VOLUNTARY TEACHER TURNOVER IN THE TSHWANE SOUTH DISTRICT

by

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DECLARATION

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VOLUNTARY TEACHER TURNOVER IN THE TSHWANE SOUTH DISTRICT

I declare that Voluntary Teacher Turnover in the Tshwane South District 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 submitted the dissertation 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.

_____   _____

SIGNATURE   DATE

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my late grandmother, Janet Noko Ngoetjana, who, without any formal education, encouraged and supported me in my studies. It is unfortunate that she passed on before I could finish this dissertation, *Robala ka kgotso Morolong!*

Barolong wee!
Ke ngwetšana a mmaletlatša noka e tlatša ke moedi.
Ke bantana balagadi.
Ke batho babo mmapelwana difedile,
Ba šetše ka pelwana ye tee ya mararampane.
Ke bana ba tsakatsaka ya lebelo,
Ka ditsepu aka tlogela mangana le makoba a ga matlala.
Bare Ngwetšana le barwa le tsebane neng?
Are sale re tsebana kgale modu mphogodumo.
Ke batho babo makokolope mahloka bosele kgabo o hloka ka lehlware la bo kgabo podile tšhweu e ngana ka molomo!

I also dedicate this work to my two nephews, Kholofelo Bokang Khanya and Keatile Leruo Khanya. They are the wind beneath my wings, my heartbeat, and source of inspiration. It is my wish that they are inspired by my work and continue to become great humans. *Ke di tlogolwana tsa barolong!*

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ABSTRACT

Teachers play a critical role in the development of any society. The purpose of this study was to explore some of the factors that led teachers from Tshwane South District schools to voluntarily resign before retirement age during the period 2013-2015. Despite the need for education and the important role that teachers play in South Africa, teacher turnover for the period 2013-2015 escalated dramatically, with 27 168 teachers resigning from the profession. This high turnover of teachers threatens South Africa's achievement of the United Nations' (UN) Sustainable Development Goals, with Goal 4 being "Quality Education", and presents both a concern and a challenge for the Department of Basic Education (DBE).

For this study, a qualitative research design was followed, which made use of face-to-face, semi-structured interviews to collect information. A purposive sampling selection strategy was used to select participants. Information was collected from Tshwane South District participants who had resigned from their posts between 2013 and 2015. The study ascribed to the interpretivist paradigm so as to understand teacher turnover from a humanistic perspective. The collected information was analysed using thematic identification, where themes were created from the interpretation of actual phrases emanating from the interviews.

Responses from selected participants revealed that the primary cause of teacher turnover for this period was related to financial challenges. The financial indebtedness of participants led to teachers resigning in order to access their pensions and use that money to pay off debts that they had accumulated over the years. Furthermore, it was found that working conditions contributed to the early resignation of many of the participants. Working conditions in this study's context were characterised by workload and learner discipline, both of which proved to be challenging for the participating teachers. It was also noted that some teachers resigned only to return to the profession at a later stage. Such teachers are colloquially referred to as "resign and resume" teachers.

The potential benefits related to this study could apply to both the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) as well as the Tshwane South District, as the study may supply these entities with valuable information regarding teacher turnover.

These stakeholders could also potentially implement this study's recommended methods to mitigate the challenges surrounding teacher turnover in the Tshwane South District in the future.

Keywords: teacher turnover, teacher resignations, voluntary turnover, resign and resume, teacher attrition, turnover, and pension pay-out.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ATP	Annual Teaching Plan
CAPS	National Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement
DBE	Department of Basic Education
EFA	Education for All
FET	Further Education and Training
GDE	Gauteng Department of Education
GNU	Government of National Unity
GPAA	Government Pensions Administration Agency
HR	Human Resource(s)
HRM	Human Resource Management
National ETD	National Electronic Theses and Dissertations
NCS	Revised National Curriculum Statement
NP	National Party
OBE	Outcomes-based Education
PED	Provincial Education Departments
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SACE	South African Council for Educators
SADTU	South African Democratic Teachers Union
SAPS	South African Police Services
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation
USA	United States of America

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CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The *Medium-Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) 2014-2019* (Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation 2014:16) states that "in order for individuals to have more equitable chances in life, better economic mobility and growth, the ability to create employment, and lower poverty levels in their communities, they should have access to education". Without education or educators, it has been proposed that South Africa will not be able to achieve its objectives, since, as a socioeconomic factor, education plays a pivotal role in society and the development of a country (National Planning Commission 2011:261, 265). This study, therefore, aimed to identify some of the factors that led to the voluntary turnover (i.e. attrition) of teachers from Tshwane South District schools during the period 2013-2015.

This chapter introduces the different parts of the study and provides the *raison d'être* of the ensuing content. The chapter also covers the background and rationale of the study with the aim of placing the research problem in context. Furthermore, the research problem, research questions, and aims and objectives of the study are provided in order to define the direction of the research project. The research methodology, design, and methods are also briefly highlighted as important parts of the research framework, along with a brief overview of the referencing methods utilised in this study. The scope of the study has further been provided in order to depict how the study remained focussed. Additionally, as a means to avoid any misinterpretation of concepts that appear regularly throughout the text, terms have been concisely explained near the end of this chapter. This chapter concludes with a chapter outline (i.e. a delineation of the study sequence) and a summary.

The following section details the background and rationale of the study.

1.2 BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

The South African education system experienced, at the national level, one of its biggest challenges in recent memory when more than 14 000 teachers resigned their positions during the period 2013-2015 (Sello 2015:para 10). In a written reply to the

National Assembly in 2020, Basic Education Minister, Angie Motshekga, noted that 57 193 teachers had resigned from the profession between 2012 and 2019 (Parliamentary Monitoring Group, 2020).

South Africa's education system has a long history. According to South African History Online (2013:para 4), "the education of Black South Africans under the newly-formed (1948) Apartheid system was aimed at fitting this population for lower-status roles in the society". Dr Henrik Verwoerd, acting as the Minister of Native Affairs for the then ruling National Party (NP), established Bantu Education in 1953 (South African History Online 2013:para 24). This education system formed part of the broader political system known as Apartheid, which means "separateness" or "the state of being apart" (History.com 2010:para 1, 9). Apartheid was a system of racial segregation applied in South Africa and administered through legislation by the governing NP from 1948 to 1994 (History.com 2010:para 1, 9).

After the first democratic elections in 1994, South Africa was guided by the Interim Constitution of 1993, which was the result of multiparty negotiations that paved the way for a new era in South Africa (Legodi 2001:157). The Interim Constitution of 1993 included provisions for a Government of National Unity (GNU) that was based on a power-sharing model (Southern 2015:239). Additionally, a single coordinated education system and related educational policies were introduced at the induction of the new democratic government (Matoti 2010:568). Under this Interim Constitution, South Africa had one national Department of Education overseeing nine provincial education departments (Legodi 2001:157-158). This specific structure (i.e. of a single national Department overseeing smaller provincial departments) was one of the GNU's key initiatives, and was provided for by the South African Schools Act of 1996 (Department of Basic Education [DBE] 2001:1; Jansen & Taylor 2003:2). The Council of Education Ministers was responsible for coordinating the structure's operations (DBE 2001:1; Jansen & Taylor 2003:2).

One of the key projects implemented under these new educational structures was Outcomes-based Education (OBE), which was introduced by the first Minister of Education under the new political dispensation and launched in 1997 as *Curriculum 2005* (Legodi 2001:180). OBE was aimed at equipping learners with necessary skills, knowledge, and competencies, while ensuring outcomes-based learning and

encouraging learners to take charge of their own learning (Legodi 2001:182; Matoti 2010:568). The implementation of this curriculum was to be done in phases, with Phase One scheduled for implementation in 1998 for all Grades 1 and 7 learners (DBE 1997:18). OBE was intended to be implemented in all grades by 2003 (DBE 1997:18). However, the OBE curriculum received much criticism, and the growing concern of teachers regarding this curriculum led to OBE being reviewed in 1999 (DBE 2008:1). A committee was established to review *Curriculum 2005*. This committee found that some of the criticisms levelled at OBE pertained to the complexity in its jargon, an overloaded curriculum, and the insufficient training of teachers in preparation for its effective implementation (Parliamentary Monitoring Group 2000:para 2).

Following the review, there were additional curriculum changes and developments made across the country, such as the creation of the Revised National Curriculum Statement (hereinafter referred to as the NCS). The NCS was further revised in 2001/2002 and approved in 2003, and was formally introduced into schools in 2004 (DBE 2002:6). The NCS also, however, experienced several criticisms. Hence, the then Minister of Education, Naledi Pandor, appointed a panel of experts to investigate implementation challenges (Grussendorff, Booyse & Burroughs 2014:11). Criticisms of the implementation of this curriculum included, but were not limited to: teacher overload; inconsistencies in documentation, which resulted in teachers' stress and confusion; and the underperformance of learners in assessments (Grussendorff et al. 2014:11). The task team further ascertained that teachers met with challenges in implementing the NCS, which included issues related to too much administrative work, various interpretations of the curriculum requirements, as well as teacher underperformance (du Plessis & Marais 2015:1).

As a result of these criticisms, as well as the findings by the appointed panel, the highly commended NCS was short-lived, and it was ultimately replaced by the current National Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (hereinafter referred to as CAPS) in 2012 (DBE 2019a:para 1). Also in 2012, the regulations relating to the amendment of the NCS for Grades R-12 were gazetted in the Government Gazette No. 36041 (du Toit & Booyse 2015:17). It should be noted that CAPS is not essentially

a new curriculum but is rather an amendment of the previous NCS curriculum that had deficiencies, as identified by the task team in 2009 (du Plessis & Marais 2015:1).

As a result of such constant curriculum changes and developments, teacher supply and demand became a concern for the South African government (Xaba 2003:287), since it was noted that a growing number of teachers were leaving the profession prematurely (i.e. before retirement age). Therefore, the Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC 2005:xiii) commissioned a study to establish possible contributing factors for teacher turnover. The resignation and early retirement of teachers has been a challenge for policymakers and those involved in the provision of education since the introduction of OBE in South Africa and currently still remains one of the major reasons for teacher attrition (Mafora 2013:228; Mafukata & Mudau 2016:2243).

According to a South African Council for Educators (SACE 2010:21) study, 50% of the sampled teachers indicated their intention to leave the profession. This group of teachers who were desirous to exit the profession consisted mainly of Technology, Natural Sciences, and Economic Management teachers (SACE 2010:21). Furthermore, teachers who indicated an intention to leave highlighted distance from school, low job satisfaction, and high stress as contributing factors towards their intention to leave (SACE 2010:21). Some teachers in an alternate study cited work stress, low salaries, and a lack of career advancement as reasons to leave the profession (Pitsoe & Machaisa 2012:4). That study also found that the primary demographic of teachers who leave the profession tend to be young (i.e. novice) teachers (Pitsoe & Machaisa 2012:4).

1.2.1 Significance of the Research

This study was deemed appropriate and relevant within the current education discourse for various reasons. Firstly, the study could be relevant to the Gauteng Province's education sector as well as, specifically, to the Tshwane South District because the study focussed particularly on teacher turnover in this district. As noted in Section 1.2, it has become evident that the DBE is greatly concerned about the increasing numbers of teacher resignations. Furthermore, according to the National Executive Committee of the South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU 2015), there has been particular concern over the mass resignation of teachers from the

system as a means to access their pensions. Since 2015, the state has seen increased numbers of public servants resign their posts, and one of the key reasons for this mass resignation has been attributed to the enactment of the 2015 Taxation Laws Amendment Bill (Nkosi 2015:para 1). This Act enabled the tax harmonisation of retirement fund contributions and benefits, which would ultimately prohibit teachers and other public servants from acquiring lump-sum pay-outs of their pensions (Nkosi 2015:para 1). The Act was set to come into effect as of 1 March 2016 (National Treasury 2015b:1).

A survey of the literature highlighted that low salaries, continued changes to the curriculum, economic conditions, ill-disciplined learners, poor school management, poor working conditions, and increased workloads have all been noted as contributors to teacher turnover (ELRC 2005:5-6; SADTU 2015; Xaba 2003:288). In this current study, face-to-face, semi-structured interviews with participants were used to elucidate whether or not some of these noted causes are, indeed, a true reflection of the reasons for why teachers within the Tshwane South District, specifically, chose to resign prematurely. The findings of this study are discussed in detail in Chapter Four.

Secondly, the study could contribute significantly to the ongoing body of research related to teacher turnover and its possible causes, especially within the Tshwane South District. Researchers such as Xaba (2003), Mampane (2012), and Mafukata and Mudau (2016) have all conducted enquiries into teacher turnover and/or teacher resignation by applying different case studies and methodologies within the South African context, and this current study could add further insights to such previous research.

Thirdly, limited research regarding teacher turnover has been published within the field of local Public Administration and Management over the past 5 years. The researcher for this study consulted two of the most noteworthy local journals related to Public Administration and Management (i.e. *Administratio Publica* and *Journal of Public Administration*). From a perusal of these journals, it was established that limited articles were available that directly related to teacher turnover or turnover as a Human Resource Management (HRM) component in South Africa. Although this topic has been addressed in other fields, such as Education, HRM, and Management, a specific gap was identified in the field of Public Administration and Management.

It should be noted that this study was restricted to the Tshwane South District because of feasibility and accessibility to participants. Teachers employed in this district teach within one of the following phases: 1) the foundation phase, which covers teaching for Grades R-3; 2) the intermediate phase, which covers teaching for Grades 4-6; 3) the senior phase, which covers teaching for Grades 7-9; and 5) the further education and training (FET) phase, which covers teaching for Grades 10-12 (DBE 2019b).

In the next section, the research problem and questions relevant to this study are presented.

1.3 RESEARCH PROBLEM AND QUESTIONS

The research problem and questions are presented in the following sub-sections.

1.3.1 Research Problem

As noted previously, South Africa faced a particularly challenging period between 2013 and 2015, with many teachers voluntarily terminating their services (Bernstein 2015:20). Generally, teacher turnover can impact Government, schools, and learners (Norstrum 2015:33). As a result of high turnover, fellow (remaining) employees can be given added responsibilities and may be required to teach out-of-field subjects, while school managers tend to experience heightened pressure to recruit suitable replacements (Pitsoe 2013:15).

Given these noted challenges, as well as the reasons provided previously in Section 1.2.1, the researcher found it necessary to conduct research that could better investigate the following research problem: *What are the intricacies of some of the factors that led to the turnover of Tshwane South District teachers who resigned voluntarily before retirement age during the period 2013-2015?*

1.3.2 Research Questions

In order to attend to the main research problem noted in the previous sub-section, the following research questions were asked:

1. What is the nature of the concept "turnover"?

2. What are some of the causes and reasons that teachers provide for resigning from teaching?

3. How can the turnover of teachers be prevented?

The next section provides the research aim and objectives that guided this study.

1.4 RESEARCH AIM AND OBJECTIVES

The main objective of this study was to explore some of the factors that led Tshwane South District school teachers to voluntarily resign before retirement age during the period 2013-2015. In order to address the main research problem, the objectives of the study were to:

- Objective 1: Understand the nature of "turnover";
- Objective 2: Explore some of the causes and reasons that teachers provide for resigning prematurely; and
- Objective 3: Determine teacher retention strategies.

The following section provides a brief discussion of the research methodology, design, and methods employed in this study.

1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY, DESIGN, AND METHODS

The purpose of this section is to briefly discuss the research methodology, design, and methods used in this study. A more comprehensive justification of the research methodology, design, methods, information collection, and information analysis noted in this section is undertaken in Chapter Three.

Research methodology, according to Rajasekar, Philominathan, and Chinnathambi (2013:5) is "is the systematic and scientific approach a researcher takes when carrying out research and/or solving a problem". As part of this current study's methodology, an interpretivist paradigm was employed. This paradigm asserts that the social world is informed by human beings (i.e. teachers, in the context of this current study) (Shah & Al-Bargi 2013:256-257).

The design of research, as explained by Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2016:163) describe the design of research as the overall plan researchers aim to follow when

attempting to answer their specific research question(s)". A research design is, thus, the blueprint of a research project, and researchers need to decide which of the three most popular designs (i.e. qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods) to utilise for their particular study (Saunders et al. 2016:166, 168-169). For this current study, a qualitative research design was used in order to better understand the experiences of teachers that led to their voluntary resignation. This design also aided in potentially providing school management with perspectives on teacher turnover in the district.

The primary method employed for gathering information in this study, and which was guided by the aforementioned choices in research methodology and design, was face-to-face, semi-structed interviews. These interviews were utilised as a form of information collection in order to gain valuable insights from selected participants.

Next, the referencing utilised in this study is explained.

1.6 REFERENCING

According to Hofstee (2006:173), "referencing is the manner in which a researcher acknowledges that the words, ideas, information, and/or influences present in his or her study come from other scholars or sources". In this study, the researcher made use of the Harvard style of referencing, which is in line with the requirements of the University of South Africa (UNISA) and its Department of Public Administration and Management. The Harvard style of referencing is based on the author-date system, which means that all sources and/or quotations used in a document are acknowledge by giving the surname of the author and, in brackets, the year of publication. The date is often followed by a colon and the relevant page number(s) associated with the information presented (e.g. Hofstee 2006:251).

A list of sources for all quotations and/or sources used in and for this study are reflected in the reference list at the end of this document. Hofstee (2006:175) notes that offering bibliographical information at the end of a study can be of tremendous help for other researchers wishing to study phenomena within the same field. The reference list presented at the end of this dissertation lists consulted sources alphabetically according to author(s) surname or the respective organisation or governmental department, with the rest of the source details following this general

order: date of publication, title of the document, place of publication, and name of publisher, as per Hofstee's (2006:255) recommendations.

The next section details the selected scope of the study by focussing on geographical and time dimensions.

1.7 SCOPE

The research focus of this study was on *some of the factors that led to the turnover of Tshwane South District teachers who resigned voluntarily before retirement age during the period 2013-2015*. The scope of this study was further set within two parameters, namely geographical and time dimensions. These two parameters are discussed in the following sub-sections.

1.7.1 Geographical Dimension

The geographical dimension of this study focussed specifically on teacher turnover in the Gauteng province's Tshwane South District. This district is made up of 324 schools consisting of 203 public schools and 121 independent schools. For this study, focus was solely placed on teachers who taught in public schools.

1.7.2 Time Dimension

As indicated in Section 1.2, this research was confined to the period 2013-2015, when teacher turnover was reportedly very high throughout South Africa. Teacher turnover is not a new phenomenon and has been a matter of concern over many years, but it was during this specific period, and especially during the 2014/2015 school year, that the education system recorded its highest number of resignations (Parliamentary Monitoring Group, 2020). In Gauteng, a total of 6 595 teachers resigned between 2013-2015, while in the Tshwane South District, 594 teachers resigned during the same period (Parliamentary Monitoring Group 2020).

The following section provides the definition of key terms used in this study.

1.8 DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

This section clarifies key terms that are used throughout this study.

Attrition: Merriam-Webster (2018:para 4) defines attrition as when the numbers of employees within an organisation decline as a result of employees resigning, retiring, or passing away. Attrition is often used synonymously with "labour turnover", "employee turnover", and/or "wastage" (Armstrong 2012:242). Taking these definitions into consideration, for this study, attrition incapsulates both "resignation" and "premature retirement" (i.e. resigning before the legal retirement age of 60 in South Africa).

Retention: Retention refers to the number of employees remaining in an organisation (Phillips & Connell 2003:2) and involves the encouragement of talented employees to remain in an organisation (or part of a project until the project is fulfilled) (Das & Baruah 2013:8). For this current study, retention means the process of retaining talented employees to serve their full term of service and retire at the accepted retirement age (i.e. 60 years old).

Teacher: A teacher can be defined as any person, who is not a parent or guardian of the child(ren) in question, who is responsible for sharing and instilling knowledge and values to children (DBE 2019c:para 1). To qualify as a teacher in South Africa, an individual first needs to complete a teaching qualification from any of the various recognised higher institutions of learning in the country (DBE 2019c:para 2). For the purposes of this dissertation, the term "teacher" is equivalent to "educator".

