencing a sense of accomplishment when goals related to one's activity of choice are achieved. The Sports Science Institute of South Africa (SSISA) initiated a Teachers on the Move programme (2015), to get teachers moving through exercise, particularly in vulnerable schools and communities. The aims of the programme included improving teacher wellbeing as well as motivating learners to engage in physical activity in an effort to keep them otherwise engaged

and off the streets. Evidence of this programme is no longer available on the SISSA website, which may point to difficulties related to the sustainability of programmes in schools.

Optimism, a psychological trait and explanatory style, that has garnered much research interest in recent years, easily fits under the positive emotion pathway of PERMA (Forgeard & Seligman, 2012), confirming its significance as a PsyCap resource (Luthans *et al.,* 2007; Seligman, 2012). PsyCap is discussed later in this chapter. Seligman (2006) posits that optimistic people generally look to the positive side of life and expect the best from it. They tend to be happier, more successful and less prone to mental disorders. Pessimists are more prone to depression, expecting the worst from life, doubting that they will achieve their goals and worrying about the future (Schueller & Seligman, 2008). Seligman (1998) speaks of 'learned optimism', contrasted with 'learned helplessness', suggesting that it can be learned if it is not naturally part of one's disposition, for which he has a structured plan for developing greater optimism. He also refers to realistic optimism, since optimism in all situations is not ideal; it requires a level of realism. (Seligman, 2015; Luthans, Youssef-Morgan, & Avolio, 2015).

Nutrition becomes critically important, particularly to be discerning about consuming nutrient rich, wholesome food, particularly in an age of genetically modified and fast food. The relationship between nutrition and physical and psychological wellbeing and mental and emotional health has long been established (Firth *et al.,* 2020; Owen & Corfe, 2017). Good nutrition is potentially problematic, since the food security of the majority of people in South Africa is often compromised due to poverty, increasingly so in urban centres (Battersby-Lennard, Fincham, Frayne & Haysom, 2009). In addition, it has become important for people to learn how to grow their own fruit and vegetables.

Sleep, or natural sleep, is described by Devi (2012) as 'The Mother of all calm' is critical to wellbeing and supports life (Chow, 2020). It gives the mind and body a chance to reprocess the day, recharge and rejuvenate. Hillman and Lack (2013) found that disruptions in mood, concentration, thinking, memory, vigilance learning and

reaction times could all be associated with a lack of sleep. Stress and anxiety can be significant sources of sleep difficulties (Chow, 2020), and may be improved through stress management, regulating activities and increased wellbeing (Furness-Smith, 2015).

In the next section, literature relating to values-based approaches to wellbeing is explored.

3.5.3.3 Values-based approaches to wellbeing

On the relationship between values and wellbeing, Schwartz and Shorteix (2018) maintain that our values represent what we consider important and worth pursuing in life, and our subjective wellbeing represents how happy and satisfied we are with the life we are leading (Schwartz & Sortheix, 2018). Bojanowska and Piotrowski (2018) propose that values predict eudaimonic wellbeing in that the human search for meaning and purpose is realised in achieving value-related goals. They found that eudaimonic wellbeing was predicted positively by both temperament and values (particularly openness to change and self-transcendence), while hedonic wellbeing was predicted by temperament only (Bojanowska & Piotrowski, 2018). Self-transcendence is described as a macro value comprising universalism and benevolence and is contrasted to another macro value, self-enhancement, comprising hedonism, power and achievement (Schwartz, 2012). Of relevance to this research is the role of values in promoting wellbeing in school contexts, as communal spaces and microcosms of society. According to Clement (2012), values lie at the very basis of all effective education, with Dasoo (2010) confirming the role of values in improving learner and teacher wellbeing. What follows are brief descriptions of a cultural values systems (Ubuntu) and a specific values-based programme such as Sathya Sai Education in Human Values (SSEHV), both of which have been associated with improved wellbeing, and both in school contexts as values underpinning school culture (Etieyibo, 2017; Kaliannan & Ch, 2010; Letseka, 2012; Maphalala, 2017; Taplin & Parahakaran, 2021). There are several values-based programmes implemented at schools world-wide, though I have elected to present two of them here. Ubuntu,

because it is indigenous to Africa, and universally applicable, in the words of Nzimakwe (2014:39):

> *Ubuntu, or the values that underpin, Ubuntu are universal. Although Ubuntu literally means African humanism, it shares values with the human race in general. Values such as respect, dignity, empathy, co-operation and harmony between members of society are not exclusively African but comprise the human race as a whole.*

The SSEHV programme is selected because its values correlate well with Fredrickson's (2001) broaden and build theory and Peterson and Seligman's (2004) character strengths (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). Furthermore, there is much evidence, in the literature, of its success in transforming schooling environments into enabling spaces for wellbeing (Arweck & Nesbitt, 2008; Suneetha, 2013). Ultimately schools should select values or programmes that resonate best with their needs and contexts, and information, such as that presented here, serves only to guide perspectives on values. Values-based approaches to improving wellbeing and school culture should not be prescriptive, until the school community finds and adopts a suitable schoolwide approach. To this purpose, Maphalala and Mpofu (2018:1) recommend that "a school community sustains an eclectic approach to values education that covers learners' holistic experiences". In the section that follows, Ubuntu, as a value system, is presented, followed by a short exposition of the SSEHV programme.

Ubuntu: An African values system

Since Africa is the land of my birth, I reverently include the powerful philosophy of Ubuntu, permeating discourse on what it means to be human. Ubuntu is commonly understood to be a values system, highlighting the relationship between wellbeing and positive values (Sagiv, Roccas & Oppenheim-Weller, 2015; Schwartz & Shortheix, 2018.) Adams, Fischer and Abubaker (2018) hold that personal values are more important for wellbeing than perceived values of significant others and the larger society. The African Philosophy of Ubuntu is widely associated with wellbeing,

particularly relational and communal wellbeing. I reference only a few here, to illustrate the point: "Ubuntu encourages care for the environment and the wellbeing of all who live in it" (Maphalala, 2017:10242); "a way of life contributing positively to sustaining the wellbeing of people, the community or society" (Nzimakwe, 2014:31); "to acknowledge humanity in the other and oneself as salient to extend the theoretical premises of ubuntu, in particular to avoid universalist notions of the concept developed thus far with reference to human interdependence and wellbeing…" (Waghid & Smeyers, 2012:13). Letseka (2013:351) conceives of Ubuntu as "a normative concept (a moral theory), a humane notion, and a potential public policy", while Ayotunde and Bewaji (2004:396) contend that "the wellspring of morality and ethics in African societies is the pursuit of a balance of individual, with communal wellbeing." The African view, according to Dolamo (2013:4), "does not compartmentalize the human person but situates his/her wellbeing within a web of relationships and the source of the web is in the Supreme Being…" linking human wellbeing to a web of human relations, originating in the spiritual realm.

Maphalala (2017) declares that Ubuntu rests on three pillars, namely interpersonal, intrapersonal and environmental values (*cf.* Figure 3.1), precisely in that order, since "Ubuntu puts others first and is not rooted in the person, solely as an individual." (Maphalala, 2017:10243).

```
                          ┌──────────┐
                          │  Ubuntu  │
                          └──────────┘
         ┌────────────────────┼────────────────────┐
  ┌──────────────┐    ┌──────────────┐     ┌──────────────┐
  │ Interpersonal│    │ Intrapersonal│     │ Environmental│
  │    values    │    │    values    │     │    values    │
  └──────────────┘    └──────────────┘     └──────────────┘
```

Interpersonal values	Intrapersonal values	Environmental values
Respect	Honesty	Sustainability
Hospitality	Contentment	Conservation
Generosity	Humility	Preservation
Inclusivity	Positive self-concept	Aesthetic
Co-existence	Graciousness	Knowledge
Compassion	Gratitude	
Cooperation	Self confidence	
Friendliness	Self reliance	
Forgiveness	Ethical awareness	
Equity	Introspection	
	Affective awareness	

(Maphalala, 2017)

Figure 3.4: Components of Ubuntu

These three pillars signify regard for others, self and the environment as the underpinning philosophy of Ubuntu. Letseka (2012) affirms that each individual's humanity is ideally expressed in relationship with others. This means that one can be aware of one's own being but also one's duties towards one's neighbours. He further describes Ubuntu as seeking individual and communal good to enhance the prosperity of others, the self and the community. Ubuntu embodies values including respect,

compassion, charity, sympathy, care, consideration and kindness (Chikanda, 1990) as well as forgiveness, equality, empathy and tolerance (Lefa, 2015).

Sathya Sai Education in Human Values (SSEHV)

According to Majmudar (1998), the Sathya Sai Education in Human Values (SSEHV) programme originated from the teachings of Sathya Sai Baba, a highly revered Indian guru and spiritual teacher. The programme extended to areas outside India, where it was renamed 'Sai Spiritual Education' (SSE) abroad. By the 1980s, the SSE programme was adapted to foster human and spiritual values in children of parents who were not devotees of Sathya Sai Baba, thus moving away from a focus on him as spiritual leader and focusing instead on the values being taught. A group of teachers from the United Kingdom (UK), who had attended a conference in India, were inspired by Sathya Sai Baba's vision that the five universal values should be taught to *all* children, not just those in India (Arweck, Nesbitt & Jackson 2005). Consequently, they began to develop a manual and programme, which became known as 'Sathya Sai Education in Human Values' (SSEHV), taught initially in community and after-school settings. Sri Sathya Sai Baba's teachings, namely that children should be taught to cultivate love for all from as young an age as possible, underpin the programme. He emphasised the important role of education in increasing empathy and instilling universal compassion in children, declaring that the aim of education is character building (Ferreira, 2014).

Majmudar (2002) comments on the suitability of the programme in diverse cultures, since it adopts a multireligious approach, which allows and encourages learners to follow their own faith. He further describes the SSEHV programme as an international education programme that focuses on learners throughout the world through the medium of self-development programmes (Ferreira 2014; Majmudar 2002). This approach recognises the five values mentioned above as an integral part of the human being, while the values are also recognised by all the major religions (Ferreira, 2014).

Reddy (2018:18) pronounced it thus:

The underlying current of all these values is Love. Love in word and thought is truth, love in action is right conduct, love in feeling is peace, and love in understanding is non-violence. Love is the greatest power that gives solace to all human beings and even animals. The practice of these five human values allows us to live in harmony as one global family, to see unity amidst diversity and live in joy and peace – wherever we are.

The SSEHV programme aims to develop these five key values (universal values) through developing certain qualities, or underlying values, in learners, as illustrated in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3: SSEHV Universal values and sub-values

Truth	*Integrity, wisdom, non-discrimination, human understanding, sincerity, self-reflection, sincerity, curiosity*
Right action	*Determination, dependability, honesty, healthy living, respect, efficiency, regard for duty, perseverance, endurance, courage, independence, initiative*
Peace	*Calmness, contentment, optimism, concentration, self-acceptance, self-discipline, self-esteem, equanimity*
Love	*Kindness, compassion, consideration, forgiveness, gratitude, tolerance, interdependence, selflessness, gentleness, humaneness*
Non-violence	*Benevolence, concern for the environment, cooperation, respect for diversity, respect for property, resect for life, harmony*

Research reports reflect that when teachers and the whole school embrace these values, intentionally teaching and bringing them into their school culture, both teacher and learner wellbeing improves (Arweck & Nesbitt, 2008; Majmudar, 2002; Ritchie, 1998; Suneetha, 2013).

3.6   SUMMARY

Considering the literature explored, the identified gap in the literature, lies neither in the knowledge that teacher wellbeing may be compromised, nor in the availability of resources, material, solutions and theories to promote teacher wellbeing. The gap lies in configuring appropriate strategies and guidelines for implementing sustainable

systems and interventions in the school in which the group of teachers participating in this study, work. In summary, therefore, what remains is, through the process of awareness, exploration and personalisation, to find the pathways that resonate well with the group of participants in this research, in order to collaboratively develop a workable intervention that may promote teacher wellbeing in the township primary school selected for this research study. In the next chapter, the methodology guiding this research study is presented.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

4.1   INTRODUCTION

In the preceding chapters, relevant literature pertaining to this research was explored. The research design and methodology of the empirical aspect of this study, is presented in this chapter. The main question guiding this research is: *How can the wellbeing of teachers in a township primary school be promoted or improved?*

The conceptualisations, emergence of the design (Creswell, 2014a:186) and methodological selections including the research site, participants, data collection tools and all relevant aspects relating to the execution of this qualitative instrumental case study are accounted for here. The research process comprised three phases, undertaken with teachers at a single school, over a period of sixteen months. The methodological process and related choices are described in greater detail throughout this chapter.

4.2   RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This section serves to clarify the details of the research methodological choices. Creswell (2014a:17) describes research as "a process of steps used to collect and analyse information to increase our understanding of a topic or issue". Mertens (2015:2) concurs that it is "one of many different ways of knowing or understanding… a process of systematic inquiry that is designed to collect, analyse, interpret, and use data" in response to a research question or issue. Terms used to describe the methodological aspects of research can be confusing, since semantic differences exist in how leading researchers refer to them. What one calls an approach, another calls a paradigm, and another calls a design. For the sake of simplicity and consistency, I will use Creswell's (2014b:5) description of a research approach as involving the intersection of three essential components, namely, the researcher's philosophical worldview assumptions of epistemology and ontology (Crotty,1998; Nieuwenhuis,

2016), the research design related to this worldview, and the specific methods or procedures of enquiry that translate the approach into practice. This research study evolved over time, as intentions and realities did not always meet, particularly in the face of a global pandemic and as greater awareness developed throughout the process of reflection. Changes were made to best serve response to the research question, particularly relating to changes in how data were collected. Denzin and Lincoln (2011:xiii) provocatively suggest that "there is no one way to do interpretive, qualitative enquiry. We are all interpretive *bricoleurs* stuck in the present, working against the past, as we move into a politically charged and challenging future". Table 4.1 presents an overview of the study to provide the complete research methodology at a glance and then a specific discussion of each aspect is presented.

Table 4.1: Overview of research methodology

Overview of Research Methodology	
Research Approach	Qualitative
Philosophical worldview/ Epistemology	Interpretivist/social constructivist and pragmatic
Research Design/Strategies of Enquiry	Instrumental case study
Selection of research participants	Purposeful and convenient participant selection: Group of teachers at a township primary school
Selection of research site	Random selection of a township primary school
Data Collection Methods	
Phase 1: (15 participants)	▪ Baseline Qualitative Questionnaire
Phase 2: (7 participants)	▪ Qualitative Feedback Questionnaire ▪ Observation ▪ Focus Groups
Phase 3: (7 participants)	▪ Guided Personal Reflections
Data Analysis and Interpretation	Qualitative, Content and Thematic Analysis
Quality Criteria/Trustworthiness	▪ Transferability

Overview of Research Methodology		
	▪ Credibility	
	▪ Dependability	
	▪ Confirmability	
Ethical Considerations	▪ Informed consent of participants	
	▪ Voluntary participation	
	▪ Beneficence and Non-maleficence	
	▪ The right to withdraw without fear of consequence	
	▪ Confidentiality and optional anonymity	

4.2.1 Research Approach

The overarching approach, also referred to as the methodological paradigm underpinning this research study, is qualitative. It sought to prioritise the importance of human experience, reflecting the postmodernist view that the data should reflect the own culture and lived experience of the respondent and resist the legitimation of reason according to which, it is believed, we can arrive at a final truth by means of rational thought only (Biesta, 2004:6). For Denzin and Lincoln, (2011:xiii), qualitative research is an enquiry project that is simultaneously a moral, allegorical and therapeutic project and a movement towards the "humanistic and social justice commitment to study the social world from the perspective of the interacting individuals". To understand the very personal meanings that participants attach to their experiences and actions, the research needs to get close to research participants (Okeke, 2015:218). The philosophical worldview (paradigms), strategies of enquiry (paradigms) and methods (data collection tools and analyses) directing and enabling this research study, align with a qualitative approach, as discussed throughout this chapter.

4.2.2 Philosophical Worldview

Research is generally approached from the philosophical worldview perspective of the researcher, which impacts significantly on methodological choices (Maree, 2016). If one believes that an external reality exists independently of people's understandings and beliefs about it, then one would be more inclined towards a positivist worldview (Nieuwenhuis, 2016), and more likely to value a quantitative approach to understanding reality. If, as is my belief in the context of this research, one believes that human life and reality is best observed or understood from the subjective interpretations and meanings constructed by the people who experience it, and in the existence of multiple socially constructed realities (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010:6), one would be more inclined towards an interpretive/constructivist worldview. From a paradigmatic perspective, therefore, I seek to answer the research question from the interpretivist/social constructivist view that individuals "seek understandings of the world in which they live and work and develop subjective meanings of their experiences" (Creswell, 2014a:8). Furthermore, I hold another belief, that seeks actions and applications that work, or are useful, in given situations and solutions to problems, which resonates with a pragmatic worldview (Creswell, 2014a:10; Okeke, 2015:207). In the view of Denzin and Lincoln (2011:29), pragmatism directly links theory to praxis. This research is, therefore, designed around understanding participating teachers' meanings of wellbeing and seeking pathways or guidelines to improving it.

4.2.3 Research Design

Having engaged with the experts and scholars through the literature, yet still seeking a deep and rich understanding of the phenomenon of wellbeing, from the perspective of the teachers whom I consider to be significant; my intention was to connect meaningfully with participants. It makes sense then, that whom I engaged with and how I engaged with them, would be personal, individualistic and interpretive, reflected in my choice of research design and methods, as will be discussed in the following subsections.

Creswell (2014a:12) defines a research design as a type, or strategy of inquiry that provides specific direction for procedures, in answering the research question. From the plethora of options of qualitative research designs (Nieuwenhuis, 2016:) and the multiple ways in which they can be configured, I considered an instrumental case study, which is simultaneously exploratory, as the most appropriate research design for achieving the aims of the study. I also considered the case study to be collaborative, but I found definitions of collaborative case study limited to collaboration between researchers in an institution (Hamilton & Corbett- Whittier, 2012). To avoid confusion of the concepts, I have elected to describe the collaborative aspect of the research study under the subsection on my role as researcher in Section 4.10, rather than in the design.

4.2.3.1 Instrumental Case Study

Regarding the use of case study in educational research, Hamilton and Corbett-Whittier (2012:3) consider it useful for "enhancing our understanding of contexts, communities and individuals". Stake (1995), a leading author on case study, distinguishes between types of case studies on the basis of their context (context-orientation). Wolf, Daniels and Thompson (2017:173) summarise Stake's (1995) types of case studies as follows …

- *Intrinsic*, in which the focus is on the unique case rather than the issue, including all aspects of the case,

- *Instrumental*, a specific aspect of the case is explored, as opposed to all aspects, focusing on the specific issue, rather than the individual case, and

- *Collective* case study, that compares multiple cases to identify similarities and differences between them.

Wolf *et al.,* (2017:170) view case study as an opportunity to "describe, explore or explain a current phenomenon with a particular case, group or event using multiple data sources". This reflects Yin's (2003) categorisation of case studies into purpose-orientated types, namely as…

118

- *exploratory*, if one wants to explore or gather new evidence about an issue, with no specific set of expected outcomes,

- *descriptive*, if one wants to describe an issue from the understanding of its current context, and

- *explanatory*, if one wants to explain an issue in more detail, within its context, often focusing on the causal links within situations.

The descriptions above best explain the classification of this research study as an instrumental case study (Stake, 1995) because it looks specifically at the issue of wellbeing amongst a group of teachers at a township school. The study is also exploratory since it further explores the issue and seeks new evidence, particularly relating to how teacher wellbeing can be promoted in that context (Yin, 2003).

Furthermore, two processes and three contemplations were shared with participants for the purposes of enhancing their self-knowledge, self-discovery and awareness as we progressed through the research programme. The first is the model used during the group engagement to guide participants through the process of awareness, exploration and personalisation as described under Section 4.2.3.2.i. The second is a process familiar to researchers as the action research process, described under Section 4.2.3.2.ii. In the context of this research, this process was presented as a personal action research process, enabling participants to actively engage in the promotion of their own wellbeing.

4.2.3.2 Process pathways and contemplations

Mindful of the subjectivity of wellbeing experiences and the systemic influences on an individual's wellbeing, two processes and three contemplations guided the research. A day at the snake park may improve a snake lover's wellbeing, but cause fear and anxiety to someone who has herpetophobia (fear of reptiles). The two processes discussed below, enable personalisation of wellbeing strategies, as well as self-discovery of the individual's preferences and the efficacy of strategies. Systemic

awareness is created in the three contemplations as participants consider wellbeing from personal, professional and institutional perspectives.

4.2.3.2.(i) **Awareness, Exploration, Personalisation (AEP process)**

During Phase two, as the group engagement and information sharing phase, a group work model was applied to stimulate participants' self-discovery and self-knowledge. According to Vogel (2009), this is a groupwork methodology that was taught in the Department of Secondary School Teacher Education at the University of South Africa (2002). For the purposes of this research study, I named this process the AEP Process, for ease of reference and memory, since it stands for Awareness, Exploration and Personalisation. Naming it a self-discovery process may have been equally useful, but since I did not design it, I did not consider it appropriate to rename it. AEP involves three stages of progression in development/growth. Participants ideally should move through the phases of awareness, exploration and personalisation, which is very useful for acquiring self-knowledge and self-discovery.

a)   *Awareness*

Awareness may be considered to be the origin of cognitive development (Vogel, 2009) and involves and facilitates self-discovery. In order to know how to improve their own wellbeing, participants needed to become aware of many aspects, such as their perceptions of wellbeing, their experience of wellbeing, their beliefs about their coping, their awareness of their support systems and strategies. They also needed to confront and consider questions relating to what erodes their wellbeing, what makes them feel better, what causes them to feel distress, how do they cope with stress and how they relax. Participants were encouraged to compare what they were aware of and what was new to their awareness.

b)   *Exploration*

During the exploration phase, participants engaged with information from the literature and elsewhere, including strategies, models, theories, new behaviours and attitudes, among others, expanding their awareness to gain knowledge and insight into existing wellbeing promoting strategies and practices. The metaphor of a buffet table was used

to illustrate the options available for participants to explore and from which to select, based on their own needs and preferences. Participants were also invited to share strategies with which they are familiar or had heard about. Maintaining their awareness, they explored what is available, tuning in to how they experienced each strategy. Participants thus explored and experimented with information, practices or strategies to determine which resonates with them, learning more about their preferences and discovering more about themselves.

c)   *Personalisation*

The buffet table metaphor was extended in the personalisation stage of the process, similar to being at a buffet table, looking at all that is available and selecting what appeals most to one's personal taste and what new fare one is willing to try. At the personalisation stage, participants have become aware of what their wellbeing needs are, they have explored, inter alia, potential information, strategies, practices attitudes, and are now ready to select what resonates best with them. During this phase, participants need to ask, 'How do I make all this personally relevant to myself? What can I apply or use from what has been offered here?". Vogel (2009) suggests that the insights gained during the exploration phase are now applied to participants' own situations, through a private and personal process of self-evaluation. Some people's tanks are filled by religious practices, others may prefer non-religious meditation, while some may prefer talking through their stressors with another person and others may prefer writing in a journal. Figure 4.2 illustrates the stages of the self-discovery AEP Process.

Awareness

What I was aware of?

What is new to my awareness

Exploration

Engagement with information

Exploring and learning

Personalisation

How do I make all this personally relevant to myself?

What can I apply or use from what is offerd here?
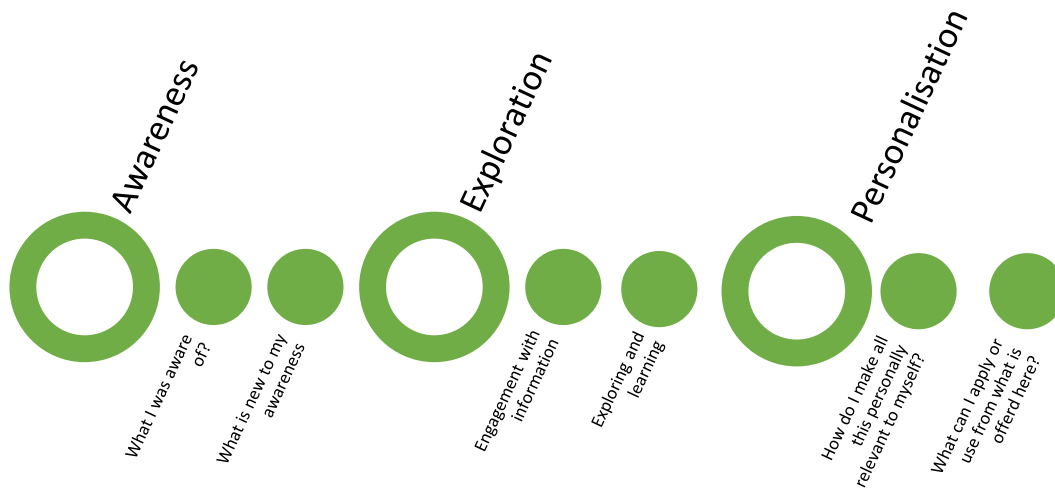
Figure 4.1: AEP process (self-discovery)

4.2.3.2.(ii) Personal action research (PAR)

Action research is conducted in cycles of a process to address a research problem or question, as first proposed by its founder, Kurt Lewin. Adelman (1993:8) summarised Lewin's characteristics of action research as follows: "Action research gives credence to the development of powers of reflective thought, discussion, decision and action by ordinary people participating in collective research on 'private troubles' that they have in common". The process includes identifying the problem, devising a plan to address the problem, acting on the plan or implementing the plan and observing whether it is a useful plan or not. This step in the action research process is referred to as the collect, analyse and interpret data stage and is followed by a reflection on whether the plan worked. If it did, the problem may be resolved. If the plan did not work, either the problem can be reformulated, or a different plan devised, and the same process of evaluation will then follow. The action research process is highly successful in investigating solutions to problems in research, that includes the involvement of the affected. I consider it to be equally useful in addressing individual personal troubles by giving structure and intention to how individuals can address these. In the context of this research, I amended the action research process to a personal action process for participants, or any person who would like to explore new behaviours thoughts or

actions by testing what works for them and what does not. It also enables participants to become intentional in promoting their own wellbeing or addressing any other 'problem' they may encounter in life. Figure 4.3 depicts my adaptation of the Action research model as a Personal action research process.
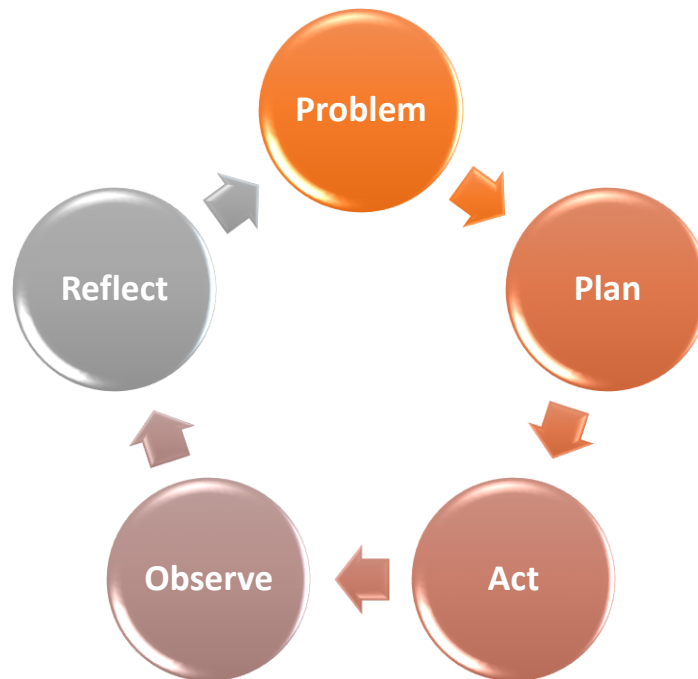
Figure 4.2: Personal action research process

4.2.3.2.(iii) Three contemplations

Furthermore, three contemplations guided the critical and reflective thinking during the research process, and were raised during our conversations, namely:

- How can I improve my wellbeing, personally?

- How can I improve my wellbeing, professionally?

- How can this benefit/improve/influence the institution in which I work (organisational/institutional culture)?

Considering the systems within which we all function, we cannot remove ourselves from the roles that we play, since the one influences the other. So, while the focus was

on the promotion of personal wellbeing, professional wellbeing and institutional health was an ever-present consideration.

Figure 4.3 illustrates how the summary of the processes and contemplations were presented to research participants
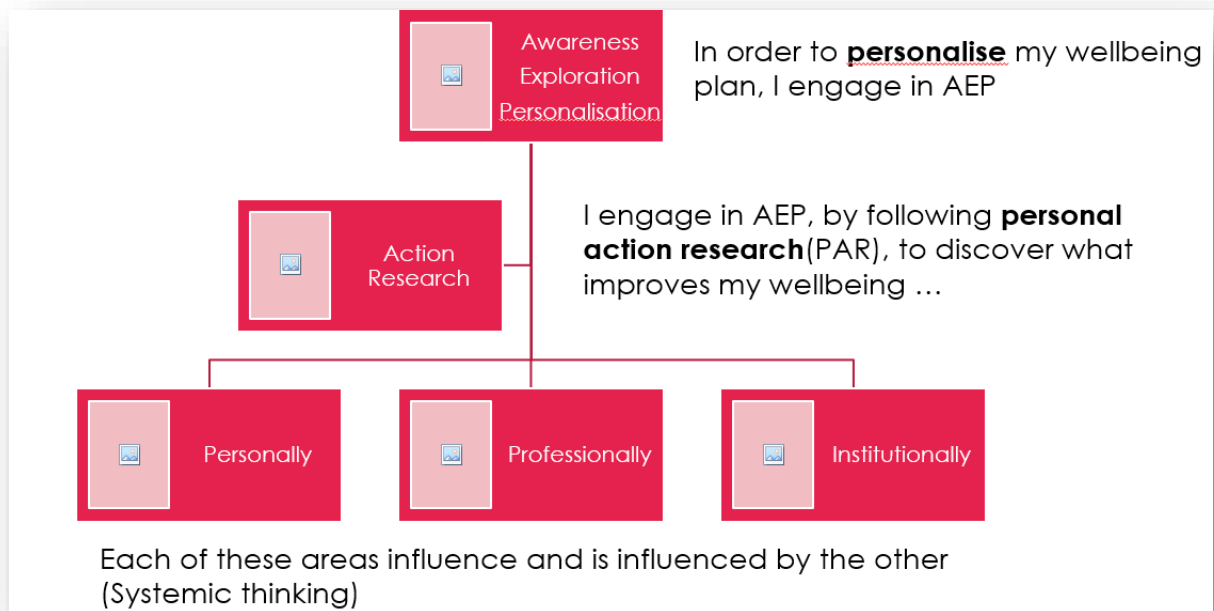
Figure 4.3: Summary of how the processes and contemplations connect

4.3   SELECTION OF RESEARCH SITE

Selection of the research site was based on two criteria, namely that the school should be located in a township and that the school principal considered teacher wellbeing to be a relevant concern. Selection is discussed in the following sections.

4.3.1 Contextualising the Site and the School Environment

As described in Chapter 1, a township situated relatively close to me was selected, for this research. From a list of ten schools in the township, I selected one, which was also the first school that I approached, on the list. Selection of the school was both convenient and purposeful (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010; Creswell, 2014a), since it was easily accessible to me, and was a primary school in a township. The community

where the school was conveniently and purposefully selected, is a township, established under the Apartheid Group Areas Act (1950). Even within the community, different socio-economic strata exist side by side; a more affluent section with bigger homes and better infrastructure and a very poor section, with small houses, no electricity, and poorly conceived infrastructure, with sewerage running freely along the streets. The whole township is characterised by previously disadvantaged, under-resourced schools, as described in Chapters 1 and 2. Neighbouring this township, is another, much bigger township. The selected school services learners from both townships and includes an informal settlement. As discussed in Chapter 1, children whose families have the financial means seldom attend schools in their townships, since they attend private or former Model C (suburban or town schools). Children who attend township schools, typically come from poorer socio-economic households.

4.3.2 Preliminary Enquiry

In addition to the selected school being a township school, a further selection criterion applied. I considered it important to determine whether the promotion of teacher wellbeing was a relevant issue at the township primary school at which the research would be conducted. My intention was to search for the names of schools in the area and begin the process of contacting the schools. If the principal gave an indication that teacher wellbeing was not an issue at the school, I would have selected a different school, until I found one where the issue was relevant. It so happened that the principal at the first school that I approached, indicated teacher wellbeing to be a concern at that school. I then met with the principal of the school, who also introduced me to one of the Heads of Department (HoD). In an informal conversation, they both expressed concern about the wellbeing of teaching staff and confirmed that the erosion of teacher wellbeing remained a pervasive issue. They acknowledged the increasing stressors experienced by teachers, that teacher wellbeing was indeed a relevant issue and that they would welcome the envisioned research at their school.

Regarding participant selection, a different process was followed for each phase, in line with purposeful selection techniques Therefore, the procedure for each phase is

discussed under the following subsection, research schedule and procedure (Section 4.4).

4.4 RESEARCH SCHEDULE AND PROCEDURE

In 2020, the world was affected by a global pandemic, Covid-19, which was an outbreak of a strain of the Corona virus. Measures put in place, such as lockdown and social distancing had implications for access to research participants. My research methodology and design needed to be amended within the parameters of appropriate research ethics and rigour, in order to continue the study and not abandon participants in the middle of the process. There were subsequently slight deviations from the original research schedule, related primarily to the inclusion of electronic and digitally mediated engagement with participants, including WhatsApp communication, PowerPoint presentations and electronic submission of Phase 3 data in some instances (Silverman, 2016), rendering it a truly iterative process.

In this section, a description of the three phases, including the following information for each phase is presented, taking into account purpose, participant selection, data collection tools and data analysis and synthesis

4.4.1 Phase 1: Baseline analysis

   i)   Purpose

The purpose of Phase 1 was to gain some insight, establish a baseline and conduct a context analysis of the state of wellbeing of the teachers at the selected school. Information gained included aspects that cause teachers stress, or threaten their wellbeing, as well as practices or activities in which they engage to manage their stress and improve their wellbeing.

   ii)   Participant selection

As part of purposeful selection, all teachers from the selected township primary school were invited to individually answer a qualitative questionnaire, designed by the researcher as part of the context analysis to determine participants' wellbeing status,

explore their challenges, resources and self-care practices. From a total of 31 teachers, 15 were available after school contact time to complete the questionnaire.

I arranged with the principal of the school, to meet with the teaching staff for an hour after school on a suitable day. The process for this phase unfolded in line with the agenda as follows:

1. Welcome and introduction of researcher (5 minutes)

2. The research proposal was explained, and teachers were invited to participate in the completion of the Qualitative Questionnaire. Teachers who wished to complete the questionnaires, were requested to stay after the tea break for completion of consent forms and questionnaires (10 minutes). Teachers were thanked in advance, so that they could leave as soon as they had completed and returned the questionnaire to the researcher. Provision was made for folders to write in and spacing of tables and chairs to afford participants space and privacy whilst completing the questionnaires.

3. Short tea break during which teachers were invited to ask questions related to the research or participation in it. The tea break provided an opportunity for teachers who did not wish to participate, to leave. (10 minutes)

4. Teachers who remained after the break, completed the consent forms and the qualitative questionnaire (25-30 minutes). These 15 teachers became the participants in Phase 1. Attached to each questionnaire was a small reply slip asking whether the participant would be interested in participating in Phase 2. Phase 2 participants, thus self-selected, and this is how they were identified. Naming of Phase 1 participants was simply P1a to P1o (Phase1 participants *a* to *o*).

iii) *Data collection tools*

As described previously, a qualitative questionnaire (*cf:* Appendix I) was used to collect data in Phase 1. I did not easily find information in research methodological

literature on the use of questionnaires in qualitative research. Information on questionnaires was most likely to be discussed under quantitative and mixed method research approaches. Creswell (2014b:242), however, acknowledges the usefulness of qualitative questionnaires, where open and closed-ended questions may be asked and Eckerdal and Hagström (2017) consider it a useful tool when needing to collect qualitative information from a relatively large group of respondents.

I found qualitative questionnaires to be useful for the following reasons:

- They enable a researcher to engage with and collect qualitative information efficiently and from more people (greater sample) than would be done with an interview.

- They are cheaper and less time consuming to administer than individual interviews.

- They provide confidentiality and anonymity to participants who have a contribution to make but would not like to be identified.

- They provide an opportunity for people who are not verbally expressive, to express themselves in writing.

The development, scoring and analysis of the qualitative questionnaire in Phase 1, warrants a separate section, will be discussed in detail under Section 4.5

iv)   Data analysis and synthesis

Phase 1 data was analysed using principles of content analysis, described by Wilkinson (2016:85) as "inspection of the data for recurrent instances of some kind". Such instances could be words, phrases or some larger units of meaning. Open-ended questions on the questionnaire were analysed according to the five-step process of Terre Blanche *et al.* (2006), whilst closed-ended ones were first recorded on a frequency table and then followed the pattern of the steps

Data collected from responses to the questionnaire, informed the guidelines for the development of content for an asset-based intervention targeted at addressing both the key risk factors impacting teacher wellbeing, as well as personal development strategies for promoting it.

4.4.2 Phase 2: Group Engagement

i)   Purpose

The purpose of Phase 2 was to explore and experiment with information, strategies and activities, both based on the findings from data collected in Phase 1, as well as evidence-based, asset-based strategies from the literature (conceptual framework) that had been found to promote wellbeing. In collaboration with the group of teachers, the models and theories comprising the conceptual framework were applied in the group engagement phase and through a process of critical reflection and feedback, evaluated by the group of seven teachers who indicated a willingness to participate in the research on weekdays after school. These topics were derived from data analysis of the questionnaires completed during the baseline inquiry. During this phase, participants experienced the asset-based intervention strategies, commented on it, critiqued it, added to it by means of observation, discussion and written feedback forms (qualitative questionnaires).

Phase 2 was initially designed to be conducted for ninety minutes after school, on one day during the week, for ten weeks. This was problematic since most participants were unable to stay for the ninety minutes, and often our sessions were only 45 to 60 minutes long and sometimes participants were engaged in other school activities or union meetings and were unable to attend the afternoon sessions. Following discussion and reflection on the situation, we agreed that weekday afternoons were not an ideal time for the intervention due to teachers' family, transport, school, union and other arrangements. Our next plan was to conduct a full day workshop covering more strategies and having more time for discussion and focus groups. The day workshop was followed by another focus group two months later.