Tshwane South District: According to the DBE (2019b:para 1), education district offices play a key role in maintaining good quality education access for all learners in the country. Specifically, these offices form a vital link between the Provincial Education Departments (PEDS), education institutions, and the general public (DBE 2019b:para 1).

The Tshwane South District forms part of the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) and is one of 15 education districts in the province (DBE 2019b:para 1).

Turnover: Turnover is understood as referring to employees who leave an organisation and reasons for their departure may be unknown (Phillips & Connell 2003:5). The termination of services in terms of turnover may be voluntary or involuntary, internal or external (Aksu 2008:197; Matlala & van der Westhuizen 2012:12; Rangaraju &

Kennedy 2012:57). For the purposes of this study, employee turnover means the *voluntary* resignation of employees from their organisations before retirement age.

The following section provides information related to the limitations associated with this study.

1.9 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study was confined solely to the Tshwane South District. Furthermore, the study was limited to teachers who resigned from their positions during the period 2013-2015. Following, some of the challenges and limitations associated with this study are presented:

- Some participants refused to participate in the study after initially agreeing to take part.
- There was a certain reluctance from participants to take part in the study for fear of victimisation by Government officials.
- Participants revealed more information off-the-record (i.e. when the interviews were considered completed), or when the recorder was switched off.

As this study initially wished to include information from Government officials, the inability to secure an appointment with such officials also formed a limitation to the research. While efforts were made to secure interviews with officials, such attempts did not yield any positive results. This particular limitation relates to how the researcher could not compare and/or contrast teacher and official views in order to determine if or where possible discrepancies between theory (i.e. what officials think is happening "on the ground") and practice (i.e. what teachers are actually experiencing "on the ground") lie, or which might further explain turnover and/or offer ways of improving the situation.

In addition, this study contained methodological limitations in terms of its selection size and access to participants. Due to the ultimately limited sample, the small number of actual participants and usable information, and the inability to gain access to interview officials from the Tshwane South District, this study cannot be generalised to other districts or to the entire teacher population in South Africa.

A final limitation that is present in this study is that departmental records were not studied extensively since this study was limited in scope to teacher interviews with participants from the Tshwane South District who had resigned from teaching during the peak turnover period of 2013-2015.

The outline of the study is provided next.

1.10 CHAPTER OUTLINE

This study is presented in five interrelated chapters with the divisions as follows:

Chapter One: The main purpose of Chapter One was to introduce the topic and provide a general outline of the study. The chapter paid particular attention to the background and rationale of the research, and then presented a discussion on the research problem, research questions, and the aims and objectives of the study. The research methodology, design, and methods were also briefly highlighted in order to provide an indication of the research blueprint. A brief overview of the referencing methods was also provided, along with the scope, and definition of key terms. This first chapter concludes with a chapter outline and summary.

Chapter Two: The second chapter provides a review of the present relevant literature regarding the study topic. Specifically, the review focusses on the concept of turnover, along with identifiable factors that push teachers to prematurely resign from the profession. Information on teacher turnover and the effects that such turnover has on schools and learners is also provided. The chapter then discusses some similarities and differences between four selected countries that have all experienced high levels of teacher turnover.

Chapter Three: In this third chapter, a discussion on the methodology, including the choice of research paradigm, along with a detailed discussion of the research design is provided. Participant strategy and information collection techniques are discussed, and a presentation of the information analysis technique is offered. Trustworthiness as a research criterion is also presented in addition to discussions regarding ethical considerations and the storage of information.

Chapter Four: In Chapter Four, information generated via the aforementioned face-to-face, semi-structured interviews is detailed. The analysis of the collected information is interpreted and presented according to the different themes and sub-themes that emerged during the interviews. The research results from the face-to-face, semi-structured interviews inform the main research question posed in this study.

Chapter Five: This fifth chapter forms the concluding chapter of this dissertation and contains a breakdown and synthesis of the results. Chapter Five presents the realisation of the study's aim and objectives, and provides answers to the research questions, as well as conclusions, recommendations, limitations, and future research areas based on the study's findings. The chapter ends with recommendations for future research.

It should be noted that extra material, including a list of sources and annexures to the text, have also been supplied as a means to complete the study.

Following, is the chapter summary.

1.11 SUMMARY

This first chapter served as a general introduction to the study and offered a foundation for the next chapter. Key sections were covered in this introductory chapter, including: the background and rationale for the study, which placed the research problem in context; the problem statement that this study aimed to address; the research questions that guided this study; and the aim and objectives of this study. Furthermore, the chapter briefly covered the research methodology, design, and methods, as well as the referencing and scope of the study. Definitions of key terms were also provided so as to aid readers in avoiding potential misinterpretations of concepts that appear throughout the text. Chapter One concludes with the previously presented chapter outline and this summary.

In Chapter Two, following, the relevant literature related to issues regarding turnover is reviewed. Attention is directed to identifying factors that cause teachers to resign from their positions prematurely. The review is presented in conjunction with global perspectives on teacher turnover, as exhibited by four different countries, and concludes with the effects of teacher turnover on schools and learners.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW ON TEACHER TURNOVER

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter One provided an introduction to the study. Chapter Two expands further on the introductory chapter by focussing on the literature related to teacher turnover. The review of this literature is guided by the following research objectives: 1) to understand the nature of "turnover", and 2) to explore some of the causes and reasons that teachers provide for resigning prematurely.

The following aspects form part of this chapter: first, a discussion regarding the conceptual understanding of turnover is provided, with a focus on the definition, dimensions, and antecedents of turnover. Second, the chapter addresses the causes of teacher turnover by viewing it from a global perspective. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the consequences of teacher turnover on stakeholders, as presented by the reviewed scholarly and scientific literature.

The next section offers the definition of employee turnover.

2.2 DEFINITION OF EMPLOYEE TURNOVER

Employee turnover is a well-researched phenomenon, as authors from various disciplines including Psychology, Sociology, Management, and Economics have all, within their own fields of focus and methodology, extensively researched this phenomenon (Harris, Tang & Tseng 2002:1). Indeed, researchers such as March and Simon (1958); Porter and Steers (1973); Price (1977); Mobley (1977); Mobley, Griffeth, Hand, and Meglino (1979); and Hom, Griffeth, and Sellaro (1984) all contributed significantly to the scientific research on turnover and turnover models prior to 1985 (Holtom, Mitchell, Lee & Eberly 2008:237). It is from these early authors' writings that the foundation of employee turnover as a concept came about.

From these earlier works, it became imperative to understand the meaning of employee turnover as it applies to this study, namely that these authors established turnover to be the termination of employment by either an employer or employee (Kurtz & Boone 2008:302). Turnover is further regarded as the deliberate desire or

voluntary act by an employee to leave an organisation (Hom, Allen & Griffeth 2019:1; Tett & Meyer 1993:262). However, both these definitions fall short in indicating whether the movement is internal or external. Ongori (2007:049) that employee turnover can be understood as the movement of workers between or across organisations, work opportunities, types of employment, and/or phases of employment versus unemployment.

By understanding turnover, it becomes possible to understand the types of people who leave an organisation and the reasons behind their departure (Masoga 2013:78). It is also necessary to properly understand this concept, since turnover can be costly (Grissom, Nicholson-Crotty & Keiser 2012:649). This cost can be in monetary value or in human capital, as companies can expend many resources on "growing" an employee, only to lose those resources when the employee leaves (Grissom et al. 2012:649). However, arguments in favour of turnover suggest that the practice is necessary as a means to rejuvenate an organisation and enable older (i.e. veteran) or potentially ineffectual employees to give way to fresh talent (Dorasamy 2014:205). This rejuvenation often occurs through turnover, as new employees tend to bring new perspectives and ideas that can (positively) influence organisational dynamics (Dorasamy 2014:205).

Based on these presented understandings of the concept of turnover, it is possible to highlight how the term is understood in this current study. Specifically, for this study, and as previously defined in Chapter One, Section 1.8, employee turnover is understood to mean the voluntary resignation of employees from an organisation before their age of retirement.

The dimensions of turnover are explained next.

2.2.1 Dimensions of Turnover

In order to fully understand the meaning of turnover, it is necessary to examine the dimensions of turnover. These dimensions include: 1) voluntary or involuntary turnover, 2) functional or dysfunctional turnover, and 3) avoidable or unavoidable (i.e. internal or external) turnover (Abdali 2011:2-3; Curran 2012:12). Figure 2.1 offers a depiction of these different dimensions.

Figure 2.1: Turnover Diagram
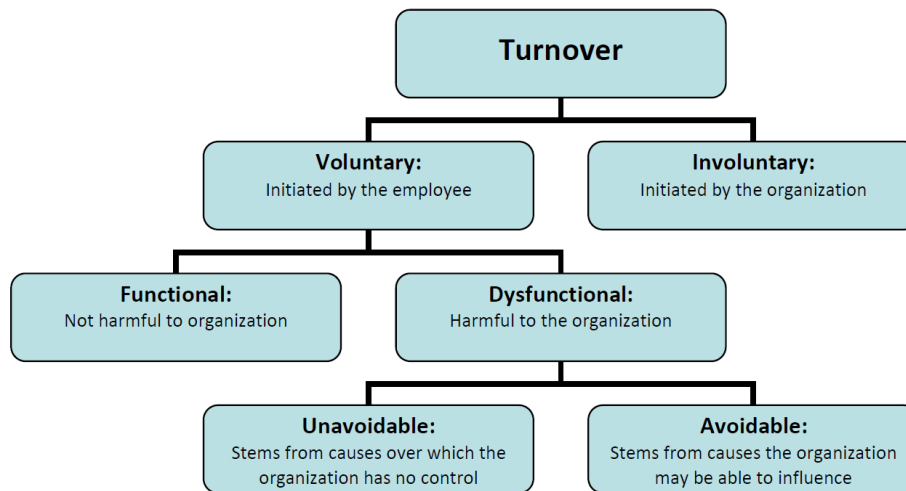
Source: Griffeth and Hom (2001:4)

The aspects relevant to Figure 2.1 are discussed in more detail under the following points:

- **Voluntary**

Voluntary turnover means that an employee has taken it upon him- or herself to resign, quit, or leave an organisation; his or her reasons for departure could be influenced by various factors (Hammerberg 2002:9; Stanz & Greyling 2010:2). Thus, voluntary turnover is when employees leave their place of employment at their own discretion and for various reasons, which may or may not be known to their employers. Holtom et al. (2008:232) further indicate that

> …the topic of voluntary turnover is a vital bridge between macro strategies and micro behaviour in organisations. It is one variable that conceptually connects the experiences of individuals in organisations to critical measures of success for those organisations.

As evidenced in Figure 2.1, turnover can be voluntary or involuntary, and voluntary turnover can be either functional or dysfunctional. Dysfunctional turnover can be further classified as unavoidable or avoidable. Voluntary turnover includes resignations, retirement at own request, and abscondment. Grissom, Viano, and Selin (2016:242), in their study conducted in the United States of America (USA), found that voluntary turnover occurs at a ratio of close to 9:1 when compared to involuntary

turnover. Furthermore, environmental, individual, and structural variables can be considered as determinants of voluntary turnover (Price 2001:601).

- **Involuntary**

Involuntary turnover is when an employer exercises their unilateral authority to terminate an employee's contract (Dwomoh, Kusi & Agyeman 2013:61). The employer's decision to terminate employment can be made even in cases where the employee may otherwise have been willing and able to continue working and performing assigned duties (Dwomoh et al. 2013:61). It should be noted that involuntary turnover occurs when an employee is laid off from work as per a company's decision and not because of sickness or external issues; however, involuntary turnover can also involve factors that are beyond the control of an organisation (e.g. retrenchments or downsizing) (Hammerberg 2002:9). In recent years, acknowledgement has been made regarding the reality that an employee's decision to terminate employment due to having to take care of relatives, illness, childbirth, or family relocation cannot always be classified as "voluntary" turnover (Hom et al. 2019:6). This acknowledgement stems from an on-going debate regarding how some employees may *need* to resign in order to fulfil family duties, and that in such cases, even though the resignation is initiated by the employee, this does not mean that the employee *wants* to resign (Hom et al. 2019:6). For example, Government regulations in Botswana state that an employee should be given an option to return to work on a flexible basis should their turnover be related to any of the aforementioned factors (Ongori 2007:50).

Other possible examples of involuntary turnover include: an employer's non-renewal of a contract, employee malfeasance, non-performance, gross unethical or criminal behaviour, misrepresentation of facts, and/or an employee's unwillingness to adhere to terms and conditions of employment (Dwomoh et al. 2013:61). It should stressed that involuntary turnover does not form part of this dissertation, as this study paid sole attention to voluntary turnover, as indicated in Chapter One, Section 1.8.

- **Functional**

According to Director, Cascio, and Boudreau (2013:4), "employee turnover can be regarded as "functional" if and when his or her exit from the organisation increases said organisation's value". Functional turnover, then, implies that when poor-performing, highly-paid employees leave an organisation, it allows the organisation to replace those employees with better performing individuals (Hom et al. 2019:6). There are various benefits associated with functional turnover, including an increased opportunity for the promotion of other employees, an increase in organisational productivity, and keeping labour costs down (Robbins 2013:223).

- **Dysfunctional**

Dysfunctional turnover occurs if and when an employee's exit from an organisation leads to a reduction in that organisation's value (Director et al. 2013:4). In essence, when high performers or employees with unique or rare skills leave an organisation, dysfunctional turnover arises (Hom et al. 2019:6). In such cases, and especially when high-value employees consistently leave, a negative image of the organisation can begin to emerge (Jex & Britt 2008:179).

- **Avoidable**

Avoidable turnover is turnover that can be changed or prevented (Mamun & Hasan 2017:65). Avoidable turnover can be understood as any loss incurred by an organisation when employees leave for (similar) positions in other organisations (Rothwell 2010:242). Avoidable turnover can be prevented by effective retention strategies (e.g. increased pay, improved working conditions, and/or encouraging employees) (Bhattacharyya 2015).

- **Unavoidable**

Unavoidable turnover is related to any employee turnover occurrence where the organisation clearly had no means of preventing the employee's departure (Jex and Britt 2008:179). Often with this type of turnover, an organisation has no control over the turnover occurring; such cases can include employees moving to a new area, or a job transfer for an employee's spouse (Curran 2012:12).

Now that a clear conception of the various types of turnover has been established, it is necessary to note that for the purposes of this current study, focus was placed on the *voluntary* turnover of teachers from the profession before they reached retirement age. In this regard, the study's voluntary turnover ignored involuntary departures but included "attrition" (i.e. the exit from a profession and/or organisation) and "mobility" (i.e. other positions outside the organisation).

2.2.2 Antecedents of Turnover

Walker and Avant (2005:173) assert that antecedents are any events or incidents that must occur, or which should be in place prior to the occurrence of a phenomenon. Based on this understanding, turnover has multiple perspectives; it is the culmination of various antecedents that ultimately results in people resigning from their organisations (Bacha 2016:4). Da Silva and Shinyashiki (2014:41) note that human resource (HR) practices can be indicative of whether or not an organisation's turnover will be high, since such practices can play a vital role in employee's levels of job satisfaction and/or commitment. Thus, managers often have the control to prevent the voluntary turnover of employees, as they have the capacity to address the factors that influence employees' (potential) resignation (Nienaber & Masibigiri 2012:69).

Furthermore, demographics such as age, tenure, and education tend to play a role in employees' decision to quit their jobs (Rehman 2012:84). Due to turnover being an HRM issue as well as an individual employee's decision, this current study attempted to confirm whether or not the reasons provided for the voluntary turnover of teachers were within the control of managers and policymakers. These findings are discussed in Chapter Four and Chapter Five, respectively.

This study, consequently, focussed, firstly, on **individual factors**, which, according to the literature, include job satisfaction, career concerns, met or unmet expectations, job stress, and personal and professional advancement (Abdali 2011:5; Grissom et al. 2012:651; Iqbal 2010:276). Secondly, this study addressed **organisational factors**, which include poor recruitment and selection processes, lack of communication and involvement in decision-making, lack of motivation, poor personnel policies, poor organisational commitment, lack of leadership and supervision, and poor compensation (Ongori 2007:050). Lastly, **environmental factors** were also

addressed in this study. Such factors include alternative employment, labour market variables, pension reform, the economy, and legislation (Abdali 2011:6-10; Iqbal 2010:276-277; Kirschenbaum & Mano-Negrin 1999:1237; Rehman 2012:84).

Broadly, the following section provides a review of literature from scholarly databases regarding the factors that lead to the voluntary turnover of teachers. The section specifically notes similar studies conducted to investigate and address teacher turnover so as to ensure that there was no duplication of work in this current study. The section also provides a discussion of the literature that particularly details teacher turnover and offers insights into why teachers choose to resign from the profession.

2.3 TEACHER TURNOVER RESEARCH: SOME RESULTS

Globally, numerous educational departments have been, and continue to be, confronted by teacher attrition; with the primary form of attrition being (voluntary) resignations (Mafora 2013:228). This section details the push factors that result in teacher turnover, as presented from within various countries' contexts. It should be noted that most of the research presented in this section, and generally, emanates from the USA. However, the USA is not the only country that offers valuable research on the topic of teacher attrition and retention, with countries such as Australia also providing key insights (Mason and Matas 2015:46).

Literature on teacher turnover generally tends to focus on teachers' *intention* to leave their employment, but rarely does such research focus on the *actual* turnover of teachers; hence, an understanding about the relationship between the two is current limited (Grissom et al. 2016:243). However, various authors, such as Harris and Adams (2007:333), and Ingersoll (2007:5), note that teacher resignations are influenced by factors such as age, work experience, race, gender, family characteristics, working conditions, effective management, and low salaries. Furthermore, job dissatisfaction, a lack of support from school administration, learner discipline issues, a lack of teachers, and limited or no influence over school decision-making are some of the other motivating factors that can propel teachers to leave the profession (Hammerberg 2002:13; Smith & Ulvik 2017:928). From these previous studies' findings, it is clear that teacher turnover is not a result of a single factor, but rather of a combination of factors that eventually motivate an individual to leave the

profession. As a result, external, internal/individual, and organisational factors all need to be accepted as contributing to turnover amongst teachers (Russell, Williams & Gleason-Gomez 2019:196).

Sutcher, Darling-Hammond, and Carver-Thomas (2016:4) further assert that the greatest contributors in turnover are teachers who choose to (voluntarily) resign before retirement age. This particular group often cite dissatisfaction with working conditions as their primary reason for leaving their employment (Sutcher et al. 2016:4). It should be noted that the rate at which *resignations* occur, either in the form of "out of the profession" or as "intra-organisational" teacher resignations, is challenging to plan for (SACE 2010:17). Hence, it is often better, and easier, to plan around teacher *retirement* by using age distributions, since retirement is far more predictable (SACE 2010:17).

The following sub-sections provide a summary of factors that impact on teachers' decision to resign from teaching according to age and experience, working conditions, remuneration/conditions of service and job satisfaction, and commitment.

2.3.1 Age and Experience

Young teachers who enter the profession tend to resign within the first 3-5 years of teaching (Newberry & Allsop 2017:863). As a result, teacher turnover is relatively high amongst recently qualified teachers (Harris & Adams 2007:333). It is asserted that in Canada the premature departure of novice teachers tends to be voluntary (Karsenti and Collin 2013:141). Since novice teachers have a higher inclination to resign prematurely from the profession, they have a tendency to contribute more greatly to the high turnover experienced in the profession than other (older) teachers (Ingersoll 2007:5; Sims 2017:1).

Research further indicates that turnover is high amongst both novice and veteran teachers who are close to retirement; while turnover is relatively low for mid-career teachers (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond 2017:25). Taking this into consideration, it is possible that age and experience have a bearing on the profession; therefore, this current study aimed to determine whether or not these particular factors play a role in turnover.