As described under Phase 1, respondents to the qualitative questionnaire were asked if they would like to participate in the next phase. Twelve respondents indicated that they would like to participate in Phase 2. A week after completion of Phase 1, I arranged with the principal to visit the school at the end of the school day, to meet with teachers who were interested in participating in Phase 2. Seven teachers attended the meeting that afternoon. The envisioned process was discussed, and teachers were encouraged to discuss how they would like the sessions to be conducted. Some of the participants indicated that they could only stay until 14h30 or 14h45 due to family, travel and other arrangements. We agreed to proceed anyway and see how much we could get into a weekly session. GDE regulations prohibiting research between October and February and the onset of COVID-19 Lockdown level 1, impacted the success of the weekly sessions, and both the research programme and data collection remained incomplete. It became necessary to conduct a day workshop to continue the research programme and data collection, in the wake of COVID-19 measures.

Participants in Phase 2 preferred to give themselves pseudonyms for engagement during the sessions. Participants were, however, assigned codes to further protect their identity, as described under Section 4.5.

iii)   Data collection tools

During this phase, data were collected through observation, qualitative feedback questionnaires and focus groups. The topics covered during the six-week programme are presented in Table 4.2. The Power Point presentations of some of the topics, as well as the one-day workshop, are attached as Addenda.

Table 4.2: Topics explored during the six-week programme and workshop

Session	Theme, topic, aspect explored
Week 1	Teacher wellbeing: flourishing or floundering
Week 2	Journalling: written expression and creativity (types of journaling-reflective/bullet/wreck-it)

Week 3	My life as a teacher: talking with colleagues
Week 4	Mindfulness: quiet time, sensory awareness
Week 5	Managing your mind: brain and mind exploration
Week 6	Managing money: financial wellbeing
Workshop	Presentation of theories, process and content pathways to wellbeing

iv)   Data analysis and synthesis

All data collected during Phase 2 were analysed using thematic analysis, but specifically as follows:

Qualitative feedback questionnaire

This short feedback questionnaire, administered immediately at the end of each session, was analysed in order to refine and improve the intervention.

Observation

In agreement with Jorgensen (2015), that analysis and interpretation of data collected through observation is like that of other forms of qualitative data, the data collected through observation were analysed and interpreted using coding, filing, sorting, sifting, constructing and reconstructing the data in search of features, patterns or meaning. This fits well within the five-step framework suggested by Terre Blanche *et al.* (2006:322). My observations were recorded in what doubled as my reflective journal and served mostly to inform the guidelines discussed in Chapter 6.

4.4.3 Phase 3: Individual engagement

i) Purpose

During this phase, the intention was to explore the views and responses of individual teachers on a deeper, more personal level, through individual guided personal reflections written by participants.

ii) Participant selection

During Phase 2, participants engaged and interacted as a group. I further needed to understand the personal experience or journey and perceptions of each participant. For this reason, Phase 3 is distinguished from the previous phases in that it enabled the personalisation aspect of the process, to be explored. All seven participants from Phase 2, were invited to participate in Phase 3, to probe deeper into their experiences of teacher wellbeing.

iii) Data collection tools

Guided personal reflections were elicited through the use of guiding questions. The table below illustrates the guiding questions and information the guided personal reflections were designed to elicit:

Table 4.3: Guiding questions

	Guiding Questions
1.	Do you think wellbeing, especially teacher wellbeing, is a legitimate concern, or not so important? Please explain in as much detail as possible.
2.	Reflect on the factors that influence your wellbeing in your personal life, professionally and the ways in which the institution promotes or diminishes your wellbeing. This will be treated with utmost confidentiality. Later, in question 5, you will have an opportunity to consider and reflect on what is necessary for this to be improved or addressed.
3.	Has your participation in this research, changed or influenced your ideas about wellbeing in any way? Has it promoted your wellbeing in any way, or not? How?
4.	How did/ do you feel about the **processes** engaged in? Was it too much, too vague, clear, useful, complex, a waste of time? Please be very honest and share in as much detail as possible. What are your reflections on the processes of AEP, PAR and PPI?

	Guiding Questions
5.	This question refers to your **PERSONALISATION** of the strategies/content explored by you, both within and outside of this research study. What did you think of the **content** presented? What should be included (is missing from the content)? Is there anything that should be removed? What types of interventions, strategies, information etc. work for you, or promote your wellbeing? In responding to this question, you may include pictures, photographs, drawings, collages, journal entries, your written reflections or any other way in which you can express the things/strategies/activities/ relationships/values/practices/experiences and so on, that fill your tank, make you feel good and improve your wellbeing.
6.	What factors, do you think, need to be considered in the implementation of an intervention to promote teacher wellbeing? What suggestions do you offer for the **sustainable** promotion of teacher wellbeing, personally, professionally and institutionally?

iv) Data analysis and synthesis

Inductive content and thematic analysis were employed in the qualitative analysis and interpretation all collected data.

Phase 1 data was written up quantitatively, and presented as visual displays, described by Scagnoli and Verdinelli (2013) as being useful in the presentation of "inferences and conclusions and represent ways of organising, summarising, simplifying and transforming data". This seemed to be the most efficient means of presenting the data. Having said that, the exact procedure for analysing and presenting data was somewhat different for each data collection strategy, but followed the same broad pattern or steps proposed by Terre Blanche *et al.* (2006), as follows:

Step1: Familiarisation and immersion. Evoking an image of the researcher wallowing in and wading through the emerging data, this step describes exactly how collected data is at first approached and absorbed.

Step 2: Inducing themes. The essence of what the data reveals gradually becomes more evident as themes begin to emerge that relate to the information sought or the research question.

Step 3: Coding. Elliot (2018) describes coding simply as placing labels or tags on pieces of qualitative data. He refers to it as the starting activity in qualitative analysis and the foundation for what comes later. This step for the researcher entails inspecting the data very closely to find the specific sentences, phrases or words that relate to the identified or emerging themes; to highlight them and to 'label' them according to the themes, categories and subcategories as they emerge.

Step 4: Elaboration. During this part of the process, themes are explored more closely to capture the nuances of meaning that may have been missed during the initial coding process. This is done by comparing sections of text or to gain a sense of whether they are sufficiently similar or too different to be grouped together (Terre Blanche *et al.,* 2006).

Step 5: Interpretation and checking. As the subtitle suggests, this is the final step in the analysis process and refers to the reviewing and fine-tuning of the gathered information into appropriate and justified interpretations (Terre Blanche *et al.,* 2006).

4.5   CODES ASSIGNED TO PARTICIPANTS AND EVENTS

Three levels of coding were used to name participants in the presentation of the data.

1. Phase coding – each phase was coded as P1, P2 or P3

2. Participant coding – each participant in each phase was assigned a letter of the alphabet, corresponding to a participant number, for example, 1 - a, 2 – b, 3 – c, etc.

3. Event coding – within Phase 2, several sessions transpired. I refer to these as data collection events, some of which were designed to collect data, and others providing data incidentally. I distinguish between events and data collection tools in that not all events were designed as tools; for example, comments and

discussion during workshops, were not designed as a conventional data collection tool, yet still made a qualitative contribution to the research. This coding is illustrated in Table 4.4 below:

Table 4.4: Participant coding

Phase	No. of participants and their codes	Data collection events, including data collection tools	Examples of final Identifying codes
1 Contextual analysis and baseline inquiry	15 P1a to P1o	Qualitative questionnaire	P1a to P1o P1d = Phase 1 respondent d Since there was only one event, no further identification was necessary
2 Group engagement and information sharing	7 P2a to P2h	Focus group 1 (F1)	P2aF1 = Phase 2 participant a in Focus group 1
		Focus group 2 (F2)	P2cF2 = Phase 2 participant c in Focus group 2
		Session feedback forms (6 sessions, SF)	P2fSF = Phase 2 participant f session feedback
		Wellbeing 1 (W1): *Process pathways to wellbeing*	P2gW1 = Phase 2 participant g in Wellbeing 1
		Wellbeing 2 (W2): *Content pathways to wellbeing*	P2eW2 = Phase 2 participant e in Wellbeing 2
3 Individual reflection	7 P3a to P3h	Participant reflections	P3a = Phase 3 participant a

To further protect participant anonymity and confidentiality by minimising easy identification of participants, participant P2aF1 was a different person to participant P2aF2, which means that each participant was assigned a different participant code for each event. The reason is that participants know each other and work together. Furthermore, it was agreed that some information would be known to all, for example the group sessions during Phase 2 while some information will be kept confidential, as with the personal reflections in Phase 3. This manner of coding, therefore, ensures anonymity within the group. Thus, the same participant may have several different

codes based on the event; for example, participant P2aF1 may become P2eW1 or P3c, to prevent identification through coding patterns

4.6   DEVELOPMENT OF PHASE 1 QUALITATIVE QUESTIONNAIRE

The purpose of the qualitative questionnaire was to acquire some baseline information from respondents, about the kinds of stressors they experience and the kinds of self-care practices in which they engage to manage their stress. It was a self-report questionnaire consisting of four questions, three of which had sub questions and activities.

An excerpt of each section (question) of the questionnaire is presented below, followed by an explanation and reason for the specific question being included in the development of the questionnaire.

Please indicate Male (M) or Female (F)____ [   ]   Age category [   ]   Date: _____

CONFIDENTIAL
QUALITATIVE WELL-BEING QUESTIONNAIRE

This is a questionnaire designed to determine your current state of well-being and self-care practice. It contains a range of activities and questions related to your personal and professional life. Please answer each question. Please be honest. Your personal information will be treated sensitively and confidentially. This information will be used to develop an intervention programme to promote teacher well-being. Data from all questionnaires will be compiled illustratively (NO NAMES OR NAMES OF SCHOOLS WILL BE USED).

The only biographical information required from respondents was their gender and age category in decades; for example, twenties, thirties etc., for the following reasons. Firstly, I hoped respondents would feel comfortable enough responding honestly knowing that they were anonymous and secondly, I was interested in knowing if there were differences in the kinds of stressors and concerns experienced by respondents, as well as their self-care practices, based on their age and gender, amongst this group of teachers.

Question 1

1.	EMOTIONS CHECK										
1.1.	On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being very unhappy and ten being very happy, circle the number that best describes how you feel today or at this moment.										
☹☹	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	☺☺
1.2.	Did you choose the number10? (Mark with X)					YES		NO			
1.3.	If you answered NO, briefly list some things that prevent you from being a 10.										
•											
•											
•											
•											
•											

Question 1 was the emotions check using a common version of the feelings check. I considered this 'emotions check in' to be a non-threatening gauge of whether respondents were feeling more positive or negative. Learning to recognise, differentiate and name one's feelings is important for developing higher levels of emotional skills and resilience (Carlyle & Woods, 2002:161), but this was covered in more detail during the intervention. A feelings or emotions check is useful for enabling one to become aware of one's emotions. Question 1.3 was intended to elicit the concerns or challenges uppermost in participant's foreground. In my view, this would provide information on the risk factors or challenges threatening the wellbeing of the group of respondents. This information was analysed using a frequency table, where all given responses were listed and then indicated, as such when reported again.

Question 2

2.	STRESS CHECK						
2.1.	Indicate how often you feel stressed. (Mark the correct block with an x)						
Almost Never		1 to 3 days a week		3 to 6 days a week		Everyday	
2.2.	List some things that cause you to feel stressed or discontented (challenges)...						

In your personal life	In your professional life
•	•
•	•
•	•
•	•
•	•

2.3	Are there things you do to make you feel better when you feel stressed or discontented?	YES		NO	
a)	**If YES**, list some of them here (What do you do to relax?)				
	•				
	•				
	•				
	•				
b)	**If NO**, list some things that would make you feel better, if you could do them. Perhaps include what prevents you from doing them.				
	•				
	•				
	•				
	•				

Question 2 was designed to provide a quick survey of respondents' experience of stress, more specifically distress, though the difference between distress and eustress and stress appraisal would only be discussed with participants during the intervention in Phase 2. Question 2.1 required the frequency with which respondents felt stressed and was analysed and presented using a frequency table. Question 2.2 required respondents to contemplate and distinguish between stressors in their personal and professional lives. This question was designed to provide information related to

respondents' perceptions and experience of their stressors, providing a form of triangulation with data collected in question 1.3. Question 2.3 was designed to determine respondents coping strategies and Question 2.3a) required respondents to list some of the strategies they use to cope or manage their stress. Question 2.3b) required respondents to consider what they would like to do to manage their stress, but do not, and reasons for not doing so. Sometimes people know what to do to manage their stress, or they have an idea of what they would like to do, yet they do not do it for specific reasons.

Question 3

3.	SELF-CARE CHECK		
3.1	It is believed by many, that a person has the following four broad aspects: Mind (Intellectual) Body (Physical) Heart (Emotional) Soul (Spiritual) Most people usually have difficulty developing all four equally. Sometimes some aspects are neglected, and others nurtured.		
	For each aspect, **mark with an X**, the statement most true for you.		
3.2.	Taking care of my **MIND** (intellect) is…		Taking care of my **BODY** (physical) is…
Very important for me		Very important for me	
Quite important for me		Quite important for me	
Unsure		Unsure	
Not important for me		Not important for me	
If applicable, list activities you engage in to develop your mind.		If applicable, list activities you engage in to develop yourself physically.	

139

Taking care of my **HEART** (emotions) is...		Taking care of my **SOUL** (spiritual) is...	
Very important for me		Very important for me	
Quite important for me		Quite important for me	
Unsure		Unsure	
Not important for me		Not important for me	
If applicable, list activities you engage in to develop your heart or emotions.		If applicable, list activities you engage in to develop your spirituality.	

3.3.	Self-care may also include some of the following aspects: **Circle, or highlight the ones you practise.** In the spaces below, write how you practise self-care in these areas, if applicable.	
Relationships		Financial
Professional		Hobbies (or other interests)
Add any apects that you think should be added. (This may be left blank if you have nothing to add).		

Question 3 was designed to gain insight into respondents' existing self-care practices, and awareness of areas they nurture or neglect. This aspect of the questionnaire served the purpose of both providing information for me, but also giving respondents an opportunity to consider these aspects for themselves.

4.	If there is anything not captured in this questionnaire, that you think is important regarding your own stress or well-being, please add it below:

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire!

The purpose of Question 4 was simply to give respondents an opportunity to add any information they may have considered relevant but had not been covered in the questionnaire.

Data analysis procedures for this questionnaire were mostly content analysis, though certain aspects did lend themselves to inductive thematic analysis, such as the personal self-reporting questions. Data was sometimes recorded as frequencies and sometimes thematically, as discussed in Chapter 5.

4.7   QUALITY MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

The important contribution research makes to knowledge creation, requires that the collection, analysis and synthesis of data be trustworthy and of credible quality. This means that the research findings need to be both *valid* and *reliable*, terms typically associated with quantitative research. Creswell (2014a:201) suggests that validity in qualitative research is achieved when the researcher "checks the accuracy of the findings by employing certain procedures", and that qualitative 'reliability' "indicates that the researcher's approach is consistent across different researchers and different projects." Lincoln and Guba (1985) offer the widely-used and accepted model of norms for establishing trustworthiness in qualitative research, namely, ensuring credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability and authenticity of design, data collection,

analysis and interpretation. As mentioned in Chapter 1, a researcher is responsible for ensuring that strategies and procedures are applied in order to increase a study's trustworthiness (Hamilton & Corbett-Whittier, 2012); furthermore, understanding and applying the correct evaluation criteria for "legitimating their research project" (Anney, 2014:275). To ensure trustworthiness in this study, the procedures and strategies I applied, as suggested by leading researchers, are described in the context of how they correspond with Lincoln and Guba's (1985) model, as follows:

4.7.1 Credibility

In qualitative research, credibility is the preferred term for internal validity, and is concerned with the truth value of the study, or how truthfully the data reflects the participants' reality (Bertram & Christiansen, 2017). The questions it seeks to address is, "How can confidence be established in the research findings and how can one know if the findings presented are genuine?" (Anney, 2014). I applied the following strategies, as suggested by Nieuwenhuis (2016:123) to improve credibility of the research study:

- ✓ Well established research methods were adopted and described processes in detail.

- ✓ Early familiarity was developed with participants, who were selected using well-defined purposeful participant selection.

- ✓ Data-collection methods were described in detail and triangulation was employed, in that two or more forms of data was collected on the same issue to establish coherent themes by converging information from all the data sources (Creswell, 2014a; Hamilton & Corbett-Whittier, 2012).

- ✓ Frequent debriefing sessions with my supervisor, and peer discussion were conducted.

- ✓ Researcher's reflective notes were kept.

- ✓ Member checking was conducted, which is the process of confirming with participants that their views, actions and participation have been accurately captured by the researcher by sharing transcripts, initial analyses and interpretations with participants during and after data collection, to ensure that what they intended to express, was indeed captured that way (Hamilton & Corbett-Whittier, 2012).

Interestingly, Richardson (1994) rejects the idea of triangulation, as rigid, fixed and two-dimensional, and proposes another, more transgressive, post-modern form of validity, which she names crystallisation. In her view, a crystal, as metaphor for how reality may be perceived, "combines symmetry and substance with an infinite variety of shapes, substances, transmutations, multi-dimensionalities, and angles of approach. Crystals grow, change, alter, but are not amorphous…[they] are prisms that reflect externalities and refract within themselves, creating different colours, patterns, arrays, casting off in in different directions. What we see depends upon our angle of repose". I considered Richardson's (1994) concept of crystallisation an attractive one in approaching the trustworthiness and execution of the research study.

4.7.2 Dependability

Dependability and credibility are closely linked (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Nieuwenhuis, 2016:124) and may be conceived as the qualitative equivalence of reliability, which addresses the issue of consistency in research. Anney (2014) rephrases Guba's (1981) initial question to be addressed as, "How can one know if the findings would be repeated consistently with the same, or similar participants in the same context?" Bitsch (2005) speaks of it as "the stability of findings over time." In seeking to improve dependability of the research, I applied Anney (2014) and Nieuwenhuis's (2016:124) recommendations to:

- ✓ Provide a thickly described audit trail of the operational detail of the data gathering and analysis processes employed.

- ✓ Reflect and appraise the research study by keeping a journal and 'memoing' my decisions and thought processes as the research progressed.

✓ Code and recode the same data twice with approximately two weeks between each exercise, to compare the findings to see if I find the same of different results.

✓ Request my supervisor to double check my analysis and interpretation of data, to see how our findings correspond.

4.7.3 Transferability

Transferability is the qualitative equivalent of generalisability of the research findings, and addresses the concern of applicability (Anney, 2014). The question to be addressed asks, "How do we determine the applicability of the findings of the inquiry in other settings or with other respondents?" (Anney, 2014). The goal of qualitative research is not to generalise, but instead to present "a slice from the life-world layered meanings" relevant to that slice of the lifeworld (Denzin, 1983; Nieuwenhuis, 2016:124). Terre Blanche *et al.* (2006:93) capture it well in their assertion that:

> *Interpretive and constructivist researchers do not assume that they are investigating a stable and unchanging reality and therefore, do not expect to find the same results repeatedly. On the contrary, they expect that individuals, groups, and organisations will behave differently and express different opinions in changing contexts.*

Whilst the results of this study cannot be repeated in the exact context, with the same people in the exact environment on a specific day, it is possible that transferability or resonance (Pollard, 2011) may occur. Nieuwenhuis (2016:124) suggests that this is possible when participants are typical of that context, to which the findings apply, for example, teachers in township schools. To achieve this, I endeavoured to:

✓ Describe the context, participants and research design, as richly and thickly as possible, so that the readers can make considered decisions about the transferability of the research to similar contexts and participants, and perhaps so that teachers in similar schools may find resonance with the findings.

✓ Purposefully select participants typical of the context, that is, teachers in a township primary school.

4.7.4 Confirmability

Confirmability addresses the concern of neutrality in qualitative research, including the degree to which other researchers can confirm or corroborate the results of an enquiry and seeks to address the question, "How do we know if the findings come solely from participants and the investigation was not influenced by the bias, motivations or interests of the researcher?" (Anney, 2014). Creswell (2014a) asserts that the interpretation and findings need to be grounded in the data, and not the researcher's perceptions or viewpoints; what Anney (2014) quotes Tobin and Begley (2004:392) as saying that "the findings are not figments of the inquirer's imagination but are clearly derived from the data". Confirmability, it seems, is enhanced by providing an audit trail, triangulation and researcher reflexivity offering evidence that the researcher did not simply find what he or she set out to find (Anney, 2014). This alludes to the neutrality of the researcher, which Sullivan (2019) and Silverman (2016) acknowledge that neither qualitative or quantitative research is ever bias free or truly objective, and that to some extent, subjectivity is an inevitable part of research. Both agree, though, that engaging in reflexive practice, discussed more fully under Section 4.8, may mitigate some of the undermining influences of bias. Sullivan (2019) suggests that researchers should become aware of their biases and openly acknowledge and explore the subjective influences in their research, so that the reader of the findings can judge for themselves what factors may have shaped those findings. My attempt to do this is expressed in the following section.

4.8   RESEARCHER ROLE AND REFLEXIVITY

In my role as researcher, I viewed myself as entering into a collaborative partnership with knowledgeable, participating teachers in a township school, to understand wellbeing, and their experience and perception of it, in order to explore ways of improving it. In terms of this collaboration, I further considered myself as an "outsider working collaboratively with insiders" (Herr & Anderson, 2005:32-45). To avoid the

knowledge claim conundrum in collaborative research, I use the word 'we' when referring to collective insights we acquired as a group, and the word 'I' when referring to my personal learning and perspectives (McNiff, 2017:141).

Moreover, I was also a research instrument. I followed Maree's (2016:44) advice that a researcher needs to be a "sensitive observer who records phenomena as faithfully as possible, simultaneously raising additional questions, following hunches and moving deeper into the analysis of the phenomena". Creswell (2014a:18) offers a useful summary of the practices of a qualitative researcher, to which I relate, as follows:

- Positions herself

- Collects participant meanings

- Focuses on a single concept or phenomenon

- Brings personal values into the study

- Studies the context or settings of participants

- Validates the accuracy of findings

- Makes interpretations of the data

- Creates an agenda for change or reform

- Collaborates with the participants

Researcher reflexivity, often documented in a reflexive journal, contributes significantly to the trustworthiness of a research study as it enables a researcher to reflect, interpret tentatively, plan and record the "… 'ah' phenomenon that arises during the investigation" (Anney, 2014:279).

4.9   ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Stake and Jegatheesan (2008) consider that "to comprehend some meanings of life, one must get close to that life. But if one gets too close, one risks violating its privacy",

cautioning about how we engage with the lives that we get close to for purposes of research. Ryen (2016:42) talks about the moral responsibility researchers have towards research participants in the process of knowledge production and identifies the key ethical issues as revolving around codes and consent, confidentiality and trust. King (2019:36) lists the following principles of the Helsinki Declaration, which, he suggests, underlie contemporary research ethics:

- protection from harm (physical and psychological)

- respect for individual dignity

- right to self determination

- right to privacy

- protection of confidentiality

Valuing an ethical approach to conducting this research, I considered all these guidelines in my engagement with participants. Based on the Code of Human Ethics of the British Psychological Society, King & Hugh-Jones (2019) present informed consent, confidentiality, the right to withdraw, assessing risk of harm, researcher safety, deception, debriefing, limitations to researcher role, use of incentives, honesty and integrity and processes for research governance and ethical review, as important aspects to be considered. In the table below, aspects that I considered to be important and relevant to this research study, from King's (2019:37-42) list are illustrated, with the actions I took to ensure ethical conduct in this research study.

Table 4.5: Ethical considerations

Ethical Issue (King & Hugh-Jones, 2019:37-42)	Actions I took to ensure ethical conduct
Informed consent: Participant should only participate in research when they have made an overt decision to do so, and have adequate information about the project	Consent to participate was requested from all participants; all aspects relating to the research purpose and process was explained to them and no information was

Ethical Issue (King & Hugh-Jones, 2019:37-42)	Actions I took to ensure ethical conduct
	withheld. All participants consented (*cf:* Appendices E, F and G for consent forms)
Confidentiality: This involves access to the personal information disclosed by participants.	Confidentiality was discussed with each participant as part of building the relationship of trust, and efforts to protect their confidentiality including storage of data. Part of the member checking process involved participants checking that their identity was sufficiently concealed in the reporting. Participants were offered optional anonymity in case they wish to be acknowledged for their contribution to the research (*cf.* Appendix H).
Right to withdraw: Two aspects apply, namely participants may withdraw from the data collection process and/or withdraw data they may already have provided.	Consent forms informed participants of their right to withdraw at any time without fear of consequence. It was also explained to participants that they would not be able to withdraw data collected in Phase one, since I would be unable to identify their questionnaire without compromising the other participants.
Assessing risk of harm: Researchers have the responsibility the assess the risk of physical or psychological harm to participants in any research involvement	Risk to participants was considered to be minimal given the benign processes engaged in. Participants were, however, requested to express any discomfort they may experience; during the interviews to share only what they were comfortable with and during phase two to say if they were uncomfortable with the topic under exploration. At all times, participant wellbeing was prioritised, and beneficence applied.
Limitations to researcher's role: When psychologists undertake research, it may be	The wellbeing of participants was important in the context of this research. When

Ethical Issue (King & Hugh-Jones, 2019:37-42)	Actions I took to ensure ethical conduct
possible that some participants may feel that the researcher may be able to provide assistance, counselling or advice on the participants personal issues.	personal issues emerged, they were dealt with sensitively, and participants were asked if they would like that included in the data or omitted. At no point, though, were boundaries overstepped.
Use of incentives: Researchers sometimes offer participants rewards or payment to participate in research projects.	No incentives were offered, and participation was out of the individuals' own free will.
Honesty and integrity: Researchers have an ethical responsibility to engage with honesty and integrity in interaction with participants; declare potential conflicts of interest; avoid any fabrication or dishonest manipulation of data or presentation of findings; and acknowledge the contribution of all involved.	Honesty and integrity were upheld in all aspects relating to the research study, and besides the ethics of morality, the research was also governed by an ethics of care for research participants.
Research governance and ethical review processes: These include systems and procedures set up to manage and monitor research activity	Approval to conduct the research was requested and granted from the Gauteng Department of Education, The District Director, School Principal and Governing Body. Institutional ethical clearance was applied for and granted: Ref. 2019/06/12/08632618/36/MC (*cf.* Appendix A, B, C and D) for approval and consent letters and certificates)

All data, including notes, audio recordings, questionnaires and related information was treated as confidential and stored in a locked cabinet at the researcher's home for a period of five years after completion of the envisaged study. Electronic data was stored on the researcher's computer or external hard-drive, using passwords to protect such information.

4.10 SUMMARY

In this chapter, methodological aspects relating to the empirical process of the research undertaking were presented. This included the research orientation and design; selection of research site and participants; the phasic process; data collection, analysis and synthesis; trustworthiness of the study; the role of the researcher and ethical considerations. The data, as analysed and interpreted, is presented in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 5

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In the preceding chapter, the methodology used to achieve the aims of this research study was accounted for. In achieving the broad purpose of the research to explore how teacher wellbeing can be promoted in a township primary school, the aim of the study was to develop guidelines for the promotion of teacher wellbeing. In achieving the aim, the objectives of the study were to…

- gain insight into participating teachers' perception of wellbeing;
- explore what those teachers perceive to be threats to their wellbeing;
- explore the resources or strategies they consider to promote their wellbeing and new interventions or strategies that can be implemented to promote teacher wellbeing in the context of the research; and
- consider and acknowledge the factors that influence the operationalisation and sustainability of an intervention to promote teacher wellbeing in a township primary school.

In this chapter, the data are presented, and the interpretations summarised. However, the findings are discussed and integrated in the next chapter, Chapter 6. The data analysis and interpretation are presented as specific to each phase as well as an integrated discussion across phases, highlighting key interpretations.

5.2 SCHOOL CONTEXT

The primary school at which this research was conducted, is situated within a township in Gauteng. Typical of township schools, the school was not designed with any facilities such as sports facilities (swimming pool, tennis/netball courts), library, school hall, science laboratory, computer rooms or any other similar facilities. In 2008, the GDE provided mobile libraries for the Foundation Phase, as part of the Gauteng Primary Language and Mathematics Strategy (GPLMS) programme. The teachers are

all from previously disadvantaged racial groups, with more female than male teachers. Three teachers have postgraduate qualifications and the rest have degrees, diplomas and higher diplomas. Most learners in the school come from lower socio-economic circumstances and the personal and social challenges associated with it. Most of them live in the nearby informal settlement and experience extreme poverty. The school has a School Nutrition Programme that provides a cooked meal to approximately 800 learners daily. The school's language of learning and teaching (LoLT) is English, but most learners are not English first language speakers. The school has management and governance structures in place such as the School Management Team (SMT) and School Governing Body (SGB), which are functional. The school's internal structures, such as the School Based Support Team (SBST), is functional too.

5.3   OVERVIEW OF PHASES

To improve the trustworthiness of the research, the empirical research was conducted in three phases for the purposes of data triangulation, and more importantly to penetrate the exploration within the case, from bigger group to individual perceptions and experiences. As described previously, the research spanned three phases as follows:

Phase 1: Baseline enquiry and context analysis of fifteen respondents' perception of their state of wellbeing by means of a qualitative questionnaire

Phase 2: Group engagement and information sharing with seven participants, a sub-group of Phase 1, following a process of Awareness, Exploration and Personalisation, as described in section 4.2.3.2. Engagement and information sharing sessions were conducted firstly, once a week over a six-week period; then during a one-day workshop (presentations on process and content pathways distinguished as Wellbeing 1 and Wellbeing 2 for ease of event coding). During these sessions, asset-based approaches or interventions, found in the literature, to promote wellbeing, were presented by the researcher to be explored, experienced and reviewed by the research participants.

Phase 3: Individual reflection with the same seven participants from Phase 2, using participant personal reflections for more in-depth insights into participants' views and experiences of the process, and their views on the promotion of teacher wellbeing in a township primary school.

Phases 2 and 3 are thus distinguished from each other on the basis of group and individual engagement.

5.4   PARTICIPANT PROFILE / DEMOGRAPHICS

As mentioned in Chapter 2, teachers in township schools are predominantly teachers from previously disadvantaged groups, so no white teachers participated in this research. In this subsection, participant gender and age categories are presented, per phase.

Gender

Phase 1: Of the fifteen respondents, two were male and thirteen, female.

Phases 2 and 3: The seven participants in Phases 2 and 3, who were a sub group of Phase 1, comprised one male and six females. Not all participants attended all sessions, since they sometimes needed to attend union or other meetings or had other engagements.

Age

Phase 1: Most of the respondents were in the age categories from forties to sixties. This suggests that three of the fifteen respondents were born after the dawn of democracy in South Africa, and the remaining respondents attended school during the old apartheid dispensation of separate education as described in Chapter 2.

Phases 2 and 3: The ages of the seven participants in these two phases ranged from twenties (one participant), forties (three) to fifties (three).

The age categories are presented in Table 5.1, as follows:

Table 5.1: Age categories of participants

Age category	Phase/s	Twenties	Thirties	Forties	Fifties	Sixties
Number of respondents	1 (N-15)	3	0	4	6	2
	2 and 3 (n-8)	1	0	3	3	0

In the following sub-sections, the data are presented, beginning with the content analysis of data collected in Phase 1. The rest of the data, integrated across phases and analysed using thematic analysis, are then presented and interpreted. An integration of identified themes is summarised later in this chapter and discussed as findings in Chapter 6.

5.5   DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

As data were collected, I followed the steps as suggested by Terre Blanche et al. (2006) discussed under Section 4.4.3. iv). I immersed myself in the data, through reading it several times over, to become familiar with its contents and context. Throughout this process, I continuously reflected on the meanings I deduced and induced from the data, the aim of the research, the research questions and the relationship between them and the conceptual framework underpinning the research. Slowly the process of coding began to unfold as I was able to identify labels, categories and sub-categories from within the data. Since not all the collected data emerged as themes, or needed to be presented as themes, thematic analysis was not used to analyse and interpret all data. Some data were analysed using content analysis, as differentiated in Chapter 4. Themes emerging across all three phases are interpreted and presented comprehensively under Section 5.7, as they relate to the main and sub-research questions.

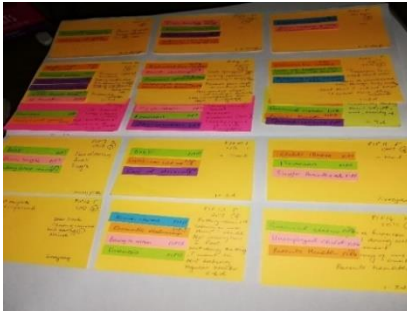The data collected throughout the three phases differed in nature and therefore analysed differently. The data collected in Phase 1 consisted mostly of one-word answers, listed in response to specific questions designed according to specific categories; for example, stressors and resources. This data did not require further interpretation and were best analysed using content analysis, as described in Section

4.4.1iv). In subsequent phases, related categories emerged but due to the engagement between researcher and participants, there is more to interpret and therefore, data analysis becomes more relational and thematic analysis characterises data analysis and interpretation in Phases 2 and 3. The overlap in similarity between all three phases is mediated by an integrated interpretive discussion, under Section 5.7 and of findings in the next chapter. The data collected and analysed from Phase 1 are presented below.

5.6   CONTENT ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF PHASE 1 DATA

Phase 1 enabled a baseline enquiry and context analysis of the state of wellbeing of fifteen respondents by means of a qualitative questionnaire, as explained in detail in the previous chapter.

The photograph in Figure 5.1(a) illustrates how I initially captured the raw data from Phase 1. Each of the fifteen respondents was represented as a coloured square. On each square, information such as age and gender were noted. Each respondent's responses to the questions, were written on coloured strips of paper, with each colour representing similar responses; for example, all responses to question 1.3 that related to financial concerns were recorded on green strips of paper and factors such as the politics, corruption and crime in our country were recorded on purple strips of paper. This was a preliminary coding strategy that made it easier to count the occurrence of similar responses, at a glance. I coded responses into categories, namely, personal and professional threats and personal and professional resources. I then copied every response onto a table for each category where I counted the number of occurrences, illustrated in Figure 5.1(b) as part of the content analysis applied (*cf.* Section 4.4.1) and then categorised the coded data for the specific category (c).

Figure 5.1: Initial capturing of data from the Phase 1 qualitative questionnaire

To maintain respondent anonymity, the only identifying information requested from respondents were their gender and age categories. As explained in Chapter 4, I was interested in knowing if there were differences in the kinds of stressors and concerns experienced by respondents, as well as their self-care practices, based on their age and gender, amongst this group of teachers. These qualitative findings are commented on as they arise, where relevant, in the interpretive summaries.

Data collected in Phase 1, are presented in visual displays (*cf.* Tables 5.2 to 5.6) followed by an interpretive summary of each category.

5.6.1 Emotions check and Experience of Stress

The emotions check, and stress check were the first two questions on the qualitative questionnaire in Phase 1. The results are presented in the following sections.

156

5.6.1.1 Emotions check

Results from the emotions check are presented in Table 5.2, with the top row indicating the scale from 1 (negative) to 10 (positive), and the bottom row, the number of respondents who chose each rating.

Table 5.2: Emotions check responses from respondents

Scale	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
No. of respondents	0	1	1	1	2	1	4	3	1	1

5.6.1.2 Frequency of feeling stressed

Question 2 was designed to provide a quick survey of respondents' experience of stress, more specifically distress, though the difference between distress, eustress and stress appraisal was only discussed with participants during the information sharing in Phase 2. This question enquired about the frequency with which respondents felt stressed and results are presented in Table 5.3, indicating the frequency with which respondents feel stressed.

Table 5.3: Frequency with which respondents feel stressed

Frequency of feeling stressed	Almost never	1 to 3 days a week	3 to 6 days a week	Every day
No. of respondents	0	8	2	5

5.6.1.3 Interpretive summary of participants emotional check and frequency of feeling stressed

Teachers reported feeling relatively good, as reflected in most scores being above five (5) on the emotions check fin. Based on these self-ratings, it appears that more respondents felt more positive (rating higher than 5) than negative, with three of the fifteen respondents rating lower than 5. All respondents reported feeling stressed at least once a week, with seven participants reporting feeling stressed three to seven

days a week, with five of them, daily. The significance of this finding relates to the effects of stress and prevalence of stress-related illnesses among teachers in South Africa (*cf.* Section 2.5.2). Though teachers reported feeling relatively good, the frequency with which they feel stressed (meaning 'distressed') indicates some incongruence. This piqued my curiosity around whether these teachers were possibly repressing their negative feelings to survive a day's work, with such repression manifesting as high levels of stress, whether they had accepted or resigned themselves to the fact that their job was stressful, or whether they had good coping strategies and resources in place (*cf.* Section 3.3).

Interestingly, during a session (Wellbeing 1) in Phase 2, seeking some insight into the questions I had whilst familiarising myself with the data in Phase 1, I mentioned to participants that even though respondents reported many stressors and factors diminishing their wellbeing and frequently feeling stressed, they still rated their emotional states as being relatively positive. I asked if this meant that their resilience was quite high. One of the participants facetiously remarked, *"We are used to the abuse."* (P2cW1), to which all participants laughed and acknowledged as being true. I wondered then whether participants acknowledge 'abuse' or perhaps feel 'abused' as part of their daily work to such an extent that they cannot afford the luxury of acknowledging negative feelings, or if they accept it as part of the vocational load. It may also be true that those who are exposed to chronic abuse become numb to those abuses, take them as normal, but not without cost to their entire emotional makeup and range. Many teachers survive by feeling numb. This would not matter if they are in other professions, but teaching requires teachers to be highly attuned to their own feelings. The 'abuse' they may experience undermines that attunement and can undermine the education endeavour.

5.6.2 Threats to Teacher Wellbeing

Questions 1.3 and 2.2 specifically asked respondents to list things that affected their emotional check-in state at that time, as well as things that cause them to feel stressed or discontented. I then separated these into personal and professional stressors,

mindful of the reciprocal influence between the two. The one-word responses characterising much of the data from the questionnaires were best analysed using content analysis and are represented visually in order of occurrence.

5.6.2.1 Personal stressors

Personal stressors diminishing wellbeing (or threats to wellbeing) amongst respondents, are presented here in order of frequency with which they occurred in the data.