It has also been noted that young qualified teachers have a tendency to wish to explore other professions (Borman & Dowling 2008:370). This is especially evident for Maths and Science teachers, who are inclined to leave the profession in higher volumes than teachers from other subjects (Borman & Dowling 2008:370; Hanushek, Kain & Rivkin 1999:2). Research conducted in the USA indicates that teachers who voluntarily resign from the profession tend to do so only once they have confirmed (or accepted) alternative employment (Harris & Adams 2007:330).

However, Harris and Adams (2007:326) contend that turnover is relatively high for veteran teachers, which indicates that the profession is more susceptible to cases of early retirement. It should be noted that while workload impacts negatively on novice teacher retention, salary and permanent employment aid in the retention of this teacher demographic (With 2017:4). Additionally, attention should be placed on non-retirement related turnover, which requires institutions to have succession plans in place as well as good retention plans to ensure that quality employees are retained (Ingersoll 2001:524).

2.3.2 Working Conditions

Working conditions that impact turnover include, but are not limited to: professional development, facilities, teaching resources, parental involvement, and learner behaviour/discipline problems (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond 2017:29). Poor working conditions, which include workload or administrative pressures, contribute significantly to teachers' decision to leave their employment (Ladd 2011:239; Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond 2017:4). Furthermore, issues such as drugs, sexual and verbal abuse, pregnancies, and/or the possession of weapons at schools can all contribute negatively to learner behaviour, which, in turn, can contribute to low teacher morale (Weiss 1999:866).

Limited resources and classroom overcrowding are also regarded as barriers to teaching and learning that can propel teachers to search for better working conditions (Nesane 2008:6). Of note is that disadvantaged rural schools, which often report high poverty rates and related limited resources, tend to have a higher teacher turnover rate than urban schools (Donitsa-Schmidt & Zuzovsky 2016:84). Clotfelter, Ladd, Vigdor, and Wheeler (2007:1368) argue that schools that experience high poverty (or

which are considered "lower quality") tend to hire teachers from a pool of relatively weak applicants to make up for quality teachers that may have left (or who never applied to) those schools. Thus, high poverty, low-performing schools tend to face the biggest challenge when it comes to retaining good quality teachers (Garcia & Weiss 2019:5).

The lack of parental involvement in a child's education, learner disengagement, and a lack of learner preparedness for learning are some further challenges that teachers experience, and which can contribute to poor working conditions (Garcia & Weiss 2019:5). Learner discipline and classroom management are important in ensuring an atmosphere that promotes learning; however, bad behaviour by learners can impede and disturb planned lessons and general learning (Rahimi & Karkami 2015:58). Furthermore, school-based violence can be categorised as psychological violence, physical violence, sexual violence, and/or bullying and are all forms of violence that pose a challenge for teachers and other learners (Khumalo 2019:2). It is imperative, therefore, for school managers to create a safe working and learning space for teachers and fellow learners (Ladd 2011:238).

Safe environments are also of utmost concern for school managers, since they have more control thereof than they do the issue of limited resources, which lies with Government (Ladd 2011:238). Beyond the challenge of resources that some schools experience, teachers also have a greater tendency to remain in schools where there is an appropriate workload, good collegial opportunities and interactions, teacher participation in decision-making, learner discipline support, and professional development (Lavigne 2014:34; Sutcher et al. 2016:6; Weiss 1999:863; Sims 2017:8).

2.3.3 Remuneration/Conditions of Service

Salaries play an important role in a teacher's decision to stay or leave the profession (Sutcher et al. 2016:6). In various publications, salaries, low pay, or a lack of incentives have all been found to be contributing factors for teacher turnover (e.g. Mafukata & Mudau 2016:2249; Mutune & Orodho 2014:19; Pitsoe 2013:316). In another study, it was determined that while some teachers do not leave the profession, they still tend to migrate from one school to another, seeking better paying positions and/or improved working conditions within the same district (Clotfelter et al.

2007:1363; Luna, Mvumbi & Achieng 2018:78). To compensate for poor salaries, teachers often take up other jobs to supplement their salaries, which may involve taking extra jobs in other sectors of the economy (Mafukata & Mudau 2016:2250).

Over the years, poor salary has been known to be a significant contributor to turnover (Kayuni & Tambulasi 2007:91; Luna, Mvumbi & Achieng 2018:75). As Lindqvist, Nordänger, and Carlsson (2014:96) postulate that while pay does play a role in teachers' turnover decisions, it is not the main deciding factor. Ingersoll's research (in Harris & Adams 2007:326, 333) indicates that high teacher salaries reduce turnover, whereas low administrative support and high learner conflict increase teacher turnover. This means that although poor salary is a contributing factor, it is not the only deciding factor related to whether a teacher decides to leave or remain in his or her employment. Other financial contributing factors, such as late payment, inability to access pay in a timely manner, or incorrect payments to teachers also contribute to teachers resigning from the profession in order to gain more financial security (International Task Force on Teachers for Education for All [EFA] 2010:21).

2.3.4 Job Satisfaction and Commitment

Low job satisfaction and commitment have been cited as further possible causes for teacher turnover (Crossman & Harris 2006:29; Emoja 2016:89). Job satisfaction is one of the key factors that trigger an employee to resign from his or her job (Okyere-Kwakye, Nor, Assampong & Awang 2018:352). Furthermore, job satisfaction and commitment both have a direct bearing on turnover because if an employee is not satisfied with his or her current job, commitment to that job declines, which, in turn, results in the employee seeking alternative employment (Tentama & Pranungsari 2016:40). Some of the main factors that contribute to the low satisfaction and (potential) subsequent turnover of teachers include a lack of career advancement and recognition, a lack of job security, and poor teaching structures (SACE 2010:21). High teacher turnover is, thus, a possible indication of low job satisfaction and low job commitment. There are theories in HRM, such as Maslow's hierarchy of needs and the two-factor theory by Hertzberg, that address job satisfaction (Larkin, Brantley-Dias & Lokey-Vega 2016:28). From these theories, it is evident that job satisfaction is determined by the extent to which a job provides an individual with a sense of satisfaction and fulfilment (Ansah-Hughes 2016:162). With this in mind, job satisfaction

can be affected by factors such as pay, working conditions, and relationships with co-workers, amongst others (Curran 2012:16).

According to Larkin et al. (2016:29), organisational commitment is

> …a strong belief in and acceptance of the organization's goals and values,
> a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization, and
> a definite desire to maintain organizational membership.

Therefore, if motivation and job satisfaction are high, then teachers should not have a strong desire to leave the profession; thereby showing job commitment (Tentama & Pranungsari 2016:40).

The next section provides a discussion of various country perspectives on teacher turnover, with specific reference to four countries, namely the USA, Australia, Malawi, and South Africa. These country discussions provide different perspectives, along with comparative similarities and differences related to teacher turnover in these parts of the world.

2.4 COUNTRY-SPECIFIC PERSPECTIVES ON TEACHER TURNOVER

This sub-section investigates teacher turnover as reflected in four different countries. This discussion of global perspectives can provide insights into teacher turnover trends, as well as aid in identifying similarities and differences between countries; thereby offering more understanding regarding the phenomenon. As Karsenti and Collin (2013:143) state, teacher attrition is a global issue that affects countries in both hemispheres.

The selected four countries presented in this sub-section are: the USA, Australia, Malawi, and South Africa. The USA and Australia both offer a large number of publications from which to draw valuable information regarding high levels of teacher resignations and turnover (Lavigne 2014:33-34); hence these countries' inclusion. The International Task Force on Teachers for EFA (2010:12) states that voluntary teacher turnover is often the leading attributor to attrition in the profession in sub-Saharan Africa, while retirement accounts for a far smaller proportion of attrition in the region as well as in comparison to other regions. For this reason, Malawi and South Africa

were selected to be part of the four countries discussed in this section related to global perspectives on teacher turnover.

2.4.1 The United States of America

In the USA, the federal government contributes 8% of its budget towards elementary and secondary education; however, funds also come from other federal agencies such as the United States (US) Department of State and the US Department of Education (2017:para 1, 4-5). It is the responsibility of each state to determine the number of compulsory years of schooling, which can range from 5/6 years to 16 years, with "K-12" referring to all primary and secondary education (Corsi-Bunker 2014:5). Corsi-Bunker (2014:1) states that each state manages its own education department and all laws related to education finance, personnel appointments, learner attendance and curriculum. Education departments in each state are then further broken down into local districts, which are responsible for the coordination of education policies and curricula (Corsi-Bunker 2014:2). It is still, however, the responsibility of the federal government to provide limited support in terms of policy leadership and education throughout the whole country (US Network for Education Information 2008).

The USA is one of the leading countries in teacher turnover research (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond 2019:6). Di Carlo (2015:para 5) explains that teacher turnover was alarmingly high in the USA between 2008/2009 and 2012/2013 due to the Great Recession, which saw many people, not only teachers, change professions. According to Carver-Thomas and Darling-Hammond (2017:3) from the Learning Policy Institute, teacher attrition in the USA reports to be almost twice as high as countries like Finland, Singapore, and Canada. It should also be noted that the teacher turnover rate in the USA tends to be higher in private schools than in public schools, possibly due to a lack of time and financial investment pertaining to certifications because there tends to be less cost involved in leaving private schools than public schools (Ingersoll 2001:526; Maloney & Mayer 2010:335).

Furthermore, teacher turnover in the USA differs extensively between states and regions, school districts, and teachers (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond 2017:3). Statistically, the national trend of teachers who leave the profession yearly is 8%, and another 8% relates to teachers who move between schools and/or districts (Carver-

Thomas & Darling-Hammond 2019:6). To analyse these statistics further, from the overall turnover of 16% recorded for 2011/2012-2012/2013, 30% consisted of voluntary pre-retirement leavers, and 37% of voluntary movers (Garcia & Weiss 2019:2). Southern USA reports the highest teacher turnover in the country, at 13%, annually; and turnover tends to be more prevalent in cities than in rural towns or areas (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond 2017:4, 9). General dissatisfaction has been cited as a major contributor to these high levels of voluntary pre-retirement turnover in the USA, along with, amongst a plethora of other factors, poor working conditions, a lack of resources, curriculum, and unhealthy emotional environments (Newberry & Allsop 2017:866).

2.4.2 Australia

Australia is another country that is consistently losing experienced teachers before retirement age and is a reflection of other developed countries that are faced with the challenge of recruiting and retaining a sufficient number of teachers (Shine 2015:501). Schools in rural Australia tend to be the most affected by high teacher turnover, with teachers usually leaving within the first 5 years of employment in these areas (Mason & Matas 2015:45). It is asserted that schools in rural or remote areas of the country suffer the most teacher turnover because there tends to be a lack of teacher incentives for working in these areas (Handel, Watson, Petcock & Maher 2013:14). Therefore, to make teaching in these areas more attractive, the Australian federal government has needed to instigate strategies to retain and hire more teachers in these schools (Handel et al. 2013:14).

In 2007, it was reported that 25% of beginning teachers in Australia would leave the profession within the first 5 years of teaching (Weldon 2018:63). The Queensland College of Teachers (2013:39) provided estimations of between 8% and 15% for teacher attrition. Similarly, information from the Commonwealth Government regarding the national teaching workforce in 2014 further indicated that 5.7% of teachers leave the profession in any given year (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership Limited [AITSL] 2016:8).

Since the presented statistics related to teacher turnover are only estimations, it is challenging to know if they are truly reliable. It has, for example, been observed that

female teachers often resign in order to have children only to return at a later stage, which makes it necessary for employing bodies to take such cases into consideration when viewing teacher turnover and attrition (Buchanan 2012:208). Indeed, interviews conducted by Buchanan (2012) with former teachers provide a comprehensive perspective on whether or not teachers ever consider going back to the profession. That study's findings indicate that some of the teachers who were interviewed, and who had resigned, were not considering returning to the profession (Buchanan 2012:213). Buchanan's (2012:209-214) research also asserts that inadequate support, a lack of professional development, and challenges with discipline in classrooms, as well as poor teacher self-confidence, are amongst the common reasons provided by teachers for why they choose to leave the profession. Additionally, teaching-related challenges such as poor working conditions, stress, poor student behaviour, and a lack of enjoyment have been noted by Australian teachers as factors that play a role in their consideration to change careers (Howes & Goodman-Delahunty 2015:25).

2.4.3 Malawi

Malawi is one of many countries that reports an uneven distribution of (educational) resources (Mutune & Orodho 2014:11). It is particularly challenging to retain graduates in this country because of the low salaries and poor incentives found in the teaching profession (Kadzamira 2006:3). As a result, qualified teachers in Malawi display a tendency to leave the profession for alternative employment (Kadzamira 2006:3).

Teachers in Malawi are drawn towards schools that provide better incentives, and such schools are mostly found in urban areas (Asim, Chimombo, Chugunov & Gera 2017:2). This favouring of urban-based schools adds to the country's current inequality of teacher distribution, as rural schools are disadvantaged by high teacher turnover and a refusal of teachers to be deployed in such areas (Asim et al. 2017:2; Kadzamira 2006:6). The continued loss and/or shortage of teachers in schools could also be attributed to how some teachers fail to actually practically begin their teaching career after training (Nkhokwe, Ungapembe & Furukawa 2017:7).

For the period 2013/2014, 359 secondary school teachers resigned and left the teaching profession altogether, which constituted 29% of all secondary teachers who

resigned that year (Nkhokwe et al. 2017:9). Additionally, secondary employment tends to be prevalent amongst Malawian teachers as a means to supplement their low incomes; yet, this additional employment can often negatively impact the attendance and performance of teachers when they are in the classroom (Kadzamira 2006:17).

In 2014, this country's learner-to-teacher ratio at the primary school level stood at 78:1 (Huag 2015:para 1). It has been noted that there are not enough secondary school teachers, as they tend to move to the private sector due to a lack of incentives in the (public) education sector (Kayuni & Tambulasi 2007:94). As a result of this large imbalance within the learner-to-teacher ratio, as well as other factors, Malawian teachers often identify poor working conditions as a reason for leaving the teaching profession (Ndala 2015:6). In addition to poor working conditions, Malawian teachers have also cited poor financial compensation; syllabus and educational system changes; and insufficient medical schemes as possible causes for high teacher turnover (Kayuni & Tambulasi 2007:93).

There are three distinct categories of teachers who leave teaching in Malawi, as identified by Nkhokwe et al. (2017:21). The first category includes teachers who have a general degree qualification but no professional in-service training (Nkhokwe et al. 2017:21). The second consists of new recruits who experience challenges with coping with the demands that come with teaching and the general school environment (Nkhokwe et al. 2017:21). For this category, it has been found that the current teacher curriculum does not adequately prepare graduates for their place of work (Nkhokwe et al. 2017:21). The third category is inclusive of teachers for whom teaching was not their career of choice; as Nkhokwe et al. (2017:21) note, individuals who did not choose teaching as their preferred college course are unlikely to remain long in the profession.

Information collected for the period 2005-2007 in Malawi by the International Task Force on Teachers for EFA (2010:8, 12) indicates that teacher attrition was at 5% for primary school level teachers and 10% for secondary school level teachers. For these figures, the leading causes of attrition at both the primary and secondary levels included death (involuntary), retirement (involuntary), and resignations (voluntary) (International Task Force on Teachers for EFA 2010:8, 12). It was during the period 2005-2007 that a United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation

(UNESCO 2010:a) study on the loss of teachers in sub-Saharan Africa between 2005-2007 revealed that when compared to other countries in the region, Lesotho and Malawi reported the greatest attrition of secondary school teachers".

When detailing issues around education and teacher turnover in sub-Saharan Africa, it is unavoidable to also note that HIV/Aids has had a bearing thereon. Indeed, teacher turnover has been significantly impacted by HIV/Aids in a number of sub-Saharan African countries, and Malawi is no exception (Kayuni & Tambulasi 2007:94). While HIV/Aids is a significant contributor to turnover, however, this current study focussed solely on voluntary turnover, which makes a discussion on involuntary (e.g. death) turnover related to HIV/Aids and other causes irrelevant for this particular dissertation.

2.4.4 South Africa

In South Africa, teacher resignations contribute more to teacher attrition than any other factor, including death, illness, or retirement (SACE 2010:18). Table 2.1 shows the percentage of resignations, retirements, and transfers of South African teachers for the period 1997/1998-2003/2004.

Table 2.1: Percentage Terminations by Cause for Educators 1997/1998-2003/2004

	Resignations %	Retirement %	Transfer %
1997/8	43.1	6.5	1.3
1998/9	44.3	13.0	3.3
1999/00	48.2	15.9	0.9
2000/01	51.1	16.7	0.6
2001/02	48.3	14.1	0.5
2002/03	53.6	16.1	0.4
2003/04	53.1	17.7	0.3

Source: SACE (2010:18)

From Table 2.1, it can be seen that the relative number of teacher resignations escalated from 43.1% in 1997/1998 to 53.1% in 2003/2004. This is an indication that teacher resignations gained traction between 1997/1998 and 2003/2004. Additionally,

the number of teacher retirements evidenced in the table shows an increase from 6.5% in 1997/1998 to 17.7% in 2003/2004. This increase indicates that a large number of the teacher workforce were old teachers who went on retirement in or around 2003/2004. The last column in Table 2.1 shows the percentage of teacher transfers. This column is slightly more positive in its information, as it shows that from 1997/1998 to 2003/2004, the number of transfers decreased, which means that teachers tended to remain at their school, district, or even province of employment over the given 6-year period.

Table 2.2: Joiners and Leavers, 2004-2012

Year	Educators	Joiners	Leavers	Join rate	Leave rate	Qualified young joiners	Qualified older joiners	Unqualified joiners
2004	*375159*		19550		5.21%			
2005	382133	26524	*21163*	7.07%	*5.54%*			
2006	385860	*24891*	*19415*	6.51%	*5.03%*			
2007	394225	*27778*	23053	7.20%	*5.85%*			
2008	400953	*29783*	*21005*	7.55%	*5.24%*			
2009	413067	*33120*	*18081*	8.26%	*4.38%*			
2010	418109	*23124*	*27021*	5.60%	*6.46%*	*5582*	*16283*	*1259*
2011	420608	*30213*	22156	7.23%	*5.27%*	*6378*	*17311*	*6523*
2012	425167	*26713*		6.35%		*8474*	*11765*	*6474*
			Mean	6.97%	5.37%		56.7%	17.8%

Source: Centre for Development and Enterprise (2015:23)

Table 2.2 above highlights the number of joiners and leavers from the year 2004 to 2012, it indicates that in 2004 a number of educators stood at 375159 and of that figure, 19550 left which indicated a leaving rate of 5.21%. Over the years the educator leaving rate fluctuated and was highest in 2009 at 8.26%. Looking at the overall mean for leaving rate is 5.37% as compared to the joining rate which is 6.97%. Additionally, the number of qualified older joiners is much higher compared to qualified young joiners. Unqualified joiners stand at a mean of 17.8% dating from 2010 to 2012. Overall these statistics are encouraging in that the leaving rate of educators is below 10% overall.

Anecdotal evidence has highlighted that low job satisfaction, high stress, and distance from school all form reasons for why teachers left the profession in South Africa in the

early 2000s (SACE 2010:18). However, more concrete evidence is currently lacking, since the Annual Schools Survey conducted by Statistics South Africa, falls short in accurately detailing teacher records, as it is challenging to know exactly how many teachers exit the system prematurely and the reasons for their early exit. Furthermore, the South African higher education and training institutions also do not graduate enough teachers to meet the demand in the country, as the country graduates close to 18 000 teachers, which is below the required 25 000 for the effective teacher-pupil ratio that is required (Maphalala & Mpofu 2019:para 5-6).

For South Africa, the main challenge is not so much that teachers do not make it to the classroom, but that teachers resign from the profession and never go back into teaching (Simkins 2015:18). Financial strain also plays a role in the causes of high teacher resignations, as does the underperformance of some schools (Mpumalanga Province 2016).

The enactment of the 2015 Taxation Laws Amendment Bill, which was set for implementation on 1 March 2016, completed the legislative process that enables the tax harmonisation of retirement fund contributions and benefits (National Treasury 2015b:1). Upon enactment, this harmonisation contributed to a high number of teacher and other (e.g. nurses and police officers) resignations as a means to access pension monies (National Treasury 2015b:4). The introduction of the tax harmonisation of retirement funds has meant that all individual taxpayers who contribute towards a retirement fund now qualify for a tax deduction of 27.5% of their greater taxable income or remuneration, up to a limit of R350 000 (National Treasury 2015b:2). The main concern at the time regarding this harmonisation was an optional pay-out of one-third of an individual's retirement as a lump-sum, with the remaining two-thirds being annuitised (National Treasury 2015b:2). This law only applies to new contributions made by those younger than 55 when the legislation came into effect (i.e. after 1 March 2016), and those younger than 55 years at that time would also be subjected to the two-third annuitisation requirements (National Treasury 2015b:1). This meant that those whose retirement savings were higher than a total of R247 500 would have two-thirds of their pension annuitised and would receive a regular income as part of their pension rather than a cash lump-sum (National Treasury 2015b:2). As a result, Government teachers, in particular, started to resign

in high numbers in order to gain access to their monies before the law came into effect (National Treasury 2015b:2).

On 17 March 2016, the South African Cabinet took a decision to postpone the annuitisation requirement for provident fund members (National Treasury 2016:para 3). This postponement was set for a period of two years, while allowing for consultations with stakeholders (National Treasury 2016:para 3). However, the provisions relating to retirement as well the tax harmonisation reforms in accordance with the 2015 Tax Laws Amendment Act still came into effect on 1 March 2016 as scheduled (National Treasury 2016:para 5-6), which impacted teacher turnover.

Another important consideration for addressing teacher turnover in South Africa is whether or not teaching is the career of choice for teachers in the country. To this end, Howes and Goodman-Delahunty (2015:22) provide statistics that indicate that out of a sampled group of 133 teachers, which consisted of teachers who are currently working as teachers, those who are intending to leave, and those who formally worked as teachers, 48% indicated personal fulfilment as their reason for choosing teaching. The remaining percentage was divided between those who chose the profession for practical reasons (21%), those who desired to contribute to society (13), those who lacked alternatives (11%), and those whose decision was influenced by others (6%).

These statistics offer an indication that South African teachers tend to go into teaching for various reasons, some of which may be unknown. From the presented statistics, 11% of students go into teaching due to a lack of alternatives, which means that some go into teaching simply as a stepping stone towards their preferred career. This may well explain the high turnover rate of teachers within the first 5 years of their teaching employment.

Regardless of whether or not teachers truly wish to be teachers, it is still important to ensure that good quality and talented teachers are retained (Johnson & Birkeland 2003:586). Related thereto, the next section addresses the effects of teacher turnover on different stakeholders.

2.5 EFFECTS OF TEACHER TURNOVER

Teacher turnover has adverse effects on learners, schools, and school management (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond 2019:3). High teacher turnover generally means that there needs to be the recruitment, training and development, and mentoring of new teachers, which, in turn, results in increased costs pertaining to recruitment (Xaba 2003:288). Therefore, the financial implications of turnover need to be taken into account when teachers resign *en masse* (Newberry & Allsop 2017:864). For example, there is a loss on investments made pertaining to teacher education and training when Government trains teachers and develops them only to have them leave soon after (Garcia, Slate & Delgado 2009:2; Nkhokwe et al. 2017:14). Similarly, the recruitment, selection, and training of new staff members hold a financial bearing on education departments (Garcia et al. 2009:2; Nkhokwe et al. 2017:14).

Teacher turnover also inherently disrupts cohesion and has the potential to negatively impact the working and learning relationships that exist between teachers, students, and/or administrators (Newberry & Allsop 2017:864). The greatest impact of teacher turnover is on learners. This is especially true for when teachers leave sometime during a year's curriculum; thereby interrupting learning and impacting on learner achievement (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond 2019:3; Donley, Detrich, Keyworth & States 2019:6). Furthermore, the early voluntary retirement of quality teachers has a particularly negative effect on staff morale, as remaining teachers often need to fill the gaps left by those that have exited their positions (Pitsoe 2013:315).

In addressing the high turnover rate of teachers, some school managers have begun implementing unfavourable strategies to address the gap left by teachers who leave prematurely (Donitsa-Schmidt & Zuzovsky 2016:90; International Task Force on Teachers for EFA 2010:1). Some such strategies include phasing out certain subjects, employing unqualified teachers, increasing the workload of remaining teachers, and increasing the learner-to-teacher ratio in classrooms (Donitsa-Schmidt & Zuzovsky 2016:90; International Task Force on Teachers for EFA 2010:1; Moleni & Ndalama 2004:vi; Nkhokwe et al. 2017:14-15).

Overall, it should be noted that the effects of teacher turnover are experienced differently by different stakeholders (e.g. learners, schools, and school management).

From the presented information in this latter part of the literature review, it is necessary to understand that teacher turnover is not unique to South Africa. Teacher turnover is a problem that is experienced in many countries, regardless of whether they are developed or developing. It can also be seen that the impact of teacher turnover results in problems not only for schools, but for remaining teachers, management, and the Department as well. It is also evident that, especially in South Africa, not enough graduates are motivated to enter the classroom or to make teaching their lifelong career.

2.6 CONCLUSION

Chapter Two reviewed currently available literature, as presented by a variety of authors, related to turnover and, specifically, teacher turnover. The chapter provided an understanding of the conceptual understanding of turnover.

A discussion on teacher turnover presented in the chapter supplied evidence for the following factors as playing a role in teachers prematurely resigning from their positions: 1) age and experience, 2) working conditions, 3) money (e.g. salaries or incentives) and job satisfaction, and 4) commitment. Then, a presentation of global perspectives focussed on four countries, namely the USA, Australia, Malawi, and South Africa. These countries were specifically discussed since they all experience high teacher turnover and share some similarities pertaining to reasons for the premature resignation of teachers. Finally, it was noted that the effects of teacher turnover impact all stakeholders differently, but that the resignation of teachers disrupts learners' and their learning the most.

The next chapter, Chapter Three, focusses on describing the research methodology, design, and methods relevant to this current study.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY, DESIGN, AND METHODS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The preceding chapter provided an overview of existing literature related to teacher turnover. The reviewed literature indicated that teacher turnover is not a new phenomenon and that it has been widely researched in countries such as the USA and Australia. The review also revealed that individual, organisational, and environmental factors appear to be antecedents of turnover.

In this chapter, the subject of discussion is the research methodology related to this current study. Scientific research is the process of gaining knowledge through the employment of a range of objectives, procedures, and methods (Welman, Kruger, and Mitchell 2005:2). This third chapter, therefore, situates this current study in the mainstream discourse related to the research methodology that was briefly mentioned in Chapter One, Section 1.5. Specifically, this chapter offers a succinct reflection on the praxis of the methodological approach in the context of this study, including the relevant design and methods applied to achieve the objectives of the research project.

The chapter begins with a discussion on the research paradigm, followed by the research purpose, design, and the appropriate information collection methods applied in this study. The chapter also discusses the participant strategy, information collection and analysis, and trustworthiness as a research criterion. Furthermore, the chapter addresses the storage, retention, and annihilation of information collected, and concludes with a discussion on ethical considerations.

The following section addresses the methodology utilised to achieve the objectives set out in this study.

3.2 METHODOLOGY UTILISED TO ACHIEVE THE RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The main aim of this study, as depicted in Chapter One, Section 1.4, was to explore *some of the factors that led to the turnover of Tshwane South District teachers who resigned voluntarily before retirement age during the period 2013-2015*. In order to address the main research problem, the objectives of the study were to:

- Objective 1: Understand the nature of "turnover";
- Objective 2: Explore some of the causes and reasons that teachers provide for resigning prematurely; and
- Objective 3: Determine teacher retention strategies.

The selected qualitative methodology used in this study was carefully considered. South African studies that previous addressed teacher attrition, resignations, or turnover focussed, generally, on using a literature review or document analysis as their preferred methodology. For example, Mampane (2012) relied on the use of a literature review, existing documents, and surveys; while Pitsoe (2013) used available statistics from the DBE, along with document analysis. Due to an established lack of primary/participant-based information within the South African context, this current study opted for an empirical approach specifically to gain the viewpoints of teachers who had resigned during the stipulated period. Hence, this study utilised face-to-face, semi-structured interviews to gather necessary qualitative information.

Based on the need for interview-based information, it was determined that the selected research paradigm (namely interpretivism – see Chapter One, Section 1.5) would be best for this current study, since interpretivism allows a researcher to gain an in-depth understanding of a phenomenon from participants regarding their lived experiences (Kivunja & Kuyini 2017:33). The following section addresses this chosen research paradigm in more detail.

3.3 RESEARCH PARADIGM

Positioning research within the correct research paradigm or "philosophical research framework" enhances the essence of research in terms of research perspectives and theoretical orientations (Creswell & Poth 2017:20). A research philosophy forms the ideological basis for a methodology; in particular, "philosophy" denotes the abstract ideas and/or beliefs that feed into research practices (Creswell & Poth 2017:16). A philosophical framework, also referred to as a "paradigm" or "world view", is a frame that a researcher uses to understand, observe, and reason within his or her given research (Khan 2014:298).

As mentioned previously, this study ascribed to the interpretivist paradigm, as the researcher sought to understand the phenomenon under investigation from a

humanistic perspective by employing qualitative methods, as recommended by Shah and Al-Bargi (2013:256-257). Paradigms encompass different ontological, epistemological, methodological, and axiological assumptions that guide and locate research (Kivunja & Kuyini 2017:26).

The ontological assumption (i.e. what constitutes reality) of interpretivists is relative, which implies that reality differs from one individual to another and is socially constructed (Shah & Al-Bargi 2013:257). This means that each participant interviewed in this study holds a different reality and his or her own view of the world. Therefore, each teacher has his or her own reason(s) for early retirement. These personal differences informed this study by providing reasons for what motivated the interviewed teachers to leave prematurely during the chosen period.

Since the epistemological assumption of interpretivism is subjective and holds that different people construct meaning differently (Shah & Al-Bargi 2013:257), the construction of knowledge, as understood epistemologically, occurs through conversations or human interaction (e.g. through face-to-face, semi-structured interviews). A researcher functioning within the interpretivist paradigm, therefore, relies on participants' understandings and viewpoints regarding the phenomenon under investigation. For this study, knowledge regarding teacher turnover was gained through participant interviews in order to better understand some of the reasons that led the study participants to resign from their teaching positions before retirement age.

The following section addresses the research purpose of this study.

3.4 RESEARCH PURPOSE

Focus in this section is on the purpose of and reasons for conducting this study. As noted previously, the purpose of this study was exploratory, as it addressed questions regarding the "what" surrounding the phenomenon of teacher turnover, and assisted the researcher in gaining more insight into aspects related thereto.

Teacher turnover, or turnover in other environments, is a phenomenon that is widely researched, and it has been established that the turnover of teachers in South Africa, as a phenomenon, is becoming a crisis (Mafukata & Mudau 2016:2243). This study aimed to offer an exploration into this phenomenon by conducting face-to-face, semi-

structured interviews with teachers who had voluntarily resigned their positions during the period 2013-2015. Specifically, the study sought to identify and understand some of the factors that led to these voluntary resignations.

The research also addressed "why"-related questions as a means to discover new meaning and additional information related to the reasons for said resignations. Therefore, findings that emanated from this study are expected to contribute to ongoing research related to teacher turnover and may contribute significantly to the existing body of knowledge in Public HRM and Public Administration.

The research design relevant to this study is presented in the next section.

3.5 RESEARCH DESIGN

A research design is the plan or blueprint of a study, and focusses on the final product or outcome of the conducted research (Saunders et al. 2016:166, 168-169). There are three basic types of research designs. The first is a qualitative research design, which is more flexible and inductive, provides rich contextual information concerned with participants' experiences, and seeks to contribute to existing theory (Austin & Sutton 2014:436; Maxwell 2013:2). The second is quantitative research, which tests existing theory, is based on a cause-and effect relationship, and is statistically and more narrowly focussed (Fox & Bayat 2007:78). The last is a mixed methods design, which is a design that combines both qualitative and quantitative information collection techniques as well as analytical procedures in order to gain rich and detailed information (Saunders et al. 2016:166, 168-169). Guided by the choice of the research paradigm (i.e. interpretivism) in this current study, the researcher opted to utilise a qualitative research design in order to yield the best results.

Yin (2016:99) notes that qualitative researchers are able to study phenomena as they occur in the "real world". In qualitative research, the findings do not rely heavily on statistical procedures, and information focus is placed, instead, on the underlying meanings gained from participants' experiences (Rahman 2017:103). The interpretivist paradigm ascribes to support the use of qualitative research based on the ontological and epistemological reasonings discussed in Section 3.4 of this chapter. Researchers tend to use a qualitative research approach when seeking to

understand what constitutes participants' realities and, thereby, extend their understanding and interpretation of a given phenomenon (Merriam 2002:4).

The following section details the choice of research methods used to determine what led participating teachers to resign before retirement age. The research methods discussed include population and selection, information collection instruments, and information analysis.

3.6 RESEARCH METHODS

Research methods are inclusive of information collection techniques, participant selection (i.e. the interview group), and information analysis techniques (Creswell 2014:45). This section pays attention to the use of specific relevant research methods in this study, and begins with the research process that was followed.

3.6.1 Interview Process

Figure 3.1 provides an illustration of the interview process followed in this study. This study-specific process consisted of a 12-step procedure that was adapted from a similar research process developed by Baloyi (2016:27). Each of the 12 steps in Figure 3.1 indicates what was done at each stage of the interview process.

Figure 3.1: The Interview Process Followed for this Study

Research Question

What are some of the factors that led to the turnover of Tshwane South District teachers who resigned voluntarily before retirement age during the period 2013-2015?

Research Design

The design is qualitative, using empirical methods to answer the main research question

Who is involved?

Researcher/former teachers in the Tshwane South District/key contact

Initial contact with key contact

Seek permission from Tshwane South District to conduct study

Identification of selection group

Development of interview questions

Check validity of already developed interview questions

Conduct interviews

Check validity of collected information

Data analysis using theme identification

Comparison of collected information to existing literature

Report findings

Source: Baloyi (2016:27)

Figure 3.1 indicates that the interview process began with the research question that this study sought to answer (see Step 1). In order to answer the posed research question, an empirical research design was chosen to best express the voices and viewpoints of the participating teachers themselves. Researchers such as Mampane (2012) and Xaba (2003), who conducted similar studies previously, relied on document analysis; therefore, the researcher for this current study opted to do an empirical study instead (see Step 2). The individuals involved in this process were: the researcher; the

participants; and the key contact, who was, at the time of the study, an official at the Tshwane South District's Human Resource (HR) division (see Step 3).

In Step 4, contact was made with the key contact person from the Tshwane South District; this contact was determined after identifying Tshwane South District as the locus for this study. During this initial contact, the key contact was introduced to the study. The key contact then clarified the process of acquiring ethical clearance from the District and informed the relevant directorates about the study. It was important to get permission from the District because the participants had worked in the Tshwane South District, and, as such, some statements made by participants could directly relate to the District. For Step 5, with the help of the key contact, a small purposive selection of participants was made based on teachers who voluntarily resigned from Tshwane School District schools during the period 2013-2015.

Step 6 involved the development of interview questions, which were informed by extant literature and an exit interview survey provided by the Tshwane South District. In Step 7, the validity of the developed interview questions was ascertained with the assistance of the study supervisor and co-supervisor to ensure that all the interview questions would lead to answering the main research question presented in Step 1. For Step 8, face-to-face, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the selected participants.

Then, in Step 9, the researcher confirmed the validity of the collected interview information by ensuring that all participants were asked the same questions. The researcher also ensured that all interview questions were answered by all the participants. Upon completion of the interviews, the recorded information was transcribed. Step 10 relates to how the collected information was analysed and how meaning was made of the information by grouping key terms into different themes and sub-themes. In Step 11, comparisons of the collected participant information to the literature discussed in Chapter Two were made. The final step, Step 12, was to discuss the themes that emerged from the interviews. These discussions are presented in detail in Chapter Four.

3.6.2 Participant Selection Strategy

Participant selection involves selecting individuals who, ultimately, form part of a study from within a given population (Mertens 2010:309). The strategy used for selecting a sample influences the quality of the information collected, as well as the interpretation thereof (Mertens 2010:309). Tshwane South District was chosen as the area of focus because of feasibility, resources and accessibility to participants. This district is a low to medium income district and it is one of 15 districts in Gauteng and the second biggest district in relation to the number of teachers and schools. Furthermore, this district is made up of 299 schools both public and independent schools, however, the research focused on teachers who taught in public schools, which comprises of 198 schools both primary and secondary. Tshwane South District was also affected by teacher turnover with teachers resigning prematurely before retirement age.

Participants selected for this current study consisted of Tshwane South District teachers who resigned voluntarily before retirement age during the period 2013-2015. Participants were located using the key contact from Tshwane South District office, details of participants were provided by the key contact as highlighted in section 3.6.1.

There are different types of sampling (i.e. probability and non-probability sampling) strategies used for qualitative and quantitative research (Kumar 2011:175). Probability sampling is often used in quantitative research, where a sample is selected in such a way that it is not biased, and the sample must be representational of the given population (Kumar 2011:175). Non-probability sampling is often associated with qualitative research, where researchers select a sample based on participants who can provide the richest information relevant to their study topic (Moser & Korstjens 2017:10). This type of strategy allows a researcher to be deliberate about sampling and not rely on a random sample, as is the case with probability sampling (Moser & Korstjens 2017:10).

Within non-probability sampling, there are various types of sampling strategies, such as purposive, criterion, theoretical, convenience, snowball, maximum variation, extreme case, typical case and/or confirming, and disconfirming sampling (Moser & Korstjens 2017:10). Based on the requirements of this particular study, out of the various non-probability sampling options available, a purposive selection strategy was

deemed the most practical choice. The purposive sampling technique enables a researcher to make informed choices pertaining to both 1) what needs to be known (i.e. what information needs to be gathered during information collection) as well as 2) what participants should be selected (i.e. who would be best at supplying the necessary information based on their knowledge and experience) (Etikan, Musa & Alkassim 2016:2). A purposive sampling was used because selected participants are people that would provide the necessary information regarding reasons for teacher turnover. The selected participants were ideal in addressing the aim of this study and provide rich information.

Not everyone in the population (i.e. not all the teachers in the chosen district) was given an equal opportunity to be selected for this study. Instead, face-to-face, semi-structured interviews were conducted with purposefully selected participants from the chosen district who had resigned during the period 2013-2015. The selected participants varied in age, gender, years of experience, and teaching phase (i.e. foundation, intermediate, senior phase, or FET). Participants were selected based on the understanding that they had 1) voluntarily resigned from teaching before their retirement age; 2) their resignation took place within the period under examination (i.e. 2013-2015); and 3) before their resignation, they had been teachers in the Tshwane South District for over 10 years, which would mean that they would have sufficient experience in the field for the purposes of this study. Potential participants who did not meet all three these criteria were excluded from the study. The Tshwane South District was selected because of its accessibility and convenience to the researcher.

3.6.3 Selection Size

There is an ongoing debate regarding the best selection size for qualitative research (Dworkin 2012:1319). Identifying the "right" selection size in qualitative research is challenging, and Kumar (2014:176) holds that

> … holds that since qualitative research is far more interested in establishing
> the impact of a phenomenon as opposed to its scale, sample sizes hold less
> significance than for quantitative studies.

Additionally, in qualitative research, the sample size is small, and attention is paid to the richness of information, the variety of participants, the information collection

methods, the sampling strategy, and the broadness of research questions (Moser & Korstjens 2017:11). Some authors, such as Moser and Korstjens (2017:11), advocate for collecting information until information saturation is reached. Information saturation occurs when a researcher has enough information to replicate the study (Fusch & Ness 2015:1408).