Table 5.4: Personal stressors experienced by respondents

No	Categories and sub categories						
15							
14			▓				
13			▓				
12			▓				
11	■		▓				
10	■		▓				
9	■		▓				
8	■		▓	▒	▨		
7	■		▓	▒	▨		
6	■		▓	▒	▨		▤
5	■		▓	▒	▨		▤
4	■	▦	▓	▒	▨	▩	▤
3	■	▦	▓	▒	▨	▩	▤
2	■	▦	▓	▒	▨	▩	▤
1	■	▦	▓	▒	▨	▩	▤
Sub Cat	Personal finances	Unemployed relatives and others	Parenting and family relationships	Concerns: health - own and loved ones	Fears & concerns: country and other	Emotional state	Home work life integration / balance
Cat	Finances		Relationships Including family / social responsibilities		Emotional responses to situations Including fears and concerns and frustration with workload		

5.6.2.2 Interpretive summary of personal stressors experienced by participants

All but one respondent listed one or other familial relationship that they perceived to be a stressor. Family relationships whether with spouses, partners, children, parents or extended family were consistently a cause of personal stress to respondents. This varied from parenting: "*My children*" (p1g); "*being a mom*" (p1m); "*daughter growing*

up"; to specifically, single parenting: "*single parenting, must resolve everything*" (p1a); "*being single*"; general domestic relationships: "*romantic relationship*" (p1m); "*relationships at home*" (p1c); conflict within families: "*extended family challenges*" (p1d); "*extended family conflict*" (p1e); concern for parents, "*Mom's health*" (p1h); "*parent's health*" (p1n); "*wellbeing of parents*" (p1o). Concern about family members, particularly their health, overlaps with the emotional state of respondents covered later on. Unemployed relatives were also experienced as stressful, as discussed under the next subsection, financial stress.

Most participants, reported financial stress as a personal stressor, influencing their wellbeing. Respondents wrote, to quote a few, "*Finances run out, not enough*" (p1a); "*financial worries*" (P1c); "*debt…salary never enough*" (p1i)"; "*stress about finances*" (p1n). Besides their own financial stress, some respondents reported further stress caused by unemployed relatives and other less fortunate individuals: "*suffering, less fortunate individuals seeking my help*" (p1a); "*unemployed relatives becoming my burden*" (p1d); "*unemployed husband*" (p1f); "*unemployed son*" (p1n).

A broad category relating to the emotional state or experiences of respondents reveal much negative emotion such as worry, concern, fear, anger characterising responses to personal stressors experienced by respondents. Responses varied from health concerns (worry), for themselves, particularly among older respondents, "*ill-health*" (p1c); "*health challenges*" (p1d). Both these participants were in their sixties. Concern and worry about the health of loved ones, some of which have already been quoted under relationships, "*daughter's illness*" (p1k); "*loved one's who are ill*" (p1j); "*Hormones PMS*" (p1g). This questionnaire was completed in August 2019, months before the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic. I often wonder how the pandemic may have escalated these concerns for respondents. Participants in Phases 2 and 3 do share some insights relating to the pandemic, which is discussed under thematic analysis of data from Phases 2 and 3.

Some respondents listed fear relating to their socio-political environment, citing "*crime in the community*" (p1a); "*economy of our country*" (p1n); "*land invasions, politics, corruption*" (p1b). Some of the other negative emotions experienced by respondents

161

include, personal fears, such as "*fear of driving*" (p1i and p1j); worry, "*worry, constantly thinking about stuff*" (p1h); "*not achieving my goals*", "*worry about transport*" (p1o); "*insecurities*" (p1g); "*anger – because of the children sometimes*" (p1b) and "*stress*" (p1l).

Another negative emotion that appeared to be experienced by respondents is frustration, particularly relating to work, either at home, from school, or with other involvements, such as the church. I considered this emotional state deserving of its own subcategory due to the blurring of lines between personal and professional stressors and systems, as respondents appear to be stressed by trying to integrate their home and work lives. Respondents cited some of the following, "*very little leisure time*" (p1c); "*Even though long weekend, will not have leisure time or social time with friends… balancing work and home life*" (p1e); "*work…church*" (p1h); one respondent seemed to feel overwhelmed and disempowered, "*taking on more than I should, not voicing how I feel not doing things I want to, not taking regular breaks…house chores*" (p1m). In Phase 2, a participant speaks about the guilt teachers feel when needing a break, as though they are neglecting their duty when they take a break. In the section of the questionnaire dealing with self-care practices, a respondent wrote "*…It's easy to say go exercise or take a walk but time does not allow me."* (p1g) and another, "*using a stress ball to contain my frustration in class*", (p1i).

In the next section, respondents' views on the professional stressors impacting their wellbeing are presented.

5.6.2.3 Professional stressors

The previous section ended with the stressors experienced by respondents to integrating the demands in their personal and professional lives. This flows naturally into the stressors experienced in the workplace. The following visual display presents respondents' professional stressors at a glance, followed by and interpretive summary thereof.

Table 5.5: Professional stressors reported by respondents

No	Categories and sub categories						
15							
14	■						
13	■						
12	■						
11	■						
10	■						
9	■				■		
8	■		■		■	■	
7	■		■	■	■	■	
6	■	■	■	■	■	■	
5	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
4	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
3	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
2	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
1	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Sub Cat	Admin work / workload and deadlines	Curriculum coverage	Concern for learners – barriers, social challenges curriculum	Emotions and experiences related to professional role	Learner behaviour and attitude	Overcrowded classes, high teacher learner ratio	Lack of stakeholder support
Cat	Professional roles and demands				Lack of stakeholder and systemic support		
	Systemic challenges						

5.6.2.4 Interpretive summary of professional stressors experienced by respondents

In contemplating the data, all challenges were systemic whether internal (within individual) or external (within external systems). Two broad categories could, however, be identified, namely professional roles and demands and a perceived lack of stakeholder and systemic support. These are discussed below.

Professional roles and demands

Again, all but one respondent cited workload, deadlines, pressure to cover the curriculum and the burden of administrative work, as professional stressors. Respondents in Phase 1 of this research described it thus, "*Excessive work load, deadlines, lots of administration*" (p1c); *"concern regarding my workload, even though it's a long weekend, the fact that I will not have leisure time this weekend*" (p1e); "*pressure from department for curriculum coverage*" (p1d), "*compact curriculum*" (p1j), to quote a few.

Coupled with the pressure to complete administrative tasks and cover the curriculum adequately, teachers are aware that their rush to complete work compromises some of the learners: "*One is still expected to mark and conduct reading, these things are not well conducted in most cases, that is why our learners are struggling to read/read with comprehension…Coverage of curriculum circulates every term and yet there was no understanding in some concepts. You don't do diligent teaching.*" (p1d); "*chasing curriculum but leaving learners behind… too much administration*" (p1l); "*feeling ineffective, not reaching all learners, proof in assessment results*" (p1c). Several respondents referred to the language barriers experienced by learners, caused by learners having different home and school languages, and having to attend a school that does not offer instruction in their mother tongue.

Respondents also reported concern over the social circumstances and difficulties experienced by many learners. One respondent seemed to lament the amount of time spent dealing with social problems instead of teaching the curriculum, "*turned out to be a social worker…learners with social problems, resolve and refer instead of*

164

conducting the curriculum as required" (p1d); *"social factors of learners"* (p1n), *"heavy session conducted in the morning"* (p1o), even though this is one of the roles, a pastoral role, specified for teachers in the Norms and Standards (*cf.* Section 2.4.4).

Many responses were nuanced with emotion, but some respondents specifically described how they were feeling. They used words such as, "*anger*" (p1b); "*feeling ineffective*" (p1c); "*tiredness from the week that was*" (p1e); "*long and busy day*" (p1f); "*not taking regular breaks*" (p1m), "*taking blame for learner behaviour that I cannot control*" (p1a). One respondent, in the forties age category, appeared to be considering resigning, contemplating "*career change…concerned about having enough pensionable years after resigning.*" (p1h). From reading such responses, one gets a distinct sense of the demands of the profession and its potential for draining the resources (protective factors) a teacher may have.

Lack of stakeholder and systemic support

Stakeholders in a school context, typically include learners, parents, teachers, the department of education and the community. The last quote in the previous paragraph referred to learner behaviour, which, if perceived to be ill-discipline, is a significant stressor for many teachers, as attested to by the responses from this group of teachers. Many respondents complained about the behaviour and attitude of learners citing, "*ill-discipline*" (p1a), "*ill-disciplined learners*" (p1l); "*unruly behaviour of learners*" (p1j and p1k); "*learners who are not eager to learn*" (p1l) and "*learners' attitude towards learning*" (p1n). Respondents seem to feel let down by learners who are not making their task any easier. The learners too, may have their reasons and story, and that too, is research that needs to be undertaken.

It may be that responses regarding the social difficulties experienced by learners, allude to the role of parents, families and the community in supporting learners, but some respondents specifically listed the "*lack of support from parents*" (p1d) and said that "*parents disturb teaching and learning sometimes, come to class any time they choose*" (p1a). I wondered about the school protocols in protecting learners and

teachers, if parents (or anybody) have access to classrooms during the school day, especially as respondent (p1d) listed "*security at work*" as a stressor.

Lack of support from the department of education was widely cited, in aspects ranging from overcrowded classrooms, to impractical policies, the pressures and workload already mentioned, and insufficient development from the department. Appropriate skills training in terms of managing learner behaviour may also be an area of neglect from the department. Respondents cited "*large learner numbers*" (p1c); "*overcrowded classes with less furniture*" (p1d); "*teacher learner ratio*" (p1e and p1l). In some cases, respondents equated the large learner numbers with ill-discipline, "*big class -ill disciplined*" (p1a), which is understandable if one considers how difficult it may be to manage a large group of children.

A respondent bemoaned the fact that "*Policies that are not practical/ Policy makers who theorise these but cannot practise or come and assist me on putting these practically*" (p1a) may highlight the policy expectation that teachers should fulfil multiple roles and effectively complete multiple tasks, in the absence of support or evidence that it can be done.

5.6.3 Resources that Improve Teacher Wellbeing

In this subsection, the data collected and analysed relating to resources, or self-care practises engaged in by respondents, to improve their wellbeing, are presented.

5.6.3.1 Personal resources

Question 2.3 was designed to determine respondents' resources or coping strategies with question 2.3a) requiring respondents to list some of the strategies they use to cope or manage their stress and 2.3b) requiring respondents to consider what they would like to do to manage their stress, but do not, and reasons for not doing so. Sometimes people know what to do to manage their stress, or they have an idea of what they would like to do, yet they do not do it for specific reasons. Question 3 was designed to gain insight into respondents' existing self-care practices, and awareness of areas they nurture or neglect. This aspect of the questionnaire served the purposes

of both, providing information for me, but also giving respondents an opportunity to experience self-awareness of their self-care practices.

It was easier, whilst analysing Phase 1 data, to distinguish between personal and professional threats, as presented in the previous section. It was not as easy to distinguish personal from professional resources, though professional resources were covered in question 3.3. It is also important to note that wellbeing promoting resources may be present in various forms, such as in the individual's environment, personality traits of the individual, among others, explained in more detail in Chapter 3. The questionnaire from which Phase 1 data were collected, focused specifically on activities respondents engage in that make them feel better (*cf.* question 2.3) and some of their self-care practices in the areas of mental, emotional, physical and spiritual wellbeing (*cf.* question 3.2) as well as relationship, financial, professional and other activities, such as hobbies (*cf.* question 3.3). In the context of this research, these self-care practises are regarded as resources, enabling increased wellbeing of respondents. Furthermore, reported resources were analysed insofar as they related to the PERMA+ model as described under the Conceptual Framework (*cf.* Section 3.5) and briefly illustrated in Figure 5.6, noting resources potentially not covered by the model.

(Seligman, 2013)

Figure 5.2: PERMA+ model

The data collected are visually displayed in Table 5.6, the dotted lines indicate the permeability across and between aspects, as discussed under the interpretive summary.

Table 5.6: Personal and professional resources reported by respondents

No.	Personal and professional resources using the PERMA+ model									
15			■							
14			■	■						
13			■	■						■
12			■	■		■				■
11			■	■		■				■
10			■	■		■				■
9			■	■		■				■
8			■	■		■				■
7			■	■		■				■
6			■	■		■		■		■
5			■	■		■		■		■
4		■	■	■		■		■		■
3		■	■	■		■		■	■	■
2	■	■	■	■		■		■	■	■
1	■	■	■	■	■	■		■	■	■
	P	E	R	M	A	P	O	N	S	Other

5.6.3.2 Interpretive summary of resources reported to promote respondents' wellbeing

Most frequently cited resources were relationships and engagement with others, including family, colleagues, friends and even learners. Every respondent referred to some or other relationship in listing their resources. Interestingly, many respondents referred to relationships when asked how they practise self-care for their hearts

(emotional self-care): "*call my mother… going on a date*", (p1o); "*enjoy hugs, giving high fives to learners coming in my class*", (p1n); "*going out with friends*", (p1m); "*relationships with family, socialising*", (p1k); "*I maintain open communication through honesty, I love people unconditionally, I respect others*", (p1j); "*I have a passion for people or others*", (p1h); "*talk to my spouse, communicate with friends, colleagues*", (p1c); "*visit family*" (p1b).

Religious and spiritual practices were cited, by fourteen of the fifteen respondents, as sources of strength and support: "*share word of God with others through discussions, practice and worship, sing, go to gatherings to worship and hear God's word*" (p1a); "*meditate, pray*" (p1c); "*I normally turn to God, truly, no one else listens to my challenges, instead more pressure is put on you… get my daily strength from God.*" (p1d); "*listening to gospel music, going to church every Sunday, meditating on God's word*" (p1j); "*Prayer, worship, reading the Bible, fasting, Watch TBN, attend church.*" (p1g). Often the activities described involved other people such as in "*prayer group and church*" (p1n), reinforcing the prominence of relationships as resources.

Physical activity was also frequently reported, with most respondents engaging in walking, dancing, cycling, jogging or going to the gym and exercise, to take care of themselves, physically: "*Take long walks*" (p1c); "*gym, exercise a lot*", (p1d); "*Part of local workout group that meets on weekday evenings. I do my utmost to attend at least once a week*" (p1e); "*I jog on Saturday morning*", (p1l); "*dance*", (p1g).

The focus on health and physical activity often included attempts towards healthy nutrition by eating well, supplementation, drinking more water and attempts to minimise or manage conditions such as hypertension and diabetes. Respondents said the following: "*am trying to control factors that can cause a heart attack such as high blood pressure*", (p1b); "*take supplements, drink a lot of water… use less fat and try to eat lots of fruit and veggies, take some raw, use olive oil instead of oil*", (p1d); "*try to eat healthy*", (p1h); "*watch my diet, regular check up at the doctor*", (p1i); "*trying to eat healthy food, regular visits to the doctor (hypertension and diabetes)*", (p1j).

Since respondents were not specifically asked questions relating to engagement, positive emotion, optimism, accomplishment and to a degree meaning, interpreting these aspects from the given responses may be described as a form of abductive reasoning, which, according to Butte College (2021: para.13) "typically begins with an incomplete set of observations and proceeds to the likeliest possible explanation for the set". There is a strong degree of overlap and permeability between these aspects as they cannot be easily distinguished from each other, since engagement may result in the experience of positive emotion, which may give meaning to one's life, or increase optimism and a sense of accomplishment. For example, where respondents indicated enjoyment of "*gardening*" (p1a and p1c), "*home maintenance*" (p1c), or mentioned the words "*I have a passion for…*" (p1f and p1h), "*love to exercise*", (p1f). I interpreted this as engagement, which may be experienced in a variety of activities as described in Section 3.5.3.2. Engagement and meaning were also reflected in the questionnaire items relating to hobbies or other activities engaged in as part of respondents' self-care, and the following hobbies, not already mentioned, include, "*Charity work, I try to make time to be/get involved in charity work*", (p1e); "*I do motivational talks, this is my passion*", (p1f); "*dance and music*", (p1i); "*reading and watching TV*", (p1n); "*baking*", (p1o). Singing and listening to music was cited by several respondents as improving their wellbeing, as well as reading and watching TV. Even though only two respondents specifically expressed positive emotion, using the words "*laugh*", (p1n) and "*enjoy*", (p1h), the experience of positive emotion may be present in any response relating to activities that respondents reported on, such as, inter alia: "*singing*", (p1a and p1n), "*journaling*", (p1o), or dancing, walking, being with friends or family, as already presented.

Other aspects not specifically covered by the PERMA+ model, but reported on by respondents, are discussed next.

PERMA+ refers specifically to sleep, as an aspect promoting wellbeing, but does not include other forms of rest and relaxation as reported on by respondents, for example, "*lay on my bed and watch TV*", (p1b); "*meditate*", (p1c, p1e, p1i, p1j); "*me time*", (p1m"); "*go on breaks*", (p1h); "*sitting outside and watching nature*", (p1a). These are all

aspects not specifically captured by the PERMA+ model (*cf.* Section 3.5.3.2). Three respondents, however, specifically mentioned sleep and naps as improving their wellbeing.

The questionnaire asked respondents to indicate how or if they practised self-care in the following areas: mind (cognitive); heart (emotions); body (physical); soul (spiritual); relational; financial, professional and hobbies or other activities that contribute to their self-care. Most of these are easily subsumed in the PERMA+ model. Aspects, less clearly subsumed or not covered at all, are presented next.

Eleven respondents mentioned reading (books, newspapers, magazines) as part of their cognitive self-care. Several mentioned playing stimulating games on their mobile phones and others reported watching documentaries or motivational videos. The use of technology to provide stimulation, information and entertainment was frequently expressed by respondents, reflecting the role of technology in improving wellbeing.

An aspect not specifically covered by the model, yet strongly influencing respondents' state of wellbeing is financial stability or resources, as reflected in the personal threats to wellbeing, already discussed. The questionnaire asked respondents to indicate how or if they practise financial self-care. Nine of the fifteen respondents indicated that they try to practise financial self-care in some of the following ways, "*I am a budgeting person, stick to my budget, avoid spending unnecessarily, spoil myself and family now and then*", (p1a); "*not to carry on making loans*", (p1b); "*Retirement planning*", (p1c); "*use my money wisely, eat at home instead of malls, not splurging on wants as opposed to needs*", (p1e); "*save*", (p1g). Other respondents expressed similar ideas.

5.6.3.3 Professional resources

Although professional self-care may reflect positive emotion, engagement, relationships, meaning and accomplishment, it warrants separate presentation for the purposes of presenting professional resources. Respondents reported practising professional self-care in some of the following ways, "*I attend phase and grade district developmental workshops, I discuss challenges with colleagues*", (p1a); "*being organised*", (p1o); "*prepare before a lesson*", (p1m); "*sticking to the plan, whatever it*

171

may be, this way work does not pile up", (p1e); "*attend workshops to meet colleagues from various schools to interact on various strategies to apply in our classes*", (p1d); "*with teaching there's lots of work. But I practise to have time for myself*", (p1b); "*using a stress ball to contain my frustration in class*", (p1i); "*I attend workshops, training meetings for development and to stay updated. This can be stressful*" (p1f). The last two responses allude to the fine line between threats and resources that sometimes exist and the role of resources in mediating stressors.

The data collected and analysed from Phase 1, using content analysis, feeds into the thematic analysis of data collected during subsequent phases, as presented in the next section.

5.7 THEMATIC ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA COLLECTED ACROSS PHASES

Incorporating the data presented and analysed from Phase 1 and further familiarisation with the data collected from subsequent phases, I was soon able to identify common patterns and occurrences, that flowed naturally into codes, categories, subcategories and themes as they emerged and were identified from the data.

The broadest delineation of data into themes corresponded with the sub research questions seeking to explore…
- ➢ Participant perceptions of wellbeing
- ➢ Threats to teacher wellbeing
- ➢ Resources that improve teacher wellbeing
- ➢ Factors to consider in the promotion of teacher wellbeing (guidelines)

The following table illustrates the themes that were induced and identified from the data, where they are further categorised, and sub categorised. Overlap between categories sometimes arises as often happens within and between systems. In the ensuing subsections, data are presented thematically, followed by an interpretive summary of each theme.

Table 5.7: Themes, categories and sub categories

Themes	Categories	Sub-categories
Participant perceptions of teacher wellbeing	Participants' perceptions and awareness of wellbeing before participation in the research	• Personal associations of wellbeing • Participants' awareness of teacher wellbeing before participation in the research

	Participants' experiences and awareness of wellbeing during and after participating in the research	• Participant's experiences of the research engagement
		  - Exploring their agency
		  - During the research programme
		• Participants' awareness of their wellbeing after completion of the research programme

Threats to teacher wellbeing	Personal challenges experienced by participants	• Finances, relationships, family and social responsibilities, concerns about health (parents, children and self), home-work life integration and balance, negative emotions experienced
	Professional challenges experienced by participants	• Workload and professional demands, feeling ineffective, not reaching learners, overcrowded classes, not enough furniture, learner behaviour / discipline, lack of support from stakeholders • Professional roles, systemic challenges and lack of support
Resources that improve teacher wellbeing	Personal resources (self-care practices or wellbeing promoting activities engaged in by participants)	• Existing resources (pre-research engagement) correlated with PERMA+ - Relationships; religious and spiritual practices; physical exercise and health consciousness; entertainment (Technology); rest and relaxation; engagement in pleasurable or meaningful activities • New and existing resources explored (post research engagement)
	Professional resources	• Professional development and engagement with colleagues (supportive relationships) • Collegial relationships and strengths; supportive school structures (Principal and SMT and SBST)
Factors to consider in	Sustainability of the intervention	• Determining the need for an intervention

Themes	Categories	Sub-categories
the promotion of teacher wellbeing (Guidelines)		- Participant views on the importance of teacher wellbeing • Threats to sustainability - Time, diversity of needs, misconceptions, absence of structures • Opportunities for sustainability - The importance of cultivating an enabling school environment (ethos and values)
	Stakeholder roles in the implementation of a proposed intervention	• Systemic synergy - Role of the department of education and the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) - Role of the school and its structures (SMT, SGB and SBST) - Roles of external service providers - Role of the individual
	Nature of the proposed Intervention	• Presentation of a programme • Process pathways to wellbeing • Content pathways to wellbeing - Relevance of Conceptual Framework in the context of this research - Additional topics for inclusion

To confirm that the findings do emanate from real data (Creswell, 2014; Anney, 2014), quotations from focus group transcriptions and other data collection sources are provided. As many quotations as possible are given to enrich the data and provide thick description of the processes engaged in. Sometimes such quotations are presented in a table, especially if dialogue needs to be indicated or all participants views on a topic are shared. Sometimes quotations are provided intext, as related to findings or as otherwise appropriate. At times quotations (data) are detailed and long but full inclusion of the entire text is necessary to represent participants' views more fully.

5.7.1 Theme 1: Participant perceptions of teacher wellbeing

This theme discusses findings related to personal associations of wellbeing before participation, during the research process and after participation in the research.

5.7.1.1 Participants' perceptions and awareness of wellbeing before participation in the research

Personal associations of wellbeing

During Phase 2, in the session, referred to as Wellbeing 1, during which process pathways to wellbeing were presented, participants were invited to engage on what wellbeing means to them and what would make them feel well, or know that their wellbeing is good. Their responses reflected varied answers, including feeling good (hedonic) and functioning well (eudaimonic) perspectives, as discussed in the literature under Section 3.2.4. Content pathways, or the content of an intervention to promote wellbeing cannot be a one-size-fits-all programme and needs to consider the subjective preferences of participants. This makes the AEP process so important, that based on awareness, and exploration of a variety of pathways, a person will personalise the pathways and strategies that promote their individual wellbeing.

Table 5.8: Excerpts from participants' personal associations of wellbeing

Participant	Quotations
P2aW1	*When I have lots of money…I'll be so well, I won't have care in the world.* LATER *I'll feel well if my daughter's two matric balls are past. The 23rd and the 30th. Then I'll feel okay.*
P2bW1	*When you feel happy, you feel good, you feel happy, you're relaxed.*
P2cW1	*When your work is done.* LATER *Tranquillity, contentment and ease. Peace.*
P2dW1	*When it is well with my soul.*
P2eW1	*The day I get up for school and I'm happy to come to school, and I'm looking forward to it, that day, then I'm well.*

Participant	Quotations
P2fW1	*Feeling joyful, peaceful…and content.*
P2gW1	*I feel happy when I'm able to make difference in someone's life. If they are sad and they're able to talk to me and feel happier after that, then I'm happy. If they're struggling with something and I'm able to assist, then I assist, with no expectations.*
P2hW1	*For me, its… immediately when you said wellbeing, peace of mind came. Peace of mind even when my car breaks down; peace of mind even when I don't have the money; peace of mind even if everything else around me falls apart, then I know I'm well, but if I fall apart when things around me falls apart, then my being is not well.*

(During this session, eight people were present, since a teacher joined the group for the workshop, on that day only)

Participants' awareness of teacher wellbeing before participation in the research

In seeking to understand participants' views of their own wellbeing, the participants in Phases 2 and 3 revealed that they did not prioritise or give much thought to their own wellbeing. Wellbeing was always considered in relation to the wellbeing of others.

Table 5.9: Excerpts from participants' awareness of wellbeing prior to the research

Participant	Quotations
P2aF2	*I thought it's like non-existent.*
P2bF2	*To tell you the honest truth, Bev, normally they just overlook the teachers, it's like their wellbeing was not even very important because you just come and teach. We have to look out for the learners most of the time, so personally for me, I didn't think about it because my focus was more on the wellbeing of the learners.*
P2cF2	*I knew that the department has a… department. The principal always tells us that… if you have a problem or if there's a problem, he will refer you to the department but personally you don't really think about it, you just think, like – was saying now, you think you have to be the strong one, doesn't matter what happens, you just have to, you have to be resilient all the time,*

Participant	Quotations
	you just need to bounce back every time and sort out, so it's not something that you really think about,…you always have to consider the learners and the parents but you don't think about…, I never thought about my own wellbeing.
P2dF2	*Ja Bev, perhaps my own wellbeing, I used to just push to the back, but partially I was always concerned about teachers at school, you know, at times I would see that a teacher is not well, you know, and as an individual I would like just ask the teacher, you know I see that you are not okay, is there anything that is the matter, but not that I could really help to resolve things, but I was aware that teachers are not always well, and I am aware, that teachers are not always well but how to deal with it, was maybe a challenge.*
P2eF2	*I think, ja, we are not even aware of our own wellbeing. You know, as others have already said, you assume that you are okay, and we are also of the idea that wellness only becomes an issue when you are not well. It is not something that you are aware of, and you are also not pro-active. You know before I break down, let me have this in place in terms of my wellbeing. So, we are not aware, we just carry on as we carry on every year until something happens and then you find out, it is also not something personal, wellbeing is always for other people when things don't go right, but not personal, what happens when I break down?* *…we are not even aware of our wellness, we just like machines, we just carry on.*
P3a	*Many people believe we have no cause for complaints because we chose this profession, but I believe that teaching is a calling, so we are called by God to teach His flock, therefore we deserve to be well taken care of by ourselves, firstly, and then as a collective, by each other and the department of education.*
P3b	*Most times we concentrate on the learners and forget about the educators. A sick educator can't support a sick child.*

5.7.1.2 Participants' experiences of participating in the research

Participants' experiences during the research engagement

The data in this sub category are presented in two parts:

- Firstly, deliberate decisions made by participants, during the research process, to improve their wellbeing on a daily or weekly basis, encouraging their agency in improving their own wellbeing.
- Secondly, their comments during the process regarding their experiences of the research programme; and

Firstly, during the weekly sessions, participants were asked to intentionally change something that week, to explore new behaviours that may improve their agency, and consequently improve their own wellbeing. Excerpts from their weekly feedback questionnaires are presented in Table 5.10 below to illustrate their efforts to improve their wellbeing.

Table 5.10: Intentional changes participants made to improve their own wellbeing

Participant	Quotations
P2aSF	*I tried changing my attitude towards the learners. To be more patient. Tried to be more patient and tolerant with my colleagues.*
P2bSF	*I am henceforth choosing what will stay (positive thoughts and attitude) and what will go (all the negative). This will help me to relax and solve problems better…and help me to relate better with people around me.*
P2cSF	*Did not take school work home; made time for alone time* *started spending most of my time invigilating while learners do classwork; started journaling*
P2dSF	*watch less TV; Not to worry and think too much about things I fear and cannot change; Sticking to a budget with day-to-day stuff.*
P2eSF	*Pray and praise. Try to be more kind to people even though I felt overwhelmed.*

Guided by Rotter's notion of Locus of Control (*cf.* Section 3.2.6), participants explored making small changes, intentionally, each week, relating to aspects of their lives that they would like to improve. This awareness and action enabled participants to proactively care for themselves by exploring different thoughts, actions or behaviours

that would make them feel better. It was different for each person, which makes the personalisation aspect of the AEP process (*cf.* Section 4.2.3.2) so relevant, since the process enables each person to explore and personalise based on their own context and needs. Furthermore, the changes made by participants reflect a level of self-awareness, a necessary first step in improving their wellbeing (*cf.* Section 3.5.2) as they consciously made changes to aspects that were reported as threats or stressors, in Phase 1.

The second aspect reported on in this section relates to how participants experienced some of the sessions during the research process.

Table 5.11: Excerpts from participants' experiences during the research engagement

Participant	Quotations
P2eF1	*I am looking at this setup now, when I walked in, immediately I just got so relaxed, welcoming, so comfortable*
P3d	*Many or even most sessions resembled counselling and therapeutic practices. And I think that is why the sessions were so effective and you could leave sessions empowered and with your burdens lighter.*
P2eF2 **Quotation also applies in Table 5. 20 (suggestions for content to be included in a proposed programme)**	*So, I think for me the important thing of all your sessions was the self-discovery. We don't really know what is going on with us emotionally, what is going on in the inside of us, we don't even know how well we are mentally, we make our own judgements, but based on what? So, these sessions are all about self-discovery, so I think those topics you know where you become more aware of yourself, and how you work internally and I'm talking about emotionally and mentally in terms of your mind.*
P2dF1	*You came in and you did that wellbeing…workshop that we had, and after that I must admit everybody raved about it they even wanted the slides because it was so relevant for us, it really touched a nerve if I can call it that, because you could relate to us and we could share, we could learn, so I think the sub-committee, even though people won't say what their problem is, getting people from the outside to come and address us you know, issues, people that know what teachers are all*

Participant	Quotations
	about, because many times, teachers feel misunderstood, they feel like nobody understands what we are going through…
P3a	*I wish we had more time together because after each session I always walked away feeling so revived, re-energised and with a positive mindset.*

During participation in the research programme, participants reported positive experiences, a growing self-awareness and a feeling of being understood, which was intended to explore possibilities regarding process and content pathways to promoting teacher wellbeing. Some of these experiences hold relevance for implementation of the intervention, going forward, and will be referred to again under Section 5.8 dealing with intervention implementation.

5.7.1.3 Participants' awareness of their wellbeing after completion of the research programme

This section presents participants' reflections, in Phase 3, on their awareness of their wellbeing after they had engaged in the research process. There may be some overlap between this and the previous subsection.

Table 5.12: Personal reflections after participation in the research

Participant	Quotations
P3a	*…now I am mindful of my wellbeing and am making an effort to influence my own wellbeing positively; Teacher wellbeing starts with self. My participation in this research has enhanced my ideas about wellbeing.*
P3b	*Positive, real positive. I thought it was going to waste my time because we've heard it all. To my surprise it inspired me, well done!*
P3c	*My participation in this study has definitely influenced my ideas about wellbeing. It is written in Hosea 4.6 that people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. So, my participation in this study has been my saving grace.*

Participant	Quotations
P3d	*What I learnt is that there is so much that can be done to improve teacher well-being, but that well of knowledge has not reached our schools and especially our managers. Many times, you don't know what to do with the feelings and emotions you are experiencing, and I have learned that its sometimes okay, not to be okay. This research has empowered me to cope with what life throws at me. It taught me that it's okay to break down, fall, rest and recoup.*
P3e	*I enjoyed being a participant in this research because I could open up and express myself without feeling intimidated. I enjoyed the sessions; it was therapeutic and very relaxing. I felt that my opinion mattered and was valued, just having someone to talk to.*
P3f	*I'm an optimistic person, with good relationships, yet my stress levels are still high. I've realised now that I also need to look after my physical health, do more exercise, and make time for myself, quiet time, time to breathe and relax. I'm always busy and rushing.*

5.7.1.4 Interpretive summary of Theme 1: Participants' perceptions of teacher wellbeing

The first theme relates to participants' perceptions of wellbeing, and how this changed and developed throughout the research process. Participants' associations of wellbeing included feelings of peace, happiness and contentment, relaxation, personal resilience in adversity, spiritual wellness, the role of work in the determination of their happiness, their perceived financial status, achieving their goals and making a meaningful contribution to the lives of others, resonating with findings from the literature in Chapter 3.

Participants' perceptions of teacher wellbeing before participating in the research reveal a lack of awareness of the importance of teacher wellbeing, in how they did not prioritise nor give thought to the promotion of their own wellbeing, though they did consider the wellbeing of others, particularly learners and at times, other colleagues.

During the research process, participants were encouraged to take action to intentionally improve their wellbeing. In exercising their agency, participants reported some of the following: making changes in their attitude to improve their relationships with learners and colleagues; being kinder to others even though they were overwhelmed; making changes in their attitude to focus on the positive, more than on the negative, to relax and use better problem-solving strategies; to manage their work-home life balance better by not taking school work home, focusing on learners during the school day and making more time for self-care; using strategies explored during sessions, such as journaling; managing their time better, including watching less TV, not worrying about things over which they have no control, managing their budgets better and giving more time to prayer and praise. Participants further reported positive experiences of participating in the research, including experiencing it as therapeutic and empowering, revitalising and reenergising, feeling understood and finding the content of the programme relatable.

At the end of the research engagement, participants' growing awareness of the importance of their own wellbeing became evident. Their reflections expressed both the development in their awareness from neglecting their wellbeing to realising that is important, their awareness of their agency in improving their own wellbeing and an awareness of what their individual wellbeing needs are, as evident in their reflections.

5.7.2 Theme 2: Threats to teacher wellbeing (challenges and stressors)

In response to the sub research question enquiring into the factors that compromise or threaten teacher wellbeing at a township primary school, there was strong correlation with the factors presented in the literature (*cf.* Section 2.5.2). In Chapter 1, reference was made between the teacher as person, and as professional, in that a teacher is a human being (person) and a professional, with mutual influence between the two. As previously mentioned, the findings as induced from the data, are therefore categorised into personal and professional factors influencing wellbeing. In addition to the data presented for Phase 1, relevant data collected in Phases 2 and 3 are presented, both as they complement or confirm the data collected in Phase 1.

5.7.2.1 Personal challenges

Data collected in Phase 1 revealed the following stressors as personal threats to respondents' wellbeing:

- Familial relationships
- Financial stress, including their personal finances, as well as the financial burden of unemployed relatives and others
- Negative emotions related to, amongst others, concerns, worries, fears and frustrations
- Difficulty integrating work and home life and time pressures

In the smaller group engagement in Phases 2 and 3, participants confirmed the impact of these stressors or threats to their wellbeing, triangulating the data collected in Phase 1, are not be repeated in the next sections.

5.7.2.2 Professional challenges

Like personal threats, professional threats to the wellbeing of respondents were clearly expressed in the data collected in Phase 1, as follows:

- Professional roles and demands, including:
- Administrative workload and deadlines
- Curriculum coverage pressures
- Concern for learner wellbeing including academic and social barriers experienced by learners, the curriculum as a barrier, compromising learner performance by too a strong a focus on curriculum delivery
- Negative emotions related to professional roles, including feeling ineffective, tired, guilty
- Lack of stakeholder and systemic support
- Learner behaviour perceived as ill-discipline
- Lack of support from parents
- Lack of support from the education system (Department of Education), experienced as pressures and workload, impractical policies, overcrowding in

classes, lack of skills training to deal with challenges and lack of resources such as furniture.

During Phases 2 and 3, participants elaborated on much of the same stressors, expressed in more of a narrative form that enabled insights into the experiences of the group of teachers participating in the research study. One participant expressed it thus, "*Teaching in itself is a challenging profession. And demands much from the teacher (emotionally, mentally) and it also takes up much of our time, even beyond the classroom. It tests the very strength of our hearts and minds*" (P3a).

The following, detailed reflection, of another participant, summarised much of what is experienced by teachers in the school, and based on the research, in many other schools too. *"Just imagine a staff of 33 educators at a school, who is happy, content and stress free? A staff like that can move mountains. Instead, we're sitting with educators in our school, with 50% comorbidities like high blood, sugar, HIV and AIDS, stress, as well as divorcees, single parents, etc? Why do we have staff that is so toxic? A few things come to mind… The school system is creating educators that are despondent, unhappy, overwhelmed, sick, depressed, but to name just a few. In your class have up to +- 45 learners with many barriers. As an educator, the department expects you to be… an educator, teaching learners that can't read and write, trying to set barriers and backlogs to rights.*

- a social worker who needs to investigate and support the learners who need nutrition, social grants, violence at home, drug abuse and abuse from parents. You have to support the learner and the parents who are neglected…

The school has to form an SBST committee, that's basically doing the work of a psychologist, screening all learners, to identify those that need to be placed in an LSEN school; completing the SNA documents which takes time and effort. In the past, the department officials used to do that. In class, the educators have to deal with learner behavioural problems, support from district is none. If you contact them, they take forever to visit the school. They have too many schools to deal with. At home, female educators are also single parents. Finances creates stress. To conclude, many

educators are unwell, unfit and just plain fed up at schools. Just think and put yourself in that educator's shoes. It is actually really scary" (P3b).

Another participant shared that, "*Most teachers are exhausted; they complain about the learners, parents or their principals; they display negative attitudes towards the teaching profession since it is no longer a respected profession; they drag themselves to work; and so on…This is not something that I read about. This is what I constantly hear during phase meetings and discussions with my colleagues or teacher friends. Yet very little is done to prevent - or address teacher burn out"* (P3c).

It emerged, from the data collected in Phase 1, that teachers often work during their leisure time, such as over weekends. The following excerpt from focus group 1 reveals that some teachers continue to be on duty throughout the school day, without a break. Foundation Phase teachers supervise their learners, even during breaks, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic, as revealed in the following excerpts:

P2eF1: (addressing colleague), *I don't know about you, but I have been looking at the foundation phase, we have no break.*

P2c: We don't have a break, that's what I wanted to say.