In this current study, saturation was determined to have been reached when the information collected started becoming repetitive and participants began relaying similar details. Initially, the expectation was to interview 12 participants (11 teachers and one District Director) with the hope that saturation would have been reached by the 12th participant. However, due to various information collection challenges, some potential participants refused to participate in the study. The researcher, therefore, ultimately only interviewed seven participants in total. The selection of participants was based on who would best provide answers to the questions posed in this study, rather than on trying to gain participants who would best represent the Tshwane South District teacher population as a whole. It was not the researcher's aim to generalise the findings of this study but rather to determine whether suggestions or hypotheses could be formulated for further future investigation regarding the broader teacher population.

3.6.4 Information Collection

This study made use of face-to-face, semi-structured interviews to collect primary information for analytical purposes. The following sub-sections explain the choice of the selected information collection techniques related to gathering primary information.

3.6.4.1 Face-to-Face, Semi-Structured Interviews

Face-to-face, semi-structured interviews were conducted with participants so as to gain an in-depth understanding of some of the reasons that led to teacher turnover in the Tshwane South District during the period 2013-2015. The face-to-face, semi-structured interviews assisted the researcher in building a rapport with participants as well as noting participants' non-verbal communication. Miller and Glassner (2016:52) highlight that

…highlight that qualitative interviews can provide researchers with the opportunity to access "social worlds" wherein they can explore and examine such worlds' workings as well as how individuals define themselves and their experiences within them.

The interviews proceeded in the form of a dialogue between the researcher and each participant. Moreover, the interviews provided an opportunity for the researcher to better understand how the participants perceived their own social worlds by asking follow-up questions, delving deeper when necessary, and seeking clarity when responses where ambiguous.

Open-ended questions were asked during the interviews, which allowed the researcher and participants to discuss key points in detail and to probe for more information. Interviews took place at central meeting locations where participants felt comfortable; thus, the interview locations were different for and dependent on each individual participant.

3.6.4.2 Recordings and Field Notes

An audio recorder was utilised to record the interviews. Each participant had to give consent to the recording of his or her interview prior to commencing this form of information collection. The use of a recorder allowed the researcher to pay closer attention to body language and non-verbal signs during the interview (e.g. participants' playing with their hands, being uncomfortable in a chair, and/or using their hands to explain certain aspects).

Field notes were also made as a form of information collection. According to Silverman and Patterson (2015:41), field notes are an essential information collection tool in qualitative research. For this study, the interviewer made field notes regarding the date, time, location, and surroundings in order to add thick description to the information collected.

3.6.5 Information Analysis

Information analysis is the interpretation of collected information in order to make meaning thereof (Neuman 2014:477). For this study, once the recorded interviews had

been transcribed, the information collected was analysed using thematic identification. Thematic analysis' primary function is to identify, analyse, and report on any recurring patterns or themes within the information collected that best encapsulate and answer posed research questions (Baloyi 2016:57).

Figure 3.2 offers an illustration of the information analysis process followed in this study.

Figure 3.2: Steps in Information Analysis
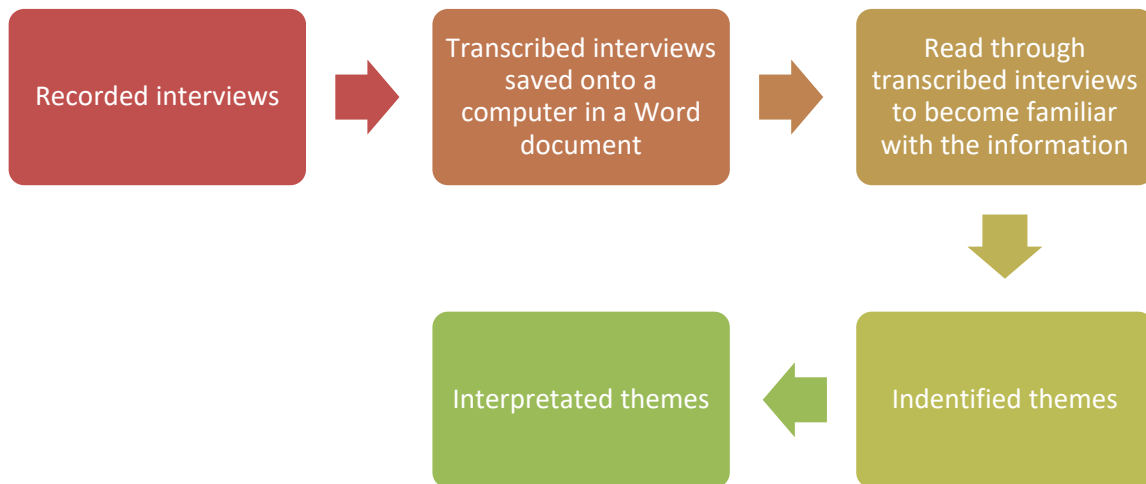
Source: Author

From the information presented in Figure 3.2, it is evident that this study's information analysis was conducted in five steps. In the first step, the recorded interviews were saved onto a computer for safekeeping. These recordings were subsequently sent to a transcriber for audio-to-word transcription. For the second step, the transcribed interviews were saved in a Word document format on a computer to enable the researcher to work with and read through the information. The researcher then listened to the recordings again, read through all the interview questions, transcriptions, and field notes, and became familiarised with how the responses were captured. In so doing, the researcher was able to determine whether or not any themes could be identified that had not yet been addressed in the extant literature.

Based on current literature, methodologists usually expect a researcher to delay the interpretation of information until all the information has been collected or until all interviews have been conducted (Leedy & Ormrod 2015:309; Moser & Korstjens 2018:15). However, for this study, each interview's information was analysed as soon as the interview's transcription was received. While aware of the usual analysis protocols, this alternative approach was followed as a means of streamlining the process as well as to ensure that the research yielded accurate

Themes were created from the interpretation of the actual phrases emanating from the transcriptions. Each theme was then used as a main heading in the interpretation of the information gathered from participant interviews. The interpretation of the themes was the last step in the information analysis process. In interpreting themes, a researcher analyses and discusses each theme while simultaneously highlighting complimentary and contradictory points and new insights (Creswell 2013:249). The themes and related discussions emanating from this study are presented in Chapter Four.

The next section addresses trustworthiness as a research criterion to assess the overall quality of this study.

3.7 TRUSTWORTHINESS

Trustworthiness is a research criterion that was developed by Lincoln and Guba in 1985 to establish rigour and assess the quality of qualitative research (Moule & Goodman 2013:250). Rigour is the extent to which a research process is conducted with precision, and refers to establishing the overall quality of the research in question (Cypress 2017:254). The trustworthiness criterion is also used as a tool to dissect the analysis process and validate study results (Elo & Kyngas 2007:112). Therefore, trustworthiness was used as a criterion to evaluate and assess the overall quality of this current study. In order to determine the level of trustworthiness in this study, the following factors were taken into account: credibility, transferability, and confirmability. Each of these factors are discussed in greater detail in the following sub-sections.

3.7.1 Credibility

Nowell, Norris, White, and Moules (2017:3) explain that explain that in order to establish credibility, it is necessary to ensure that participants' responses and how a researcher opts to present such responses are in agreement. Participant validation enhances credibility and/or the accuracy of findings as, once participants have been provided with a copy of the findings, they can make comments on the level of accuracy

evidenced in reporting those findings (Creswell 2013:251). By practicing participant validation, a researcher can ensure that he or she has presented the information in such a way that it accurately addresses and represents participant responses (Moser & Korstjens 2017:121). For the purpose of ensuring credibility in this current study, participants were furnished with their transcribed interviews as well as with the interpretation of the information, as discussed in Chapter Five.

3.7.2 Transferability

Moser and Korstjens (2017:121) define transferability as the determination of what degree qualitative research results can be applied or "transferred" to contexts and respondents who fall outside of the study's original scope. In order for transferability to take place, a study needs to clearly detail its unique research elements, such as context, participant selection criteria, participant characteristics, information collection methods, and the process of analysis (Graneheim & Lundman 2003:110). Processes followed in this study have been clearly detailed throughout this dissertation to enhance transferability (e.g. see Section 3.2, which highlighted the interview process). It should, however, be noted that for this particular study, transferability is limited, since the findings cannot be generalised to the entire Tshwane South District population due to the small participant selection size. Still, the research does offer findings that are relevant to the literature, which, in turn, makes the research transferable to the literature, albeit not to the population.

3.7.3 Confirmability

Confirmability, according to Anney (2014:279), refers to how closely other researchers are able to corroborate the results of a particular study. The practice of ensuring confirmability is to ascertain that a researcher's interpretation or information analysis is aligned to the information collected and has not been fabricated (Moser & Korstjens 2017:121). In order to enhance confirmability in this current study, the researcher conducted moments of self-reflection, where post-interview reflective notes were made that cited any insights and/or biases that might have arisen on the part of the researcher during an interview. As part of these reflective moments, the researcher considered her own background and how it might (have) potentially influence the research process. To address potential influences on the study's information, member

checking was conducted, where participants were provided with the final interpretations of the information analysis so as to make comments on the level of accuracy of these interpretations (Birt, Scott, Cavers, Campbell & Walter 2016:1803). The researcher also documented all the activities that took place during each interview, with specific focus on detailing participants' body language. Such field notes can enable a researcher to probe further if and when it appears that a participant is withholding information and/or when clarity is sought should a researcher not understand the meaning of unfamiliar terms that a participant might use (Anney 2014:279; Thomas & Magilvy 2011:154).

The ethical considerations relevant to this study are explained next.

3.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Research involving humans requires a researcher to treat participants with a moral requirement that affirms their humanity (Oliver 2010:12). In order to protect participants in this current study, ethical clearances from the GDE, the Tshwane South District, and UNISA (Annexures 2, 3, and 4) were sought and obtained before commencing information collection. The ethical principles of plagiarism and results reporting, disclosure, informed consent, and confidentiality, as detailed by Welman et al. (2005:181) and Salkind (2006:152), were also taken into consideration when undertaking this study.

3.8.1 Plagiarism and Results Reporting

In order to uphold the particular ethical concern of avoiding plagiarism and accurately reporting results, the researcher became familiarised with the *UNISA Policy for Copyright Infringement and Plagiarism* (2005) as well as the *Intellectual Property Policy* (2012) as a means of ensuring compliance thereto while conducting this study. The research findings have, thus, been presented in an honest and principled manner to ensure and maintain a high level of excellence, integrity, and quality. Furthermore, in order to ensure that this study's findings have not been fabricated or falsified, transcripts of the interviews can be made available upon request.

The Harvard referencing style is the preferred style of referencing for the Department of Public Administration and Management at UNISA. Hence, this particular referencing

style has been used throughout this research document, as explained in Chapter One, Section 1.6. All consulted sources have been acknowledged using the required author-date system (see Mouton 2001:242).

3.8.2 Disclosure

The researcher disclosed to all participants involved in the research the necessary information pertaining to the research prior to conducting the interviews. Such disclosure included informing participants as to the researcher's academic institution and level of study. The purpose of the research was also communicated to each participant prior to his or her interview. All participants were provided with copies of the ethical clearance certificates (Annexures 2, 3, and 4), as well as participant information sheets (Annexure 5) that contained a consent form (Annexure 6). All consent forms had to be signed by participants before commencing their interviews. Furthermore, and as previously mentioned, ethics certificates allowing the researcher to conduct the research were sought and granted by all relevant institutions (i.e. the GDE, the Tshwane South District, and UNISA) before information collection began.

3.8.3 Informed Consent

Participation was strictly voluntary; no individual was coerced into taking part in the study. To confirm this voluntary nature of participation, participants were required to sign an informed consent form before information collection commenced. According to Salkind (2006:151), an informed consent form is meant to provide prospective participants with a detailed description of everything that will happen throughout the course of the research process. Hence, for this study, all participants were provided with the necessary information regarding the purpose and aim of the research, as well as details regarding their contribution to the study. Informed consent is vital in any research, as participants need to participate in research out of their own free will and only information that is necessary for a study's ends should be collected (UNISA 2016:12).

Participants were also informed that they could withdraw from participating in the study at any time, should they feel unsafe or uncomfortable. All participants signed the presented consent form before information collection commenced. Their signatures serve as proof that no one was forced into taking part in this study and that the

researcher had clearly explained all possible risks to all participants. Participant consent was also upheld and maintained throughout all the interviews.

3.8.4 Confidentiality

In any research, the confidentiality and anonymity of participants should be upheld and protected, and any personal information detailed by or relating to a participant must be kept confidential (UNISA 2016:12, 15). In order to uphold confidentiality in this current study, all digital interview information was (and continues to be) kept in a computer folder that is password protected, and each participant has been referred to as "Participant", followed by a number (e.g. Participant 1). This same use of coding instead of using participant names was upheld during interview recordings, and the third-party transcriber signed a non-disclosure agreement to further ensure that in cases where identifying information may have come to light in an interview, that such information would still be held in confidentiality. Hard copies of all information collected (e.g. interview recordings, field notes, and transcripts) were (and continue to be) kept in a locked cabinet that is only accessible to and by the researcher. Further details regarding the safe storage of information are presented in Section 3.10, following.

3.9 STORAGE, RETENTION, AND ANNIHILATION OF INFORMATION

All collected information pertaining to this study is currently kept in a safe environment that can only be accessed by the researcher. Hard copy material (e.g. field notes taken during interviews, hard drives, flash discs, and audio recordings) has been locked in a cabinet at the researcher's home. Soft copy material (e.g. transcripts and audio files) have been saved on a computer drive that is password protected; only the researcher knows the password. As back-up, all information has also been saved on a Google Drive cloud that is password protected.

The collected information will be retained for a period of 5 years and destroyed thereafter. Moule and Goodman (2009:66) highlight that information collected during a research project should be kept for between 5 and 10 years, depending on the type of information in question. After the stipulated 5 years, the hard copy information will be destroyed by burning all material and shredding handwritten notes, while available software designed to destroy soft copy material will be used to destroy all digital information.

3.10 CONCLUSION

Chapter Three addressed the research methodology, design, and methods underpinning this study. The chapter began with an exposition of the detailed interview process, which provided insights into how the research was conducted – starting with the statement of the research objectives and ending with the interpretation of findings. A discussion around the research paradigms indicated that this current study ascribed to an interpretivist paradigm, which sought to understand the phenomenon in question from a humanistic perspective and ascertain meaning through human interaction.

The chapter then discussed the research purpose, design, and appropriate methods for information collection. The study was qualitative in nature, as it espoused to gather in-depth, rich information from participants regarding their experiences that led to their early resignations. A section on research methods presented in this chapter addressed issues related to the chosen participant selection strategy, selection size, information collection methods, and information analysis process. In order to establish rigour and ensure the overall quality of the research, trustworthiness as a research criterion was used to ensure credibility, transferability, and confirmability in this study. Ethical considerations were also addressed, along with details pertaining to the storage, retention, and annihilation of collected information.

The next chapter presents the information analysis and interpretation of findings gained from the face-to-face, semi-structured interviews conducted with participants. In this next chapter, the collected information has been placed into themes to assist with interpretation.

CHAPTER FOUR

INFORMATION ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter provided an overview of the research methodology, design, and methods employed to answer the main research question posed in this study. The chapter provided justification for the use of an interpretivist research paradigm; the selection of a qualitative design; and the use of fact-to-face, semi-structured interviews as a technique for information collection.

The main research question driving this study, as stated in Chapter One, Section 1.3, was, *What are the intricacies of some of the factors that led to the turnover of Tshwane South District teachers who resigned voluntarily before retirement age during the period 2013-2015?* This chapter analyses and interprets the findings of the information collected in this study related to this question. The chapter starts by providing information relevant to the collection experience, followed by demographical information of the participants, and concludes with the identification and interpretation of emerging themes.

4.2 INFORMATION COLLECTION EXPERIENCE

The researcher made use of face-to-face, semi-structured interviews that consisted of one main question (i.e. *Why did you resign?*), followed by related sub-questions (e.g. *Was there something that the employer could have done to stop you from resigning? If yes, please elaborate. What aspects of your work did you find frustrating? Do you know of the impact your resignation had on learners?*). The questions were designed to be probing and to offer prompts that would allow participants to share their unique experiences.

Interview appointments were arranged telephonically with each participant and interviews were conducted at various places of convenience with each participant. Prior to the commencement of each interview, permission to record the interviews was sought, and each participant gave consent to having the interaction recorded. Participants were also given the option to respond to questions in their preferred language.

It should be noted that securing an appointment with the Tshwane South District Director or any personnel from the district proved to be a challenge, as officials were reluctant to meet – the reasons for their refusal to participate are unknown. As a result, no interviews were conducted with officials from the district. The interview with personnel from the district would have provided more insight from a management perspective on teacher turnover in the district and its possible effects, and the lack of such information may have limited the final outcomes of this study.

Following, some of the challenges experienced by the researcher when conducting the interviews are noted:

- Some participants refused to participate in the study after initially agreeing to take part.
- There was a certain reluctance from participants to take part in the study for fear of victimisation by Government officials.
- Participants revealed more information off-the-record (i.e. when the interviews were considered completed), or when the recorder was switched off.

Even with the stipulated challenges, the researcher still managed to conduct interviews with seven (out of the initially desired 12) willing participants, and information revealed off-record was captured in reflective notes. Participants gave consent to these notes and for the researcher to write the information down that was shared when the recorder was off; participants also welcomed the inclusion of these written notes on un-recorded information when the researcher shared the final interpretations with participants.

As indicated in the previous chapter (Section 3.7.2), information saturation was utilised to determine when sufficient information had been gathered. After interviewing the fifth participant, responses from participants became similar in nature, and some information became almost wholly repetitive. Thus, information saturation was, technically, reached as of the fifth participant. The repetitive details provided by the fifth to seventh participants were, thus, used to inform key themes in the study.

The next section offers a presentation of participants' demographical information.

4.3 PARTICIPANTS' DEMOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Table 4.1 presents the demographical information of the participants who were interviewed for this study. All participants resigned voluntarily during the period 2013-2015 from the Tshwane South District. It should be noted that the table does not include participant names or any information that may compromise or infringe on participant confidentiality (see Section 3.9.4). In total, seven participants were interviewed. Six interviewees were female, and one was male. Six out of the seven participants had over 20 years of work experience, and there was a mix of primary, secondary, and high school teachers.

Table 4.1: Demographical Information of Participants Involved in the Study

Participant	Sex	Teaching Experience in Years	Primary/Secondary/High School
Participant 1	Female	30	Primary school
Participant 2	Male	30	High school
Participant 3	Female	19	Secondary school
Participant 4	Female	20	Secondary school
Participant 5	Female	24	Primary school
Participant 6	Female	25	Primary school
Participant 7	Female	21	Primary school

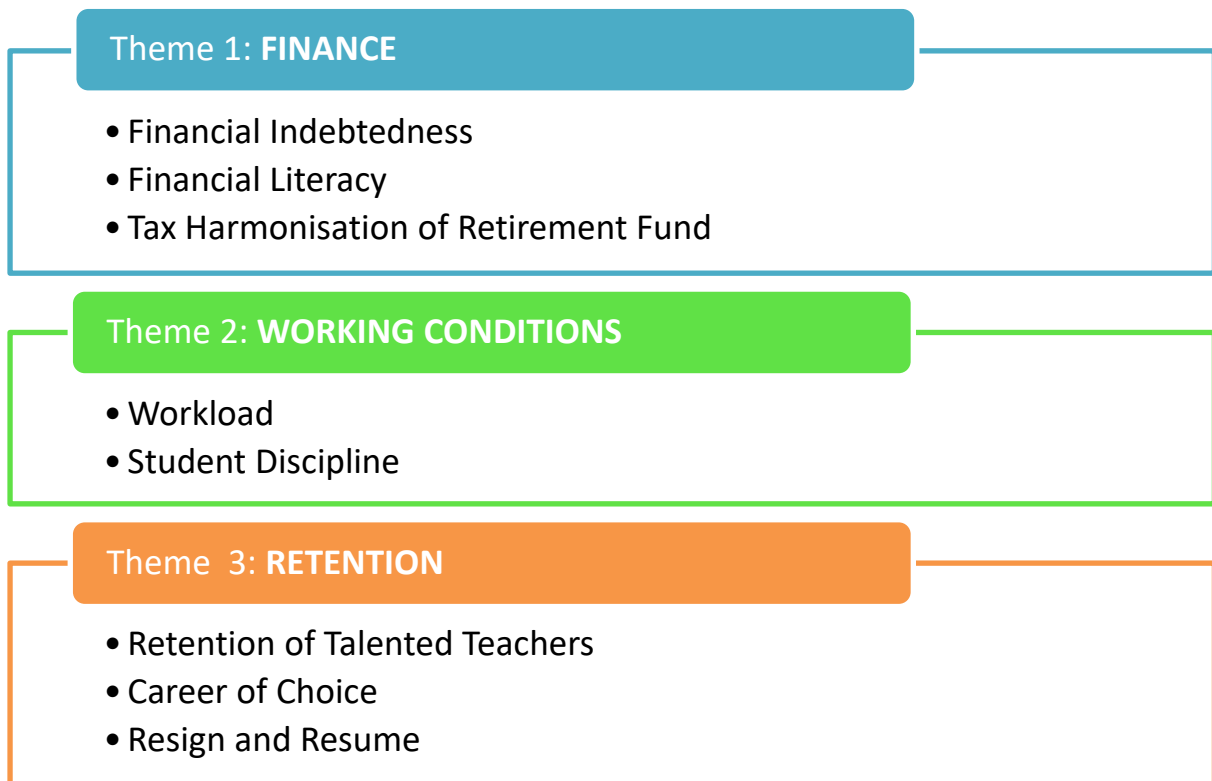Source: Mkhondo (2016:4)

The following section provides details on the themes established through this research.

4.4 RESEARCH THEMES

From the interviews conducted, various responses that appeared to be similar or related were combined in order to form themes. As a result of these combinations, the following primary themes (Figure 4.1) emerged during the face-to-face, semi-structured interviews.

Figure 4.1: Themes and Sub-Themes

Theme 1: **FINANCE**

- Financial Indebtedness
- Financial Literacy
- Tax Harmonisation of Retirement Fund

Theme 2: **WORKING CONDITIONS**

- Workload
- Student Discipline

Theme 3: **RETENTION**

- Retention of Talented Teachers
- Career of Choice
- Resign and Resume

Source: Author

From Figure 4.1, it can be seen that the three main themes that emerged from analysing the collected information were: 1) Finance, 2) Working Conditions, and 3) Retention. Furthermore, within each theme there arose sub-themes that guided and underlined the main themes. Under Theme 1 (Finance), three sub-themes emerged, namely financial debt, financial literacy, and tax harmonisation. The second theme (Working Conditions) elicited two sub-themes, namely workload and learner discipline. The third theme (Retention) indicated three sub-themes, namely retention of talented teachers, career of choice, and resign and resume. Each theme, along with its related sub-themes, are explored in more detail in the next sub-sections.

4.4.1 Theme 1: Finance

As can be seen from Figure 4.1, in answering the question related to the main reason for participants' voluntary resignation from teaching, financial challenges were most prominent, and was determined to be the main reason for voluntary teacher resignations. Under this theme, three sub-themes (i.e. financial debt, financial literacy,

and tax harmonisation) emerged. When asked about the reason for why participants resigned, four of the participants stated the following:

Myself, personally, it was – I had a very serious financial problem when I decided to resign because I heard people who resigned they got a lot of money then I felt maybe let me do this also so that I can be able to can… (**Participant 4**).

No, ne ke nale financial problems ka nore ke resign. My daughter anafetsa go tsena ko university. As a single parent, ke mo patalletse ngwaga wamathomo wa bo i-two it was hectic for me then I decided gore nkase kgone [No, I had financial problems and I said let me just resign. My daughter had just started university. As a single parent, I paid for the first year, and the second year it was hectic for me then I decided that I cannot] (**Participant 5**).

During my teaching period I have accumulated so many things and some of them they were influenced by the strikes that we had and the no work-no pay. So, I had to be a mother and father in the long-run because I was trying to make sure that my kids they grew up in an environment whereby they don't miss their other parent – not like spoiling them but just trying to get whatever they need. So, basically, it's all about the debts that I encountered (**Participant 6**).

Finance and lebaka ke gore neke bona hore nthwela e e mpalang ela nka e dira; go felletsa ntlu. Ka tseya chelete tsaka ka felletsa ntlu [Finance and the reason was that thing that I could not do, I can actually do it and finish off my house. I took my monies and finished my house] (**Participant 7**).

The presented responses prove that financial challenges were the majority of participants' main reason for resignation. However, this was not the case for all participants. Instead, one of the participants indicated:

Well, from my side…nna, I decided to go on business…. So, when I left teaching I had about 15 or 16 houses, including farms as well so that also added.... I never thought I'd stay long in the school, but the way things were done, you know, the way things were done it was somehow frustrating (**Participant 2**).

4.4.1.1 Financial Indebtedness

From the responses provided, financial challenges, as indicated by four of the participants, was a major determining factor for resignations before retirement age. It was found that while there may have been other contributing factors, finances were key. Four of the seven participants indicated that because of the debts they had accumulated over the years, getting access to their pension money seemed to be a good way to assist them in writing off some of their debts and paying for their children's university fees.

Teacher indebtedness and a lack of financial literacy were also primary factors that participants highlighted during the interviews, and warranted more attention by the researcher. For example, **Participant 5** remarked:

I didn't resign because I didn't enjoy teaching anymore. I resigned because I had debts….

The study's finding that finances can play an important role in the early retirement of teachers supports Mafukata and Mudau's (2016:2249) earlier research, which asserts that South African teachers may resign as a means to access their pensions so as to pay off any money they might owe to lenders. A further reason for financial strain was indicated by one of the participants, who claimed that societal pressure had contributed to her debt because teachers are expected to live a certain lifestyle. Therefore, the participant felt the need to live up to those societal standards, not taking into consideration that she was getting herself into more debt.

4.4.1.2 Financial Literacy

When asked if financial literacy was important, participants indicated that it was very needed, and that perhaps if they had had better financial literacy or training on how to manage their finances they would have made better (i.e. more informed) financial decisions. Although the participants did not express any regrets regarding the decisions they took to resign, they did note that it would have been better if they had training on money matters and how to manage their finances. As two participants noted:

I should think so. Nna, personally, I should think so. Maybe motho e nkabe sa le a saba reckless, in a way […maybe a person would not have been reckless, in a way] (**Participant 4**).

Ja, I think it will help but at the same time if you look at the people who are – I'm sorry to generalise – who resigned, they are older enough to know the difference to manage their funds (**Participant 6**).

4.4.1.3 Compensation and Tax Harmonisation of Retirement Fund

Compensation (i.e. remuneration), though less frequent, was also considered by the participants to be an important factor, as the concept has been a topical issue for many years. On the issue of teacher salaries, **Participant 3** indicated that her salary was insufficient:

…*the payment was not enough. You get paid today (month end), on the 6th you don't have money. The pay was not enough so I said, no let me resign and look for other ventures*.

Various participants noted that teachers' compensation remains a challenge and that teachers tend to search elsewhere for better paying jobs. Additionally, some teachers take up weekend jobs to supplement their income, which can include working as private tutors, drivers, or money lenders (Makhuzeni & Barkhuizen 2015:7). As addressed in Chapter Two, Section 2.5.3, conditions related to service/compensation can influence whether or not a teacher leaves the profession. For example, in their own study, Sutcher et al. (2016:6) indicate that salary influences teacher turnover decisions. The literature also clearly indicates that compensation plays an important role in motivating people to remain in a profession; and for teachers, it has been reported that they do not earn enough (UNESCO 2014:302). For example, Makhuzeni and Barkhuizen's (2015:7) research indicates that participants in their study deemed their salaries to be insufficient, with many asserting that they are unable to cover their living costs. Mafukata and Madau (2016:2249) also note that teachers often find it difficult to meet basic household needs due to their low salaries.

As noted previously, it has been asserted that South African teachers resigned in high numbers between 2013 and 2015 due to the imminent introduction of the aforementioned tax harmonisation of the retirement fund that took effect as of 1 March 2016 (National Treasury 2015a:4). The pension reform, as discussed in Chapter Two, Section 2.6.4, meant that Government employees, particularly members of the Government Employees Pension Fund, would be allowed one-third of their pensions to be paid out as a lump-sum retirement benefit, while the remaining two-thirds would be annuitised (National Treasury 2015a:5). When asked about the uniform taxation and annuitisation for retirement funds and teachers' resigning to get their pay-outs, one participant responded as follows:

Ebile, di union ne di le against…di resignation nako ya teng. Di union ne di sa battle go utlwa selo, o mo golo wa di union abolela a re go nale this thing ya gore matichere a resigner a nyaka go boya gape gape, agona gore o tlo boya gape, leska resigner [Unions were against resignations at the time. Unions did not want to hear anything; one of the executives said there was this thing about teachers resigning and wanting to come back, there is no coming back again, do not resign] (**Participant 7**).

In the same vein, **Participant 4** revealed:

At our workplace people will talk gore, 'be careful you might not get all your monies, or you might not get your pensions', especially when Zuma was in office. So, a lot was going on, kore that is also a reason ya gore we…I was afraid, and as a single parent you think, 'gore bjanong if I don't get that and then how am I going to survive with this problem ya finance?'

These participant sentiments reveal that rumours were circulating amongst teachers and that the unions were against teachers resigning prematurely. Two out of the seven participants indicated that the talks around tax harmonisation did not affect or influence their decision to leave teaching, nor did it affect their monies when they left. Furthermore, these two participants did not recall any negative discussions being held regarding the proposed tax harmonisation during the union meetings that they attended. Instead, the rumours came from individuals, not unions. **Participant 4** remarked:

Nna, I was and I'm still a member of SADTU. They never discussed anything negative pertaining the monies it will come from individuals but definitely there was never a day where a meeting was held to discuss that.

During the time of the tax harmonisation announcement, teachers and South African Police Service (SAPS) officials accounted for most Government employee resignations, with the Government Pensions Administration Authority (GPAA) reportedly receiving an average of 2 239 resignations each month, and a total of approximately 26 824 resignations for each financial year (Morar, in Matshediso 2015).

While Chapter Two, Section 2.6.4 discussed the breakdown of the noted tax harmonisation and the various concerns held by individuals regarding the related pay-out, it should be understood that the pension reform was not the actual cause of the high teacher turnover rate for the period 2013-2015 rather played the role of a catalyst that ultimately led to resignations (Mafukata & Mudau 2016:2249). Similarly, participants in this current study indicated that even though some teachers may have heard about the pension reform, it was not necessarily the main cause for their resignations. Instead, the main cause for resignations, as indicated by the participants in this current study, was due to financial challenges, and especially their own personal financial indebtedness. It was this financial concern that had led to participants' desire to access their pensions.

The next section discusses Theme 2 (Working Conditions), along with its related sub-themes.

4.4.2 Theme 2: Working Conditions

Although finance was found to be the strongest determiner of resignation for the participants, working conditions, to a lesser degree, also contributed to some teacher resignations. In this theme, working conditions were characterised and underlined by the sub-themes of workload and learner discipline. Participants asserted that working conditions is a challenge for teachers, and learner (mis)behaviour also interferes with instructional time, thereby adding to teachers' workloads. Furthermore, participants indicated that teachers often tend to focus more attention on disciplining learners as

opposed to actually teaching. This lack of teaching time, in turn, negatively affects teachers' workload.

4.4.2.1 Workload

When asked about the workload of teachers, participants stated:

There's a lot of paperwork of which you must do at the end of the day and then there are learners at the same time who are waiting. And then there's this thing again workload, ne and then a lot of paperwork ne, and then number two it's ATP (Annual Teaching Plan) (**Participant 1**).

…a lot of paperwork. A lot of paperwork, really a lot of paperwork. Administration work, that's too much. It was really too much (**Participant 2**).

As discussed in [Chapter Two, Section 2.5.2](#), poor working conditions offer a challenge for teachers and hinder their ability to teach effectively (see Garcia & Weiss 2019:3-4; Geiger & Pivovarova 2018:608-609; Marais 2016:2). Additionally, participants in this study indicated that teachers must manage a lot of "paperwork" (i.e. administrative work). In a study conducted in Australia with former teachers, participants cited heavy workload as the main contributing factor to their resignations, but seldom indicated financial compensation to be a contributor (Shine 2015:507). Similarly, in discussing workload, a study by Mafukata and Mudau (2016:2247) further notes excessive workload as one of the major contributing factors of teacher resignations. These authors assert that their participating teachers often found it very difficult to cope with their workloads since, aside from having to perform teaching duties, they were burdened with excessive administrative tasks that included activities like marking papers, completing CASS [continuous assessment] mark sheets, and attending teaching workshops.

Participant 3 highlighted:

…at my school I was the only teacher who teaches isiZulu from Grade 8 to 12….

Taking this statement into consideration, it would mean that this particular participant was a single teacher who taught five different grades across two different phases. To put this into perspective, according to Motshekga (2012), an ordinary public secondary

school in South Africa has a learner-to-teacher ratio of 35:1. Thus, if one grade has three isiZulu classes with an average of 35 learners per class, this means that the teacher would be responsible for 525 learners. This raises questions regarding equity in the division of work; the marking of assessments; learner feedback and instructional time, especially in respect to learners who are slower than the rest; and the timeous submission of marks (Mophosho 2014:88).

As discussed in Chapter One, Section 1.2, under Background and Rationale, teacher workload has been a challenge in South Africa for many years. Indeed, the task team that consolidated a report in 2009 for the Minister of Basic Education highlighted four main concerns related to the NCS at the time, one of which was related to teachers being overburdened with administration (DBE 2009:8). Even with the introduction of the improved CAPS curriculum, teachers are still overloaded with written work and having to create teaching aids for their learners (du Plessis & Marais 2015:10). This continued work overload was supported by **Participant 1**, who said:

The Department of Education needs to make sure that teachers are not like piled up with administrative work than interacting with learners. That's the challenge I've seen, and we tend to be submissive in submitting to whatever the department wants…. What about the child because, at the end of the day, the contact time with the child becomes minimum due to paperwork?

Additionally, Mampane (2012:76) posits that, in practice, teachers only spend between 43-46% of their work time actually teaching, yet the national policy dictates that teachers conduct actual teaching for closer to 64-79% in their work time.

Participants further noted that teachers are expected to teach in accordance with the ATP, which provides dates and timeframes indicating when a teacher should be done teaching a chapter or theme, as well as details on content to be taught and activities and resources to be used. Some participants posited that it is the teacher's responsibility to constantly complete the ATP and follow it diligently, irrespective of whether learners understand or have grasped the main concepts of a given chapter or theme. As **Participant 1** stated:

ATP is not about learners it's about covering the ATP. To cover, it's not maybe about learners understanding. Whether they understand, or they don't understand.

The Western Cape Government of Education (2013:i) describes the ATP as a framework to aid teachers in sequencing and pacing their lessons and assessments for each term over the course of the four phase years.

4.4.2.2 Learner Discipline

As discussed in the opening paragraph of , working conditions are characterised by workload and learner discipline. Regarding learner discipline, participants had the following to say:

…the students getting out of order. That was, ay that one. They were uncontrollable; you can't discipline them anymore. They'll tell you whatever they want to tell you; they'll answer you the way they want and then they'll tell you they've got the rights… (**Participant 3**).

Discipline, it frustrates us because we are coming from the era whereby we were spanked if ever we were ever not disciplined but our kids presently they know their rights. Not only their rights – they don't know their responsibilities – so it comes as a challenge for us to implement their responsibility to them or making them [know]… (**Participant 6**).

These participant claims are supported by reports about increased levels of various forms of violence taking place in South African schools (Ngidi 2018:1). The lack of parental involvement in disciplining children has also been noted to impact how learners behave at school (Mosekoameng 2010:16). Some participants expressed that doing away with corporal punishment in schools had given learners authority over teachers:

I believe if the government can bring back the corporal punishment. I don't know whether they will be able to do that but ay ay ay, our kids without corporal punishment really is not on (**Participant 3**).

…the discipline part also – it frustrates us because we no longer can discipline our kids the way we used to. Because, nna, I entered the teaching fraternity long before they stopped this corporal punishment, ja (**Participant 4**).

Section 10(1) of the South African Schools Act (Republic of South Africa [RSA] 1996) strictly provides that no school or school personnel may administer corporal punishment to any learner. As a result of this Act, teachers discovered to be using corporal punishment may be found guilty of an offence; instead, teachers are now encouraged to use "corrective measures" to discipline learners, such as temporary withdrawal from class, counselling, manual work, and suspension (Onyango, Raburu & Aloka 2016:528). Findings indicate, however, that teachers are not certain on how to discipline learners while also adhering to legislation such as Constitution of the RSA, the South African Schools Act, and the SACE Act that details human rights principles that teachers should not infringe upon (Segalo & Rambuda 2018:3).

As **Participant 5** noted:

Discipline. Bare bana resaba betha. Agona di strategies or di methods tse ba tlileng gore botsa ngwana ha ira byana, o irelang [They say we should not hit children, but there are no strategies or methods that they brought to tell us how to deal with children when they misbehave].

Thus, in doing away with corporal punishment, **Participant 5** suggests that teachers were not given alternatives on how to discipline learners. When asked if their school principals had provided strategies on how to handle learners that misbehave, participants indicated that the issue of discipline was beyond school principals. Participants also revealed that teachers needed to use their own discretion to determine how best to discipline learners; however, the method(s) chosen needed to fall within the confines of the law:

My kids [learners] *I discipline wherever but not using a stick. I discipline ko re I look, for different forms of punishment. Sometimes the others are so difficult these kids, they are so difficult that some of them will refuse* (**Participant 4**).

There is some evidence that current disciplinary issues in schools may be attributed to the disciplinary void that was left upon the abolition of corporal punishment in schools (Naong 2007:283, in Marais & Meier 2010:41). **Participant 3** confirmed this sentiment by expressing that

…even if you punish them, the punishment to them it's a way of playing. When you say, 'go and clean the toilet', it seems you tell them to go and play in the toilets. They didn't feel that punishment that way and then they said we must punish them after school.

The issue of a lack of discipline and the inability of teachers to enforce discipline in a classroom has led to the security and protection of teachers being compromised on school premises (Segalo & Rambuda 2018:4). Reyneke (2011:135) states that despite the use of punitive measures, maintaining discipline is becoming an increasing problem in South African schools. Anecdotal news reports in 2019 from sources such as News 24, EYEWITNESS News, eNCA, Twitter, and Facebook all reveal that teachers and learners are often beaten or killed by (other) learners. For example, Khumalo (2019:4) provides a chronological order of recorded severe and violent occurrences from January to June 2019, and indicates that these recorded occurrences took place across four different provinces, namely the North West, Gauteng, Limpopo, and the Eastern Cape.

It should be noted that information collected in 2016 regarding school-based violence did not show an increase in school-based violence in recent years; however, while such instances remained stable, they were still high (Grobler 2019). Mampane (2012:78) previously postulated that the complete lack of security measures in the vast majority of South African schools has led to teachers becoming increasingly vulnerable to both learner-based and community-based violence enacted on or near school property. For example, the author highlights how, due to the absolute prevalence of learner-on-teacher violence in schools, such cases no longer garner much, if any, media attention (Mampane 2012:78).

In response to the challenges and crimes happening at schools, the DBE has applied various frameworks and guidelines to address the issue of school-based violence. Some of the documents include, but are not limited, to: the *National School Safety Framework*, which is a management tool that empowers relevant stakeholders in understanding their responsibilities concerning school safety; the *National Strategy for the Prevention and Management of Alcohol and Drug Use amongst Learners in Schools*; the *Regulations for Safety Measures at all Public Schools*; and the *Guidelines for the Prevention and Management of Sexual Violence and Harassment.*

Participant 2 asserted that a lack of parental involvement also seemed to fuel poor learner behaviour, because learners who were aware that their parents did not play an active role in their learning or what happens at school were more likely to misbehave and disrespect teachers and fellow learners. It has further been argued that a lack of proper infrastructure, which can result in classrooms becoming overcrowded due to a lack of adequate teaching facilities, as well as poor parental involvement can significantly contribute to the noted factor of poor working conditions, which, ultimately, can result in teacher shortages in South Africa (Maphalala & Mpofu 2019:para 14).