P2e: We are with our children, that 15 minutes is not even a break because we sit with our children, we look after them. They never have a time where they can be away from their children. You are pulled away from your children when nature is calling, seriously and you have to run, and you run because you are so afraid to leave them alone, anything can happen in that ten, five minutes and you are responsible. So that is one thing that worries me badly, I believe that they are so overwhelmed, as you say, just a moment in the sun, the sun does wonders to a person's emotions, and the teachers in this block don't have that time, so that is something we need to look into. I remember when I started full time in the class, I said to (colleague's name) 'in your break, just come around and say, I am here, I am going to look after them for five minutes, go to the toilet.' Just to give me that break, so maybe if we have that understanding, with the rest of the school, where the teachers in the intersen phase have their 30-minute break, where they can identify a teacher here at the back and say, don't you want a

185

break, I can look after them for ten minutes. Just go sit there in the garden or have a smoke break or have a tea break, just that relationship, if we can foster that type of caring amongst one another."

Another participant said*, "…for us to have that break, like, go to the toilet, you need to rush to the toilet, to come back because now it's Covid, so now they can't touch one another, play with one another, so you also just have to have, once you are pressed, go to the toilet come back and be with them.* (P2fF1)

As that discussion ensued and solutions were contemplated, a participant shared that many teachers feel guilty if they want to take a break. The following conversation reveals the discourse around this issue and reflects teachers' perceptions that people (colleagues) will think they are evading work or being lazy if they are seen to be taking a break. They, therefore, feel guilty, for needing a break.

Excerpt from Focus Group 1:

P2cF1: In 407: I also think teachers…feel guilty taking a break…

P2eF1: Ja

P2cF1: …they feel guilty, and they've got learn to just let go. That's all that they should do, take a break.

R: To know that they deserve it.

P2c: They deserve it yes., I think that is what is happening, and when they're in the class, they irritate themselves, they scream, they shout, they fight.

R: So why do you think they feel guilty?

P2e: Somebody is looking at you and saying you loafing. Why are you not in class?

P2c: And you not even, because you are working…

Further discussion on the topic reveals the complexities involved in the simple act of taking a break in the context of a classroom.

P2cF1: My previous principal, - said, if you feel that way, don't kill the children, just take a walk. Take a walk, take a break, whatever, but don't do that to yourself.

P2a: Who's looking after your children while you go and take the break?

R: That's the problem, then one stabs another one with the pencil and then you have a bigger problem on your hands. So, it's so difficult to navigate in a school environment, your personal needs.

P2c: But you can be there and lose your temper and hurt a child also, that can also happen, you can hurt a child very badly, you can even go to jail, that is the consequences you can also face. Because at that time you just snap.

Clearly there are many intricacies involved in having one teacher with many learners, without immediate support such as an assistant or school structure and schedule that enables mandatory breaks for teachers.

Teachers also reported experiencing Union-related tensions and conflicts

P2cF1: Another thing that concerns me, was the two camps that were caused, I don't know, like the union members, they were like, ganging up against the principal and then in meetings they would attack him. So that also caused like very insecure feelings, for me at the school, it wasn't a nice feeling and it is still ongoing, so I don't know how that problem is going to be solved, because many teachers are like angry and they wait for meetings to express themselves, you know, attacking the principal, attacking the various teachers, and also with the posts that is being advertised now, people are, it's like underground.

P3b: Unions also interfere with lodging complaints if their members are not appointed (into promotion posts).

5.7.2.3 Interpretive summary of Theme 2: Threats to teacher wellbeing

Personal and professional threats to teacher wellbeing were found to be consistent with findings from the literature (*cf.* Section 2.5.2). In addition to the threats as reported in Phase 1, teachers reported some of the following:

- The mental and emotional investments required in a demanding job such as teaching, which also takes up much of their time.

- Teachers who are unwell with comorbidities such as hypertension, diabetes, HIV /AIDS.

- Teacher roles are demanding, as discussed under Phase 1, including social worker roles requiring teachers to investigate and support learners (nutrition, social grants, domestic violence, drug abuse, abuse from parents) and support neglected parents and learners; psychologist roles requiring teachers to screen learners for barriers, identify learners for placement in special schools, complete Support Needs Analysis forms that take time and effort (work that was previously undertaken by department officials).

- Lack of support from education department structures because they seem to be under resourced, district does not respond timeously, have too many schools to deal with.

- Personal stressors impacting professional functioning, such as financial stressors and single parenting.

- Symptoms of burnout were captured in participants' description of teachers (self, discussion with teacher friends, colleagues, and teachers from other schools met at meetings) as being exhausted, complaining about learners, parents and principals, displaying negative attitudes towards the teaching profession which is no longer respected. The participant pointed out that nothing is done to prevent or address teacher burnout.

- Teachers often work during leisure time such as weekends and public holidays (long weekends). Even during the school day, some teachers, such as the Foundation Phase teachers, continue to be on duty throughout the school day without any breaks, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic. During their 15-minute break, teachers are not temporarily replaced for a comfort break, but the

safety of their learners remains their responsibility. The demands of working with a group of children the whole day is therefore to a large extent, ignored. Participants agreed that this placed much stress on them. Moreover, feelings of guilt are reported because they cannot cope with the continuous pressure of not being able to take a few minutes to recover emotionally.

The information gleaned from the data seems to confirm the belief, held by teachers and possibly the education system/department, that teachers should go above and beyond the call of duty and reasonable expectation, even outside of work hours. It also highlights the occupational demands on teachers, the lack of systemic support both at departmental and school level, the negative emotions experienced by teachers and the altruistic nature that teachers sometimes display.

5.7.3 Theme 3: Resources that promote teacher wellbeing

5.7.3.1 Personal resources (self-care practices or wellbeing promoting activities engaged in by participants)

Data collected in Phase 1 reveal the following personal resources as reported on by respondents:

- Relationships (family, friends and colleagues)
- Religious or spiritual practices
- Physical activity, including walking, jogging, exercising at the gym and dancing
- Health consciousness through better nutrition and drinking more water
- Engagement in pleasurable or meaningful activities, including gardening, home maintenance, and other activities related to finding meaning (charity work, giving motivational talks) and activities for which respondents expressed love and passion.
- Other activities included reading books and magazines, playing games on mobile devices, and many respondents mentioned singing and listening to music.
- Rest and relaxation activities such as lying and watching television, meditating, sitting outside and watching nature, creating 'me time'.

189

- Sleep and naps
- Improving financial wellbeing through saving, budgeting, making provision for retirement.

During Phases 2 and 3 participants shared similar personal resources, confirming and triangulating the data collected in Phase 1. They also referred to new resources they had developed and explored as a result of engaging in the research process. Some of them are presented below:

5.7.3.2 Professional resources

Data collected in Phase 1, revealed the following professional resources, as reported by respondents:

- Professional development workshops and training often related to meeting colleagues from other schools and sharing ideas
- Discussing challenges with colleagues
- Being organised and adequate preparation
- Making time for self-care

In addition to the data collected in Phase 1, participants in Phases 2 and 3 supplemented the data with more detail and experiences of resources and support, including the following:

Supportive collegial relationships

Several participants referred to the support they derive from relationships with colleagues and spoke of the importance of trust in supportive relationships. "…*but I think each one of us, like, I have my go to person here at the school, like if I feel overwhelmed or whatever, I know I can go to that person, I speak to that person, you know and it is, we have more or less, I can trust that person, so I get that outlet* (P2dF2). The same participant alluded to foregoing available support due to a lack of trust, "*but on the other hand if you don't go to the principal, if you don't trust the principal, then, you won't get that support.*" (P2dF2). Having acknowledged the importance of collegial relationships as a resource, participants also realised how

threatened the resource was due to the absence of a common space for collegial interaction, as the following excerpt explains: "*I am looking at this setup now,* (referring to the room and setup in which we were conducting the day's session)*, when I walked in, immediately I just got so relaxed, welcoming, so comfortable, and maybe that is what we also lacking at the school. The staff room has lost its purpose, the staff room has become just a formal place where we sit, and we have a meeting. It's now worse even with Covid 19, it's like a no-go area, you know where people really don't come. When we started, many years ago, when we started teaching, the staff room was the place where came to have a cup of tea, there where we could sit, and we could just laugh about anything, and leave the children outside, and be here together. So, I am just seeing this place where, those two classes will now become an open space, or the staff room, where a teacher can come in and have a cup of tea.* "(P2eF1). This participant indicates an intention, that such a space should be created, where teachers can come and relax for a little while and share in the company of their colleagues, if they wish.

Strengths of colleagues

Participants recognised that there were colleagues among them, who naturally nurtured other colleagues and who promoted wellbeing in how they engaged with colleagues. In speaking about a certain colleague, for example, the following discussion ensued…

"*Like if it is your birthday, she will be the first one to come and give you, and it really does, it uplifts you, it makes you feel good, and then it also makes you want to pay forward, you know, then you want to do it for someone else. So that's a nice thing. I think the teacher wellbeing is not just contained to one little thing; it is those little things that we spoke about that will bring it all together… When she starts her meetings, she will have a little sweet for you with an acronym, that motivates you (*P2dF1). "*She's the glue that sticks us together (*P2bF1). Later when exploring ways of sustaining an intervention to promote teacher wellbeing, another participant suggested, "*It is important to investigate each educator's strong points, capitalise on that*" (P3b).

Supportive Principal and school structures (SMT and SBST)

Participants acknowledged the importance of having a supportive principal as a professional, and sometimes personal resource. "…*Something happened to one of our teachers, I am not going to go into detail, but that person called the principal, so what the principal did, the principal referred that person for counselling, so I would say that in that case that it is more of a trust issue, if you trust the principal you go to the principal and then he will find measures to help you" (*P2dF1). Another participant agreed, saying… "*the Principal allows us to grow and take on more responsibilities; attend workshops to promote wellbeing"* (P3b).

5.7.3.3 Interpretive summary of Theme 3: Resources that promote teacher wellbeing

In addition to the interpretive summaries presented for data collected in Phase 1 relating to personal and professional resources, participants reported additional resources acquired during and after engagement in the research. Regarding personal resources, there is much overlap with data presented under Section 5.7.1.2, where participants report on changes in their attitude, a more positive orientation and deliberate actions to improve their wellbeing and their relationships. In addition to the data presented from Phase 1, professional resources included supportive collegial relationships, colleagues whose natural character strengths enhance the wellbeing of others and having a supportive principal. The data collected reflects the data found in the literature, as presented in various sections of Chapter 3 and as is discussed in the next chapter.

5.7.4 Theme 4: Factors to consider in the promotion of teacher wellbeing

In the following sections, the factors that need to be considered in the implementation of an intervention to promote teacher wellbeing, are presented. These factors contribute to the guidelines that will recommended in the next chapter.

5.7.4.1 Sustainability of the intervention

Determining the need for an intervention: Participants' views on the importance of teacher wellbeing

This aspect of participants' views on teacher wellbeing strongly overlaps with Theme 1, presenting participants' perspectives on wellbeing, especially after engagement in the research programme. I have elected to present it here though, since there should indeed be evidence of a need for an intervention before one considers implementing one. As we progressed through the research process, participants agreed that teacher wellbeing is important, as presented in their reflections in the table below:

Table 5.13: Participants' views on the importance of promoting teacher wellbeing

Participant	Quotations
P3e	*Teacher wellbeing is a legitimate concern because a teacher plays an important role in the upliftment of a society. It can impact a society negatively if a teacher's morale is low.*
P3a	*I believe teacher wellbeing is very important as it pertains to the condition of the teacher be it mentally, emotionally, spiritually or otherwise…. A big YES, teacher wellbeing is extremely important. Healthy teacher, Healthy society?*
P3b	*Oh yes, most definitely. Just imagine a staff of 33 educators at a school, who is happy, content and stress free? A staff like that can move mountains.*
P3d	*…teacher wellbeing is imperative for those suffering in silence, those who feel they cannot live another day longer, those who cannot cope with things that weighs them down.*
P3c	*I think teacher wellbeing is definitely a legitimate concern for the following reasons…*

During engagement in the research process, participants all agreed that teacher wellbeing is important, contrasted to their earlier views on how they prioritised the needs of others, above their own, and did not consider their own wellbeing to be important. This change reflects the development of awareness, intended by the AEP

process pathway of Awareness, Exploration and Personalisation, discussed under Section 4.2.3.2. Acknowledging the importance of teacher wellbeing is one thing. It is quite another to sustain an intervention, or initiative over time, particularly when teachers are already overloaded with work. Based on my own observations that will be presented in the next subsection, there are factors that diminish the sustainability of interventions. These are discussed next.

Threats to sustainability

One of the challenges identified in promoting teacher wellbeing over a period of time, is the sustainability of the endeavour. Participants revealed being very conscious of the way that programmes and intentions are not always sustained in school contexts, mostly because they get bogged down by the pressures of daily work. During one of the workshops, questions for participants to consider included the question, 'How can your personal and professional wellbeing be promoted, consistently and sustainably, in your school?' A participant observed the following during Focus Group 1:

P2eF1: *I am looking at the word sustainability and consistency. When I look at all of us, most of here. Remember we attended some training for how many weeks?*

P2dF1: Oh, that counselling?

P2b: with FAMSA

P2eF1: with FAMSA, and then the aim was to come back here and sort of create that sub-committee where there is a room for people to come to, even for children to come to, and then it just fell flat and we just went on with life again, understandably also because it is like once you come into school, the demands from school and the pressures, you know there is no time to establish all these things that we dream to have in our school."

Another participant reflected the same sentiment:

"… it sounds wonderful, but once again is it going to happen as you said sometimes you go to a workshop, then things happen at the school, we forget all about the

information and then, for example if I can make a suggestion, maybe if it is possible that you can just liaise with (colleague's name), and ask now and then, where is your committee, how is the committee doing, is it still functional, even after your research… so that we know there is going to be a follow-up on these processes, you understand?" (P2aF1)

Both comments reflect the difficulty of sustaining good intentions and interventions when teachers become absorbed in the daily routines of work. Based on these discussions, some solutions were offered, including the formation of a committee, as a subcommittee of the SBST, to serve as the implementation team of the intervention and that I, as researcher, remain in contact and support them to sustain the initiative. Both solutions were agreed upon. Establishment of the subcommittee, as suggested, is discussed in greater detail under stakeholder roles.

Though there may be multiple threats to sustainability of the intervention, only the following are discussed in this subsection, based on my researcher reflections: time, managing diverse individual and group wellbeing needs and preferences and misconceptions and uncertainty about how to operationalise and implement.

Time

A glimpse into the demands and workload experienced by teachers, and the difficulty expressed with balancing personal and professional lives, gives some insight into the value that time must have for teachers. After participants volunteered to participate in Phase 2, we agreed that a weekday afternoon would be most suitable for our engagement and information sharing sessions. I subsequently planned the weekly sessions to be at least 90 minutes long to facilitate presentation of some of the process and content pathways, experience of the strategy, deliberation and feedback. The following entry from my researcher journal shows my reflections at the start of the research programme. "*Today I met with eight research participants, who agreed to participate in Phase 2. One could only stay for 5 minutes since she had to fetch her child from school, and two others indicated that they needed to leave at 2.30pm due to transport arrangements and family responsibilities (picking child up from school).*

We started at 2pm. It's going to be a bit challenging to present the 90-minute session, if I only get to see participants for 30 minutes" (researcher reflective journal). During the first session of introductions and discussing the envisaged programme, several participants indicated that they would only be able to stay for at least 45 minutes, since they had transport arrangements or family responsibilities such as fetching their children from school. In subsequent sessions, some participants were unable to attend due to being otherwise engaged with Union or other meetings or activities. As the weeks progressed, participants expressed their enjoyment of the sessions, yet we were always rushed, trying to complete conversations and experiences before people had to leave, unable to collect adequate engagement and feedback. My first realisation was that weekday afternoons were not the most conducive time for an intervention programme with teachers. Later in the programme, when discussing implementation strategies, a participant confirmed the issue of time as being a possible threat to sustainability of an intervention to promote teacher wellbeing, since, given the choice to stay after hours to attend a programme or to leave school, a teacher is likely to want to leave school as quickly as possible. This participant confirms this in the following observation: "*It is easier to do that than to say, 30 staff members, you are going to have a workshop on mindfulness and the first thing people want to know is, do I have options? And if they see they have options, then you already lose 50% of the staff, so things fall apart, so I think that is important*" (P2eF2). Upon enquiry into sustainability of the programme, covered in the previous subsection, the following comment from a participant alludes to the time challenges, yet also offers a solution and commendation for implementing the intervention, "*This is not easy to make a judgement on, but I think this would be helpful if it forms part of teachers' professional development as some type of formal programme because teachers are so busy and everything else, no matter how beneficial, is seen as a distraction for which we don't have time for. It is only when you go through the process like we did and engage with the content that you see the results and change that occurs in your attitude and outlook in life. In my estimation, this is more beneficial than listening to ten motivational speakers (not that I have anything against motivational speakers), but it did not just give you that feel good factor, but it empowered me to tackle everyday life. Thank you, Bev! Appreciate*" (P3d). The latter part of this quotation will not be repeated, but overlaps with

participants' experiences of the programme, as well as suggestions for the sustainable implementation of an intervention to promote teacher wellbeing.

Managing diverse individual and group wellbeing needs and preferences

By and large, most teachers have similar needs based on the demands of the profession. Occasionally, however, teachers may differ in their preferences; for example, some teachers may enjoy a communal space for sharing breaks together, others may prefer to spend it alone, "*I in any case never used to drink my coffee with anyone*" (P2aF1); some teachers may enjoy having a break most days of the week and going on break duty one day of the week, as suggested by a participant, and others may prefer to spend their break with their children, in class, thus having no break away from their learners, "*I don't want to lie. I want to look after my own children. I don't want that system*" (P2aF1). Differences in teacher needs, and teacher personalities and relationships, as reflected in the conversation about teacher breaks in the Foundation Phase, reveal the difficulty in trying to please everyone. A culture of care and cooperation, however, may mitigate the effects of one person influencing decisions for the majority. The following excerpt from the discussion illustrates the point. Most teachers expressed the need for a break. A suggestion was made that they opt for the same system as is used in the Intermediate Phase and Grade 7, where teachers go on duty once a week and have two breaks the rest of the week. One participant rejected the idea on the basis that she would rather spend every break looking after her own class, than going on duty for a day and screaming at 10 classes. The point is, that it can be difficult to manage the needs of individuals, but also reflects the need to have systems in place that make it possible for teachers to have options, or to apply democratic principles to instituting practices that serve the needs of most of the teachers. It can be a difficult situation to manage.

Excerpt from Focus Group 1:

P2aF1*: "It is a good idea, but it also, if I now look at that people there, I honestly can't see one person there, that is going to do what - is doing with – (referring to one*

participant relieving another for a break). I don't have the freedom to go and ask - to come and sit in my class…"

P2bF1: *"Ja, ek sal kom sit in jou klas"* (yes, I will come and sit in your class)

P2a: *"… I know, I am just making an example. I know she is going to say no, do you understand what I am saying. That is my break, why do you want to take my break now, I also need this break…So, it's not all of us that are going to go that route, that's going to agree with that."*

Participant 2a seems to have a different interpersonal style, preferring to drink her coffee alone, preferring to spend her break with her class and not believing that her colleagues are likely to be supportive of her.

Misconceptions and uncertainty about how to operationalise and implement a potential intervention

Coupled with being uncertain about what and how teacher wellbeing consciousness can become part of school organisational culture, there were also misconceptions regarding the role of the implementation team. Though participants were keen to embark on a process of extending their experiences of promoting their own wellbeing, to the broader staff body, some participants were not clear how this would be done and what their roles would be, reflected thus in the following discussion during Focus Group 2:

P2bF2: *"But what must we put in place, that is my question?"*

P2aF2: *"I think it is very difficult, because how do you identify someone with a problem? 'cause other people are very secretive."*

R: *"No, we're not even there where we are solving somebody else's problem. It's about bringing awareness to teachers that my wellbeing is important because if I am not in a good space, what am I giving out? So, you are not even concerned with anyone else, you are only concerned with your own wellbeing."*

198

P2bF2: *"For me also, Bev, what I feel is, you want me now to be part of this, say committee, right? I myself don't know what to tell this person, so I need to have knowledge or the skills, to assist this person because I can't go suck things out of my thumb and damage that person more than that person is already damaged. So, from my point of view, I don't feel we are skilled enough, as you say, we didn't have a lot of time to go into what is mindfulness, for example, do you understand what I am saying. So, with that little bit of knowledge how can I go and assist the rest of the staff?"*

R: *"Okay, so move away from, we are going to solve anyone's problem. Right, we are speaking about every teacher, not the committee solving anything for anyone… ultimately everyone is responsible for their own wellbeing. You can't fix – 's wellbeing, you can't fix my wellbeing, I have to fix it. So, forget that you're going to have the responsibility to look after anyone, because that is not going to happen that is now putting a burden on you that you don't need, right? but the only thing that you can do is, you can bring awareness to people. You can bring awareness. This is how we manage our classes if teachers are struggling with that, this is how we manage learner behaviour. This is how we manage our finances; this is how we organise our work and do our things."*

P2bF2: *"So where do we get that information?"*

R: *"…that information is everywhere in the world, where do you think I get it? … I use the internet and I find, 'who did research on this and who found this and who found that, and you take that information and you begin to put it together. So, when you are on a committee like that, all that you are, is you become an information seeker."*

P2bF2: *"a resource?"*

R: *"A resource, yes."*

This conversation illustrates the progressive realisation that the implementation team, or committee, will not be responsible for acting as counsellors or coaches for their colleagues, as some participants initially thought, but that they will become resources,

eyes and ears in terms of what is needed and how, who or what can be put in place to ensure teacher wellbeing remains in the foreground.

Opportunities for sustainability

In addition to capitalising and expanding on the professional resources already discussed, there were further inputs from participants regarding the sustainability and consistency of an intervention to promote teacher wellbeing. These included the following aspect, at school level. Participant suggestions relating to the broader education system including national and provincial education departments, are presented under stakeholder roles (*cf.* Section 5.7.4.3).

The importance of cultivating an enabling school environment

Amongst the group of participants, opportunities for sustaining a focus on teacher wellbeing far outweighed the threats to the initiative. Participants acknowledged the importance of the school or organisational environment as key in promoting teacher wellbeing. Within the school environment, several aspects were identified as being important, including the school ethos and values. One participant pointed to the school's values, which are necessary for the promotion of a positive school culture, "*During our yearly planning meeting we need to integrate the core values of our vision of the school.* (P3b). Another participant clearly articulated the process of building a supportive school culture: "*I think the culture, the ethos of the school, the values we share, are great contributors to the wellbeing of teachers. 'Cos when you step into the gate, you're coming into an atmosphere… you are coming into a climate, and then if it is going to advance or promote teacher wellbeing, then that climate must also be sustained, but then it becomes everybody's responsibility. It also requires… inter-personal relationships to be very good, because then we help people, to trust each other…but those things come as a result of the type of people you have here but that is filtered into the culture and ethos and the values of the school, and I think that helps. When you just come to the place, you already feel good… and further than that, there are people that you can connect with, you really need someone to speak to, and further than speaking to someone, people that can direct you to the right direction where you*

can get help, and they don't have to take that burden on them. Especially when it comes to financial issues or legal issues, you know serious issues that needs counselling, then you cannot do that, but at least you have done your part in supporting…" (P2bF1). This quotation highlights many relevant aspects for the promotion of teacher wellbeing at school level. The participant mentions the importance of the school climate being inviting, such that people feel good when they enter. The participant considers it to be everyone's responsibility to create that climate and notes the importance of developing good interpersonal relationships and trust. Another aspect raised is that of having support structures in place, such as supportive people in the school environment but also referral networks outside the school that can offer specialised support such as counselling, financial or legal advice and support. The creation of such support structures was another important aspect identified by participants and is discussed under the next sub-section.

5.7.4.2 Interpretive summary on ideas related to the sustainability of an intervention to promote teacher wellbeing

All participants agreed on the importance of promoting teacher wellbeing, establishing a need for an intervention or initiative towards that endeavour.

Participants all agreed that the biggest threat to sustainability of positive change is the pressures of daily work. Other identified threats include the time during which the engagement, workshops or wellbeing sessions would be conducted, the diversity of teacher wellbeing needs and preferences, misconceptions and uncertainty about how to operationalise and implement such an intervention, and the role of an implementation team (or possibly a sub-committee of the SBST), as suggested.

Participants also agreed that the greatest opportunities for sustainability of positive change, such as the envisioned intervention to promote teacher wellbeing, is the importance of cultivating an enabling school environment, including the institutional ethos and values of the school and establishing a collaborative and supportive network with existing and external service providers and stakeholders, as discussed in the next section.

5.7.4.3 Stakeholder roles in the implementation of a proposed intervention

Due to the detailed data and information presented in the remaining sections of this theme, discussion or interpretive summaries either precede or follow immediately after presentation of the data, instead of at the end of the theme. Furthermore, there is great overlap in sub categories, since participants often shared insights that related to multiple sub categories, characteristic of the cohesive, systemic reality of the context in which they live and work. I have attempted to categorise them, but at times the whole is more than the sum of its parts and the complete picture is best left intact, though quotations are cross-referenced in tables where necessary.

Systemic synergy; whose role is it anyway?

An important question arising from discussions with participants, was regarding whose responsibility teacher wellbeing is... *"…my biggest question is, who is responsible for the teachers' wellbeing here at school? Is it the teacher itself… is it another person, for example SMT member, is it a principal's job…, is it the SBST coordinator, is it my HODs job to make sure? because look, at the end of the day, we are all supposed to be positive and we are supposed to function properly at the school, so you have all these influences and that influences your functioning at school. So at the end of the day, we are all sitting with problems, but how and who are you supposed to go to, to make sure that you are functioning properly?"* (P2aF1).

The simple answer, as discussed in the next chapter, is that it needs to be a systemic endeavour, with the role players in the linked systems making contributions towards the goal of promoting teacher wellbeing. At times participants thought of it as the function of a body (committee of the SBST); sometimes they felt that they needed to use the counselling training they all had done, to offer counselling services in the school. There is certainly some overlap between creating an enabling school environment and the roles of different stakeholders operating in and around the school system. The following stakeholders were, specifically, discussed:

a. *Role of the Department of Education and the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)*

202

From a systemic perspective, the department of education, specifically the Employee Assistance Programme, whose function it is to promote employee wellness and wellbeing, has an important role to play. Participant perceptions moved (*cf.* last two quotations) from viewing the EAP as a distant, inaccessible entity to realising that they should explore its functions and include the EAP in their referral network, discussed in Table 5.14. Suggestions for the Department of Basic Education follow immediately as presented in Table 5.15.

Table 5.14: Participants' views of the DBE's Employee Assistance Programme

Participant	Quotations
P2aF1	*I know for example at one time there were people from head office that came in, they even gave us their cards, but teachers are not using those things, they even said you can go to head office and you can speak to a psychologist and whatever, but people don't do that.*
P2bF1	*We know the department has the teacher wellbeing section or department and those people have access to the school, but in answering this question those people normally come in when something major has happened, you understand, but not for your normal stress or when stressors are happening, they are not here.*
P2dF1	*Bev, I want to come back to the committee thing. This was an issue that was raised, I think the committee will work, you know if they fully understand what the role of the department's wellbeing wing is, you understand, because then they can inform the staff that these things are available, or these services are available*
P3a	*I also think the GDE should assist in this regard by bringing wellness centres closer to our schools, perhaps one centre per circuit, to start with.*
P3c	*Although the department has a unit for teacher wellbeing, teachers are only referred to this unit by the principal when they have lost a loved one or when they have experienced some kind of trauma.*
P3d	*In my view, employee wellness is more curative than preventative. Something really bad and terrible must first happen to you before you encounter wellbeing from your employer's side.*

In the section that follows, participants' suggestions for systemic factors, controlled by the national Department of Basic Education, are presented.

Table 5.15: Participants' suggestions for the DBE

Participant	Quotations
P3a	- *Professionally I would like to see teachers doing less paperwork* - *Teaching fewer learners (Covid-19 brought some relief in this regard* - *Wellness centres in all circuits (that are well equipped)* - *Three months leave after every 5 years of teaching* - *Involvement in policy making as we are the executors of these policies* - *Better salaries in line with cost of living*
P3e	- *Bring back the leave system so that teachers can rest and feel rejuvenated* - *Assistants can be assigned to assist the teacher in the class with marking and various tasks and activities.* - *Early dismissal times to rest and recover for the next day, longer breaks* - *Create developmental programmes giving special attention to the curriculum and needs of learners and teachers*
P3c	*I know from personal experience, that if you experience high levels of stress or prolonged stress, it may lead to burn out. Having said that, I know that there was a time when teachers were granted paid leave (for one term) after a five-year teaching period. I think the reason for that was to prevent teacher burn out. Unfortunately, at this stage, no one seems to care about teacher burn out.*

Participants who made recommendations for their employer, the DBE, all appealed for the return of long leave that used to be part of teacher incentive leave benefits under the previous dispensation. Teachers seem to feel exhausted and would welcome some respite from their demanding jobs. Further suggestions included a reduction in paperwork; learner enrolment aligned to physical school and teaching staff capacity, to avoid overcrowded classes; salaries in line with the cost of living; classroom assistants to assist with marking and other tasks (especially in view of teachers being unable to take breaks during the school day); early dismissal times; developmental programmes focused on curriculum, leaner and teacher needs and a well-equipped wellness centre in every circuit.

b. *Role of the school and its structures: School Management Team (SMT) and School Based Support Team (SBST)*

Still moving systemically from the outer in, the structures within the immediate school environment including the principal and the SMT, SGB and SBST were considered as playing important roles. The role of the principal and his/her support has already been mentioned as a professional resource.

Since several participants formed part of the School Management Team, there was already intention and commitment on their part to investigate issues such as the relief of Foundation Phase teachers to have a break. Participants also identified the absence of a communal space for teachers to relax and engage with each other, as obstructing collegiality between staff. A participant further indicated the need for the School Governing Body to play a role, "*I also think it is important that the SGB plays a role in the parent part…*" (P2eF1)

In Table 5.16, participants' suggestions for the creation of a sub-committee of the SBST to function as an implementation team of the potential intervention to promote teacher wellbeing. This is immediately followed by participant's suggestions for institutional level (school and its structures) to facilitate the creation of an enabling environment for the promotion of teacher wellbeing, as presented in Table 5.17.

Table 5.16: Participants' views on the creation of a committee (sub-committee of the SBST) to facilitate teacher wellbeing at school level

Participant	Quotations
P2dF1	*I know now with Covid, the principal made it clear that teacher wellbeing… has become a function the SBST coordinator or the SBST body.*
P2dF1	*Yes…, personally I feel… the SBST should have some kind of structure, maybe a sub-committee of the SBST where, even though you won't divulge your problem but you can, just like, identify and say "I have a problem", and then even if the teacher doesn't feel*

Participant	Quotations
	comfortable speaking to that sub-committee, they can then arrange, like what the principal did, external people to come and have workshops or come and work with you or you go for counselling.
P2eF1	*So it comes back to the very committee where we can just have this committee, we are not promising to solve people's problems but the people would know, there is a place where I can go to, there is a person identified at the school, that I can relate to and it doesn't have to be one person, as you say, people may not feel comfortable with -, but if there is sort of a committee, they might be able to identify at least one person within that committee that they can go to.*
P2bF1	*I think the committee will work, then with IQMS, you will identify needs with IQMS and these needs will be addressed through workshops, training, whatever, but I think for the emotional wellbeing of teachers, the same should be done. You know where people say, I have stresses in this area, the committee looks at it, and now they get professionals to address those things, you know a real plan of action for that committee.*
P3b	*As per discussion, we already decided to form a committee who can drive a programme like this. We need to bring in more professionals besides the district officials.*

Participants had agreed, through much discussion and deliberation, that the creation of a sub-committee of the SBST would be a feasible centralised implementation point to coordinate the potential intervention to promote teacher wellbeing at the school. Various suggestions were made for how to operationalise and target it at needs identified from teachers in the school, linking it to their personal development plan, linked to the performance management system Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS), capitalising on the strengths of staff members and collaborating with external service providers and professionals.

Further suggestions were made for the institutional level promotion of teacher wellbeing, as presented in Table 5.17 below.

Table 5.17: Participants' suggestions for the school and its structures, to create an enabling environment for the promotion of teacher wellbeing

Participant	Quotations
P2cF1	- *Early dismissal. It makes a difference that half an hour. People are tired.*
P3a	- *Create a positive school environment, neat classrooms, beautiful gardens, welcoming staffroom, avail tea /coffee, open door policy in Principal's/SMT offices* - *Buddy system where a friend checks up on a friend*
P3b	- *During our yearly planning meeting, SMT need to integrate the core values of our vision of the school* - *It is important to investigate each educator's strong points, capitalise on that* - *A bosberaad can be organised where an open and honest discussion needs to take place.* - *As an SBST member we need to do our part, most times we concentrate on learners and forget about the educators. A sick educator can't support a sick child*
P3c	- *Being valued at my institution (school) is of utmost importance, to bring out the best in me* - *I would suggest team building to be arranged by the SMT and principal…healthy relationships with your colleagues at school is of utmost importance and a great contributory factor to my well-being* - *End of term functions where teachers are thanked for their hard work* - *Incentives and rewards, where deserved, will boost my motivation to become a better teacher and to go the extra mile.* - *The school environment, a beautiful garden with chairs for relaxation during breaks* - *We must create policies to deal with trauma situations such as deaths, illness, unexpected circumstances such as COVID-19* - *Thankfulness, acknowledgement and recognition from the SMT and the parents will be much appreciated.*
P2eF1	*You know for me, teacher wellbeing is so important, and I really, really believe that it impacts on your functionality and your performance in the classroom. So, incentives, even a stick sweet, a lolly pop just to say enjoy your day, and this sweetie here (gesturing to sweets on the table), makes a difference, it brightens up a person's day.*
P2eF1	*When it's your birthday, to just say to that person you can have a day off, I know we don't have that right, it comes from up there somewhere, you know maybe just on that day when it is your*

Participant	Quotations
	birthday, acknowledge that it is this person's birthday. If your birthday was on a Saturday or a Sunday, take the Monday off, relax, just stay at home, away from these children that might just upset your day, you know, so little things like that could perhaps just make a difference in a teacher's life.
P2dF1	*Then also another thing, …in the past, teachers were regarded as you know, they were really appreciated and they were regarded as professionals, but nowadays you don't really find people, parents that show appreciation and I think because maybe that is part of their culture, they just assume that it is our job to teach their children, especially, I think only now during Covid, they would say to us, "Thank you the schools are open because I don't know how to deal with this. So, I think as the leaders of the school, as leaders of the school, they should make sure that the teachers at the school feel valued, because I think that can also lead to people feeling deflated or they are not motivated, if they not appreciated. So, it is important and even, and it should be the ultimate role of the SMT, to let teachers feel appreciated, but even amongst ourselves, you know, like - said now, even that little, just maybe that little hug, or that smile sometimes you know.*
P3a	*Professionally and in our institution, much needs to be done with regard to teacher wellbeing…my hope is that 'we' (the group who attended the sessions) would start a formal process that would take care of the wellbeing of all people at the school by setting the process in motion, involving other stakeholders.*

When asked specifically what will make a teacher's day a little more bearable or easier, participants offered several ideas and suggestions, ranging from individual, to school level, to provincial and national department of education broader systems. Responses cover a broad spectrum, though most suggestions can be implemented at school level. Suggestions include incentives for teachers like time off, acts or tokens incentivising or acknowledging teachers; building healthy relationships, having an open-door policy and beautifying the school environment (including neat classrooms, a garden, place to sit outside. In my view, the SMT should have the autonomy to make decisions that will serve the interests of the organisation by prioritising the wellbeing of the human resources within it.

Collaboration/synergy between external providers and internal systems

The following discussion, with inputs from one of the participants, reinforces aspects already covered, and adds further suggestions for how the intervention may be implemented in synergistic collaboration between the school and external service providers, including the researcher and other entities such as non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

Table 5.18: Participants' views on collaboration with external stakeholders and entities

Participants	Quotations
P2eF2	*…like in our school, I think the stage is set for something, or a programme in terms of wellness and I think our staff if open for, a person that is going to come, they are going to speak about wellness or even we take that responsibility to say guys, teacher wellbeing is important. This is what we have put in place, to serve you. The issue of awareness, so you come, and you make people aware but at the same time once you make them aware you also empowering them. Once people hear what you present, then they become aware of themselves, 'but that is me, I am experiencing that. So, I think that is something in the school set-up that you can use and then you can also have, like we spoke about, like referrals, then you can say, there is this NGO or there is this individual that can help you in this way. Here's a card, here's a number, and then the onus is on the person. So that is another way in a school set-up and I would like your programme like if you can engage with the management of the school and you say, let's have a programme for wellbeing where we apply these things, the proposals we are making, so we say for 2021, we are committing to focusing on wellbeing, it will consist of so many sessions. You will come in, so getting the staff there, that's our problem, you understand? and you do what you've done with us, we can also identify this is areas, this is the topics we want covered and then we see the impact of those sessions over a year period.*
P2cF2 **This quote also has relevance in Tables 5.11**	*You know, your first workshop that you had with us, 'are you flourishing or are you floundering?'…That to me, made a huge impact on me. That is where my reality came, where things opened up for me; where I realised you know as a person, you need to check if you are flourishing or are you floundering? Then your second workshop about where you showed us how powerful your mind is... So I think*

Participants	Quotations
(experience during research engagement) and 5.20 (suggestions for content to be included in a proposed programme)	*you should remain, you should almost, I don't know if I can put it like that, adopt the school where you come to the school and once a term on our school management plan where you come in once a term and you do those kind of workshops, not only for us, because it was very beneficial…so maybe if you can come in once a term and do that for the entire school and it is on our management plan, it will benefit like all the teachers because that is where that knowledge will come in from an expert, you being a psychologist.*
P2eF2	*Ja, for me one on one will work, because a one on one is for your wellbeing, it is for your personal thing. When we went for that counselling training at FAMSA they gave us an opportunity you know where you are the counsellor, and you speak to a person. Out of that experience you could pick up, a person realises in a one on one, this is now my time, you understand. You trust the person, the counsellor. I also picked up the level of opening up, you understand, people really open up so that you can really help, and I also picked up, they also received, in a such a setup, the counsel that you give, they receive it very, very well. It is also similar to a doctor's appointment. So, I think that will work, because you also make an appointment, that suits you,*
P3a	*Training on how to take care of self, self-awareness (self-study and at school)*
P3b	*We need to bring in more professionals besides the district officials*
P3c	*Parental involvement to assist teachers in class with homework. We can also use them for athletics, to coach learners. This will allow teachers more time to pay attention to more important issues they are faced with*

Participants' views give valuable insights into how external providers could be networked and collaborated with to provide specialised services and programmes. In the last focus group (Phase 2) and their personal reflections (Phase 3), participants offered valuable suggestions for what would promote their own wellbeing. Some participants felt that there needed to be counselling services available to teachers. One participant recommended one-on-one counselling services for teachers, and when asked if the participant thought there should be school-based counsellors, the participant responded thus, "*No, not per se, I think if you want people to open up, you need to say what is really bothering you, so that they can get the best help, a neutral*

person would be the best one, that don't know you from a bar of soap." (P2eF2). This too has implications for how such a programme may be presented and will be referred to again under Section 5.8.

c. *Role of the individual*

Participants agreed that individuals have an important role to play in the promotion of their own wellbeing, and that self-awareness was critical to understanding the self and one's capacity for self-reflection.

Table 5.19: Participants' views on the role of the individual in promoting their own wellbeing

Participant	Quotations
P2eF1	*I think it is also very important to be in a good relationship with oneself, where I know when I wake up in the morning, eish, I don't feel okay. Where I can ask myself, what is the matter, what is making me feel not okay, so that I'll be wary, because if I am not aware of the fact that I don't feel okay, and don't know how to handle me that is not okay, I will lash out on someone, on the day, and she will just be, at that moment the punching bag or this in the way, where I can lash out on, and it will not be her fault, but mine you know where I don't know how to handle me that is not feeling okay, and I should know, as a person that, when I'm not okay, I can go to (colleague's name) , I can go to (colleague's name) , I should have a person at school, when I am not okay to just go and say. "listen, I am not okay, please, when you see that I am behaving in a way that is not okay, just come and just say shhh, get in line, or is there something, talk to me or here is a cup of tea for you.*
P2bF1	*…'Cos when you step into the gate, you're coming into an atmosphere… you are coming into a climate, and then if it is going to advance or promote teacher wellbeing, then that climate must also be sustained, but then it becomes everybody's responsibility. It also requires… inter-personal relationships to be very good, because then we help people, to trust each other…*
P3a	*Many people believe we have no cause for complaints because we chose this profession, but I believe that teaching is a calling, so we are called by God to teach His flock, therefore we deserve to be well*

Participant	Quotations
	taken care of by ourselves, firstly, and then as a collective, by each other and the department of education
P3a	*Training on how to take care of self, self-awareness (self-study and at school)*
P3c	*Exercising on a weekly basis can relieve much stress.* *I can use my skills and experience to contribute to my community. This will add value to my life and create a sense of accomplishment for myself*
Dialogue between researcher and participants during Focus Group 2	R: *I just want to pick up on something that you said. You said that it is something we pay attention to when things have gone wrong. Do you think that teachers need to be pro-active about taking care of their wellbeing, and putting things in place to manage, the effects of stress?* P2eF2: *Yes, because I mean we have a stressful job, we work with children, we work with people, so I think there must be some evidence already, empirical evidence that this is the impact that this job will have on a person.*

Participants acknowledged the role that an individual has in the promotion of their own wellbeing, referred to in other quotations as self-awareness and self-discovery, and also how interpersonal relationships are determined by individuals, who must take responsibility for the collective school climate. They mentioned specific activities such as self-study and exercise and agreed that teachers need to be proactive in taking care of their own wellbeing and managing their stress, especially because of the demands of the profession. Participant P3a's comment captures the vocational thinking that may lead to the type of self-sacrificing behaviours that teachers seem susceptible too, as well the necessity for a systemic approach in addressing the issue of teacher wellbeing.

5.8 Nature of the proposed Intervention

Though it was not an objective of this research study to test or evaluate a programme, a programme was designed and explored with the group of participants, to gauge their experience of a potential programme developed around the data collected in Phase 1

as well as the conceptual framework designed for such a purpose. Participant inputs and insights on how an intervention to promote teacher wellbeing have been presented and elaborated on in the preceding sections. In this section, such views and suggestions are extended to what comprise such an intervention. To contextualise and recap…

- participants have agreed that the intervention is necessary
- ideally the DBE can enhance the intervention with policy and systemic support
- the school and its structures can create the enabling environment and create collaborative networks with stakeholders and external service providers
- teachers will benefit from developing greater self-awareness, self-discovery and stress management techniques to enable them to flourish amid personal and professional demands, improving their wellbeing, as such a proposed programme has the potential to facilitate

Based on participant perceptions and contributions, this section aims to capture what a structured programme designed to promote the wellbeing of the staff (primarily teachers, but not excluding non-teaching members of staff) may comprise in terms of its processes, content, and the way in which it may effectively be presented to staff in the school context. Throughout this thesis I have referred to this as process and content pathways to wellbeing. Participants' experiences and suggestions for the improvement and refinement of the proposed programme, as delineated by the conceptual framework (*cf.* Section 3.5) follow.

5.8.1 Presentation of a Programme

When considering the presentation of a structured programme to promote teacher wellbeing, the facilitator of such a programme needs to have an idea of how such a programme may best be presented, which process seem to be effective and which content may be beneficial to potential participants. In this section, such considerations are presented based on my views, as researcher, and the views of participants in this research study.

5.8.1.1 Modes of presentation

Given the challenges sometimes experienced with accessing participants amid lockdown regulations, time pressures and participant commitments, it is necessary to consider how a structured programme can best be presented. In the subsections that follow, participant suggestions for contact (face-to-face) and online modes are presented.

Contact presentation mode

To avoid duplication of presented data, this section is cross-referenced to the data presented in Table 5.18. Participants offered suggestions for how a service provider may engage with the SMT to provide a structured programme at the school. Some suggestions included a presentation to the entire staff once a term, as part of the school management plan. Another suggestion was that the service provider submit a proposal to the SMT, outlining the duration of the programme, and the SMT would then ensure implementation of the programme. Another was to work collaboratively with the sub-committee of the SBST, specifically formed to oversee and implement the teacher wellbeing initiative, to assist with sustainability by regular follow up with the committee and forming part of the school's referral network. Further suggestions from participants included a wellness centre in each education circuit; counselling services, possibly offered at such wellness centres (though the EAP does make provision for counselling services, participants are still at a point of exploring the accessibility of EAP services), and a network of specialist services (including legal and financial advisory services) that teachers may be referred to, or given the contact numbers of, if necessary.

Online presentation mode

However, given lessons learnt during the Covid-19 pandemic and the experienced constraints of time and space, as identified during the research process, participants suggested finding ways to present such a programme online, or electronically. Technological advances in recent years enable many possibilities for engaging with people. Data collected in Phase 1 revealed respondents' use of technology to relieve

stress, develop and motivate themselves and relax through entertainment, among others. Technology provides a useful resource in mitigating some of the threats to sustainability, such as restrictions of time and place. Participants offered valuable insights into how technology can be used in the implementation of an intervention to promote teacher wellbeing, as described in the following participant observations during Focus Group 1: "*I think we also have to look at the use of electronics, that is very important because there is one of the companies that I work with my policies, my retirement and stuff, so they do a lot of stuff electronically, you know like the presentation is on the phone, so I can follow. The signature is on the phone, so I don't have to go to them, I just have to make sure that time, I'm free. I open my phone, and everything just go. So, I think electronics also needs to be explored when we do this, especially when we want to transmit information to people.* (P2eF2)

The participant continued to make the following comments:

P2eF2*: Yes, or even via email, because normally when that communication happens, it's via e-mail, you understand where you follow instructions, it's just a press of a button.*

…Because people like watching videos, and you know when it's inspirational, when it has to do with wellbeing, do you understand, they really watch those things. They even go as far as commenting, do you understand, because getting them to the point of watching it and seeing it, you know it really touches them, it also evokes a response.

…Electronics helps you also, with people that missed out on the session. So, if you've missed out, you've missed out, but electronics help us you know. Because if you missed out, we also losing you, but with electronics you can miss out, and you can still catch up and still be part of it. (P2eF2)

Given this input, an area requiring further investigation, is the creation of an effective online programme or website that teacher may access in their own time and space, and derive improved wellbeing, from participating or accessing the programme.

5.8.1.2 Process pathways

From a researcher perspective, the usefulness of the processes engaged in emanate clearly from the development evident in participants' thoughts and contributions as we progressed through the study. In my observation, participants seemed to appreciate the processes we embarked upon, as they provided strategy and structure to our research process. The processes, named as two processes and three considerations as explained and discussed under sections 3.5.2 and 4.2.3.2, were followed as we engaged in the research process. These are…

- AEP Process 1: Awareness, Exploration, Personalisation
- Personal action research Process 2: Identify the problem; Plan, Act; Observe; Reflect
- Systems thinking considerations: Personal wellbeing, Professional wellbeing, Institutional wellbeing

It is my assertion that these processes are beneficial in improving teacher wellbeing, and its efficacy in this research programme confirms its usefulness in an intervention to promote teacher wellbeing.

5.8.1.3 Content pathways

It is important to determine the relevance of the designed conceptual framework in the context of this research as well as additional topics or concepts that ought to be included in the content of a proposed programme to promote teacher wellbeing.

The conceptual framework informing the processes and content of the research programme, was configured and designed based on evidence-based research, theories and models, so a track record exists for the utility and effectiveness of the framework. Content pathways to promoting wellbeing refers to the content that needs to be covered in an intervention programme, aligned to the needs of the participants, in this case, the teachers at a township primary school. Participants responded positively to the relevance of the PERMA+ model, underpinned by Positive Psychology principles. Furthermore, content explored during the research programme derived from a combination of evidence-based content found to improve wellbeing and

information gleaned from the Phase 1 context and needs analysis, including financial management, stress management, information and activities was designed to elicit self-awareness and self-discovery. The need for such information was confirmed by participants during the course of the research programme. Table 5.20 presents information shared by participants regarding content that was explored during the research engagement, as well as ideas for additional content to be included in the envisaged intervention. The suggested content topics include stress management, financial management and health awareness.

Table 5.20: Participants' views and suggestions for content to be included in an intervention programme based on teacher wellbeing needs

Participant	Quotations
P2eF2	*I think you know, like one of the issues that you dealt with is stress, you understand, people don't know when they are stressing, or what,*
P2dF2	*Perhaps we should also look at financial management because I think that is, that it contributes majorly to the stresses of teachers.* *When the money is finished before the end of the month, then you can already see how people are very edgy, and ja, it contributes to our stress levels.*
P2bF2	*What I also feel is health, like the diseases, some of us have some of these comorbidities that we are not even aware of. So, I feel if teachers are made aware, yes you know normally, you go to the doctor, and whatever, but how to manage it properly so that you can lessen that stress that you are sitting with, do you understand, so those are the things that you need to make teachers aware of. So that they know what is going to happen, if you have this comorbidity, this is what you can do to make sure that you are being well constantly, look after yourself. You have this comorbidity, what can you do, where can you go for assistance, and that?*
P2eF2 **Quote also relevant in Table 5.11**	*I think for me the important thing of all your sessions was the self-discovery. We don't really know what is going on with us emotionally, what is going on in the inside of us, we don't even know how well we are mentally, we make our own judgements, but based on what? So, these sessions are all about self-discovery, so I think those topics you know where you become more aware of yourself, and how you work internally and I'm talking about emotionally and mentally in terms of*

Participant	Quotations
	your mind. Those type of things you know, once you become aware you know then you get an interest in something and then you can start raise issues, you know like, now's the right time to ask that question. I was wondering about this, now I can ask this question. But like we said, right from the onset is, we are not even aware of our wellness, we just like machines, we just carry on

5.9   SUMMARY

In this chapter, the data from the empirical investigation was presented. The school context and description of participants was undertaken, followed by an overview of the phases. Data have been analysed and interpreted using strategies from both content and thematic analysis approaches and a brief interpretive summary was presented after each theme to integrate the coded data. In the next chapter, the findings from both the literature and the empirical study, are discussed and integrated, culminating in the envisaged product of the research, namely the guidelines for the promotion of teacher wellbeing in a township primary school.

CHAPTER 6

RESEARCH SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, empirical research data were presented, analysed and interpretive summaries of themes were provided. This chapter serves to provide a summary of the research and present the findings, conclusions, limitations and recommendations of this research study. Findings and conclusions from the literature and the empirical study are discussed in response to the research questions and in relation to the purpose of the research study. The overarching research question sought to determine how the wellbeing of teachers in a township primary school can be promoted or improved. In addressing this question, the sub-questions are addressed first, as they contribute to a more comprehensive response to the main research question. Recommendations include areas for further research as well as the outcome of the research, namely, guidelines for the promotion of teacher wellbeing in a township primary school.

In Chapter 1, I optimistically aspired to find tools to help teachers refill their emotional tanks and to begin ripples of improved teacher wellbeing in a vulnerable school community, towards becoming a community guided by care (*cf.* Section 1.4). This chapter reflects on the realisation of that intention.

6.2 OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

The purpose of this research was to explore how teacher wellbeing can be promoted. The aim was to develop guidelines for the promotion of teacher wellbeing. In achieving the aim, the objectives of the study were to gain insight into teachers' perceptions and awareness of wellbeing, determine threats to their wellbeing, as well as resources and factors that promote their wellbeing and lastly, to consider and acknowledge the factors that influence the operationalisation of an intervention to promote teacher wellbeing in a township primary school. In order to address the research questions

and achieve the objectives, a review of relevant and available literature was undertaken, followed by an empirical research study. A qualitative research study was designed to engage with teacher participants from a township primary school in Gauteng, South Africa, in three phases described in Sections 1.6.4; 4.4 and 5.3. The research was conducted over a period of seventeen months, interrupted by the Covid-19 lockdown regulations. Effectively, only five months were spent in engagement with research participants, a total of eleven sessions.

6.3   DISCUSSION OF THE LITERATURE FINDINGS

In response to the research question: *How can the wellbeing of teachers in a township primary school be promoted or improved?* the simple response is that it is best done systemically. However, not all the systems involved can be controlled, therefore, attention should be focused on the systems over which one has some control and influence. This encourages a focus on the personal, professional and institutional factors over which teachers, in collaboration with a supportive network, may have some agency. In this section, the research questions, aims and findings from the literature review are summarised, as they lead to progressive answering of the main question of the research.

6.3.1   Findings from the Literature Review

The findings from the literature reviewed, preliminarily in Chapter 1, then extended in Chapters 2 and 3 are presented in response and in relation to each research sub-question posed in Chapter 1.

6.3.1.1 Sub-question 1: What is the social, historical and political context of township schools?

The aim of this enquiry thus, was to situate the township school in its social, historical and political context insofar as it explains the distinction of a school as a township school.

The literature (*cf.* Sections 1.2, 1.3 and 2.3.1) is rich in accounts of the troubles that beset the education system in South Africa, not the least of which is the legacy of apartheid. Under apartheid, legislated racial inequality saw the institutionalised oppression of black citizens, who were constitutionally disenfranchised and designated to ignorance and poverty. Under apartheid, racial segregation compelled race groups not classified as white, to reside in townships, characterised by multiple deprivation whilst white citizens resided in suburbs.

Post-apartheid townships continue to exist as do township schools, typically described as being schools with high job demands, risks and needs, but low resources (*cf.* Section 2.3.2). Learners and teachers in township schools are at greater risk due to pervasive historical inequality, as expounded in the research and reports, on what is aptly referred to as the 'dual economy' in South Africa. The research of Spaull (2013, 2015) and Turok (2015) (*cf.* Section 2.3.2.2), among others, prominently highlight the perpetual disparity between what they refer to as 'Two Education Systems' existing concurrently within the South African public schooling system, with 75% of schools belonging to the dysfunctional system and 25% of schools to the functional system. Township schools generally fall within the 75%. In his report, Spaull (2013) (*cf.* Section 2.3.2.2) acknowledges that the provision of optimal, quality education in previously disadvantaged areas continues to be compromised by the effects of historical injustices, yet he holds to account, the present department of education in their responsibility to provide quality education to all South African children. Shalem and Hoadley (2009) (*cf.* Section 2.3.2.2) explore the issue of schooling and teacher morale in the context of the dual economy and find that the measures put in place to improve education in disadvantaged areas, have the unintended consequences of obstructing progress and sustaining past inequalities.

Teachers in township schools easily become the villains to explain poor performance, though past and present systems mitigate against learner success in the face of social challenges enveloping township communities (*cf.* Section 2.3.2.2). Yet, in the context of those challenges, such teachers also provide psychosocial support to the learners in school ecologies and play an important role in limiting or alleviating children's

vulnerability (*cf.* Section 2.4.3). It may be expected that teachers' personal resources may be easily depleted under such conditions.

6.3.1.2 Sub-question 2: What factors have been found to contribute to teacher stress and compromise teacher wellbeing, internationally and in South Africa, particularly in vulnerable and under-resourced schools?

The aim of this sub-question was to explore factors contributing to teacher stress and compromising wellbeing, both internationally and in South Africa; particularly in vulnerable and under-resourced schools, such as the township school at which this research study was undertaken. There is no shortage of literature, in South Africa or abroad, finding teachers to be stressed and in need of support (*cf.* Sections 2.3.2 and 2.5.2). Research finds that many teachers are in crisis as they are confronted by the political, economic, psychosocial, personal and myriad other factors influencing the education system, daily. Literature on teacher stress and burnout, and efforts to increase and promote teacher wellbeing, can be found in flourishing and languishing economies, proving its occurrence throughout the world. Globally, teacher wellbeing is reported as becoming a major issue as teachers encounter increasing diversity and demands across classrooms and schools. Stressors reported on by teachers range from discipline problems with learners, to poor working conditions, to a lack of emotional support—all of which have been linked to teacher burnout and, in many cases, teacher turnover and attrition (*cf.* Section 2.5.2).

In South Africa (*cf.* Section 2.5.2), researchers found that teachers experienced moderate to high stress levels and that low salaries were a significant stressor. Other stressors and factors relating to the following stakeholders in the school context and broader education system were found:

- Parents: poor involvement and participation in respect of both school governance and the disciplining of their children; disintegration of discipline
- Learners: poor discipline; lack of motivation; negative attitudes towards themselves
- School and DBE: numerous changes inside and outside the school; lack of facilities for teaching; severe overcrowding of schools and classrooms; lack of

adequate incentives; policy overload, heavy workload leading to dissatisfaction with time allocation, unbearable working conditions, increases in administrative work and role conflict; inadequate training for teachers, multi-grade challenges and a lack of resources. Discernible themes and patterns may be observed in research findings from different researchers, different geographic locations and over a period of years, in South Africa. Reviewed literature covered little with respect to personal threats to teacher wellbeing. Professional threats predominated the literature about teacher stressors.

6.3.1.3 Sub-question 3: What are the factors, including types of interventions, models, theories and strategies that have been found to promote wellbeing, and teacher wellbeing?

This question encouraged exploration into factors, including types of interventions, models, theories and strategies that have been found to promote wellbeing, and teacher wellbeing. Throughout this thesis, these are referred to as pathways to wellbeing. The literature reflects the prominence teacher wellbeing has gained in recent years (*cf.* Section 2.5.1 and 2.5.3), though mostly still in consideration of improving learner wellbeing. Much teacher wellbeing research is conducted in other parts of the world and in South Africa, the wellbeing agenda is slowly gaining gravity and is promoted by local researchers (*cf.* Sections 2.5.1 and 2.5.3)

Factors found to promote wellbeing, personally and professionally, seem to be generally asset-based (*cf.* Sections 1.3, 3.2.6 and 3.5) and values-based (*cf.* Sections 1.3; 3.2.6; 3.2.7 and 3.5.3.3) and are influenced by personal characteristics and development (*cf.* Section 3.2.6) and systemic influences (*cf.* Section 2.2). Based on the evidence that asset-based and values-based approaches foster enhanced wellbeing, I developed a conceptual framework premised on an asset-based, psychofortigenic/ salutogenic approach, as illustrated in Section 3.5. Subsequent to the empirical research, the conceptual framework was revised, and recommendations for a structured programme are presented under Section 6.6.2.

6.4   DISCUSSION OF THE EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

To address the main research question, a set of research sub-questions guided the empirical research. These questions aligned with the identified themes, which collectively address the purpose of the research undertaking.

6.4.1   Findings from the Empirical Study

To avoid repetition of the empirical findings as integrated with the findings from the literature, an integrated discussion will ensue in this section. Findings are presented in response to each research sub-question and corresponding theme, as it contributes to addressing the main research question.

6.4.1.1 Sub-question 4: What are the participating teachers' perceptions of wellbeing?

Theme 1: Participants' perceptions of teacher wellbeing

This research sub-question sought to ascertain the perceptions of teachers in a township primary school, regarding wellbeing and if indeed they considered it something worth promoting. The data responding to this question were presented under Theme 1 and a part of it in Theme 4 in the previous chapter (*cf.* Section 5.7.1 and 5.7.1.4).

Participating teachers were unanimous in their feedback that they did not prioritise nor give any thought to their own wellbeing (*cf.* Table 5.9 in Section 5.7.1.1). They all reported that their awareness of wellbeing was always in relation to other people; prominent amongst which are the learners in their care. Some rationalised that they are in a profession of caring and therefore focus on caring for the learners, not for themselves. One participant spoke of being very attuned to the wellbeing of her colleagues but pushed her own wellbeing aside (*cf.* Section 5.7.1.1). According to another participant, wellbeing was only something one became aware of after something had gone wrong or had happened. The participant said that people assume they are okay, are not proactive about taking care of their wellbeing, and are unaware

of it, carrying on like machines. These perceptions confirm the assertions of Mercer and Gregersen (2020) that teachers often think it egocentric and self-serving to prioritise their own wellbeing (*cf.* Section 2.5.3). Nias (1999) challenges this 'self-sacrificing' orientation and calls it misguided. Researchers also find teachers to be altruistic (Lam, 2019) as presented in Section 2.5.3 and Seligman (2012) contends that people's natural altruistic tendencies give meaning to their lives by feeling connected to or in the service of something greater than themselves (*cf.* Section 3.5.3.2). Whilst caring for others may reflect values such as Ubuntu, it seems as if the value of caring did not include self-caring in participants.

Participants' immediate responses to what wellbeing would feel like to them included responses that both resonate with feeling good and functioning well (*cf.* Table 5.8 in Section 5.7.1.1), or hedonic and eudaimonic responses, as theorists have coined it (*cf.* Section 3.2.4). What participants' responses reflect is that people have differing opinions, perceptions and needs and that wellbeing is essentially a subjective experience.

As participants engaged with the ideas and information presented during the research programme and reflected on the state of their wellbeing, they explored their own agency in improving their wellbeing, by intentionally doing certain things differently (*cf.* Table 5.10 in Section 5.7.1.2). This simultaneously required and developed greater self-awareness and observation of their daily thoughts, feelings and actions. This kind of agency mitigates the disempowerment of feeling, like a machine just carrying on. It becomes empowering to feel in control of one's life to some degree, as observed by a participant (*cf.* Table 5.12). The AEP process and the Personal Action Research (*cf.* Section 4.2.3.2) proved to work well, as seen in how participants personalised differently, based on their individual subjective needs, experiences and contexts. They intentionally made changes to aspects that were reported as threats or stressors in Phase 1 and that were within their circle of control (*cf.* Section 3.2.6).

Through engagement in the research programme, participants reported a growing awareness of the importance of taking proactive care to improve their wellbeing. Furthermore, they experienced feelings of wellbeing, describing sessions as

therapeutic, relaxing, empowering and inspiring (*cf.* Table 5.11), reflecting the power of positive emotion and other asset-based pathways to wellbeing, such as the theories of Sheldon and Luyobomirsky (2021) and Fredrickson (2004) (*cf.* Section 3.2.5), Positive Psychology (*cf.* Section 3.5.3.1) and the PERMA+ model (*cf.* Section 3.3.3.2).

By the end of the research programme, participants' reflections brought to light their growing awareness of the importance of teacher wellbeing and a discernible change in their perceptions from disregarding their own wellbeing, to vociferous acclamation of the importance of teacher (thus, their own) wellbeing (*cf.* Table 5.13). This progressive change in perception attests to the usefulness of the AEP and Personal Action Research processes, discussed under Sections 3.5.2 and 4.2.3.2. It further advocates for bringing awareness to all teachers of the importance of their wellbeing, filling teachers' emotional tanks and beginning ripples of wellbeing in school contexts (*cf.* Section 1.4).

6.4.1.2 Sub-question 5: What personal and professional factors, do participating teachers consider, to threaten their wellbeing?

Theme 2: Threats to teacher wellbeing (challenges and stressors)

The aim of this research sub-question was to determine the personal and professional factors, participating teachers considered to threaten their wellbeing. Data collected from respondents in Phase 1 of the study, as well as engagement with participants in subsequent phases, revealed a high incidence of stress experienced by participating teachers. Participants shared both personal and professional stressors. Systems thinking (*cf.* Section 2.2) persuades us to acknowledge the mutual influence that exists between the multiple systems at play in the personal and professional life of an individual. Thus, personal and professional factors impacting negatively on teacher wellbeing, were explored both in the literature and empirically.

Personal threats to their wellbeing, as reported by participating teachers, in order of frequency, include family relationships, financial stress associated with personal finances as well as feeling responsible for unemployed relatives and others, negative emotions experienced, including concern for the health of loved ones and their own

personal fears, concerns about the state of the economy, corruption and crime in our country and frustration with the difficulty of balancing work and home life due to high workload (*cf.* Sections 5.6.2.1 and 5.7.2.1). These findings are confirmed in some of the literature as presented in Sections 2.5.2. Interestingly, the absence of a discernible boundary between home and school life, and the fact that some respondents complete work over the weekend which they could not complete during the school day, relates to findings in the literature about the high demands placed on teachers (*cf.* Section 2.4.4) and the view that teachers are expected to go above and beyond the call and hours of their duty, and that teachers may naturally assume this responsibility without question (*cf.* Section 2.5.3).

Professional threats to teacher wellbeing were reported in all three phases of the research study and mirrored the findings from the literature (*cf.* Section 2.3.2 and 2.5.2). Professional threats to respondents' wellbeing, as reported in Phase 1, are all systemic challenges in one way or another (*cf.* Sections 5.6.3 and 5.7.2.2). Participants' emotions and experiences related to their professional roles, are controlled by their internal systems including aspects such as such as genetics, personality and the unique character of the person (*cf.* Sections 2.2.3 and 3.2.6). Other threats reported all relate to stakeholders and entities situated within broader systems (*cf.* Section 2.2). Challenges within these systems present as threats within the professional roles and demands on teachers. These include high administrative workload and deadline pressure, pressure to cover the curriculum within certain timeframes, concern for learners' social and academic wellbeing and negative emotions experienced, such as feeling ineffective, tired and guilty. A strong connection exists between the latter three challenges in how pressure to cover the curriculum within specified timeframe causes teachers to ignore the needs of learners who have not yet grasped concepts and require more revision and reinforcement. Teachers know that they should have supported such learners and spent more time covering challenging aspects of work. The pressure to continue so that they may meet the pace-setter targets, however, evokes in them, feelings of concern for their learners and they feel guilty and ineffective for not having done true or effective teaching, which is the purpose of their work. Besides contravening inclusion policies and practices,

Shalem and Hoadley's (2009) point is proven that measures put in place to improve education in vulnerable settings, has the unintended consequence of obstructing it (*cf.* Section 2.3.2.1). Confirming findings from the literature reviewed (*cf.* Section 2.5.2), participating teachers further reported learner behaviour and attitude as being a challenge, as well as lack of support from parents, including ways in which learners were neglected and sometimes abused. Additional stressors and threats include lack of support from the DBE, experienced as high learner teacher ratios resulting in overcrowded classrooms, lack of furniture and space to accommodate all learners and lack of effective skills training to deal with challenges.

In addition to the threats mentioned in the previous paragraph, participants in Phases 2 and 3 shared several additional stressors, summarised in the interpretive summary of Theme 2, in the previous chapter. Challenges included roles and expectations of teachers, including social and academic specialised functions, no breaks during most school days for Foundation Phase teachers, teacher ill health; personal stressors impacting professional work; feeling burnt out, working beyond 'office hours' and in their leisure time, union-related conflict experienced in the school and the mental and emotional investments required in a high demand job such as teaching, in a township school. Morrow (2007) (*cf.* Section 2.4.4) contends that some of the roles and responsibilities expected from teachers are the responsibility of the system and that it is unrealistic to expect them all to reside in an individual teacher. Beyond being unrealistic, it may be argued that it is unreasonable to place such a burden on a single teacher, without appropriate support. The literature reviewed focused heavily on the professional stressors threatening teacher wellbeing. This research study fills a gap in presenting personal and professional threats to teacher wellbeing, in apposition to each other.

Participants' experience of negative emotion, reported in both personal and professional threats, is concerning. Although negative emotions are part of life, if the experience of negative emotion outweighs the experience of positive emotion, resources are likely to be depleted and wellbeing compromised (*cf.* Section 2.5.2.2 and Fredrickson, 2004 in Section 3.2.5.2). Participants were encouraged to conduct

frequent emotional audits (*cf.* Emotions check, Section 4.7) to develop awareness of the ratio of positive to negative emotion they experience. If they experience negative emotion more frequently, and in ways that keep them in a stressed state where their challenges outweigh their resources, their wellbeing is likely to be compromised, as Dodge et al. (2012) suggest in their definition of wellbeing (*cf.* Section 3.2.4).

All but one respondent cited workload, deadlines, pressure to cover the curriculum and the burden of administrative work, as professional stressors. This is not new, in fact, analysing this data was reminiscent of research conducted by Feldman (2014) and Chisholm et al. (2005) sixteen years ago, regarding teacher workload following curriculum change in the new dispensation. The same professional stressors persist. High teacher workload is also not unique to South African teachers (*cf.* Section 2.5.2). Globally, it seems, more and more is expected of teachers in education.

6.4.1.3 Sub-question 6: What personal and professional factors do teachers consider, to promote their wellbeing, in the context of the school engaging in the study?

Theme 3: Resources that promote teacher wellbeing

This research sub-question sought to determine the personal and professional factors participating teachers consider to promote their wellbeing, in the context of the school engaging in the study. Despite the high incidence of stress reported, most participating teachers also reported relatively positive emotion check-in ratings. Three of the 15 respondents in Phase 1 indicated negative emotional states and the rest indicated moderate to positive states of emotion. The reasons for this response are unclear, since it was not an objective of this study to pursue, though it may be worth researching in the future.

Personal resources were analysed and interpreted according to the PERMA+ model, (*cf.* Section 5.6.3) noting any resources not covered by the model. In terms of PERMA+, relationships, physical activity and nutrition ranked highest among resources reported on by respondents, in order of frequency. I found it interesting that family relationships were also the most cited cause of personal stress to the same

respondents. This speaks directly to Wissing's view (*cf.* Section 3.5.3.2) that our closest relationships are both the sources of our greatest joy and most meaningful experiences, yet also sometimes the source of our greatest sorrows. Relationships often permeated other activities such as visiting family, sharing spiritually with others, giving motivational talks to others and socialising with friends.

Meaning ranked high due to the frequent reference to spiritual and religious resources, such as relationship with God, prayer, listening to gospel music and reading the Bible. Most participants reported from a Christian perspective. Seligman's PERMA+ model holds that the attribution of meaning in one's life is often related to a spiritual purpose (*cf.* Section 3.5.3.2). Sleep, the experience of positive emotion and accomplishment ranked relatively low, though it should be noted that the qualitative questionnaire was not specifically based on the PERMA+ model and therefore does not provide specific information on each aspect of PERMA+. Optimism was difficult to identify in the given responses and is therefore not ranked. This does not suggest that participants are not optimistic. Engagement and other (*cf.* Table 5.6) could easily have been merged, since both reported on activities that participants found as being enjoyable and stress relieving. Many participants reported finding joy in singing and listening to music. Engagement may have been present in all activities both pleasurable or meaningful such as charity work, motivating others, reading, gardening, baking, amongst others, the use of technology to play games or watch television, rest and relaxation activities including sleeping, meditating, making time for self-care, spending time in nature and improving financial wellbeing through saving, budgeting and making provision for retirement. Personal resources that promote wellbeing are many and varied. Based on the literature reviewed, the following factors may influence wellbeing: personal characteristics and development including personality and values (*cf.* Section 3.2.6), high resilience, hope, optimism and self-efficacy as components of Psychological Capital (*cf.* Section 3.2.7.2), resources outweighing challenges and other constructs, as defined in wellbeing theories (*cf.* Sections 3.2.4 and 3.2.5).

Professional resources reported on include professional development workshops and training and the connection and information sharing it often provided with other

teachers, having colleagues to discuss challenges with, preparing well and being organised regarding work and making time for self-care. Elaborating on these factors, participants later shared the value of supportive collegial relationships and the value of having trust in colleagues. Participants realised that this resource was not, however, fully utilised due to the absence of a welcoming, communal space in which teachers could connect with each other and enjoy a short break together. The staff room was no longer used for this purpose, but participants seemed to have a plan to use another space where teachers could go to, during a break. Keyes' theory of wellbeing includes a social wellbeing aspect, describing the importance of social aspects contributing to wellbeing (*cf.* Section 3.2.5). Further to supportive relationships, participants also identified that there were colleagues among them whose character strengths were to nurture others (*cf.* Section 3.2.6.3). They perceived such colleagues as unifying forces, binding them together through acts of kindness and concern for each other. They resolved during the research programme to invite such colleagues to join the implementation team. This is discussed further under the next section. Participants also spoke of the support of their principal during difficult times, which they appreciated as a professional resource. In school contexts, the principal is a representative of the employer and plays a significant role in the creation of an enabling school environment and institutional wellbeing (*cf.* Section 3.2.7).

6.4.1.4 Sub-question 7: What factors need to be considered in seeking to promote teacher wellbeing?

Theme 4: Factors to consider in the promotion of teacher wellbeing

To develop the guidelines envisioned as an outcome of the research study, it was necessary to consider the factors that influence the implementation of an intervention to promote teacher wellbeing in a township primary school. Having established that there was a need for an intervention to promote teacher wellbeing in the school, further discussion and collaboration with participants during the research programme provoked three important broad questions for contemplation. The first two questions hold relevance for participants, as potential implementation leaders of the intervention

in the school. The third question has relevance for me as a potential external service provider presenting a structured wellbeing programme to the rest of the school staff:

- ➢ Whose responsibility is the promotion of teacher wellbeing?
- ➢ How can such an intervention be sustained?
- ➢ How could a teacher wellbeing programme be structured?

Though summarised here, these questions are expanded on in Section 5.7.4 in the previous chapter. The findings are discussed here as they pertain to each of the questions raised.

Regarding responsibility for the promotion of teacher wellbeing, the multiple systems influencing each other in the broader education system require consideration. The first and central system responsible for the promotion of teacher wellbeing, is the human system, the individual whose wellbeing is under discussion. Participants acknowledged that wellbeing begins with the self and that through a process of self-awareness and self-discovery the individual teacher becomes aware of threats to his/her wellbeing, as well as resources at his/her disposal. Individual teachers need to develop agency in increasing their resources, while minimising or managing their challenges.

The next system is the one in which the school resides and includes relationships with learners, parents, the community and potential external service providers and entities. The creation of an enabling school environment in which the values and ethos of the school support and facilitate cohesive supportive relationships, is one in which the wellbeing of teachers, learners, parents and all other stakeholders in the school community can be promoted.

The third system, though by no means the only remaining system, is the system in which the employer or DBE is situated. This crucial system is less easily influenced yet is key in decision making regarding many of the challenges experienced as stressors by teachers. The DBE has an EAP created to facilitate, inter alia, teacher wellness. Participants, however, found the EAP to be distant and inaccessible.

As a way forward, participants arrived at two important decisions. Firstly, they agreed that they had benefitted from the short programme in which we had engaged and would like to extend that experience to their colleagues. Secondly, they agreed on the establishment of a committee, that would function as a sub-committee of the SBST. This committee would serve as the implementation or action team spearheading the promotion of teacher wellbeing within the school. Some of the characteristics and functions of the committee would include the following, amongst others

- Inviting members of staff with potential interests and strengths to serve on such a committee. There was lengthy discussion on the strengths and personalities of colleagues who were naturally nurturing, modelled care for others and promoted cohesion among staff; and

- Building synergistic relationships with external entities, including the researcher, NGOs, the EAP and other experts who may form part of the referral network for teachers or be available to present talks and other support, where necessary, to the school community.

The issue of sustainability of a potential intervention arose from the acknowledgement by participants that they have had many good ideas and intentions for programmes and interventions in the past. Such intentions, however, fall by the wayside when teachers fall back into the routine of the daily demands. When teachers become swamped with the daily grind, little room is left for directing human and other resources towards other activities, such as the implementation of useful interventions and resources. This appears to be the biggest threat to the sustainability of an intervention. Other threats identified from my perspective as researcher include the time during which a structured programme would be conducted, managing the diverse individual and group wellbeing needs and preferences and misconceptions about the role of an implementation team (sub-committee in this case) in operationalising and implementing a potential intervention. These have been discussed under Section 5.7.4.1 as threats to sustainability.

In as much as there are threats to sustainability, there are also opportunities. The greatest opportunity for the sustainability of a potential intervention to promote teacher

wellbeing is, according to participants, readiness on the part of the school for such an intervention. A participant spoke of amenability on the part of the school management, in collaboration with external service providers and entities such as the EAP, NGOs, to advance an agenda for the prioritisation of teacher wellbeing, not excluding the wellbeing of other staff and stakeholders. Furthermore, the ethos and values already present in the school, including relationships of trust between staff, set the tone for fostering a more enabling environment within the school. The school, as a welcoming and enabling environment, would promote acknowledging teachers' efforts, through incentives, special days, team building, building social cohesion within the school, putting systems in place to ensure that every teacher has an opportunity for a break during the school day, including support when the teacher needs to leave class in an emergency. Participants' suggestions are presented in Table 5.17 under Section 5.7.4.3.

The remaining question raised, by me, relates to how a teacher wellbeing programme should be structured, to be useful in the context of the school participating in this research study. Since this is one of the contributions of the research, it will be discussed more fully as proposed recommendations for an intervention to promote teacher wellbeing in a township primary school, under Section 6.6.2.

6.5   LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

A significant limitation I experienced in conducting this research relates to time and access. It was often challenging to complete the entire session during our weekly sessions, because participants were not always able to stay for the intended duration of the session due to personal arrangements and obligations. This is certainly significant as a finding for the guidelines, that weekday afternoons, are probably not the best time to conduct an intervention with teachers.

A consequence of the limited time is that participants did not always get to experience the evidence-based strategies and activities designed to improve wellbeing, which may have enhanced their experience of the programme.