When asked about parental involvement, an illustrative statement from **Participant 5** was presented:

Mm, the parent comes but if you complain with the discipline – you write a letter to the parent, the parent they'll also don't help. They don't come.

Participant 2 was of the view that

…*parental involvement can play a much* [bigger] *role because really, the frustration teachers have is, you will call a parent asatle* [doesn't come]*, o batla ho mmotsa ka* [you want to tell them] *the progress of his or her child but still doesn't come.*

Authors, van Tonder and Williams (2009:8), have indicated that a lack of parental involvement, as well as parents' verbal abuse towards teachers, can negatively affect educators' work experience. Additionally, some educators have noted that parents often presume that teachers should take on the role of parenting, as well as teaching, the children in their classes (van Tonder & Williams 2009:8). The issue with learner ill-discipline manifests in various ways, including vandalism, truancy, smoking, disobedience, intimidation, delinquency, murder, assault, theft, and rape; all of which contribute to poor working conditions for teachers (Marais & Meier 2010:41).

Such findings are a testament to other anecdotal reports detailing how teachers and/or fellow learners are being murdered, bullied, raped, and/or subjected to various other forms of school-based violence across South African schools (e.g. Chetty 2019; Maphanga 2020; Naidu 2019). Wolhuter and Oosthuizen (2003:454, in Marais & Meier 2010:47) state that according to learners, poor parental involvement is the greatest

reason for children's poor discipline in school. It should be noted that factors related to the family are viewed as being part of an external system; yet a lack of parental involvement exacerbates the situation in which teachers often find themselves with regard to ill-disciplined learners (Segalo & Rambuda 2018:5).

The next theme, Retention, is discussed in the following section and pertains to ways in which schools might retain talented teachers.

4.4.3 Theme 3: Retention

There are certain strategies that contribute positively to employee retention, such as pay, training and development, and managing expectations (Torrington, Hall, Taylor & Atkinson 2011, in Dorasamy 2014:207-208). This theme of Retention is guided by three sub-themes, namely talent retention, career of choice, and resign and resume. For this theme, participants shared their views related to teacher retention and what they believed Government could have done to retain them. These insights may prove important, since participants asserted that effective retention strategies are currently needed to enable Government to retain talented teachers.

4.4.3.1 Retention of Talented Teachers

When asked if there was anything that the employer (i.e. the DBE) or school principal could have done to encourage them to stay, participants shared the following:

No, the principal did try to talk to me but hey, I felt that hey with these kids I'm enough now (**Participant 3**).

No, as I said, one of the things that were discouraging: you see people that are underqualified being given positions which you think you will fit better and you can do better to what they're doing and so on. Some of those things were somewhat discouraging (**Participant 2**).

However, there were participants who held a different viewpoint:

Ja, nna, [me] *I thought – I think they should have allowed us to get some loans from our pensions…* (**Participant 4**).

Ja, ankere neba bona, by the time nna ke resign, neba bona batho ba ba ntshi ba resign. Nkene ba re stopile ba re, 'okay ge, tseyang 50%', because ne nkase mind go tsaya that 50%. I knew gore ka 50% ne ketlo dira dilo tse diintshi [Yes, they could see that by the time I resigned a lot of people had resigned. They could have stopped us by saying 'okay take 50%', I would not mind taking 50%. I knew that with the 50% I was going to do a lot of things] (**Participant 5**).

I wish if ever the government could have released partial amount of our pension fund, we wouldn't find ourselves in so much debt because at the end of the day it was like I'm having this money and I cannot afford this and this and like I'm starting to struggle and it affects my work so I opted – I cannot say 'we' – I opted to resign because of if ever they said, 'Okay, you can withdraw part of your money and make sure that you settle your debts', I wouldn't have resigned (**Participant 6**).

Ja, nkene gwa kgonahala nkene bare adimile tsona di chelete tse. Akitsi ba re adime yang mara maybe bamo pension'eng, oka access'a maybe one-third or something – kera fela, because e neise gore ha resa nyaka mmereko, enele gore o nyaka chelete o dire ntho yeo pallang [Yes, if possible they should have borrowed us those monies (pensions). I do not know how, but maybe from your pension be able to access one-third or something because it's not that we did not want to work. It is because you want money to do that thing that you are unable to do] (**Participant 7**).

Talent retention involves motivating talented employees to keep working at their current place of employment by creating an environment where they feel valued, and where their needs are met (Bailey, Mankin, Kelliher & Garavan 2018:215). From the responses provided by the study participants, it is clear that some teachers felt that there was absolutely nothing that the government could have done to keep them in the profession. However, four out of the seven participants alluded to the fact that Government could have allowed them to access their pension funds early in order to settle some of their debts and do things that they were unable to do with their general salary. Such sentiments, again, illuminate the theme of finances; specifically highlighting the challenge of teachers being indebted and attempting to access their pensions to settle their debts.

When taking the interviewed participants' work demographics into account (Table 4.1), it is clear that they all had many years of teaching experience and could be consider valuable to the profession. Retention forms part of talent management, and talent retention involves establishing strategies to retain talented employees (Iles & Preece 2016:252). Pitsoe (2013:317) proposed that the attraction and retention policies in South Africa should be viewed through the lens of the incentive theory of motivation, which involves four options, including: 1) higher salaries, 2) differentiated salaries, 3) smaller classes, and 4) mentoring. Similarly, Mason and Matas (2015:58) argue that the attrition and retention of Australian teachers is a complex phenomenon with numerous variables at play. These authors, thus, proposed a four-capital theoretical model where retention is at the intersection, as can be seen in Figure 4.2.

Figure 4.2: 13 Themes Impacting on Teacher Attrition or Retention and Their Relationship to Four Established Theories of Non-Economic Capital
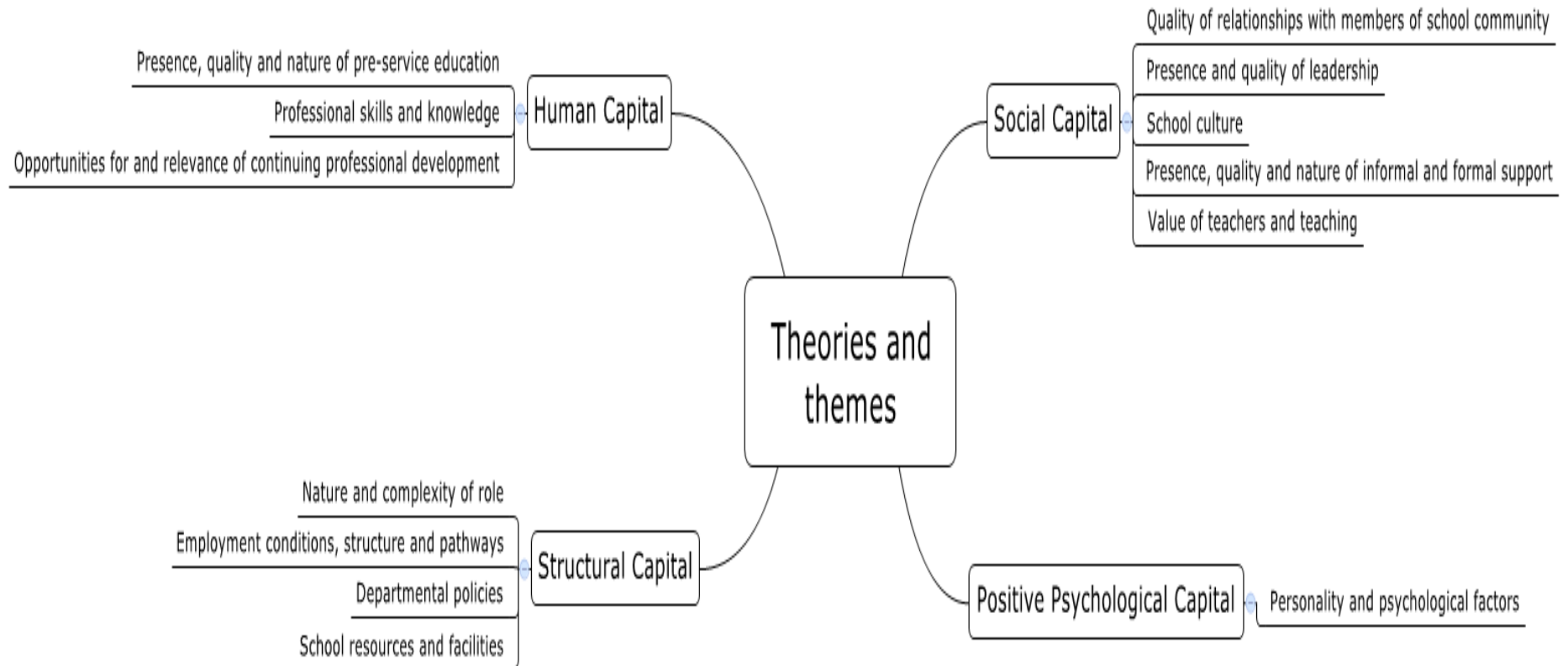
Source: Mason and Matas (2015:55)

From Figure 4.2, it can be seen that the four-capital theoretical model is holistic and encompasses variables such as human, social, structural, and positive psychological capital. The human capital aspect pays attention to the skills, experiences, and knowledge that creates value for an individual. Social capital involves an individual's networks and interpersonal relationships. For teachers, such capital could include relationships with learners, colleagues, school management, and even the practice of teaching itself (Mason & Matas 2015:56). Structural capital, as presented in Figure 4.2, includes the nature and role of teachers; employment conditions and pathways; policies that govern teachers; as well as school infrastructure, resources, and facilities. Positive psychological capital is concerned with the developmental state of individuals, which includes variables that are internal to individuals, such as high self-efficacy, optimism, and intrinsic motivation (Mason & Matas 2015:58).

4.4.3.2 Career of Choice

In order to become an employer of choice for future employees, the GDE currently conducts an exit interview survey that employees are encouraged to complete when they leave. The survey covers areas such as job satisfaction and work distribution, legal compliance, strategic leadership and guidance, resources, employee interrelations, compliance with occupational health and safety requirements, and general comments (GDE n.d.). This survey offers exiting employees a space to provide suggestions for how to improve the Department, the school work environment, and general service delivery in the future. In the survey, a teacher who has resigned or plans on leaving the Department is encouraged to rate his or her level of satisfaction from 1 to 5, with 1 being "never/poor/ineffective" and 5 being "extensive/good/very effective". The Department utilises this survey to inform its retention strategies and improve on areas where lack is identified (GDE n.d.).

In a further effort to attract young people to the teaching profession, the DBE has employed a strategy in a form of a bursary known as the Funza Lushaka Bursary Scheme, which is awarded to students who take up teaching as a profession (DBE 2019c). According to the DBE (2019c), the bursary is a programme that offers financing for full qualification in and encourages young people to enter the teaching profession as a means to meet national education interests.

However, despite this initiative, according to da Silva (2019:para 4) the number of trained teachers entering the profession has been steadily decreasing since 2013, with Global Education Monitory Report statistics indicating that only 85% of all teachers practicing in the profession in 2017 had been trained.

The author further purports that teaching is often viewed as a "thankless" profession where employees are required to work under increasingly challenging conditions and, as a result, is no longer seen by the majority of people as a desirable profession (da Silva 2019:para 13). Da Silva's (2019) statements corroborate what was discussed in [Chapter Two, Section 2.6.4](#) regarding how teaching is no longer a career of choice, but is rather seen as a stepping stone to other more "ideal" careers for young people (see Pitsoe 2013:316).

In order to determine whether or not teaching was, indeed, a career of choice for this study's participants, the participants where asked why they chose teaching. Their responses were as follows:

At first, I didn't like teaching. I wanted to do something else but because of the situation at home. I wanted to do CA (Chartered Accountant) so I went there to Vista for a month and two weeks but that time we were not exposed to bursaries and financially we were not okay and then now we were supposed to be the two of us and my father couldn't afford so that's where my father had to tell me to stop Vista and go to join my sister at Indebo College (teachers college). That's what he can afford so that's how I got into teaching and then I did well… (**Participant 1**).

That's a really interesting one. I choose teaching because there was no where I could go due to financial constraints (**Participant 2**).

Enese line yaka, to be honest. Ne ke rata office work ebele gore keya Setlogelo. ka utlwa ba re ngwaga o latellang go buliwa skolo ko East Lynn, bare ke Kosa. Ka founa maar ke founela bona ba ma matric. Ga ke founa bare 'space galore', aowa sommar kaba nyakela space lenna go ntate kamo tlhalosetsa gore ke bone gore kono teach'a [It was not in my line, to be honest. I loved office work and I went to Setlogelo (college). I heard that the following year a school will be opened in East Lynn, called Kosa. I called on behalf of those who were doing matric (family members), when I called I was

told there is 'space galore', I searched for space for them and myself and I explained to my husband that I might as well do teaching] (**Participant 7**).

Some participants, however, held a different view on why they went into teaching:

I choose teaching so that I can help other children that are suffering because I love speaking with the children. That was my hobby, so I told myself that I want to be a teacher and help these upcoming children (**Participant 3**).

For the love of education and the growth of our country (**Participant 6**).

As a means of establishing effective recruitment strategies, the International Task Force on Teachers for EFA, along with UNESCO entities and other external partners of the International Task Force on Teachers for EFA developed the *Teacher Policy Development Guide*, which sought to help countries develop evidence-based national teacher policies (UNESCO 2015:21).

As established previously, teacher turnover and the failure to retain talented teachers has undesirable effects on learner achievement (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond 2017:1). **Participant 3** remarked on the impact that her resignation had on learners by stating:

…I was the only teacher who teaches isiZulu from Grade 8 to Grade 12, so when I leave the children stayed for 6 months without having a teacher.

Papay, Bacher-Hicks, Page, and Marinell (2017:439) postulate that when schools or related bodies are unsuccessful in retaining good-quality teachers, they are at higher risk of decreasing students' learning standards, especially when such teachers leave the profession. Furthermore, Mafora (2013:238) denotes that despite principals' function as human resource managers, they do not currently have any power to, nor does current policy dictate that they should, address or mitigate teacher attrition or implement any kind of retention strategies at the profession's ground-level.

Turnover effects, as discussed in Chapter Two, Section 2.7, highlight the negative impact that teacher turnover has on learners, especially if a teacher leaves mid-year (Xaba 2003:288). Furthermore, although a teacher can be replaced, the expertise of that exiting teacher is more difficult to replace (Makhuzeni & Barkhuizen 2015:1).

4.4.3.3 Resign and Resume

During the interviews, participants indicated that "resign and resume" is an informal term given to teachers who resign from the profession and then resume teaching after a few months or years. In this study, the aim was to interview teachers who had resigned from teaching completely; however, by the time the interviews were conducted, five out of the seven participants had resumed their duties as teachers, again within the Tshwane South District. As a result, this particular resign and resume factor was ultimately included in the study. The demographical information of the interviewed teachers who fell into the resign and resume category in this study indicated that 1) these teachers were between the ages of 40-50 years old (i.e. younger than retirement age), 2) they taught primary or secondary school, and 3) by the time of their resignation, one participant had 19 years and the other four had 20 years or more teaching experience. These participants' reasons for their resignations before retirement age have already been well captured under Theme 1 and Theme 2, respectively. Their reasons for resuming or returning to the same profession are, however, highlighted as follows:

I didn't resign because I didn't enjoy teaching anymore. I resign because of the debts so I considered my age and I said, I want to go back to teaching because this is the love of my life (**Participant 6**).

…I didn't resign because I didn't love my work. I love my work. The resigning part wasn't about 'I don't love my work'…. I would be a waste at home and so many learners will be also wasted (**Participant 1**).

When asked if they knew at the time of their resignation that they had intentions of coming back to teaching, one participant remarked:

Ja, and lebaka ke gore yena friend yo a resign'ileng, ne setse ebile ba mo tshepisitse go boya [Yes, and the reason is that my friend who resigned was already promised to come back] (**Participant 7**).

The Minister of Basic Education, Angie Motshekga, as quoted in the *Mail & Guardian*, addressed the issue of resign and resume teachers by stating that teachers who

resigned as a means to access their pensions should not be reappointed to teaching positions unless there are very sound reasons for doing so (Nkosi 2015:para 4).

The Minister also emphasised that these teachers should be last in line for consideration when filling teaching posts in public schools (Nkosi 2015:para 3). In order to solidify this position on resign and resume teachers, guidelines for the reappointment of teachers resigning and re-entering the system were developed at the end of 2014 (DBE 2014). The main purpose of these guidelines is to

> … ovide PEDs with guidelines and principles that can be used to standardise their management of the reappointment of teachers who had opted to leave the profession as a means of accessing their pensions (DBE 2014). Specifically, these guidelines aim to assist PEDs in curbing resign and resume practices (DBE 2014).

These steps are an indication that Government was, and still is, aware that teachers resigned in order to access their pensions only to re-enter the system after some time.

When asked whether the resign and resume idea was calculated, two participants explained that it was. One went on to explain:

I didn't stay at home. I didn't because I resigned at the end of the year December and the beginning of the year there was a post, a vacant one for PL1 then I stepped in (**Participant 6**).

This response is an indication that some teachers calculated and planned to resign and come back to the system after a few months or years. However, the statistical number of resign and resume teachers in the Tshwane South District could not be confirmed. This lack of statistical information poses a challenge in determining the number of teachers that resigned completely from the profession versus teachers that resigned and resumed teaching again.

Arguably, resign and resume teachers do not count as lost human capital for the profession, and it does not necessarily require a district to undertake costly recruitment efforts (Papay et al. 2017:438). However, the resignation of teachers still disrupts cohesion and learner performance, especially if the exiting teachers are not replaced

immediately (Mkhondo 2016:33). Furthermore, teacher turnover has financial implications, where more money has to be allocated towards recruitment in order to fill a vacant post (Pitsoe 2013:315)

4.5 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, a discussion was presented pertaining to the information collected through the in-depth, semi-structured interviews of seven participants who had previously taught in the Tshwane South District and who had retired from teaching during the period 2013-2015. A brief explanation of the researcher's information collection experience was provided, followed by a presentation of the interpretations according to the themes and sub-themes that emerged from the interviews with participants and as guided by the main research question. These themes and sub-themes were presented through participants' own words, as they expressed their realities related to teacher turnover and explained some of the reasons that led them to resign before retirement age.

In interpreting the collected information, some material from previous literature was incorporated to highlight similar or paradoxical points. A key finding presented in this chapter was that the majority of interviewees claimed to have resigned voluntarily before retirement age due to experiencing financial challenges. Indeed, four out of the seven participants cited that they had resigned from teaching as a means of accessing their pensions, which they aimed to use to pay off accumulated debts.

The next chapter is the concluding chapter of this study. The chapter provides the summary, conclusions, and recommendations related to this study and the findings presented in Chapter Four.

CHAPTER FIVE
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The preceding chapter presented an analysis and interpretation of the findings derived from the information collected from face-to-face, semi-structured interviews with selected participants. Emerging themes and sub-themes, as per participant responses, were analysed and interpreted with the support of relevant literature such as books, journal articles, and governmental documents. Chapter Four established that some of the participating teachers resigned due to financial challenges, followed by working conditions, which were characterised by workload and learner discipline.

This research was undertaken to explore some of the factors that led Tshwane South District teachers to voluntarily resign from their positions before retirement age during the period 2013-2015.

Supporting research questions that formed part of this research included:

1. What is the nature of the concept "turnover"?
2. What are some of the causes and reasons that teachers provide for resigning from teaching?
3. How can the turnover of teachers be prevented?