Sometimes participants were unable to attend sessions due to other commitments. A lesson learned from this limitation again is that full day workshops are preferable to shorter afternoon sessions spread over a longer period.

A reflective note on the limitation of time

GDE regulations prohibit research during the fourth term, so I had no access to participants during the last term of 2019. We resolved to start afresh in the new year, but during term one, the schools in this area usually have intra and inter-school sports (athletics), which meant that teachers were unavailable on weekday afternoons. Sports practices and meetings, impacted curriculum coverage, putting both teachers and learners under pressure to complete the curriculum for term one. In view thereof, we agreed that it may be best to resume our programme during the March holidays, which is exactly when Covid-19 Lockdown was implemented in South Africa. Accessing and connecting with participants during the Covid-19 pandemic remained a huge limitation. Though electronic contact was certainly an option, we valued and missed the human connection and physical proximity of being in the same room. Early in Phase 2, we spent time getting to know each other and building relationships of openness and trust, which, I felt, needed to be re-established after the long break between contact sessions. While Covid-19 measures forced acceleration of our technological competence, electronic contact was still constrained in that not all participants were comfortable with online meetings. We decided to wait it out, and resume when Covid-19 had blown over, though the pervasive uncertainty around this contributed to my angst about being unable to complete the study or support the participants at a time when their wellbeing was more important than ever. Teachers and learners returning to school, increased the risk to participants' sense of wellbeing and I felt helpless that I could not access them to continue our exploration of strategies to improve their wellbeing or discuss their feelings and needs. This led to another significant finding, that teacher wellbeing interventions and strategies are best offered and applied within the school context, rather than by an external person/entity. This led to the discussion that teacher wellbeing needs to be promoted from within the school, drawing on external resources where necessary, but incorporating it into the

SBST portfolio. Despite these limitations, the process of reflection and deliberation led to insights and resourcefulness that may otherwise not have emerged.

6.6   RECOMMENDATIONS

Although this study was done according to the qualitative approach, seldom seeking generalisability beyond its participants, important principles were forthcoming that may be applied in other contexts while keeping in mind the effect of different contexts. People in similar contexts may, however, experience 'resonance' with similar issues and acquire insights that may help them understand the nature of their own problems.

In this section, recommendations derived from the findings of this research study are proposed in three areas as outcomes of the research study. Firstly, in response to the main research question, namely: *How can the wellbeing of teachers in a township primary school be promoted?* guidelines for the promotion of teacher wellbeing are suggested. Secondly, recommendations for a structured programme, based on the conceptual framework, are proposed for a programme designed to promote teacher wellbeing. Lastly, recommendations for further research are proposed.

6.6.1 Proposed Guidelines for Promoting Teacher Wellbeing in A Township Primary School

Maintaining a system's view and heeding Stroh's (2015) suggestion that if one wants to achieve sustainable change, it is helpful to understand the dynamics at play within and across systems, so that one may consciously work with them instead of unconsciously working against them. To this purpose, these guidelines are presented for three key role players as they exist in the education system, as follows:

a) *The employer (DBE) and the broader education system*

The employer, or DBE and the broader education system has a significant role to play regarding the promotion of the professional wellbeing of teachers. The employer will benefit from the realisation that the provision of quality education for all is heavily dependent on the human resources who facilitate it. It is recommended that the DBE:

- ❏ Make provision for teachers to have a period of long leave after a number of years of service to prevent burnout and give them an opportunity to rest and rejuvenate.

- ❏ Ensure that the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) is more proactive in its service provision to teachers and more accessible (centres or offices in each circuit) where walk in or appointment services may be provided.

- ❏ Give equal attention to the development of teacher wellbeing and personal development as is given to didactic development. Teachers are human before they are professionals. A well-adjusted functional person is better able to be an effective professional (teacher).

- ❏ Undertake more programmes to improve conditions in low socio-economic schools and communities if the disparities and legacy of the past are ever to be addressed. Teachers and learners in vulnerable settings continue to be at the highest risk of compromised wellbeing.

- ❏ Ensure that appropriate support structures and policies are put in place to assist teachers with the roles and activities that most threaten their professional functionality and wellbeing.

b) *The principal and management team as managers of the school and its structures*

The principal and the school management team are instrumental in establishing the school culture and climate, in which teachers can either flourish or flounder. When making recommendations following research, it is important to acknowledge what is already working and build on existing systems. In the context of the school in this research study, the principal and SMT were found to be supportive, and are an existing protective factor. The following recommendations serve to strengthen that system, and for schools who may benefit from not having such systems in place. The principal and SMT should…

- ❏ Actively promote and pursue an agenda for teacher wellbeing (not excluding the wellbeing of other stakeholders).

❑ Acknowledge the significant role teachers play in the realisation of educational goals. Reward, thank and encourage them for their efforts through incentives such as time off, opportunity for socialisation, tokens, words and acts of acknowledgement and appreciation.

❑ Put support systems in place to ensure that every teacher has an opportunity to have a break during the school day. Mandatory breaks should be facilitated that may serve to ease tensions and relieve stress.

❑ Create welcoming and inviting spaces in which teachers may take their breaks, such as a communal space or a small garden.

❑ Encourage teachers to practise self-care. Make it possible by being mindful of their workloads, the mental and emotional demands of their jobs and the demands of their personal lives.

❑ Infuse the values in the school's vision and mission statements, including other agreed-upon values, into the culture and climate of the school. Positive values have the power to transform school communities into communities of kindness and care, uplifting all who are associated or involved in the school through affirming values that promote wellbeing.

❑ Invite specialists and external entities to address or be available to staff to support with specific needs of teachers, such as financial advisors to assist teachers with financial planning, wellness experts (EAP) to assist with health and wellness information and support.

❑ Engage with teachers and hear them by having an 'open door' policy, since teachers who feel valued can make valuable contributions.

c) *The individual teacher, as significant role player in the education system*

The individual teacher, as a person and human resource, is responsible for improving and maintaining their own psychological. emotional, physical and social health and wellbeing. However, teachers, and others in caring and service professions, tend to neglect their own wellbeing in their focus on the wellbeing of others. Often such professionals need awareness and support in becoming more mindful of the importance of their wellbeing. They cannot pour from empty tanks. They should …

❑ Realise that a better quality of life is possible even in a demanding profession and that they deserve to have rest, relaxation, rejuvenating, pleasurable and meaningful experiences that enhance their wellbeing.

❑ Exercise greater agency in the improvement of their wellbeing, by proactively seeking to increase their personal and professional resources and managing and minimising their challenges, where possible.

❑ Engage in self-study to develop self-awareness and self-discovery. Knowing the self, including one's personality, explanatory style, values, character strengths, needs and resources, can be empowering. Wellbeing audits are useful for identifying needs (challenges) and strengths (resources) to facilitate greater agency in balancing them and improving assets.

❑ Use the aspects of the PERMA+ model both to measure and improve factors that have been found to improve wellbeing. This is discussed more fully in the next section.

6.6.2 Proposed Framework for a Programme designed to promote Teacher Wellbeing

A structured programme to promote teacher wellbeing should be seen as complementary to the recommendations in the previous section. An isolated programme, supported by crucial systems, is more likely to be effective.

The immediate supportive systems required for the efficacy of a specific programme to promote teacher wellbeing include …

❑ The buy-in and support from the school principal and management team of the school, to support presentation and delivery of the programme. This will include scheduling time (preferably on a Saturday or during school holidays) and possibly space (a comfortable venue including refreshments) for facilitation of the programme, as part of the school management plan.

❑ The establishment of an implementation team (or sub-committee of the SBST) to drive the wellbeing agenda from within the school, as suggested in Section 6.4.1.4. Their activities can further include acknowledging birthdays, special

days and expressions of gratitude to honour and acknowledge staff; promoting positive values within the school with posters or art exhibitions (from learners), creating schoolwide opportunity to experience positive emotion such as a movie day or inviting a motivational speaker or magician to the school, creating opportunity for social cohesion within the school and community, such as a Family Fun day or Thank your teacher day or Valuing learners' day. The list is endless.

❑ Buy-in from the teachers. A programme caveat is that the success of a programme designed to improve a person's wellbeing requires intentional buy-in by participants.

❑ A programme facilitator who can acknowledge the existing knowledge, experience, values and skills that have enabled teachers to cope thus far; build on the existing strengths in the system and create opportunity for collaboration with participants who know what they need.

Based on my experiences derived from engaging with literature and with the research participants, some recommendations can be made. The programme could be presented online, as suggested by a participant but in my experience, most participants in this research study were reluctant to engage online. My proposal is that such a programme should be presented as three, full-day workshops over a period, rather than try to find time on weekday afternoon. At least a week should elapse between workshops, to enable participants to process and explore information between workshops. A programme to promote or enhance the wellbeing of teachers, personally and professionally and to support institutional wellbeing, should include …

❑ An overarching asset-based, salutogenic or psychofortigenic approach to improve wellbeing, that underpins all other aspects of the programme.

❑ Process pathways to enable teachers to develop agency in their own wellbeing. A programme should…
- enable teachers to become *aware* of their wellbeing needs,

- provide opportunities for teachers to *explore* a variety of resources, activities, strategies available, from which they may select and engage in those that best resonate with their needs and preferences,
- encourage teachers to engage in their own personal action research process, while they explore to plan, act, observe and reflect on what works best for them, and
- invite teachers to *personalise* strategies, activities and resources, based on their individual needs and preferences, to use in the promotion of their own wellbeing.

❑ Content pathways to wellbeing to bring relevant and evidence-based information to teachers to improve their wellbeing. The programme should include …

➤ Positive Psychology philosophies, strategies and activities such as loving kindness or gratitude meditations / silent sitting / creative art activities and so on.

➤ The PERMA+ model as guide to measuring and promoting wellbeing by ...

- creating opportunity to experience *positive emotion* - can be as simple as thinking back to a moment in your life that makes you smile,
- knowing what makes you experience *engagement* and flow and doing more of it,
- intentionally working at improving *relationships* and forging them where necessary to provide a supportive net and give meaning to our lives,
- finding what gives *meaning* and purpose to one's life and actively focusing on pursuing and experiencing it,
- experiencing a sense of *accomplishment* in the attainment of goals, however, small, and
- engaging in *physical activity*, practising *optimism*, improving *nutrition* and ensuring good *sleep*.

- Infusing positive *Values* and values-based activities into the programme and into one's daily life, such as tolerance and respect, love and kindness, gratitude and humility.
- Specific topics related to specific needs raised by participants, including stress management information and strategies, time management, emotional regulation strategies, amongst others. Other specialised support and services may be provided by experts in other fields such as financial wellbeing and health promotion.

6.6.3 Recommendations Regarding Further Research

In aspiring to achieve the objectives of this research, further interesting topics for research emerged. Recommendations for further research include:

- Investigating the longer-term impact of the proposed intervention to promote teacher wellbeing in the school in which it is implemented
- Engaging with learners to explore their wellbeing needs in the context of a school
- Investigating the effects of improved teacher wellbeing on teacher efficacy, classroom practice and learner performance

6.7 CONCLUDING REMARKS

This chapter concludes the research study undertaken. It has been an interesting, illuminating and heart-warming experience to engage with 'salt of the earth' teachers who keep going, despite difficult circumstance and challenges. To quote again, an excerpt from the Incheon Declaration and SDG 4 – Education 2030 Framework for Action:

> *As teachers are a fundamental condition for guaranteeing quality education, teachers… should be empowered, adequately recruited and remunerated, motivated, professionally qualified, and supported within well-resourced, efficient and effectively governed systems* (UNESCO, 2015:24).

The wellbeing of teachers is important for the effective functioning of education systems. Even though systemic influences are always a factor for consideration, the final authority for the promotion of teacher wellbeing remains with each teacher, not in policies, curricula or national decisions affecting the education system. If such reasoning is accepted, then it is important to invest in and facilitate this crucial endeavour through proactive, structured support to the teachers on whose shoulders great responsibility rests. Such support may be provided at school level and in collaboration with external service providers. Resources within the broader education, social and health systems should be harnessed, and the education department needs to be continually reminded of the importance of teachers as significant human resources in the education system. May research such as this continually serve as to remind all stakeholders of the importance of promoting teacher wellbeing.

The process of changing one's beliefs and behaviour is a very personal, slow and deliberate undertaking. Similarly, transforming school culture towards becoming a nurturing environment characterised by an ethic of care and relational wellbeing is also a slow and deliberate process. This research is only a very small step in the process, and the project of promoting teacher wellbeing, which I have committed to undertake. I will continue to remain an ever-present advocate for the promotion of teacher wellbeing in the school and other vulnerable school communities, because when teachers are well, the wellbeing of other role players will follow. In conclusion, I wish to extend the metaphor of filling the emotional tanks of teachers, by quoting again the words of Carl Jung, (Jung & Adler, 2014) that

> *An understanding heart is everything in a teacher and cannot be esteemed highly enough. One looks back with appreciation to the brilliant teachers, but with gratitude to those who touched our human feelings. The curriculum is so much necessary raw material, but warmth is the vital element for the growing plant and for the soul of the child.*

May we continue to prioritise the wellbeing of teachers, who need filled tanks from which to water and nurture growing plants, the souls of children.

REFERENCES

Acton, R. & Glasgow, P. 2015. Teacher wellbeing in neoliberal contexts: A review of the literature. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education (Online)*, 40(8): 99-114.

Adams, B.G., Fischer, R. & Abubakar, A. 2017. The Relationship Between Well-Being and Value Priorities as Well as Intersubjective Norms Among Emerging Adults in South Africa. In *Well-Being of Youth and Emerging Adults across Cultures* (pp. 61-73). Springer

Adams, H.B. 1961. *The Education of Henry Adams: An Autobiography*. Houghton Mifflin.

Adamson, J., Gooberman-Hill, R. Woolhead, G. & Donovan, J. 2004. ''Questerviews': using questionnaires in qualitative interviews as a method of integrating qualitative and quantitative health services research. *Journal of Health Services Research Policy*, 9(3): 139-145.

Adelman, C. 1993. Kurt Lewin and the origins of action research. *Educational Action Research*, 1(1): 7-24.

Adewumi, T.M. & Mosito, C. 2019. Experiences of teachers in implementing inclusion of learners with special education needs in selected Fort Beaufort District primary schools, South Africa. *Cogent Education*, 6(1): 1703446.

Adjei, S.B. 2019. Conceptualising personhood, agency, and morality for African psychology. *Theory & Psychology*, 29(4): 484-505.

Adjei, S.B., 2019. Conceptualising personhood, agency, and morality for African psychology. *Theory & Psychology*, *29*(4), pp.484-505.

Aguinas, H. & Kraiger, K. 2009. Benefits of Training and Development for Individuals and Teams, Organizations, and Society. *Annual Review of Psychology*. 60: 451-474.

Aldrup, K., Klusmann, U., Lüdtke, O., Göllner, R. & Trautwein, U. 2018. Student misbehavior and teacher well-being: Testing the mediating role of the teacher-student relationship. *Learning and Instruction*, 58: 126-136.

Alsubaie, M.A. 2015. Hidden Curriculum as one of current issue of curriculum. *Journal of Education and Practice,* 6(33): 125-128.

American Psychiatric Association (APA). 2013*: Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders,* (5th ed.). Arlington, VA: American Psychiatric Association.

Anney, V.N. 2014. Ensuring the quality of the findings of qualitative research: Looking at trustworthiness criteria. *Journal of Emerging Trends in Educational Research and Policy Studies* (JETERAPS), (5)2: 272-281.

Antonovsky, A. 1979. *Health, Stress, and Coping.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Arweck, E. & Nesbitt, E. 2008. Peace and non-violence: Sathya Sai education in human values in British schools. *Journal of Peace Education*, 5(1): 17-32.

Arweck, E., Nesbitt, E. & Jackson, R. 2005. Common values for the common school? Using two values education programmes to promote 'spiritual and moral development'. *Journal of Moral Education*, 34(3): 325-342.

Ayotunde, J. & Bewaji, I. 2004. Ethics and Morality in African Culture. In Wiredu, K. (Ed.). *A Companion to African Philosophy*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell

Bandura, A. 1977. Self-efficacy: Toward a unifying theory of behavioral change. *Psychological Review, 84(2*): 191–215. https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-295X.84.2.191

Bandura, A. 1990. Perceived self-efficacy in the exercise of personal agency. *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology*, *2*(2): 128-163.

Bandura, A. 1994. Self-efficacy. In V. S. Ramachaudran (Ed.), Encyclopedia of human behavior (Vol. 4, pp. 71-81). New York: Academic Press. (Reprinted in H. Friedman [Ed.], Encyclopedia of mental health. San Diego, CA: Academic Press.

Barrick, M.R., Mount, M.K. & Li, N. 2013. The theory of purposeful work behavior: The role of personality, higher-order goals, and job characteristics. *Academy of Management Review*, 38(1): 132-153.

Bartels, M. & Salo, E. 2018. How Does Culture Influence Experiences of Happiness and Well-being? A Comparative Study of Chinese and Swedish Perceptions. Jönköping: Jönköping University.

Bartkus, V.O. & Davis, J.H. (Eds.). 2010. *Social capital: Reaching out, reaching in.* Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing.

Bashan, B. & Holsblat, R. 2017. Reflective journals as a research tool: The case of student teachers' development of teamwork, *Cogent Education*, 4(1) 1374234. Accessed at: https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2017.1374234

Battersby-Lennard, J., Fincham, R., Frayne, B. & Haysom, G., 2009. Urban food security in South Africa: case study of Cape Town, Msunduzi and Johannesburg. *Development Planning Division Working Paper Series* (15).

Baumgardner, S.R. & Crothers, M.K. 2010. *Positive psychology*. New Jersey: Pearson Education.

Beard, K.S., Hoy, W.K. & Hoy, A.W. 2010. Academic optimism of individual teachers: Confirming a new construct. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 26(5): 1136-1144.

Beckmann, J.L., 2018. Competent educators in every class: The law and the provision of educators. *Journal for Juridical Science*, *43*(2), pp.1-31.

Bekker, T. Ensuring Epistemological Access. In Horsthemke, K.; Siyakwazi, P.; Walton, E. & Wolhuter, C. (Eds). 2015. *Education Studies, History, Sociology, Philosophy.* Cape Town: Oxford University Press.

Benade, D. A. 2013. Educational psychological guidelines for parents based on the lifeworld of the high-achieving young adolescent. MEd Dissertation. University of South Africa

Bertram, C. & Christiansen, I. 2017. Understanding Research: an introduction to reading research. Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Bhabha, H. 2015. *Debating cultural hybridity: Multicultural identities and the politics of anti-racism.* London, UK: Zed Books Ltd.

Bhengu, T.T. & Mthembu, T.T. 2014. Effective leadership, school culture and school effectiveness: A case study of two 'sister' schools in Umlazi Township. *Journal of Social Sciences*, 38(1): 43-52.

Biesta, G.J.J. 2004. The community of those who have nothing in common: Education and the language of responsibility. *Interchange*, 35(3): 307-324.

Bill of Rights. 1996. No. 108 of 1996. Chapter 2 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. Government Printers

Bojanowska, A.& Piotrowski, K. 2021. Two levels of personality: Temperament and values and their effects on hedonic and eudaimonic well-being. *Current Psychology.* 40(5): 10.1007/s12144-018-0043-0.

Bradburn, N.M. 1969. *The structure of psychological well-being*. Chicago, IL: Aldine

Brani, O., Hefferon, K., Lomas, T., Ivtzan, I. & Painter, J., 2014. The impact of body awareness on subjective wellbeing: The role of mindfulness. *International Body Psychotherapy Journal*, 13(1): 95-107.

British Teacher Wellbeing Index. 2019. Accessed on 3 January 2021 at https://www.educationsupport.org.uk/resources/research-reports/teacher-wellbeing-index-2019

Bronfenbrenner, U. 2001. The Bioecological Theory of Human Development In U. Bronfenbrenner (Ed.), *Making human beings human: Bioecological perspectives on human development* (pp. 3–15). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Bronfenbrenner, U. 2005. Making human beings human: Bioecological perspectives on human development. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Brunstein, J.C., Schultheiss, O.C. & Maier, G.W. 1999. The pursuit of personal goals. *Action & Self-Development*, pp.169-196.

Burić, I., Slišković, A. & Penezić, Z. 2019. Understanding teacher well-being: a cross-lagged analysis of burnout, negative student-related emotions, psychopathological symptoms, and resilience. *Educational Psychology*, 39(9): 1136-1155.

Butte College. 2021. Deductive, inductive and abductive reasoning. Accessed on 24 July 2021 at http://www.butte.edu/departments/cas/tipsheets/thinking/reasoning.html

Cantor, N., Sanderson, C.A., Kahneman, D., Diener, E. & Schwartz, N., 1999. Well-being: The foundations of hedonic psychology. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Capra, F. & Luisi, P. 2014. *The systems view of life: A unifying vision.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Doi: 10.1017/CBO9780511895555.

Carlyle, D. & Woods, P., 2002. *The emotions of teacher stress.* Stoke-on-Trent: Trentham Books.

Cattell, R.B. 1957. *Personality and motivation structure and measurement.* Chicago, IL: World Book Co.

Cefai, C. 2008. *Promoting resilience in the classroom: A guide to developing pupils' emotional and cognitive skills.* Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Centre for Risk Analysis (CRA). 2018. *Education, the single greatest obstacle to socio-economic advancement in South Africa* (April 2018) (https://cra-sa.com/products/archive/fast-facts/fast-facts-2018).

Chabeli, T.N. 2007. *Perceptions of employees regarding the utilization of the in-house employee assistance programme model in the North West department of education.* Doctoral Thesis: University of Pretoria.

Chang, M. 2009. An Appraisal Perspective of Teacher Burnout: Examining the Emotional Work of Teachers. *Educational Psychology Review.* 21(3): 193-218.

Chikanda, N.E. 1990. Shared values and ubuntu. In *Kontak Conference,* HSRC, Pretoria.

Chirese, R. & Makura, A. 2014. Educator motivation and morale in South Africa. In M.W Legotlo (Ed) *Challenges and issues facing the education system in South Africa.* Pretoria: Africa Institute of South Africa.

Chisholm, L. 2012. Apartheid education legacies and new directions in post-apartheid South Africa. *Storia Delle Donne.* 8: 81-103. 10.13128/SDD-11892.

Chisholm, L., Hoadley, U., Kivilu, M., Brookes, H., Prinsloo, C., Kgobe, A., Mosia, D., Narsee, H. & Rule, S. 2005. *Educator workload in South Africa.* Pretoria: HSRC Press.

Chow, C.M. 2020. Sleep and Wellbeing, Now and in the Future. *Int. J. Environ. Res. Public Health, 17(*8): 2883.

Clark, R. & Antonelli, F., 2013. *Why teachers leave: Results of an Ontario survey 2006-08.* Ontario Teachers' Federation.

Clement, N. 2010. Student wellbeing at school: The actualization of values in education. In *International research handbook on values education and student wellbeing* (pp. 37-62). Dordrecht: Springer.

Coleman, J. 2009. Well-being in schools: empirical measure, or politician's dream? *Oxford Review of Education*, 35(3): 281-292.

Coleman, J. S., Campbell, E. Q., Hobson, C. J., McPartland, J., Mood, A. M., Weinfeld, F. D., & York, R. L. 1966. Coleman Report. 1966. Equality of educational opportunity. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

Coleman, J., 2009. Well-being in schools: empirical measure, or politician's dream? *Oxford Review of Education*, *35*(3), pp.281-292.

248

Collett, K.S. 2013. *Teacher perceptions of the role of a primary school principal in supporting their well-being: Learning from a South African public school in challenging conditions*. PhD Thesis: University of the Western Cape.

Collett, K.S., Nomlomo, V., Ngece, S., Jansen, D. and Mackier, E., 2021. Teacher Well-Being and Linguistic Diversity: A Social Justice Perspective. In *International Perspectives on Teacher Well-Being and Diversity* (pp. 61-85). Singapore: Springer.

Corbin, C.B. & Pangrazi, R.P. 2001. Toward a uniform definition of wellness: A commentary. *President's council on physical fitness and sports research digest*. Series 3 n15 Dec 2001.

Costa, P. T. & McCrae, R.R. 1995. Solid ground in the wetlands of personality: A reply to Block. *Psychological Bulletin, 117(2)*: 216–220.

Covey, S.R. 1989. *The 7 habits of highly effective people* (Vol. 1). New York: Simon & Schuster.

Covey, S.R. 2004. *The 7 habits of highly effective people: Powerful lessons in personal change*. New York: Simon and Schuster.

Creswell, J.W. 2014a. Research Design (International Student Edition): Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches. (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Creswell, J.W. 2014b. Educational Research: Planning, Conducting and Evaluating Quantitative and Qualitative Research. (4th ed.). Harlow, Essex: Pearson Education Limited

Crotty, M. 1998. *The foundations of social research: Meaning and perspective in the research process*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Csikzsentmihalyi, M. 2002. *Flow: The Psychology of Happiness: The Classic Work on How to Achieve Happiness.* London, UK: Rider: Random House Group.

D'raven, L.L. & Pasha-Zaidi, N. 2016. Using the PERMA model in the United Arab Emirates. *Social indicators research*, 125(3): 905-933.

Dagenais-Desmarais, V. & Savoie, A. 2012. What is psychological well-being, really? A grassroots approach from the organizational sciences. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 13(4): 659-684.

Dasoo, N. 2010. Nurturing teacher wellbeing through values education. In *International research handbook on values education and student wellbeing* (pp. 359-375). 10.1007/978-90-481-8675-4_22.

David, A., Guilbert, N., Hamaguchi, N., Higashi, Y., Hino, H., Leibbrandt, M. and Shifa, M., 2018. Spatial poverty and inequality in South Africa: A municipality level analysis. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/322715886_

De Lannoy, A., Graham, L., Patel, L. & Leibbrandt, M. 2018*. What drives youth unemployment and what interventions help. A systematic overview of the evidence and a theory of change. high-level overview report.* Johannesburg: Poverty & Inequality Initiative, University of Cape Town & Centre for Social Development in Africa at the University of Johannesburg.

Denzin, N. 1983. Interpretive interactionism. In Morgan, G. (Ed). 1983. *Beyond method: Strategies for social research.* Beverley Hills, CA. Sage. pp. 129-146

Denzin, N.K. & Lincoln, Y.S. (Eds.) 2011. *The Sage handbook of qualitative research.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Department of Basic Education (DBE). 2011. Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS). Government Printing Works. Pretoria.

Department of Basic Education (DBE). 2013. *General Education System Quality Assessment: Country Report South Africa.* Pretoria

Department of Basic Education (DBE). 2014. Policy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS) accessed on 11 April 2020 at https://www.education.gov.za/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=2bB7EaySbcw%3d&tabid=617&portalid=0&mid=2371.

Department of Basic Education (DBE). 2019/2020. Annual Report, 2019/2020. accessed on 24 May 2021 at https://www.education.gov.za/Portals/0/Documents/Reports/Annual%20Report%20FY1920.pdf?ver=2020-11-06-165526-607

Department of Basic Education and MiET Africa. 2010. CSTL Action Step: National Model. National Support pack. MiET Africa. Durban.

Department of Education (DoE). 2000. *Norms and Standards for Educators.* South Africa. Government printers.

Department of Education (DoE). 2001. *White Paper 6. Special needs education: building an inclusive education and training system.* South Africa. Government printers.

Department of Education (DoE). 2002. *National Policy on Whole School Evaluation (WSE).* South Africa. Government printers.

Department of Secondary School Teacher Education. 2002. *Subject didactics: School guidance and counselling. Methodology of school guidance.* Pretoria: UNISA.

Depken, C., Chiseni, C. & Ita, E., 2019. Returns to Education in South Africa: Evidence from the National Income Dynamics Study. *Zagreb International Review of Economics and Business*, *22*(1): 1-12.

Developmental Standards. 2021. accessed on 12 February 2021 at https://sites.google.com/site/dsmktylenda/content/bronfenbrenner-s-ecological-theory

Devi, G. 2012*. A calm brain: How to relax into a stress-free, high powered life.* New York: Plume, Penguin Group.

Di Fabio, A. and Palazzeschi, L., 2015. Hedonic and eudaimonic well-being: the role of resilience beyond fluid intelligence and personality traits. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *6*, p.1367.

Diener, E., Lucas, R.E. & Scollon, C.N. 2009. Beyond the hedonic treadmill: Revising the adaptation theory of well-being. In *The science of well-being* (pp. 103-118). Dordrecht: Springer.

Dodge, R., Daly, A., Huyton, J. & Sanders, L. 2012. The challenge of defining wellbeing. *International Journal of Wellbeing,* 2(3): 222-235. doi:10.5502/ijw.v2i3.4b.

Dolamo, R. 2013. Botho/Ubuntu: the heart of African ethics. *Scriptura: Journal for Contextual Hermeneutics in Southern Africa*, 112(1): 1-10.

Donald, D., Lazarus, S. & Lolwana, P. 2010. *Educational psychology in social context: ecosystemic applications in Southern Africa*. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.

Donald, D., Lazarus, S. & Moolla, N. 2014. *Educational Psychology in Social Context: Ecosystemic applications in Southern Africa* (5th ed.). Cape Town: Oxford University Press.

Drum Social Histories, https://www.sahistory.org.za/article/history-apartheid-south-africa - accessed 22 August 2019

Dunlap, J.C. 2006. Using Guided Reflective Journaling Activities to Capture Students' Changing Perceptions. *Tech Trends.* 50, 6: 20–26. https://doi.org/10. 1007/s11528-006-7614-x.

Dupriez, V., Delvaux, B. & Lothaire, S. 2015. Teacher shortage and attrition: Why do they leave? *British Educational Research Journal.* 42(1). 10.1002/berj.3193.

Eberlein, E. & Zhichao, W., 2014. Principals' Understanding of their Role in Establishing a Positive and Enabling School Culture in Chinese and South African Public Primary Schools–Report on the Pilot Study. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 5(27 P3): 1178-1178.

Ebersöhn, L. 2014. Teacher resilience: Theorising resilience and poverty. *Teachers and Teaching Theory and Practice, Special Issue on Teacher Resilience World-Wide,* 21(5): 717-735.

Ebersöhn, L., 2012. Adding 'flock' to 'fight and flight': A honeycomb of resilience where supply of relationships meets demand for support. *Journal of Psychology in Africa, 22(*1): 29-42.

Ebersöhn, L. 2019. *Flocking Together: An Indigenous Psychology Theory of Resilience in Southern Africa*. New York: Springer International Publishing.

Ebersöhn, L. & Ferreira, R. 2011. Coping in an HIV/AIDS-dominated context: teachers promoting resilience in schools. *Health Education Research*, 26(4): 596-613.

Ebersöhn, L., Loots, T., Eloff, I., & Ferreira, R. 2015. Taking note of obstacles research partners negotiate in long-term higher education community engagement partnerships. *Teaching and Teacher Education.* 45: 59-72.

Eckerdal, J. R. & Hagström, C. 2017. Qualitative questionnaires as a method for information studies research. Proceedings of the Ninth International Conference on Conceptions of Library and Information Science, Uppsala, Sweden, June 27-29, 2016. *Information Research,* 22(1). Downloaded from http://informationr.net/ir/22-1/colis/colis1639.html.

Eckersley, R., 2008. Never better—or getting worse. *The health and wellbeing of young Australians.* Australia, 21.

Education, the single greatest obstacle to socio-economic advancement in South Africa' (April 2018) Centre for Risk Analysis (CRA) at the Institute of Race Relations (IRR)

Elliott, V., 2018. Thinking about the coding process in qualitative data analysis. *The Qualitative Report*, *23*(11), pp.2850-2861.

Eloff, I. 2013. In Wissing, M.P. (Ed.). 2013. *Well-being research in South Africa*. Dordrecht: Springer.

Eloff, I. & Ebersohn, L. 2001. The implications of an asset-based approach to early intervention. *Perspectives in Education*, 19(3): 147-157.

Emmons, R.A. & Mishra, A. 2011. Why gratitude enhances well-being: What we know, what we need to know. *Designing positive psychology: Taking stock and moving forward*, pp.248-262. Oxford University Press.

Employee Assistance Professional Association (EAPA-SA). 2021. Website accessed 25 June 2021 at https://www.eapasa.co.za/about-eapa-sa/what-is-an-employee-assistance-programme/

Etieyibo, E. 2017. Moral education, ubuntu and ubuntu-inspired communities. *South African Journal of Philosophy,* (3): 311-325.

Eysenck, H.J. 1960. Levels of personality, constitutional factors, and social influences: An experimental approach. *International Journal of Social Psychiatry*, 6(1-2): 12-24.

Eysenck, H.J. 1984. Cattell and the theory of personality. *Multivariate Behavioral Research*, 19(2-3): 323-336.

Fava, G.A. & Ruini, C. 2014. Increasing psychological well-being in clinical and educational settings. Interventions and Cultural Contexts. *Cross-Cultural Advancements in Positive Psychology*, *8*.

Feldman, B. 2014. Educators' experience of transformation and change in a full-service primary school. Unpublished MEd Dissertation. University of South Africa.

Feldman, B. 2017. In Eloff, I. and Swart, E. eds., 2017. *Understanding educational psychology*. Johannesburg: Juta (Pty) Limited.

Ferguson, D. 2008. *What teachers need to know about personal wellbeing*. Australian Council for Educational Research.

Ferguson, K., Mang, C. & Frost, L. 2017. Teacher stress and social support usage. *Brock Education Journal*, *26*(2).

Ferreira, C. & Schulze, S. 2014. Teachers' experience of the implementation of values in education in schools: "Mind the gap". *South African Journal of Education*, 34(1): 1-13.

Ferreira, C. 2014. *Development of spiritual intelligence (SQ) in South African secondary schools.* D.Ed Thesis: University of South Africa.

Ferreira, C. and Schulze, S., 2014. Teachers' experience of the implementation of values in education in schools: "Mind the gap". *South African Journal of Education*, *34*(1).

Ferreira, C., 2014. *Educational strategies for the development of spiritual intelligence (SQ) in South African secondary schools*. PhD thesis: University of South Africa.

Ferreira, R. & Ebersöhn, L. (2011). Formative evaluation of the STAR intervention: Improving teachers" ability to provide psychosocial support for vulnerable individuals in the school community. *African Journal of AIDS Research,* 10(1): 63-72.

Ferreira, R. & Ebersöhn, L. 2011. Formative evaluation of the STAR intervention: Improving teachers' ability to provide psychosocial support for vulnerable individuals in the school community. *African Journal of AIDS Research*, 10(1): 63-72.

Firth, J., Gangwisch, J.E., Borisini, A., Wootton, R.E. & Mayer, E.A. 2020. Food and mood: how do diet and nutrition affect mental wellbeing? *British Medical Journal,* 369(2383): 4.

Forgeard, M.J.C. & Seligman, M.E.P., 2012. Seeing the glass half full: A review of the causes and consequences of optimism. *Pratiques Psychologiques*, 18(2): 107-120.

Fox, D., Prilleltensky, I. & Austin, S., 2009. Critical psychology for social justice: Concerns and dilemmas. In D. Fox, I. Prilleltensky, & S. Austin (Eds.), *Critical psychology: An introduction* (pp. 3–19). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Frankl, V.E. 1946. *Man's search for meaning.* Boston, MA: Beacon Press.

Frankl, V.E. 1969. *The doctor and the soul. From psychotherapy to logotherapy.* New York: Bantam Books.

Fransman, T. & Yu, D. 2019. Multidimensional poverty in South Africa in 2001–16. *Development Southern Africa*, 36(1): 50-79.

Fredrickson, B.L. 2001. The role of positive emotions in positive psychology: The broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions. *American Psychologist, 56*(3): 218–226.

Fredrickson, B.L. 2004. The broaden–and–build theory of positive emotions. *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London. Series B: Biological Sciences*, *359*(1449), pp.1367-1377.

Fredrickson, B.L. 2013. Positive emotions broaden and build. In *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, 47: 1-53.

Fredrickson, B.L., Cohn, M.A., Coffey, K.A., Pek, J. and Finkel, S.M., 2008. Open hearts build lives: positive emotions, induced through loving-kindness meditation, build consequential personal resources. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, *95*(5), p.1045.

Fredrickson, B.L. & Kurtz, L.E. 2011. Cultivating positive emotions to enhance human flourishing. In Donaldson, S.I., Csikszentmihalyi, M. & Nakamura. J. (Eds), *Applied positive psychology: Improving everyday life, health, schools, work, and society* (pp. 35–47). Abingdon-on-Thames, UK: Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group.

Freire, P. 1970. *Pedagogy of the oppressed.* London, UK: Penguin.

Furness-Smith, P. 2015. *Well-being: A practical guide*. London: Icon Books.

Gandhi u.d. 2021. Mahatma Gandhi Quotes accessed on 26 July 2021 at https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/50584-your-beliefs-become-your-thoughts-your-thoughts-become-your-words

Gerrans, P., Speelman, C. & Campitelli, G., 2014. The relationship between personal financial wellness and financial wellbeing: A structural equation modelling approach. *Journal of Family and Economic Issues*, 35(2): 145-160.

Gilmour, D., Soudien, C. & Donald, D. 2000. Post-apartheid policy and practice: educational reform in South Africa. *Education in a global society: A Comparative Perspective*, 2: 341-350.

Ginott, H.G. (1995). *Teacher and Child: A book for parents and teachers*. New York: NY: Collier.

Gintner, G. 2014. DSM-5 Conceptual changes: Innovations, limitations and clinical implications. *The Professional Counselor*, 4(3): 179-190.

Govender, K., Bhana, A., McMurray, K., Kelly, J., Theron, L., Meyer-Weitz, A., Ward, C.L. and Tomlinson, M., 2019. A systematic review of the South African work on the well-being of young people (2000–2016). *South African Journal of Psychology*, *49*(1), pp.52-69.

Govender, K., Bhana, A., McMurray, K., Kelly, J., Theron, L., Meyer-Weitz, A., Ward, C.L. & Tomlinson, M., 2019. A systematic review of the South African work on the well-being of young people (2000–2016). *South African Journal of Psychology*, 49(1): 52-69.

Granziera, H., Collie, R. & Martin, A. 2021. Understanding teacher wellbeing through job demands-resources theory. In Granziera, H., Collie, R. & Martin, A. *Cultivating Teacher Resilience* (pp. 229-244). Dordrecht: Springer.

Grayson, J.L. & Alvarez, H.K. 2008. School climate factors relating to teacher burnout: A mediator model. *Teaching and teacher education*, 24(5): 1349-1363.

Griffin, D.P. 2014. Locus of Control and Psychological Well Being: Separating the Measurement of Internal and External Construct - A Pilot Study. *Eastern Kentucky University Libraries Research Award for Undergraduates,* 3: 1-13.

Gross, J.J. & John, O.P. 2003. Individual differences in two emotion regulation processes: implications for affect, relationships, and well-being. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 85(2): 348.

Gu, Q. 2014. The role of relational resilience in teachers' career-long commitment and effectiveness. *Teachers and Teaching*, 20(5): 502-529.

Guadalupe, C. 2010. Teachers as primary agents of education systems. Accessed 15 March 2019 at https://www.focal.ca/en/publications/focalpoint/259-june-2010-cesar-guadalupe-en

Guba, E.G. 1981. Criteria for assessing the trustworthiness of naturalistic inquiries. *Ectj*, *29*(2), pp.75-91.

Gumbo, M.T. & Maphalala, M.C. 2015. The focus group discussion method. In Okeke, C. and Van Wyk, M. (Eds)., 2015. *Educational research: an African approach*. Oxford University Press Southern Africa.

Guqaza, T.B. 2012. *The role of the Employee Assistance Programme in addressing job performance of educators.* Doctoral Thesis: University of Pretoria.

Guse, T. 2017. Activities and programmes to enhance wellbeing. Chapter 10 in Wissing, M.P., Potgieter, J., Guse, T., Khumalo, T. & Nel, L. (Eds). 2017. *Towards flourishing: Contextualising positive psychology.* Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Hall, A.M. & Theron, L., 2016. How school ecologies facilitate resilience among adolescents with intellectual disability: Guidelines for teachers. *South African Journal of Education*, 36(2): 1-13.

Hall, J., Sylva, K., Melhuish, E., Sammons, P., Siraj-Blatchford, I. and Taggart, B., 2009. The role of pre-school quality in promoting resilience in the cognitive development of young children. *Oxford Review of Education*, 35(3): 331-352.

Hallam, S. 2009. An evaluation of the Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) programme: promoting positive behaviour, effective learning and well-being in primary school children. *Oxford Review of Education*, 35(3): 313-330.

Hamilton, L. & Corbett-Whittier, C. 2012. *Using case study in education research.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Hammond, D. 2019. The legacy of Ludwig von Bertalanffy and its relevance for our time. *Systems Research and Behavioral Science*, 36(3): 301-307.

Hansen, A., Buitendach, J.H. & Kanengoni, H. 2015. Psychological capital, subjective wellbeing, burnout and job satisfaction amongst educators in the Umlazi region in South Africa. *SA Journal of Human Resource Management,* 13(1): 621.

Harding, S., Morris, R., Gunnell, D., Ford, T., Hollingworth, W., Tilling, K., Evans, R., Bell, S., Grey, J., Brockman, R., Campbell, R., Araya, R., Murphy, S. & Kidger, J. 2019. Is teachers' mental health and wellbeing associated with students' mental health and wellbeing? *Journal of Affective Disorders*, 253: 460-466

Hargreaves, A. 2000. Mixed emotions: Teachers' perceptions of their interactions with students'. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 16(8): 967-983.

Harley, K., Brasa, F., Bertram, C., Mattson, E., & Pillay, S. 2000. The real and the ideal: Teacher roles and competences in South African policy and practice. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 20: 287-304.

Harms, P. D., Brady, L., Wood, D. & Silard, A. 2018. Resilience and well-being. In E. Diener, S. Oishi, & L. Tay (Eds.), *Handbook of well-being.* Salt Lake City, UT: DEF Publishers. DOI:nobascholar.com

Harter, J.K., Schmidt, F.L. & Keyes, C.L. 2003. Well-being in the workplace and its relationship to business outcomes: A review of the Gallup studies*. Flourishing: The Positive Person and the Good Life. 2.*

Harvard Business Review. 2020. (https://hbr.org/1993/07/building-a-learning-organization#:~:text=Peter%20Senge%2C%20who%20popularized%20learning,free%2C%20and%20where%20people%20are)

Havenga-Coetzer, P., 2003. Victor Frankl's avenues to meaning: a compendium of concepts, phrases and terms in logotherapy. *Benmore, South Africa: Viktor Frankl Foundation of South Africa*.

Hawkes, N. 2005. *Does teaching values improve the quality of education in primary schools?* Doctoral thesis: University of Oxford.

Hefferon, K. & Boniwell, I. 2011. *Positive psychology: Theory, research and applications.* London, UK: McGraw-Hill Education.

Herr, K. & Anderson, G.L. 2005. The continuum of positionality in action research. In Herr, K. & Anderson, G.L. *The action research dissertation: A guide for students and faculty*, pp.29-48. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Hettler, B. 1984. Wellness: encouraging a lifetime pursuit of excellence. *Health Values*, 8(4): 13–17.

Hillman, D.R. & Lack. L.C. 2013. Public health implications of sleep loss: the community burden. *The Medical Journal of Australia (MJA)* 199: S7–S10 doi: 10.5694/mja13.10620

Hirsch, J.K., Nsamenang, S.A., Chang, E.C. & Kaslow, N.J., 2014. Spiritual well-being and depressive symptoms in female African American suicide attempters: Mediating effects of optimism and pessimism. *Psychology of Religion and Spirituality*, 6(4): 276.

Holdsworth, M.A. 2019. Health, wellness and wellbeing. *Revue Interventions économiques. Papers in Political Economy*, (62). https://journals.openedition.org/interventionseconomiques/6657?file=1

Holmes, E. 2005. *Teacher well-being: Looking after yourself and your career in the classroom*. Abingdon-on-Thames, UK: Routledge.

Holmes, E. 2018. *A Practical Guide to Teacher Wellbeing: A Practical Guide*. Learning Matters. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage

Hook, D., 2001. Critical psychology in South Africa: Applications, limitations, possibilities. *Psychology in Society*, 27: 3-17.

Hook, S. (n.d.). BrainyQuote.com. Retrieved November 12, 2016, from BrainyQuote.com Web site: https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/s/sidneyhook195688.html

Hopkins, T. & Rippon, S., 2015. *Head, hands and heart: asset-based approaches in health care.* Health Foundations.

Horsthemke, K., Siyakazi, P., Walton, E., Wolhuter, C. 2015. *Education Studies: History, Sociology, Philosophy*. Cape Town: Oxford University Press

Howie, S., Combrinck, C., Roux, K., Tshele, M., Mokoena, G. & Palane, N.M. 2017. *PIRLS 2016.* Pretoria: Centre for Evaluation and Assessment.

Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC). 2016. The health of educators in public schools in South Africa 2016 accessed on 17 November 2019 at http://repository.hsrc.ac.za/handle/20.500.11910/10971

Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC). 2017. *Comparative Fact sheet accessed 9 July 2020 at* http://www.hsrc.ac.za/uploads/pageContent/8248/Fact%20sheetHAST%20and%20DBE14%20June%202017.pdf

Huppert, F. & D. Johnson. 2010. A Controlled Trial of Mindfulness Training in Schools: The Importance of Practice for an Impact on Wellbeing. *The Journal of Positive Psychology* 5: 264–274.

Hutcherson, C.A., Seppala, E.M. & Gross, J.J., 2008. Loving-kindness meditation increases social connectedness. *Emotion*, 8(5): 720.

Hwang, Y.S., Bartlett, B., Greben, M. & Hand, K. 2017. A systematic review of mindfulness interventions for in-service teachers: A tool to enhance teacher wellbeing and performance. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 64: 26-42. . 64. 26-42. 10.1016/j.tate.2017.01.015.

Ingersoll, R.M. and Smith, T.M., 2003. The wrong solution to the teacher shortage. *Educational leadership*, *60*(8), pp.30-33.

Itumeleng, S.M. & Oupa, L.L., 2014. The role of school management teams in underperforming schools: A matter of values. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 5(3): p.475.

Jansen, C. & van der Merwe, P. (2015). Teaching Practice in the 21st Century: Emerging Trends, Challenges and Opportunities. *Universal Journal of Educational Research.* 3. 190-199. 10.13189/ujer.2015.030304.

Jennings, P. 2015. Mindfulness for Teachers. Simple skills for Peace and Productivity in the Classroom. New York. W.W. Norton & Company.

Jennings, P.A. & Greenberg, M.T. 2009. The prosocial classroom: Teacher social and emotional competence in relation to student and classroom outcomes. *Review of Educational Research, 79(*1): 491–525.

Jerrim, J. & Sims, S. 2021. When is high workload bad for teacher wellbeing? Accounting for the non-linear contribution of specific teaching tasks. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 105*:* 103395.

Johnson, S. 2013. Impact of stress and burnout interventions on educators in high-risk secondary schools. PhD Thesis. Stellenbosch University

Jorgensen, D.L. 2015. Participant observation. In S. Kosslyn. *Emerging trends in the social and behavioral sciences: An interdisciplinary, searchable, and linkable resource.* pp.1-15. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

Jung, C.G. and Adler, G. 2014. *The development of personality*. London. Routledge.

Kaliannan, M. & Ch, S.D. 2010. Education in human values (EHV): Alternative approach for a holistic teaching. *Educational Research and Reviews*, 5(12): 802-807.

Kamberelis, G. &Dimitriadis, G. 2011. Focus groups: Contingent articulations of pedagogy, politics, and inquiry. *The Sage handbook of qualitative research*, *4*, pp.545-61. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Kashdan, T.B. & McKnight, P.E. 2009. Origins of Purpose in Life: Refining our Understanding of a Life Well Lived. *Psihologijske Teme, 18*(2), *303–316.*

Kehoe, J., 2005. *Mind power into the 21st century*. Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh: Sterling Publishers.

Kelchtermans, G. & Deketelaere, A. 2016. The emotional dimension in becoming a teacher. In *International handbook of teacher education* (pp. 429-461). Singapore: Springer.

Keller, M.M., Chang, M.L., Becker, E.S., Goetz, T. & Frenzel, A.C. 2014. Teachers' emotional experiences and exhaustion as predictors of emotional labor in the classroom: An experience sampling study. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 5: 1442.

Keller, M.M. & Becker, E.S. 2020. Teachers' emotions and emotional authenticity: do they matter to students' emotional responses in the classroom? *Teachers and Teaching*, pp.1-19.

Kelliher, C., Richardson, J. & Boiarintseva, G., 2019. All of work? All of life? Reconceptualising work-life balance for the 21st century. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 29(2): 97-112.

Kemmis, S., 1980. *Action Research in Retrospect and Prospect*. ERIC Collection, sponsored by the Australian Association for Research in Education, Melbourne.

Kent, M., Davis, M.C. & Reich, J.W. 2013. *The resilience handbook: Approaches to stress and trauma*. Abington-on-Thames, UK: Routledge.

Kern, M.L., Waters, L.E., Adler, A. & White, M.A. 2015. A multidimensional approach to measuring well-being in students: Application of the PERMA framework. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, 10(3): 62-271.

Keyes, C. 2005. Mental Illness and/or Mental Health? Investigating Axioms of the Complete State Model of Health. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*. 73(3): 539-48.

Keyes, C. 2006. Mental health in adolescence: Is America's youth flourishing? The *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 76(3): 395-402.

Keyes, C.L. 2007. Promoting and protecting mental health as flourishing: A complementary strategy for improving national mental health. *American Psychologist, 62*(2): 95–108.

Keyes, C.L. & Annas, J. 2009. Feeling good and functioning well: Distinctive concepts in ancient philosophy and contemporary science. *The journal of Positive Psychology*, 4(3): 197-201.

Keyes, C.L., Myers, J.M. & Kendler, K.S. 2010. The structure of the genetic and environmental influences on mental well-being. *American Journal of Public Health*, 100(12): 2379-2384.

Khaw, D. & Kern, M. 2014. A cross-cultural comparison of the PERMA model of well-being. *Undergraduate Journal of Psychology at Berkeley, University of California*, 8(1): 10-23.

Khumalo, I.P., Ejoke, U.P., Asante, K.O. & Rugira, J. 2021. Measuring social well-being in Africa: An exploratory structural equation modelling study. *African Journal of Psychological Assessment*, 3: 7.

Killen, R. 2015. *Teaching Strategies for Quality Teaching and Learning*. (2nd ed.). Juta.

King, L.A. 2016. *The science of psychology: An appreciative view*. New York. McGraw-Hill Education.

King, N. 2019. Research ethics in qualitative research. In Sullivan, C. and Forrester, M.A. (eds)., 2019. *Doing qualitative research in psychology: A practical guide*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Kincheloe, J.L., McLaren, P., Steinberg, R. & Monzó L.D. 2018. *Critical pedagogy and qualitative research: Advancing the bricolage*. In: Denzin, NK & Lincoln YS (Eds.) The SAGE Handbook of qualitative research (5th Ed.). Thousand Oaks (CA): SAGE. 235-260.

King, N. & Hugh-Jones, S. 2019 in Forrester, M.A. and Sullivan, C. eds., 2019. *Doing qualitative research in psychology: A practical guide*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Kpanake, L., 2018. Cultural concepts of the person and mental health in Africa. *Transcultural psychiatry*, 55(2): 198-218.

Koenen, A.K., Vervoort, E., Kelchtermans, G., Verschueren, K. & Spilt, J.L. 2019. Teachers' daily negative emotions in interactions with individual students in special education. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders*, 27(1): 37-51.

Kumano, M., 2018. On the concept of well-being in Japan: Feeling shiawase as hedonic well-being and feeling ikigai as eudaimonic well-being. *Applied Research in Quality of Life*, 13(2): 419-433.

Kyriacou, C. 2000. *Stress-busting for teachers*. Cheltenham: Nelson Thornes.

Kyriacou, C. 2001. Teacher stress: Directions for future research. *Educational Review*, 53(1): 27-35.

Ladbrook, M. 2009. Challenges experienced by educators in the implementation of inclusive education in primary schools in South Africa. Master's Dissertation: University of South Africa.

Lam, B.H., 2019. *Social support, well-being, and teacher development*. Springer.

Lawrence, M. 2019. Exploring teachers' morale in selected primary schools of Bohlabela District. PhD Thesis. University of South Africa.

Lazarus, R.S. & Folkman, S. 1984. *Stress, appraisal, and coping*. Dordrecht: Springer.

Le Roux, C. 2015. In Horsthemke, K., Siyakazi, P., Walton, E., Wolhuter, C. 2015. *Education Studies: History, Sociology, Philosophy*. Oxford University Press.

Le Roux, C.S. & Mokhele, P.R., 2011. The persistence of violence in South Africa's schools: In search of solutions. *Africa Education Review*, 8(2): 318-335.

Le Roux, J. 2020. *Predictors of school dropout in South Africa: an overview.* Master's Dissertation: University of KwaZula Natal.

Lebesa, M.K. 2015. Exploring the school culture in a township primary school. MEd. Dissertation: University of Pretoria.

Lee, C. & Russell, A. 2003. Effects of physical activity on emotional well-being among older Australian women: cross-sectional and longitudinal analyses. *Journal of Psychosomatic Research*, 54(2): 155-160.

Lefa, B. 2015. *Ubuntu in South African Education*. Faculty of Education and Social Sciences. Cape Peninsula University of Technology.

Legotlo, M.W. (Ed.) 2014. *Challenges and issues facing the education system in South Africa*. Africa Institute of South Africa.

Leiter, M.P. & Cooper, C.L. 2017. The state of the art of workplace wellbeing. In Cooper, C.L. & Leiter, M.P. *The Routledge companion to wellbeing at work* (pp. 1-10). Abington-on-Thames, UK: Routledge.

Lerner, R. M. 2005. In Bronfenbrenner, U., (Ed) 2005. *Making human beings human: Bioecological perspectives on human development*. Thousand, Oaks, CA: Sage.

Lessing, A. & De Wit, M. 2007. The value of continuous professional development: teachers' perceptions. *South African Journal of Education*. 27(1): 53-67.

Letseka, M., 2012. In defence of Ubuntu. *Studies in Philosophy and Education*, 31(1): 47-60.

Letseka, M. 2013. Educating for ubuntu/botho: lessons from Basotho indigenous education. *Open Journal of Philosophy*, *3*(02): 337.

Letseka, M. 2014. The illusion of education in South Africa. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 116: 4864-4869.

Liebenberg, L., Theron, L., Sanders, J., Munford, R., Van Rensburg, A., Rothmann, S. & Ungar, M., 2016. Bolstering resilience through teacher-student interaction: Lessons for school psychologists. *School Psychology International*, 37(2): 140-154.

Lincoln, Y.G. & Guba, E., 1985. E. 1985. Naturalistic Inquiry. *London, Sage Publications. Contextualization: Evidence from Distributed Teams." Information Systems Research*, 16(1): 9-27.

Locke, E.A. & Latham, G.P., 2019. The development of goal setting theory: A half century retrospective. *Motivation Science*, 5(2): 93.

Loprinzi, P.D., Herod, S.M., Cardinal, B.J. & Noakes, T.D. 2013. Physical activity and the brain: a review of this dynamic, bi-directional relationship. *Brain Research*, 1539: 95-104.

Lorenz, T., Beer, C., Koch, J. & Heinitz, K. 2016. Measuring Psychological Capital: Construction and validation of the Compound PsyCap Scale (CPC-12). Conference 50: DGPs Conference.

Lövheim, H. 2012. A new three-dimensional model for emotions and monoamine neurotransmitters. *Medical Hypotheses*, 78(2): 341-348.

Lubans, D.R., Plotnikoff, R.C. & Lubans, N.J. 2012. A systematic review of the impact of physical activity programmes on social and emotional well-being in at-risk youth. *Child and Adolescent Mental Health*, 17(1): 2-13.

Luthans, F. 2002. Positive Organizational Behavior: Developing and Managing Psychological Strengths. *Academy of Management Executive*. 16: 57-72. 10.5465/AME.2002.6640181.

Luthans, F., Avey, J.B. & Patera, J.L. 2008. Experimental analysis of a web-based training intervention to develop positive psychological capital. *Academy of Management Learning & Education*, 7(2): 209-221.

Luthans, F., Avey, J.B., Avolio, B.J. & Peterson, S.J. 2010. The development and resulting performance impact of positive psychological capital. *Human Resource Development Quarterly*, 21(1): 41-67.

Luthans, F., Avolio, B.J., Avey, J.B. & Norman, S.M. 2007. Positive psychological capital: Measurement and relationship with performance and satisfaction. *Personnel Psychology*, 60(3): 541-572.

Luthans, F., Vogelgesang, G.R. & Lester, P.B. 2006. Developing the psychological capital of resiliency. *Human Resource Development Review*, 5(1): 25-44.

Luthans, F., Youssef, C.M. & Avolio, B.J. 2015. *Psychological capital and beyond*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Lyubomirsky, S. 2001. Why are some people happier than others? The role of cognitive and motivational processes in well-being. *American Psychologist*, 56(3): 239.

Lyubomirsky, S., Dickerhoof, R., Boehm, J.K. and Sheldon, K.M., 2011. Becoming happier takes both a will and a proper way: an experimental longitudinal intervention to boost well-being. *Emotion*, *11*(2), p.391.

Lyubomirsky, S. & Layous, K. 2013. How do simple positive activities increase well-being? *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 22(1): 57-62.

Lyubomirsky, S., Sheldon, K.M. & Schkade, D. 2005. Pursuing happiness: The architecture of sustainable change. *Review of General Psychology*, *9*(2), pp.111-131.

MacIntyre, P.D., Ross, J., Talbot, K., Mercer, S., Gregersen, T. & Banga, C.A. 2019. Stressors, personality and wellbeing among language teachers. *System*, *82*, pp.26-38.

Magano, M.D. 2018. Promoting wellness through indigenous ways. Chapter 18 in Nel, M. (Ed). *Life Orientation for South African Teachers*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Majmudar, M. 2002. Discussion Paper by Dr Madhavi Majmudar, Sathya Sai Education in Human Values, presented at: The ninth annual international conference on "Education, spirituality and the whole child" 20 June - 22 June 2002, held at Roehampton, University of Surrey, UK

Majmudar, M. 1998. Developing Values Education for the new Millennium through a Cross-Cultural Approach: Sathya Sai Education in Human Values (SSEHV); Theory and Practice.

Malindi, M.J. & MacHenjedze, N. 2012. The role of school engagement in strengthening resilience among male street children. *South African Journal of Psychology*, 42(1): 71-81.

Maphalala, M.C. 2017. Embracing Ubuntu in managing effective classrooms. *Gender and Behaviour*, 15(4): 10237-10249.

Maphalala, M.C. & Mpofu, N. 2018. Embedding values in the South African curriculum: by design or default? *South African Journal of Education*, 38(3): 1-11.

Maree, K. 2007. *First steps in research*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Maringe, F. & Moletsane, R. 2015. Leading schools in circumstances of multiple deprivation in South Africa: Mapping some conceptual, contextual and research dimensions. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 43(3): 347-362.

Martin, A.J. and Marsh, H.W., 2009. Academic resilience and academic buoyancy: Multidimensional and hierarchical conceptual framing of causes, correlates and cognate constructs. *Oxford Review of Education*, *35*(3): 353-370.

Marx, C. 2013 Hendrik Verwoerd and the Leipzig School of psychology in 1926. *Historia*, 58: 99-118.

Maslach, C. & Leiter, M.P. 1999. Teacher burnout: A research agenda. In R. Vandenberghe & A.M. Huberman (Eds.), *Understanding and preventing teacher burnout: A sourcebook of international research and practice* (pp. 295–303). Cambridge University Press.

Masten, A.S. 2014. Global perspectives on resilience in children and youth. *Child Development*, 85(1): 6-20.

May, D.R., Gilson, R.L. & Harter, L.M. 2004. The psychological conditions of meaningfulness, safety and availability and the engagement of the human spirit at work. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 77(1): 11-37.

Mayer, J.D. 1998. A systems framework for the field personality. *Psychological Inquiry*, 9(2): 118-144.

McCallum, F. & Price, D., 2010. Well teachers, well students. *The Journal of Student Wellbeing*, 4(1), pp.19-34.

McCallum, F. & Price, D. (Eds.). 2015. *Nurturing wellbeing development in education: From little things, big things grow.* Abingdon-on-Thames, UK: Routledge.

McCrae, R.R. 2011. Personality Theories for the 21st Century. *Teaching of Psychology*, 38(3): 209-214.

McMillan, J.H. & Schumacher, S. 2010. *Research in Education. Evidence-Based Inquiry*. (7th ed.). Essex: Pearson.

McNiff, J., 2017. *Action research: All you need to know*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Mercer, S. & Gregersen, T. 2020. *Teacher wellbeing*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Mertens, D.M. 2015. *Research and evaluation in education and psychology: integrating diversity with quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods*, 4th ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Mnguni, N., Bacon, N. & Brown, J.F. 2012. The wellbeing and resilience paradox. *London: The Young Foundation*.

Mitchell, A. & Arnold, M., 2004. Behavior Management Skills as Predictors of Retention Among South Texas Special Educators. *Journal of instructional Psychology*, 31(3): 214–219.

Mkhize, N. 2016. Education: SA consistently prioritises spending on education in its budgets. Downloaded from Business Day Live on 14 June 2016.

Moodie, T.D. 1975. The rise of Afrikanerdom: Power, apartheid and the Afrikaner Civil Religion. University of California Press.

Moon, B., Morash, M., Jang, J.O. & Jeong, S. 2015. Violence against teachers in South Korea: Negative consequences and factors leading to emotional distress. *Violence and Victims*, 30(2): 279-292.

Moore, C. 1997. *The ecosystemic approach*. In: Meyer, HF, Moore, C & Viljoen HG. (Eds.) Personology: From individual to ecosystem. Johannesburg: Heinemann. 555-590

Mori, K., Kaiho, Y., Tomata, Y., Narita, M., Tanji, F., Sugiyama, K., Sugawara, Y. &Tsuji, I. 2017. Sense of life worth living (ikigai) and incident functional disability in elderly Japanese: The Tsurugaya Project. *Journal of Psychosomatic Research*, 95: 62-67.

Morrow, W. 2007. Learning to teach in South Africa. Pretoria: HSRC Press

Motshekga, A. 2016. Minister of Basic Education Speech at Education Lekgotla, January, 2016. Centurion. Reported on by Sipho Masondo, City Press 24.01.2016. Accessed at https://city-press.news24.com/News/angie-reads-riot-act-20160123

Motshekga, A. 2016. Minister of Basic Education Speech at Education Lekgotla, January, 2016. Centurion. Reported on by Sipho Masondo, City Press 24.01.2016. Accessed at https://city-press.news24.com/News/angie-reads-riot-act-20160123

Msila, V. 2009. School choice and intra-township migration: Black parents scrambling for quality education in South Africa. *Journal of Education*, 46(1): 81-98.

Myers, J.E. & Sweeney, T.J. 2008. Wellness counseling: The evidence base for practice. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 86(4): 482-493.

Naidoo, K., Botha, C. & Bisschoff, C. 2013. Causes of stress in Public Schools and its Impact on Work Performance of Educators. *Journal Of Social Science,* 34(2): 177-190.

National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), 2007. *The condition of education.* U.S. Department of Education Accessed on 12 March 2020 at https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2007/2007064.pdf

Nakamura, J. & Csikszentmihalyi, M. 2014. The Concept of Flow. In *Flow and the foundations of Positive Psychology* (pp. 239-263). Dordrecht: Springer.

National Education Policy Act (NEPA) No.27 of 1996. Government Gazette. Pretoria: Government Printers

Naylor, C. & White, M. 2010. The worklife of BC teachers in 2009: A BCTF study of working and learning conditions. *British Columbia Teachers' Federation. Retrieved from http://www. bctf. ca/uploadedfiles/public/issues/WorklifeWorkload/ 2009/fullreport. pdf of Holistic Nursing*, *25*(4), pp.238-248.

Nel, 2017. Theories on character strengths, resilience, hope and self-determination. In Wissing, M.P., Potgieter, J., Guse, T., Khumalo, T. & Nel, L. (Eds). 2017. *Towards flourishing: Contextualising positive psychology*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Nel, N., Müller, H., Hugo, A., Helldin, R., Bäckmann, O.,Dwyer, H. & Skarlind, A. 2011. A comparative perspective on teacher attitude-constructs that impact on inclusive education in South Africa and Sweden. *South African Journal of Education* 31:74-90. http://www.ajol.info/index.php/saje/_article/viewFile/63492/51335.Downloaded 23 September 2012.

Nel, N.M., Tlale, L.D.N., Engelbrecht, P. & Nel, M. 2016. Teachers' perceptions of education support structures in the implementation of inclusive education in South Africa. *Koers*, 81(3): 1-14.

Ngobeni, H. 2006. The role of the head of department in alleviating work-related teacher stress in primary schools. Master's Dissertation: University of South Africa.

Nias, J. 1999. Teachers' moral purposes: Stress, vulnerability, and strength. In R. Vandenberghe & A. M. Huberman (Eds.), *Understanding and preventing teacher burnout: A sourcebook of international research and practice* (pp. 223–237). Cambridge University Press.

Nieuwenhuis, J. 2016. Introducing qualitative research in K. Maree. (Ed.). *First Steps in research*. Pretoria: van Schaik.

Noble, T. & McGrath, H. 2012. Wellbeing and resilience in young people and the role of positive relationships. In Noble, T. & McGrath, H. *Positive relationships* (pp. 17-33). Dordrecht: Springer.

Noddings, N. 2002. *Educating moral people: A caring alternative to character education*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Nsamenang, A.B., Fru, F.N. & Browne, M.A. 2007. The roots of community psychology in Cameroon. In Reich S.M., Riemer M., Prilleltensky I., Montero M. (Eds.) *International Community Psychology* (pp. 392-406). Boston, MA. Springer, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-0-387-49500-2_22

Nygaard, K. 2019. *The Causes of Teacher Burnout and Attrition.* Thesis: Concordia University, St. Paul. Retrieved from https://digitalcommons.csp.edu/teacher-education_masters/10

Nzimakwe, T.I. 2014. Practising Ubuntu and leadership for good governance: the South African and continental dialogue. *African Journal of Public Affairs*, 7(4):

Oberle, E. & Schonert-Reichl, K. 2016. Stress contagion in the classroom? The link between classroom teacher burnout and morning cortisol in elementary school students. *Social Science & Medicine*, 159 (2016): 30-37.

Okeke, C. 2015. Achieving qualitative validity, reliability and generalisability. In C. Okeke & Van Wyk, M. (Eds). 2015. Educational Research: An African Approach. Oxford University Press

Okeke, C., Abongdia, J., Adu, E., van Wyk, M. & Wolhuter, C. 2016. *Learn to teach: A handbook for teaching practice* (1st ed). Oxford University Press.

Okpalaenwe, E.N. & Odigwe, G.K. 2018. Healing Technique and Rituals as an Approach to Counseling in the African Cultural Contexts. *Journal of African Interdisciplinary Studies,* 2(8): 15-26.

Oliver, R.M. & Reschly, D.J. 2007. *Effective Classroom Management: Teacher Preparation and Professional Development.* TQ Connection Issue Paper. Washington, DC: National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality.

Olivier, M.A.J. & Venter, D.J.L., 2003. The extent and causes of stress in teachers in the George region. *South African Journal of Education*, *23*(3): 186-192.

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Library. 2018. Valuing Our Teachers and Raising Their Status: How Communities Can Help https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/ 97892642926 97-6-en.pdf?expires=1588345089&id=id&accname=guest&checksum =570953 971700502250F9BBB81369A209

Owen, S. 2016. Professional learning communities: Building skills, reinvigorating the passion, and nurturing teacher wellbeing and "flourishing" within significantly innovative schooling contexts. *Educational Review*, 68(4): 403-419.

Owen, L. & Corfe, B. 2017. The role of diet and nutrition on mental health and wellbeing. *Proceedings of the Nutrition Society*, 76(4): 425-426.

Paredes-Canilao, N., Babaran-Diaz, M.A., Florendo, M., Nancy, B., Salinas-Ramos, T. & Mendoza, S., 2015. Indigenous psychologies and critical-emancipatory psychology. In I. Parker (Ed.), *Handbook of critical psychology* (pp. 356–365). Abingdon-on-Thames, UK: Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group.

Parham, T., Ajamu, A., White, J. 2016. *The Psychology of Blacks: Centering our perspectives in the African Consciousness.* Abingdon-on-Thames, UK: Routledge.

Park, E.Y. & Shin, M. 2020. A meta-analysis of special education teachers' burnout. *SAGE Open*, 10(2): 10-17.

Parker, I. (Ed). 2015. *Handbook of Critical Psychology*. Abingdon-on-Thames, UK: Routledge.

Paterson, A. & Grantham, R. 2016. How to make teachers happy: An exploration of teacher wellbeing in the primary school context. *Educational & Child Psychology* 33(2): 90-104.

Pelser, A. 2015. *Managing Teacher Stress in Secondary Schools in Mahikeng, South Africa*. PhD Thesis. Faculty of Education. North-West University, Mahikeng Campus

Pereira, F. 2011. In-service teacher education and scholar innovation: The semantics of action and reflection on action as a mediation device. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education,* 36(11): 33-50. Downloaded from http://ro.ecu.edu.au/ajte/vol36/iss11/3

Peterson, C. & Park, N., 2011. Character strengths and virtues: Their role in well-being. *Applied Positive Psychology: Improving everyday life, health, schools, work, and society*, pp.49-62.

Peterson, C. & Seligman, M.E.P. 2004. *Character strengths and virtues: A handbook and classification*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Pietarinen, J., Pyhältö, K., Haverinen, K., Leskinen, E. & Soini, T. 2021. Is individual- and school-level teacher burnout reduced by proactive strategies? *International Journal of School & Educational Psychology*, pp.1-16.

Pitsoe, V. 2013. Teacher Attrition in South Africa; Trends, Challenges and prospects. *Journal of Social Sciences.* 36(3): 309-318.

Pitsoe, V.J., 2013. Teacher attrition in South Africa: Trends, challenges and prospects. *Journal of Social Sciences*, 36(3): 309-318.

Pollard, A. 2011. Telephone interview with Hamilton, L. Reported on in Hamilton and Corbett-Whittier. 2012. *Using case study in education research*. Thousand Oaks, CA:Sage.

Positive Psychology Center Website, accessed at https://ppc.sas.upenn.edu/ on 24 July 2021

Quora. 2020. Aim of education. Accessed on 17 September 2020 at https://www.quora.com/What-is-the-main-aim-of-education

Rakepa, T.T. 2012. *The implementation of employee assistance programme of the Department of Education: a case study of Motheo district in the Free State Province.* Doctoral dissertation: Stellenbosch University.

Reddy, N. 2018. *SSEHV Global Compendium.* India: Sathya Sai International Organisation.

Republic of South Africa (RSA). Care and Support for Teaching and Learning (CSTL) programme https://www.gov.za/about-government/government-programmes/care-and-support-teaching-and-learning-programme)

Republic of South Africa (RSA). Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act No 108 of 1996. Government Gazette. Pretoria: Government Printers.

Republic of South Africa (RSA). National Education Policy Act (NEPA, 1996) Government Gazette. Pretoria: Government Printers.

Richardson, L. 1994. Writing: A method of inquiry. In Denzin, N. k. and Lincoln, Y. S. (Eds), Handbook of qualitative research (pp. 516-529) Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Ritchie, I. 1998. *Improving the ethos of a school and achieving academic excellence: The Sathya Sai Education in human values approach: An action research.* India: Sathya Sai International Organisation.

Robertson, I. & Cooper, C. 2011a. Psychological Well-Being. In Robertson, I. & Cooper, C. (Eds) *Well-Being Productivity and happiness at work.* (pp. 41-50). London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Robertson, I. & Cooper, C., 2011b. *Well-being: Productivity and happiness at work.* London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Roffey, S., 2012. Pupil wellbeing—Teacher wellbeing: Two sides of the same coin? *Educational and Child Psychology*, 29(4): 8-17.

Romero, V.E., Robertson, R. & Warner, A.N. 2018. *Building resilience in students impacted by adverse childhood experiences: A whole-staff approach.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

272

Ross, S.W., Romer, N. & Horner, R.H., 2012. Teacher well-being and the implementation of school-wide positive behavior interventions and supports. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions*, 14(2): 118-128.

Rothmann, 2017. In Wissing, M.P., Potgieter, J., Guse, T., Khumalo, T. & Nel, L. (Eds). 2017. *Towards flourishing: Contextualising positive psychology*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Rotter, J. B. 1954. General Principles for a Social Learning Framework of Personality Study. In J. B. Rotter, *Social learning and clinical psychology* (pp. 82–104). Hoboken, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc.

Rotter, J.B. 1990. Internal versus external control of reinforcement: A case history of a variable. *American Psychologist*, 45(4): 489.

Ryan, R.M. & Deci, E.L., 2001. On happiness and human potentials: A review of research on hedonic and eudaimonic well-being. *Annual review of Psychology*, 52(1): 141-166.

Ryen, A. 2016. Research Ethics and Qualitative Research. In Silverman, D. 2016. (Ed). *Qualitative Research*, (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Ryff, C.D. & Keyes, C.L.M. 1995. The structure of psychological well-being revisited. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 69(4): 719.

Ryff, C.D. & Singer, B.H. 2008. Know thyself and become what you are: A eudaimonic approach to psychological well-being. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, *9*(1): 13-39.

SA History online, accessed 27 Feb 2020 at https://www.sahistory.org.za/

Sagiv, L., Roccas, S. & Oppenheim-Weller, S. 2015. Values and well-being. *Positive psychology in practice: Promoting human flourishing in work, health, education, and everyday life*, pp.103-120.Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

Samuel, M. 2014. South African teacher voices: recurring resistances and reconstructions for teacher education and development. *Journal of Education for Teaching: International Research and Pedagogy,* 40(5): 610-621.

Scagnoli, N.I. & Verdinelli, S., 2017. Editors' Perspective on the Use of Visual Displays in Qualitative Studies. *The Qualitative Report*, *22*(7): 1945.

Scherer, S., Talley, C. & Hill, O. 2021. Mindfulness and Silent Sitting in the Classroom. *A Human Values Pathway for Teachers: Developing Silent Sitting and Mindful Practices in Education*, p.55.

Schueller, S.M. & Seligman, M.E. 2008. Optimism and pessimism. In Dobson, K.S. & Dozois, D.J.A. *Risk factors in depression* (pp. 171-194). Amsterdam: Elsevier.

Schulze, S. & Steyn, T. 2007. Stressors in the professional lives of South African secondary school educators. *South African Journal of Education.* 27(4): 691-707.

Schwartz, S.H. 2007. Basic human values: Theory, measurement, and applications. *Revue française de sociologie*, 47(4): 929.

Schwartz, S.H. 2012. An overview of the Schwartz theory of basic values. *Online Readings in Psychology and Culture*, 2(1): 2307-0919.

Schwartz, S.H. 2017. The refined theory of basic values. In *Values and behavior* (pp. 51-72). Dordrecht: Springer.

Schwartz, S.H. & Sortheix, F.M. 2018. Values and subjective well-being. In E. Diener, S. Oishi, & L. Tay (Eds.), *Handbook of well-being*. DEF Publishers. DOI:nobascholar.com

Scott, S. 2019. *Factors Influencing Teacher Burnout and Retention Strategies. Williams Honors College, Honors Research Projects.*

Sekete, G.P.I., Shilubane, M.S. & Moila, B.M. 2001. *Deracialisation and migration of learners in South African schools*. Pretoria: HSRC.

Seligman, M.E. 1998. The prediction and prevention of depression. In Routh, D.K. & DeRubeis, R.J. (Eds.). *The science of clinical psychology: Accomplishments and future directions. (pp. 201-214).* Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Seligman, M.E. 2002. Positive psychology, positive prevention, and positive therapy. In. Snyder, C.R &. Lopez S.J. (Eds), *Handbook of positive psychology* (pp. 3–9). Oxford University Press.

Seligman, M.E. 2004. *Authentic happiness: Using the new positive psychology to realize your potential for lasting fulfillment*. New York: Simon and Schuster.

Seligman, M.E., 2011. Flourish: a visionary new understanding of happiness and well-being. *Policy*, 27(3): 60-1.

274

Seligman, M.E., 2012. *Flourish: A visionary new understanding of happiness and well-being.* New York: Simon and Schuster.

Seligman, M. 2013. *Authentic Happiness. Using the New positive psychology to Realize Your Potential for Lasting Fulfillment.* London: Nicholas Brealey

Seligman, M., 2015. Realistic and FlexiBle. In Luthans, F., Youssef, C.M. & Avolio, B.J., 2015. *Psychological capital and beyond.* (p.113). Oxford University Press, USA.

Seligman, M., 2015. *Evidence-based approaches in positive education: Implementing a strategic framework for well-being in schools.* Springer.

Seligman, M.E. and Csikszentmihalyi, M., 2000. Positive psychology: An introduction. *American Psychologist, 55*(1): 5–14.

Seligman, M.E. & Csikszentmihalyi, M. 2014. Flow and the foundations of positive psychology (pp. 279-298). In Seligman, M.E. *Positive psychology: An introduction.* Dordrecht: Springer.

Senge, P.M. 2006. The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization. New York: Doubleday (A Division of Random House).

Severino, S., Aiello, F., Cascio, M., Ficarra, L. & Messina, R. 2011. Distance education: The role of self-efficacy and locus of control in lifelong learning. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 28: 705-717.

Shalem, Y. & Hoadley, U., 2009. The dual economy of schooling and teacher morale in South Africa. *International Studies in Sociology of Education*, 19(2): 119-134.

Sheldon, K.M. & Lyubomirsky, S. 2021. Revisiting the sustainable happiness model and pie chart: can happiness be successfully pursued? *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, 16(2): 145-154.

Shulman, L. 1987. Knowledge and teaching: Foundations of the new reform. *Harvard Educational Review,* 57: 1-22.

Sign the smileoff Campaign 2019 https://joepublicunited.co.za/work/sign-the-smile-off

Silverman, D. 2016. (Ed). *Qualitative Research*, (4th ed.). Sage.

Skaalvik, E. & Skaalvik, S. (2016) Teacher Stress and Teacher Self-Efficacy as Predictors of Engagement, Emotional Exhaustion, and Motivation to Leave the Teaching Profession. *Creative Education*, 7, 1785-1799. doi: 10.4236/ce.2016 .713182.

Sloan. 2009. Critical psychology for social justice: Concerns and dilemmas. In D. Fox, I. Prilleltensky, & S. Austin (Eds.), *Critical psychology: An introduction* (pp. 3–19). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Smith, P. 2014. *Mental Health Care: In Settings where Mental Health Resources are Limited.* New York: Archway Publishing.

Snyder, C.R., 1995. Conceptualizing, measuring, and nurturing hope. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 73(3): 355-360.

Snyder, C.R., Irving, L.M. & Anderson, J.R. 1991. Hope and health. *Handbook of Social and Clinical Psychology: The Health Perspective*, 162: 285-305.

Sotuku, N. &Duku, S., 2015. Ethics in human sciences research. In Okeke, C. and Van Wyk, M. (Eds)., 2015. *Educational research: an African approach*. Oxford University Press Southern Africa.

South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU). 2014. Research report: Training Needs Analysis of Teacher Professional Development. Retrieved from http://www.sadtu.org.za/docs/disc/2014/research_project.pdf on 28 October 2016.

South African History Online. Website, accessed 27 February 2020 at https://www.sahistory.org.za/article/history-apartheid-south-africa

South African Schools' Act (SASA).1996. South African Schools' Act 84 of 1996. Pretoria: Government Printers.

Spaull, N. & Jansen, J.D. 2019. *South African Schooling: The Enigma of Inequality.* Dordrecht: Springer.

Spaull, N. 2013. *South Africa's Education Crisis: The quality of education in South Africa 1994-2011.* Report Commissioned by the Centre for Development & Enterprise.

Spaull, N., 2013. South Africa's education crisis: The quality of education in South Africa 1994-2011. *Johannesburg: Centre for Development and Enterprise*, *21*(1), pp.1-65.

Spaull, N. 2015. Education quality in South Africa and sub-Saharan Africa: An economic approach. Doctoral dissertation: Stellenbosch University.

Spector, P. E. (1982). Behavior in organizations as a function of employee's locus of control. *Psychological Bulletin, 91(*3): 482-497.

Spilt, J.L., Koomen, H.M. & Thijs, J.T. 2011. Teacher wellbeing: The importance of teacher–student relationships. *Educational Psychology Review*, 23(4): 457-477.

Sports Science Institute of South Africa (SSISA). 2015. Teachers on the Move programme

Stake, R. & Jegatheesan, B. (2008). Access, a zone of comprehension, and intrusion. In Jegatheesan, B. (Ed.), *Access, a Zone of Comprehension, and Intrusion* (pp. 1-13). (Advances in Program Evaluation; Vol. 12). https://doi.org/10.1016/S1474-7863(08)12001-4

Stake, R.E.,1995. *The art of case study research*. Sage.

Steger, M. & Dik, B. 2009. *Work as Meaning: Individual and Organizational Benefits of Engaging in Meaningful Work.* Oxford Handbook of Positive Psychology and Work. 10.1093/oxfordhb/9780195335446.013.0011.

Strike, K. 2006. The ethics of educational research. In J. L. Green, G. Camilli, & P. B. Elmore (Eds), *Handbook of complementary methods in educational research*. Erlbaum.

Stroh, D.P 2015. *Systems thinking for social change: a practical guide to solving complex problems, avoiding unintended consequences, and achieving lasting results.* White River Junction, VT: Chelsea Green Publishing.

Strümpfer, D.J.W. 1995. The origins of health and strengths: From 'salutogenesis' to 'fortigenesis'. *South African Journal of Psychology,* 25, 81–89.

Sullivan, C. 2019. Theory and method in qualitative psychology. In Sullivan, C. & Forrester, M.A. (Eds)., *Doing qualitative research in psychology: A practical guide*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Sullivan, C. & Forrester, M.A. (eds)., 2019. *Doing qualitative research in psychology: A practical guide*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Suneetha, K. 2013. Implementing positive values in organizations and education for better living. *Indian Journal of Positive Psychology*, 4(1): 140.

Taplin, M. & Parahakaran, S. 2021. An Overview of Sathya Sai Education in Human Values and Silent Sitting/Visualization. In Parahakaran, S. & **Scherer**, S. (Eds.) *A Human Values Pathway for Teachers: Developing Silent Sitting and Mindful Practices in Education*, (p.7-16). Dordrecht: Springer.

Taylor, S.E., 2011. How psychosocial resources enhance health and well-being. *Applied positive psychology: Improving everyday life, health, schools, work, and society*, pp.65-77.

Taylor, S.E., Kemeny, M.E., Reed, G.M., Bower, J.E. & Gruenewald, T. L. 2000. Psychological resources, positive illusions, and health. *American Psychologist, 55*(1), 99–109.

Taylor, N. & Taylor, S. 2013. Chapter 2: Learner Performance in the National Schools Effectiveness Study, in Taylor, N., van der Berg, S. & Mabogoane, T. (Eds) *Creating Effective Schools: Report of South Africa's National Schools Effectiveness Study.* Cape Town: Pearson.

Teo, T. 2009, In Fox, D., Prilleltensky, I. and Austin, S. (Eds.), 2009. Critical psychology for social justice: Concerns and dilemmas. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage

Teo, T. 2015. (Ed). *Handbook of Critical Psychology*. London: Routledge.

Terre Blanche, M., Durrheim, K. & Painter, D. (Eds.). 2006. Research in Practice. Applied methods for the Social Sciences. (2nd ed.). Cape Town: UCT Press.

The National Policy for an Equitable Provision of an Enabling School Physical Teaching and Learning Environment, 2010. Pretoria: Government Printers.

Theron, L.C. 2012. Resilience research with South African youth: Caveats and ethical complexities. *South African Journal of Psychology*, 42(3): 333-345.

Theron, L.C. 2013. In Wissing, M.P. (Ed.) 2013. *Well-being research in South Africa*. Dordrecht: Springer.

Theron, L.C. 2016. The everyday ways that school ecologies facilitate resilience: Implications for school psychologists. *School Psychology International*, 37(2): 87-103.

Theron, L.C. & Liebenberg, L., 2015. Understanding cultural contexts and their relationship to resilience processes**.** In Theron, L.C., Liebenberg, L. & Ungar, M. (Eds.) *Youth Resilience and Culture* (pp. 23-36). Dordrecht: Springer.

Thorsteinsen, K. & Vittersø, J., 2020. Now you see it, now you don't: Solid and subtle differences between Hedonic and Eudaimonic Wellbeing. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, 15(4): 519-530.

Tobin, G.A. & Begley, C.M., 2004. Methodological rigour within a qualitative framework. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 48(4): 388-396.

Tonkin, K., Malinen, S., Näswall, K. and Kuntz, J.C., 2018. Building employee resilience through wellbeing in organizations. *Human Resource Development Quarterly*, *29*(2), pp.107-124.

Trends in Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS). 2017. Juan, A., Hannan, S., Zulu, N., Harvey, J.C., Prinsloo, C.H., Mosimege, M. & Beku, U. (2017) TIMSS item diagnostic report: South Africa: Grade 5 Numeracy. (Commissioned by the Department of Basic Education).

Tswanya, Y. 2019. Media report IOL, Cape Times, accessed on June 2021 at https://www.iol.co.za/capetimes/news/survey-reveals-need-to-reduce-school-class-sizes-teacher-workloads-28554157

Turok, I. 2015. The dual economy and spatial inequalities in South Africa. Pretoria: HSRC Institutional Repository.

Uchida, Y., Ogihara, Y. & Fukushima, S. 2015. Cultural construal of wellbeing– Theories and empirical evidence. In *Global Handbook of Quality of Life* (pp. 823-837). Dordrecht: Springer..

Ungar, M. & Theron, L. 2020. Resilience and mental health: How multisystemic processes contribute to positive outcomes. *The Lancet Psychiatry*, 7(5): 441-448.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. (UNESCO). 2015. SDG4-Education 2030, Incheon Declaration (ID) and Framework for Action. For the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 4, Ensure Inclusive and Equitable Quality Education and Promote Lifelong Learning Opportunities for All, ED-2016/WS/28.

Van Eeden, C. 2017. In Wissing, M.P., Potgieter, J., Guse, T., Khumalo, T. & Nel, L. (Eds). 2017. *Towards flourishing: Contextualising positive psychology*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Van Kampen, D. 2009. Personality and psychopathology: A theory-based revision of Eysenck's PEN model. *Clinical Practice and Epidemiology in Mental Health*, 5: 9–21.

Van Manen, M. 2008. Pedagogical Sensitivity and Teachers Practical Knowing-in-Action. *Peking University Education Review*, 1.

Vavi, Z. 2011. Education in South Africa a catastrophe. In *Zwelinzima Vavi's Speech to SADTU Eastern Cape Provincial Congress, ICC, East London.*

Vazi, M.L.M., Ruiter, R.A.C. Van den Borne, B., Martin, G. Dumont, K. & Reddy, P. S. 2013. The relationship between wellbeing indicators and teacher psychological stress in Easter cape public schools in South Africa. *SA Journal of Industrial Psychology.* 39i1.1042

Venter, F. 2010. Liberal democracy: The unintended consequence. South African constitution - writing propelled by the winds of globalisation, *South African Journal on Human Rights,* 26(1): 45-65. DOI: 10.1080/19962126.2010.11864 975

Veriava, F., Thom, A. & T. F. Hodgson. 2017. *Basic Education Rights Handbook.* Section 27. Braamfontein, Johannesburg

Vogel, J. 2009. Exploring temperaments in the mother-child relationship: an educational-psychological perspective. Master's Dissertation, University of South Africa. http://hdl.handle.net/10500/753

Von Bertalanffy, L. 1968. *General system theory: foundations, development, applications.* New York: George Braziller.

Waghid, Y. & Smeyers, P. 2012. Reconsidering Ubuntu: On the educational potential of a particular ethic of care. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 44: 6-20.

Wang, F., Yang, J., Pan, F., Ho, R.C. & Huang, J.H. 2020. Neurotransmitters and emotions. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 11, p.21.

Weare, K. 2013. *Promoting mental, emotional and social health: A whole school approach.* Abingdon-on-Thames, UK: Routledge.

Weiten, W., Dunn, D.S. & Hammer, E.Y. 2014. *Psychology applied to modern life: Adjustment in the 21st century.* Cengage Learning.

Westbrook, D., Kennerley, H. and Kirk, J., 2011. *An introduction to cognitive behaviour therapy: Skills and applications.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Weybright, E.H., Caldwell, L.L., Xie, H.J., Wegner, L. & Smith, E.A. 2017. Predicting secondary school dropout among South African adolescents: A survival analysis

approach. *South African Journal of Education*, *37*(2): 1353. https://doi.org/10.15700/saje.v37n2a1353

Whiting, L., Kendall, S. & Wills, W. 2012. An asset-based approach: an alternative health promotion strategy. *Community Practitioner*, 85(1): 25-28.

Wiener, N. 1948. *Cybernetics or Control and Communication in the Animal and the Machine.* MIT press. [2019REPRINT]

Wikipedia. Dual economy accessed on 18 July 2020 at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dual_economy#:~:text=A%20dual%20economy%20is%20the,and%20different%20patterns%20of%20demand.&text=Dual%20economies%20are%20common%20in,to%20the%20global%20export%20market.

Wilkinson, S. 2016. Analysing focus group data. In Silverman, D. 2016. (Ed). *Qualitative Research*, (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Wissing, M.P. (Ed.). 2013. *Well-being research in South Africa*. Dordrecht: Springer.

Wissing, M.P. 2014. A path towards flourishing, In Wissing, M.P., Potgieter, J., Guse, T., Khumalo, T. & Nel, L. (Eds) *Towards flourishing: Contextualising positive psychology.* Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Wissing, M.P. 2017. In Wissing, M.P., Potgieter, J., Guse, T., Khumalo, T. & Nel, L. (Eds). 2017. *Towards flourishing: Contextualising positive psychology*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Wissing, M.P. & Temane, Q.M. 2013. Feeling good, functioning well, and being true: Reflections on selected findings from the FORT research programme. In *Well-being research in South Africa* (pp. 225-250). Dordrecht: Springer.

Wissing, M.P. & Van Eeden, C. 2002. Empirical clarification on the nature of psychological well-being. *South African Journal of Psychology,* 32(1): 32–44.

Wissing, M.P., Potgieter, J., Guse, T., Khumalo, T., Nel, L. (Eds). 2017. *Towards flourishing: Contextualising positive psychology*. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.

Wissing, M.P., Potgieter, J., Guse, T., Khumalo, T., Nel, L. (Eds). 2017. *Towards flourishing: Contextualising positive psychology*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Wolf, C.P., Daniels, H. Thompson, E.S. & Thompson, E.S. 2017. Case Study Research. In C.J. Sheperis, Young, S. J. & Daniels, H. (Eds). *Counselling Research: Quantitative, Qualitative and Mixed Methods*. New York: Pearson.

Wolhuter, C., & Karras, K. 2015. In Horsthemke, K., Siyakazi, P., Walton, E., Wolhuter, C. 2015. *Education Studies: History, Sociology, Philosophy*. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.

Won Joong Kim, Nguyen Xuan Trung, Le Van Hung & Nguyen Ngoc Trung (2020

Wong, Y. P. & Zhang, L. 2014. Perceived school culture, personality types, and wellbeing among kindergarten teachers in Hong Kong. *Australasian Journal of Early Childhood.* 39(2): 100-109.

World Bank. 2021. Website accessed 15 June 2021 at https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.XPD.TOTL.GD.ZS?locations=ZA

Wrzesniewski, A., 2003. Finding positive meaning in work. *Positive organizational scholarship: Foundations of a new discipline*, pp.296-308.

Wrzesniewski, A. 2012. Callings. in Spreitzer. G.M. & Cameron, K.S. The Oxford Handbook of Positive Organizational Scholarship. https://www.oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199734610.001 .0001/oxfordhb-9780199734610

Wrzesniewski, A., McCauley, C., Rozin, P. & Schwartz, B. 1997. Jobs, careers, and callings: People's relations to their work. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 31(1): 21-33.

Yamamoto-Mitani, N. &Wallhagen, M.I. 2002. Pursuit of psychological well-being (ikigai) and the evolution of self-understanding in the context of caregiving in Japan. *Culture, Medicine and Psychiatry*, 26(4): 399-417.

Yin, R.K. 2003. Case study research: Design and methods. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Zee, M. & Koomen, H.M. 2016. Teacher self-efficacy and its effects on classroom processes, student academic adjustment, and teacher well-being: A synthesis of 40 years of research. *Review of Educational research*, 86(4): 981-1015.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Ethical clearance

UNISA | university of south africa

UNISA COLLEGE OF EDUCATION ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Date: 2019/06/12

Ref: **2019/06/12/08632618/36/MC**
Name: Mrs BA Feldman
Student: 08632618

Dear Mrs Feldman

Decision: Ethics Approval from
2019/06/12 to 2024/06/12

Researcher(s): Name: Mrs BA Feldman
E-mail address: feldmb@unisa.ac.za
Telephone: +27 71 087 2908

Supervisor(s): Name: Prof MA Venter
E-mail address: ventema@unisa.ac.za
Telephone: +27 12 429 4611

Title of research:

Guidelines for the promotion of teacher wellbeing in a township primary school

Qualification: PhD in Psychology of Education

Thank you for the application for research ethics clearance by the UNISA College of Education Ethics Review Committee for the above mentioned research. Ethics approval is granted for the period 2019/06/12 to 2024/06/12.

The **medium risk** application was reviewed by the Ethics Review Committee on 2019/06/12 in compliance with the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics and the Standard Operating Procedure on Research Ethics Risk Assessment.

The proposed research may now commence with the provisions that:

1. The researcher(s) will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics.
2. Any adverse circumstance arising in the undertaking of the research project that is relevant to the ethicality of the study should be communicated in writing to the UNISA College of Education Ethics Review Committee.
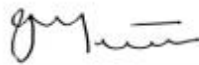
3. The researcher(s) will conduct the study according to the methods and procedures set out in the approved application.

4. Any changes that can affect the study-related risks for the research participants, particularly in terms of assurances made with regards to the protection of participants' privacy and the confidentiality of the data, should be reported to the Committee in writing.

5. 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. Adherence to the following South African legislation is important, if applicable: Protection of Personal Information Act, no 4 of 2013; Children's act no 38 of 2005 and the National Health Act, no 61 of 2003.

6. Only de-identified research data may be used for secondary research purposes in future on condition that the research objectives are similar to those of the original research. Secondary use of identifiable human research data requires additional ethics clearance.

7. No field work activities may continue after the expiry date **2024/06/12**. Submission of a completed research ethics progress report will constitute an application for renewal of Ethics Research Committee approval.

Note:

The reference number **2019/06/12/08632618/36/MC** should be clearly indicated on all forms of communication with the intended research participants, as well as with the Committee.

Kind regards,

Prof AT Motlhabane
CHAIRPERSON: CEDU RERC
motlhat@unisa.ac.za

Prof PM Sebate
EXECUTIVE DEAN
Sebatpm@unisa.ac.za

Approved - decision template – updated 16 Feb 2017

University of South Africa
Preller Street, Muckleneuk Ridge, City of Tshwane
PO Box 392 UNISA 0003 South Africa
Telephone: +27 12 429 3111 Facsimile: +27 12 429 4150
www.unisa.ac.za

284

Appendix B: GDE research approval letter

GAUTENG PROVINCE
Department: Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

8/4/4/1/2

GDE RESEARCH APPROVAL LETTER

Date:	19 November 2018
Validity of Research Approval:	04 February 2019 – 30 September 2019 2018/345
Name of Researcher:	Feldman B A
Address of Researcher:	PO Box 3073
	Florida
	1710
Telephone Number:	012 429 4896 074 756 9625
Email address:	feldmanbev@gmail.com
Research Topic:	Guidelines for the development and implementation of an intervention to promote teacher well-being in the township primary schools.
Type of qualification	Doctor of Philosophy in Psychology
Number and type of schools:	Four Primary Schools.
District/s/HO	Johannesburg Central.

Re: Approval in Respect of Request to Conduct Research

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

19/11/2018

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

1

Making education a societal priority

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

285

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

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

Kind regards

Mr Gumani Enos Mukatuni
Acting CES: Education Research and Knowledge Management

DATE: 19|11|2018

2

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

286

Appendix C: GDE extended approval

GAUTENG PROVINCE
Department: Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

	8/4/4/1/2

GDE RESEARCH APPROVAL LETTER

Date:	31 August 2020
Validity of Research Approval:	04 February 2021– 30 September 2021 2018/345 A
Name of Researcher:	Feldman BA
Address of Researcher:	PO Box 3073
	Florida
	1710
Telephone Number:	012 429 4896- 0747569625
Email address:	feldmanbev@gmail.com
Research Topic:	Guidelines for the development and implementation of an intervention to promote teacher well-being in the township primary schools
Type of qualification	Doctor of Philosophy in Psychology
Number and type of schools:	4 Secondary School
District/s/HO	Johannesburg Central

Re: Approval in Respect of Request to Conduct Research

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

09/09/2020

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

1. *Letter that would indicate that the said researcher/s has/have been granted permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct the research study.*

1

Making education a societal priority

2. The District/Head Office Senior Manager/s must be approached separately, and in writing, for permission to involve District/Head Office Officials in the project.

3. Because of COVID 19 pandemic researchers can ONLY collect data online, telephonically or may make arrangements for Zoom with the school Principal. Requests for such arrangements should be submitted to the GDE Education Research and Knowledge Management directorate. The approval letter will then indicate the type of arrangements that have been made with the school.

4. The Researchers are advised to make arrangements with the schools via Fax, email or telephonically with the Principal.

5. A copy of this letter must be forwarded to the school principal and the chairperson of the School Governing Body (SGB) that would indicate that the researcher/s have been granted permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct the research study.

6. A letter / document that outline the purpose of the research and the anticipated outcomes of such research must be made available to the principals, SGBs and District/Head Office Senior Managers of the schools and districts/offices concerned, respectively.

7. The Researcher will make every effort obtain the goodwill and co-operation of all the GDE officials, principals, and chairpersons of the SGBs, teachers and learners involved. Persons who offer their co-operation will not receive additional remuneration from the Department while those that opt not to participate will not be penalised in any way.

8. Research may only be conducted after school hours so that the normal school programme is not interrupted. The Principal (if at a school) and/or Director (if at a district/head office) must be consulted about an appropriate time when the researcher/s may carry out their research at the sites that they manage.

9. Research may only commence from the second week of February and must be concluded before the beginning of the last quarter of the academic year. If incomplete, an amended Research Approval letter may be requested to conduct research in the following year.

10. Items 6 and 7 will not apply to any research effort being undertaken on behalf of the GDE. Such research will have been commissioned and be paid for by the Gauteng Department of Education.

11. It is the researcher's responsibility to obtain written parental consent of all learners that are expected to participate in the study.

12. The researcher is responsible for supplying and utilising his/her own research resources, such as stationery, photocopies, transport, faxes and telephones and should not depend on the goodwill of the institutions and/or the offices visited for supplying such resources.

13. The names of the GDE officials, schools, principals, parents, teachers and learners that participate in the study may not appear in the research report without the written consent of each of these individuals and/or organisations.

14. On completion of the study the researcher/s must supply the Director: Knowledge Management & Research with one Hard Cover bound and an electronic copy of the research.

15. The researcher may be expected to provide short presentations on the purpose, findings and recommendations of his/her research to both GDE officials and the schools concerned.

16. Should the researcher have been involved with research at a school and/or a district/head office level, the Director concerned must also be supplied with a brief summary of the purpose, findings and recommendations of the research study.

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

Kind regards

Mr Gumani Mukatuni
Acting CES: Education Research and Knowledge Management

DATE: 09/09/2020

2

Making education a societal priority

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

288

Appendix D: Permission to conduct research

UNISA | university of south africa

20 July 2019

Principal and
Chairperson of the Governing Body
████████████████████

REQUEST FOR APPROVAL TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT ████████ PRIMARY SCHOOL

Dear Mr S ████

I, Beverley Feldman am doing research under supervision of Prof MA Venter, an Associate Professor in the Department of Psychology of Education towards a PhD at the University of South Africa.

We are inviting you to participate in a study entitled *GUIDELINES FOR THE PROMOTION OF TEACHER WELLBEING IN A TOWNSHIP PRIMARY SCHOOL.*

The aim of the study is to promote teacher wellbeing, by developing guidelines based on teacher input, on a potential intervention or programme to improve their personal, professional and institutional wellbeing. Your school has been randomly selected from the schools in the area, to participate in this study.

The research will be conducted in three phases, as follows:

Phase 1: Assessment of well-being (approximately 20 teaching staff – all staff are invited)

Teachers will complete a Qualitative Well-being Questionnaire.

Data collected will inform the development of an intervention to promote teacher well-being in this school. This will be presented as Phase 2.

Phase 2: Intervention (minimum 10 teachers)

The programme will, ideally be facilitated with teachers, once a week for approximately 90 minutes after school, for a period of five weeks.

During this time, teachers who agree to participate, will engage with me, through observation, conversation, focus groups and written feedback, as we collaboratively explore the usefulness of such a programme, and develop guidelines for its implementation. Photographs may be taken during this phase, but will only be used with individual consent from participants, in compliance with the POPI Act of 2013.

Phase 3: Case studies (individual engagement)

Individual teachers, who participated in Phase 2, will be invited to participate in Phase 3, during which they will be engaged with individually, to gain a more in-depth and personal perspective of their experience of wellbeing and participation in the programme.

The benefits of this study are that teachers will participate in the design of a framework and intervention that may improve their self-care practices to promote their wellbeing; to enable them to manage the stress associated with being in a caring profession.

No potential risks are anticipated. If, however, any participant experiences discomfort as a result of the research, this will be mediated by the researcher, who is also an educational psychologist. Participation is voluntary and participants may withdraw from the process at any time without fear of consequence.

There will be no reimbursement or any incentives for participation in the research.

Feedback procedures will entail member checking with participants before the research is submitted for examination. The research findings will be made available if the thesis is accepted and approved.

Embedded in the attached Addendum are the GDE Approval Letter and Ethical Clearance from the University of South Africa, to conduct the research. Please advise if you are unable to open the documents of if there are any further documents you would like in support of this request. Please feel free to contact me should you require any further information or want to contact me about any aspect of this study.

I hope that you will regard my request favourably.

Yours sincerely

BFeldman

Beverley A Feldman
Researcher
(Student Number: 0863 261 8)

Appendix E: Consent to participate in Phase 1

UNISA | university of south africa

9 July 2019

Dear Participant

I, Beverley A Feldman, am completing a Doctoral Degree in Psychology at the University of South Africa, under the supervision of Prof MA Venter in the Department of Psychology of Education. I am conducting a research study to propose **guidelines for the promotion of teacher well-being at a township primary school**, in collaboration with such teachers.

As explained in the presentation introducing this research study, the study aspires to use input from teachers to develop a self-care framework for teachers, and also to bring awareness to managers and other stakeholders to understand the importance of teacher well-being, and facilitate its promotion, in order to support teachers more effectively. The study will be conducted in three phases. Consent will be sought from participants in each phase, so agreeing to participate in this phase does not mean that you will have to participate in the rest of the study. This will be up to you.

I would like to invite you to participate in Phase 1 of this research by contributing to the anonymous collection of information through a qualitative well-being questionnaire. This will take approximately 15 to 20 minutes to complete. The data obtained from the questionnaire, will be used to inform the development of an intervention.

As a participant in this phase of the study it is necessary for you to be aware the following: (Please tick the appropriate box)

I understand that...	Yes	No
the purpose of the study is to propose guidelines for the development of an intervention to promote teacher well-being in a township primary school.		
my participation will involve completing a questionnaire related to my current experience relating to my personal and professional life, including emotional state, levels of stress, challenges and resources and my self-care practices.		
I may share personal information and it is up to me to ensure that others do not see my responses. The researcher will collect all completed questionnaires and not share my specific information publicly.		
this survey will be conducted during the third term of 2019, after contact time and will not interfere with my duties or activities at school.		
the anonymous questionnaires will be analysed by the researcher and kept under lock and key for five years after the research has been completed; after which it will be destroyed.		
it will take approximately 15 to 20 minutes to complete the questionnaire.		
my identity will not be revealed in any report, presentation or debriefing and confidentiality will be maintained and respected.		
my participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw from the process at any time, without explanation or penalty.		

permission for this study has been granted by the Gauteng Department of Education and the Principal. The District and the School Governing Body have been informed.		
a summary of the findings may be requested when the researcher has obtained the degree.		
I will not receive any remuneration, benefits or compensation for participating in the study. My input, however, may make a meaningful contribution to the research and subsequent recommendations		
that there is no risk or discomfort anticipated in my participation in the research, and that I may express any concerns in this regard or withdraw from the process as indicated previously.		
I agree to participate in this research.		
Is there anything, regarding the study or your participation in it, that you would like clarified? (Indicate below)		

I hereby acknowledge that I understand what my participation in this process entails.

_____   _____

Signature   Date

Appendix F: Consent to participate in Phase 2

22 August 2019

Dear Participant

Thank you for your participation in completing the questionnaire in Phase 1 of this research. The phases of the process have been explained to you. Thank you for agreeing to participate in Phase 2 of the research study to develop **guidelines for the promotion of teacher well-being at a township primary school**.

During this phase of the process, we will meet once a week for 90 minutes after school, for a period of five weeks (or as agreed to by all). Initially we will discuss the data collected from the questionnaires to confirm that this broadly reflects your experiences, and to invite further input from you. Thereafter, I will facilitate a suggested programme of intervention to you, inviting comment, critique and input from you, in the form of observation, including informal conversation and written feedback in the form of feedback questionnaires and weekly journaling tasks. You will be encouraged to keep guided reflective journals as narrative accounts of your notes, thoughts and experiences of your participation in the programme.

As a participant in this phase of the study it is necessary for you to be aware the following: (Please tick the appropriate box)

I understand that...	Yes	No
the purpose of the study is to develop guidelines for the development and implementation of an intervention for the promotion of teacher well-being.		
my participation will involve attending and participating in a proposed intervention; then commenting, critiquing and contributing to the programme, for refinement of such an intervention.		
the programme will be conducted during the third term of 2019, after contact time and will not interfere with my duties or activities at school		
Sessions and discussions will be audio recorded and kept under lock and key for five years after the research has been completed; after which, it will be destroyed. Photographs may be taken during sessions, but will NOT be of participant's faces, unless participants agree to it. Written consent will be sought from participants, for any photographs used.		
sessions will be for the duration of ninety minutes, once a week, for a period of five weeks, or as agreed to otherwise.		
my identity will not be revealed in any report, presentation or debriefing and confidentiality will be maintained and respected – unless I chose for my identity to be shared		

my participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw from the process at any time, without explanation or penalty		
permission for this study has been granted by the Gauteng Department of Education and the Principal. The District and the School Governing Body have been informed.		
a summary of the findings will be presented to the staff when the researcher has obtained the degree		
I will not receive any remuneration, benefits or compensation for participating in the study. My input, however, may make a meaningful contribution to the research and subsequent recommendations		
that there is no risk or discomfort anticipated in my participation in the research, and that I may express any concerns in this regard or withdraw from the process as indicated previously		
I agree to participate in this phase of the research		
Is there anything, regarding the study or your participation in it, that you would like clarified? (Indicate below)		

I hereby acknowledge that I understand what my participation in this process entails.

_____   _____

Signature   Date

Appendix G: Consent to participate in Phase 3

UNISA | university of south africa

17 October 2020

Dear Participant

At this stage you have participated in Phases 1 and 2 of the study designed to develop guidelines for the promotion of teacher wellbeing. Thank you for your contribution thus far; and for agreeing to participate in Phase 3 of the research process.

During this phase I would like to get an in-depth, more personal view of your experiences and input with regard to factors limiting and promoting your wellbeing, as a teacher; as well as those relating to the programme and its contents, duration and any other comments you may have to contribute to the research. This will be done in the form of a written guided personal reflection, and possibly excerpts from your reflective journal that you are willing to share.

Further to the consent from your previous consent agreement, it is necessary for you to be aware the following: (Please tick the appropriate box)

I understand that...	Yes	No
the purpose of this phase of the study is to explore my experience of factors that limit or promote my wellbeing; to share my thoughts and feelings about my involvement in the programme.		
my participation will involve written personal reflections, that I will share with the researcher, or to share excerpts, of my choice, from my reflective journal, of my experiences, during the research process.		
The reflection questions will be provided by the researcher and I will have a period of two weeks in which to contemplate and write my reflections. This will be done , after contact time and will not interfere with my duties or activities at school.		
My personal reflections will kept under lock and key for five years after the research has been completed; after which, it will be destroyed.		
my identity will not be revealed in any report, presentation or debriefing and confidentiality will be maintained and respected, unless I request to be acknowledged for my contribution to the research.		
my contribution to the research will be checked with me to ensure that I have been accurately represented and understood.		
my participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw from the process at any time, without explanation or penalty		

permission for this study has been granted by the Gauteng Department of Education and the Principal. The District and the School Governing Body have been informed.		
a summary of the findings will be presented to the staff when the researcher has obtained the degree		
I will not receive any remuneration, benefits or compensation for participating in the study. My input, however, may make a meaningful contribution to the research and subsequent recommendations		
that there is no risk or discomfort anticipated in my participation in the research, and that I may express any concerns in this regard or withdraw from the process as indicated previously		
I agree to participate in this phase of the research		
Is there anything, regarding this phase of the study or your participation in it, that you would like clarified? (Indicate below)		

I hereby acknowledge that I understand what my participation in this process entails.

_____   _____

Signature   Date

Appendix H: Confidentiality agreement

CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT: PHASE TWO

I_____ grant consent that the information I share during the intervention sessions may be used by Beverley Feldman for research purposes. I am aware that the intervention sessions and discussions will be digitally recorded and grant consent for these recordings, provided that my privacy will be protected. I undertake not to divulge any information that is shared in the group discussions to any person outside the group in order to maintain confidentiality.

Participant's Name (Please print): _____

Participant Signature: _____

Researcher's Name: (Please print): _____

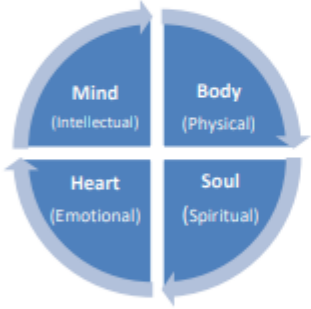Researcher's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix I: Qualitative questionnaire

Please indicate Male (M) or Female (F) [ ]   Age category [ ]   Date: _____

CONFIDENTIAL
QUALITATIVE WELL-BEING QUESTIONNAIRE

This is a questionnaire designed to determine your current state of well-being and self-care practice. It contains a range of activities and questions related to your personal and professional life. Please answer each question. Please be honest. Your personal information will be treated sensitively and confidentially. This information will be used to develop an intervention programme to promote teacher well-being. Data from all questionnaires will be compiled illustratively (NO NAMES OR NAMES OF SCHOOLS WILL BE USED).

1.	EMOTIONS CHECK
1.1.	On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being very unhappy and ten being very happy, circle the number that best describes how you feel today or at this moment.

☹ ☹	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	☺ ☺

1.2.	Did you choose the number10? (Mark with X)		YES		NO		

1.3.	If you answered NO, briefly list some things that prevent you from being a 10.
•	
•	
•	
•	
•	

2.	STRESS CHECK
2.1.	Indicate how often you feel stressed. (Mark the correct block with an x)

Almost Never		1 to 3 days a week		3 to 6 days a week		Everyday	

2.2.	List some things that cause you to feel stressed or discontented (challenges)...

In your personal life	In your professional life
•	•
•	•
•	•
•	•
•	•

2.3	Are there things you do to make you feel better when you feel stressed or discontented?	YES		NO	

a)	**If YES**, list some of them here (What do you do to relax?)
	•
	•
	•
	•

b)	**If NO**, list some things that would make you feel better, if you could do them. Perhaps include what prevents you from doing them.
	•
	•
	•
	•

3.	**SELF-CARE CHECK**

3.1	It is believed by many, that a person has the following four broad aspects: Most people usually have difficulty developing all four equally. Sometimes some aspects are neglected, and others nurtured.

For each aspect, **mark with an X**, the statement most true for you.

3.2.	Taking care of my **MIND** (intellect) is…		Taking care of my **BODY** (physical) is…	
Very important for me			Very important for me	
Quite important for me			Quite important for me	
Unsure			Unsure	
Not important for me			Not important for me	
If applicable, list activities you engage in to develop your mind.			If applicable, list activities you engage in to develop yourself physically.	

Taking care of my **HEART** (emotions) is…		Taking care of my **SOUL** (spiritual) is…	
Very important for me		Very important for me	
Quite important for me		Quite important for me	
Unsure		Unsure	
Not important for me		Not important for me	
If applicable, list activities you engage in to develop your heart or emotions.		If applicable, list activities you engage in to develop your spirituality.	

	Self-care may also include some of the following aspects:
3.3.	**Circle, or highlight the ones you practise**. In the spaces below, write how you practise self-care in these areas, if applicable.

Relationships	Financial
Professional	Hobbies (or other interests)

Add any apects that you think should be added. (This may be left blank if you have nothing to add).

	If there is anything not captured in this questionnaire, that you think is important regarding your own stress or well-being, please add it below:
4.	

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire!

Appendix J: Qualitative feedback questionnaire

Thank you for attending today. Please take a few minutes to evaluate the aspect covered

Aspect: _____ Date: _____

What did you find useful, or enjoy?

What did you find least enjoyable?

Would you consider such an exercise useful in improving your well-being?
Please elaborate...

Suggestions for improvement:

Aspect: _____ Date: _____

Weekly task: Reflect on the aspect explored this week and respond to the following statements...

1. Something that made me feel better this week
2. Something I intentionally did differently this week
3. Something that was difficult this week
4. Anything else I wish to add

Appendix K: Observation schedule/ Researcher reflections

Observation schedule / Researcher Reflections

Topic/Session: _____

Date: _____

Aspects to observe during and after each session	
Participants: mood, engagement…	
Setting: Time, space, comfort…	

Aspects to observe during and after each session	
Content: Relevant, participant feedback	
Suggestions for the next time:	

Appendix L: Proof of editing

This letter serves to confirm that editing and proofreading was done for:

Beverley Antoinette Feldman

Department of Psychology of Education

College of Education

University of South Africa

Guidelines for the Promotion of Teacher Wellbeing in a Township Primary School

Cilla Dowse
22 July 2021

Cilla Dowse	Rosedale Farm
PhD in Assessment and Quality Assurance in Education and Training: University of Pretoria 2014	P.O. Box 48
Programme on Editing Principles and Practices: University of Pretoria 2009	Van Reenen
Basic Editing and Proofreading: McGillivray Linnegar Associates 2008	Free State
	cilla.dowse@gmail.com
Professional Editors' Guild Associate Member, DOW003	Cell: 084 900 7837