This chapter provides a research summary, followed by a summation of information in line with the research questions in order to show that all questions posed in Chapter One, Section 1.4 were answered. A conclusion for the whole study is then provided, which highlights whether or not the research (along with the literature and methodology, design, and methods) addressed the main objective delineated in Chapter One, Section 1.4. Thereafter, the chapter presents a set of recommendations for possible actions to be taken by identified stakeholders, as well as areas for future research.

5.2 RESEARCH SUMMARY

The first chapter presented in this dissertation performed the function of an introduction, which presented the background and rationale of the study and explained

the study's significance in addressing the DBE's concerns regarding increased teacher resignations. The chapter also noted how this study could contribute to the ongoing body of research regarding teacher turnover. Subsequently, the problem statement, research questions, and research objectives were presented. A brief description of the research methodology, design, and methods that were used to arrive at the findings was also provided. The referencing process used in this study was then discussed, along with the scope of the research, which identified the study's geographical and time dimensions (i.e. Tshwane South District for the period 2013-2015). The limitations of the study noted in this first chapter included the refusal of some initial participants to participate after first agreeing to be part of the study, as well as a general reluctance by potential participants to participate in the study; a small sample selection size; and access to participants. The chapter also provided definitions of key terms used throughout the study, as well as an outline of chapters and a summary of Chapter One.

Chapter Two presented the literature review. The importance of this particular chapter was to position the study in the context of what previous authors have written regarding teacher turnover. Authors such as Tett and Meyer (1993), Griffeth and Hom (2001), Ingersoll (2007), the SACE (2010), Masoga (2013), Dorasamy (2014), and Carver-Thomas and Darling-Hammond (2017) were consulted.

By referring to such authors, the literature review chapter focussed on defining turnover and providing the different dimensions of the concept, which ultimately led to a definition of turnover as applied in this study. Accordingly, it was determined that turnover, as understood in this study, would refer to the voluntary resignation of employees from organisations before their retirement age. A discussion regarding some push factors, which included age and experience; working conditions; remuneration/conditions of service; as well as job satisfaction and commitment, that led teachers to resign prematurely was provided. The chapter also presented different perspectives on teacher turnover from various countries, with a prominent focus on the USA, Australia, Malawi, and South Africa. Chapter Two concluded by addressing the effects of teacher turnover on stakeholders. Specifically, the chapter highlighted how when teachers leave somewhere within an academic year, learners suffer most (Donley et al. 2019:6).

The third chapter explained the research methodology, design, and methods utilised in this study. The justification for positioning this study within an interpretivist paradigm was provided, along with the explanation for the choice of the particular research methodology. The chapter indicated how the researcher ascribed to the interpretivist paradigm in order to understand the studied phenomenon from a humanistic perspective and to allow for human interaction between the researcher and participants.

Chapter Three also provided details regarding the participant selection strategy, selection size, and techniques used for the collection of information. The face-to-face, semi-structured interviews allowed participants to express their reasons for resigning during the 2013-2015 period. Similarly, the chosen information collection method provided the researcher with an opportunity to probe deeper and gain rich information from each participant during the interviews while also making notes regarding participants' body language and facial expressions. Trustworthiness was used as a research criterion, and ethical considerations, storage, retention, and the annihilation of collected information were also taken into account and discussed in detail in this chapter.

The fourth chapter presented an analysis and interpretation of the findings. Having used semi-structured interviews, the researcher was able to provide insights into the information collection experience. Additionally, the chapter presented the collected information in terms of emerging themes and sub-themes, namely 1) Finances (including financial indebtedness, financial literacy, and the tax harmonisation of retirement funds); 2) Working Conditions (including workload and learner discipline); and 3) Retention (including the retention of talented teachers, career of choice, and the practice of resign and resume). The identified themes and sub-themes were supported by verbatim responses from participants, and all interpretations were further supported by applying relevant literature.

Chapter Four also presented information as a means of answering the main research question regarding some of the reasons that led to voluntary teacher turnover in the Tshwane South District during the period 2013-2015. In addressing this main research problem, the chapter offered the understanding that one of the main reasons participants presented for why some teachers resigned during this period was to

access their pensions as a means of paying off debts that they had accumulated over the years. In addition, heavy workloads and poor learner discipline were other key reasons noted for why teachers resigned prematurely.

This fifth and final chapter provides a research summary, along with a summary of the information in line with the research questions, as explained in the following section. This information is followed by the study's conclusions drawn from the findings. The chapter concludes by offering recommendations based on the study's findings.

5.3 SUMMARY OF INFORMATION IN LINE WITH RESEARCH QUESTIONS

As highlighted in Chapter One, Section 1.3.1, the main research question that guided this study was *What are the intricacies of some of the factors that led to the turnover of Tshwane South District teachers who resigned voluntarily before retirement age during the period 2013-2015?*

Based on the empirical information gathered through face-to-face, semi-structured interviews, key outcomes in line with the following research questions were addressed.

- **Research Question 1: What is the nature of the concept "turnover"?**

The first research question was posed in order to understand the nature of turnover. The study found, in Chapter Two, Section 2.3, that turnover is a well-researched phenomenon across various disciplines, including Psychology, Sociology, Management, and Economics. Turnover, as a term, has multiple dimensions; not only does it involve the movement of employees within the labour market, but it can also relate to the number of employees that leave an organisation and who are, ultimately, replaced (Burgess 1998:6). This current study's literature review highlighted that turnover can be voluntary or involuntary (Ongori 2007:050). Voluntary turnover can be either functional or dysfunctional, with dysfunctional turnover consisting of either avoidable or unavoidable turnover (Director et al. 2013:4; Jex & Britt 2008:179; Rothwell 2010:242). This study focussed specifically on voluntary turnover, which is turnover that is initiated by an employee. Having understood the various dimensions of turnover, the researcher then defined turnover for this study as the voluntary resignation of employees from an organisation before retirement age.

It was explained in Chapter Two that there are various push factors, "drivers", or antecedents of turnover (Walker & Avant 2005:173), including, but not limited to, factors such as low job satisfaction, low commitment, or labour market reforms (Abdali 2011:5; Grissom et al. 2012:651; Iqbal 2010:276; Rehman 2012:84). Furthermore, age, tenure, and education were found to be some of the key demographics associated with turnover and which play a role in an employee's decision to either leave or remain in an organisation (Rehman 2012:84).

- **Research Question 2: What are some of the causes and reasons that teachers provide for resigning from teaching?**

Using empirical methods and not generalising the study's findings to the entire teacher population of Tshwane South District, the study found that the main reason for the resignation of teachers before retirement age was due to financial challenges. As determined by the information gathered from participants through face-to-face, semi-structured interviews, it was established that the selected participant teachers had mostly resigned because they required debt relief. By resigning, they were able to access their pensions which, in turn, allowed them to pay off their debts. Participants expressed that their salaries were not sufficient to cover their living expenses; therefore, they accumulated debts over the years, which resulted in financial difficulties. Indeed, one participant in particular expressed that with the introduction of the 2015 Taxation Laws Amendment Bill, many deemed it better to resign and access their pension money in order to settle debts.

This study also found that teachers resigned due to the poor working conditions under which they and other teachers were (and still are) expected to teach. For this study, working conditions were characterised by workload and learner discipline. The interviewed teachers complained that the administrative work that they were subjected to interrupted valuable instructional time spent with learners. Learner discipline was also highlighted as a key factor that needed attention, because school-based violence was on the rise. Participants further felt that parents needed to be more involved in their children's learning and behaviour.

Another reason provided for teacher turnover was the absence of firm retention policies that should have been implemented as a means to avoid some of the

resignations. Possible strategies were also provided by participants based on what they believed Government could have used to retain them. The discussion on these strategies is provided in Section 5.5.

- **Research Question 3: How can the turnover of teachers be prevented?**

Participants asserted that Government should be proactive in terms of implementing retention policies that are effective for ensuring that talented teachers remain in the profession. Furthermore, in order to successfully achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030, particularly with regard to Goal 4: Quality Education, Government needs to address the current issue of teacher turnover and retention.

Participants indicated that there were, indeed, some things that their employer could have done to prevent them from resigning. For example, the participants noted that the turnover of teachers could potentially be prevented by addressing push factors such as low salaries, poor working conditions, and high workload. Participants also indicated that the employer and relevant policymakers should consider allowing teachers who have been in the profession for many years (i.e. 15 years or more) to borrow from their pensions, as this could enable teachers to settle their financial challenges while still remaining active in the profession. The participants further suggested offering more competitive salaries and other financial incentives to encourage teachers to remain in the profession. Additionally, the provision of financial training was presented as a potential means for aiding teachers to make better financial decisions.

The conclusions based on the study findings are presented next.

5.4 CONCLUSIONS

Teacher turnover is not a new phenomenon, as highlighted in Chapter Two. This study added to the extensive literature related to teacher turnover by exploring some of the reasons that led Tshwane South District teachers to voluntarily resign during the period 2013-2015. It was important for the researcher to answer the "what" question presented in Chapter One, Section 1.3.1, as while turnover has been widely researched in other fields, there has been no strong presence of information from

within the Public Administration and Management field addressing turnover, in general, or teacher turnover, specifically.

This qualitative study was undertaken in the Tshwane South District and made use of in-depth, semi-structured interviews with seven participants, all of whom had at least 15 years or more teaching experience. The study found that some of the main reasons for early retirement were due to financial challenges, as some teachers found themselves in debt and needed access to their pensions to settle their accounts. Some participants further highlighted working conditions as a challenge that needed attention. Specifically, participants noted issues around workload and learner discipline, with many referring to cases of school-based violence, where both teachers and learners have been victims, and how such violence has been gaining prominence in recent years. Additionally, with the voluntary resignation of Tshwane South District teachers during the period 2013-2015, many participants noted that they and others had resigned only to return to the profession after a few months or years; these teachers are colloquially referred to as resign and resume teachers.

While the study could not identify active retention strategies practiced by the Tshwane South District to ensure that Government retains good quality teachers, since no district officials could be gained for interviews, it could be concluded that this study still achieved its aim of exploring some of the factors that led Tshwane South District teachers to voluntarily resign before retirement age during the period 2013-2015. As discussed previously, reasons provided for resigning prematurely included financial issues, working conditions, and retention-related practices. The primary reason participants gave for their resignations was that they wished to gain access to their pension monies.

Findings from this study are consistent with other teacher turnover research, which found remuneration, workload, learner discipline, and pension reform to be some of the factors that impact on teachers' decision to resign. This indicates that the research related to teacher turnover conducted in this study's Tshwane South District holds similar findings to those of studies on the same topic conducted in other districts, which further highlights the significance and relevance of this current study and promotes ongoing discourse related to teacher turnover and the DBE.

Recommendations based on this current study's findings follow in the section.

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations present in this section are directed at the DBE, PEDs, and parents.

- **Department of Basic Education**

It is recommended that the DBE establish improved retention strategies that are practical, and which allow for the empowerment of school principals to retain teachers. The involvement of school principals in developing and implementing retention strategies could assist the DBE as the employer with ensuring that talented teachers are retained within the profession without breaking their service. As part of active retention strategies, DBE should formulate retention incentives as a means of retaining talented teachers who intend to leave the profession prematurely due to financial challenges. These incentives should especially focus on retaining those teachers with over 15 years of teaching experience so that schools do not lose such teachers' knowledge, since individuals with so many years of experience could prove to be assets to their schools.

Additionally, since participants highlighted financial strain as a reason for their retirement, the DBE could consider enabling teachers to borrow from their pensions as well as establishing a special tertiary bursary for children whose parents are teachers to remove some of that strain. A bursary for teachers' children is particularly necessary since such children do not qualify for the general National Student Financial Aid Scheme, yet some parents who are teachers are still unable to pay for tertiary education.

The provision of financial management training, not only for new entry teachers but for all teachers who might be interested in learning about managing their finances, should also be considered. Such training could afford the DBE with the opportunity to disseminate important information pertaining to finances and avoid issues of false information being circulated. This would, in turn, be beneficial in keeping teachers up-to-date with departmental considerations.

Findings further indicated that discipline in schools remains a problem. Therefore, the DBE should establish a practical policy for effective discipline methods that can be implemented in schools. As presented in Chapter Four, Section 4.4.2.2, Participant 5 stated that teachers were not given alternative strategies or methods on how to discipline learners. Therefore, teachers should be equipped with practical ways of disciplining their learners in the future. Although the DBE (2016) has created the *National School Safety Framework*, which serves as a management tool for school safety, disciplining learners is still a persistent challenge for teachers in practice.

This study also recommends that the DBE attempts to improve the working conditions of teachers so as to ensure that there is a balance between contact time with learners and administrative work for the Department. As highlighted by participants, teachers spend much of their time completing the ATP and not enough time teaching learners. Therefore, the DBE should ensure that teachers are provided with the required contact (teaching) hours, as determined by Government. However, the head of the school (i.e. the principal) should also be allowed to make some exceptions based on policy, as long as those exceptions do not compromise on contact time with learners. It is also the responsibility of the DBE and PEDs to ensure that workload in relation to class size is addressed by, amongst others, hiring more teachers as a means of lowering the current learner-to-teacher ratios in some schools (e.g. a school cannot have only one isiZulu teacher who is responsible for teaching all grades).

- **Parents**

Although the focus was not specifically on parents in this study, and recommendations related to these stakeholders may fall outside the initial scope of the study, it is necessary to highlight recommendations for parents since, through the process of information collection, participants clearly expressed that there was a lack of parental involvement in schools. Parental involvement should, therefore, be encouraged, as this, according to the study findings, could greatly assist teachers in ensuring that learners perform at their best. The active involvement of parents in activities organised by schools could potentially encourage positive learner behaviours and attitudes. Furthermore, parents should assist schools by disciplining their children at home and attending school meetings so that they know what is happening with their child at school. It is through attending meetings (especially when contacted directly by a

teacher or principal) that parents can become more aware of their child's behaviour and/or academic progress. This joint effort between both parents and schools could better ensure that learners do well academically.

The next, and final, section of this study details considerations for further research.

5.6 AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This study explored some significant factors that led to the turnover of Tshwane South District teachers who resigned voluntarily during the period 2013-2015. Limitations of this study included, firstly, the lack of a large sample size that would allow for generalisations to the entire population of Tshwane South District teachers. While a smaller number of participants may have limited this study, it should be noted that after interviewing the fifth participant, information became repetitive. Thus, although this limited sample may be seen as a limitation in that the research cannot be generalised to the broader population, it does not invalidate the findings of the study itself.

Secondly, the researcher could not secure interviews with Tshwane South District personnel (e.g. the District Director), which resulted in such interviews not occurring. Interviews with personnel from the district could have offered more information and insight into teacher turnover in the district. They could also have provided a management perspective on teacher turnover, which is now missing from this final study.

Thirdly, because the GDE's server burned down in 2018, thereby destroying some of their information, there was a lack of precise and current statistics regarding how many teachers resigned during the period 2013-2015 and from which schools. This proved to be a further limitation to this current study since such statistics could have provided clarity on the number of resign and resume teachers versus teachers who resigned completely from the profession. The statistics would also have served as additional proof that, indeed, teacher turnover is a serious challenge in the province as a whole, or at least within the Tshwane South District.

Based on the findings and noted limitations of this study, there is need for further research to:

- explore teacher turnover in Gauteng, using mixed methods and/or quantitative methods in order to yield rich information;

- determine best practices for South African schools based on what other countries have done with regard to effective learner discipline. For such research, researchers could study countries that rank high in school discipline so as to find potential ways of minimising or eradicating school-based violence in South African schools;

- identify motivation strategies to ensure that teachers remain in the profession for the duration of their careers, as well as to attract new and novice teachers to the profession; and

- establish the impact of resign and resume teachers on the education system in South Africa, as well as how this particular category of teacher affects employment rates.

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ANNEXURES

ANNEXURE 1: EDITING CERTIFICATE

To Whom It May Concern

This letter is to certify that I, Debby Kay Dewes, have edited Ms Mmatshepo Phuti Khanya's Master's dissertation, titled: *Voluntary Teacher Turnover in the Tshwane South District the Period between 2013-2015*.

Yours Sincerely,

D.K. Dewes

(Editor – English Hons. University of Pretoria)

ANNEXURE 2: GAUTENG DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION ETHICS CERTIFICATE

GAUTENG PROVINCE
Department: Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

8/4/4/1/2

GDE RESEARCH APPROVAL LETTER

Date:	31 October 2018
Validity of Research Approval:	11 February 2019 – 30 September 2019 2017/300A
Name of Researcher:	Khanya M.P
Address of Researcher:	22757 Segwete Str
	Mamelodi East
	Pretoria, 0122
Telephone Number:	012 429 6168 076 493 6913
Email address:	mskhanya@gmail.com
Research Topic:	Factors that led to the turnover of teachers who resigned voluntarily from the profession in the period 2012-2015 in one Tshwane South District.
Type of Degree:	Master's in Public Administration
Number and type of schools:	One District
District/s/HO	Tshwane South

Re: Approval in Respect of Request to Conduct Research

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

31/10/2018

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

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

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

Kind regards

Mr Gumani Mukatuni
Acting CES: Education Research and Knowledge Management

DATE: 31|10|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

ANNEXURE 3: TSHWANE SOUTH DISTRICT ETHICS CERTIFICATE

GAUTENG PROVINCE
Department: Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Enquiries: Lucky Rapudi
Tel: (012) 401 6317
Fax: 0866 522 368
Email: Lucky.Rapudi@gauteng.gov.za

TO: **The Deputy Director**
Transversal Human Resources Services
TS District Office

FROM: **Mrs. Hilda Kekana**
District Director: Tshwane South

DATE: 2nd July 2019

SUBJECT : **PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT A**
DISTRICT OFFICE

Dear Sir/ Madam

Permission is hereby granted to **M.P. Khanya** to conduct an academic research in your sub-directorate.

The researcher shall make arrangements for research with the sub-directorate management. The relevant units staff are requested to co-operate with and give support to the researcher. Research findings and recommendations are critical for policy review in public education sector.

The researcher may however not disrupt district office operations in the course of research. The research may only take place between the months of February and September. Attached are other conditions to be observed by the researcher.

The district may request for the research outcome presentation directly from the researcher or obtain research document from Research & Knowledge Management Directorate at GDE Head Office.

Regards

Mrs H.E. Kekana
District Director: Tshwane South
Date: 04/07/2019.

Making education a societal priority

Office of the District Director: Tshwane South
(Mamelodi/Eersterust/Pretoria East/Pretoria South/Atteridgeville/Laudium)
President Towers building, 265 Pretorius Street, Pretoria, 0002
Private Bag X198, Pretoria, 0001 Tel: (012) 401 6317; Fax: (012) 401 6318
Website: www.education.gpg.gov.za

ANNEXURE 4: UNISA ETHICS CERTIFICATE

UNISA | university of south africa

DEPARTMENT: PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT
RESEARCH ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Date: 6 May 2019

Ref #: PAM/2019/011 (Khanya)

Name of applicant: Ms MP Khanya

Student#: 51410893

Dear Ms Khanya

Decision: Ethics Clearance Approval 6 May 2019 to 5 May 2022

Name: Ms MP Khanya, student#: 51410893, email: phutimp@unisa.ac.za, tel: 012 429-6168

[Supervisor: Prof L van Jaarsveldt, staff#: 90053575, email: vjaarlc@unisa.ac.za, tel: 012 429-3771]

Research project 'Turnover of teachers who resigned voluntarily from the profession in the period 2013 to 2015 in the Tshwane South District'

Qualification: Master of Public Administration (MPA)

Thank you for the application for **research ethics clearance** by the Department: Public Administration and Management: Research Ethics Review Committee, for the above mentioned research. Ethics approval is granted for the period 6 May 2019 to 5 May 2022. If necessary to complete the research, you may apply for an **extension** of the period. The decision will be tabled at the next College RERC meeting for notification/ratification.

For full approval: The application was **expedited and reviewed** in compliance with the *Unisa Policy on Research Ethics* and the *Standard Operating Procedure on Research Ethics Risk Assessment* by the RERC on 6 May 2019.

The proposed research may now commence with the proviso that:

1) The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the Unisa Policy on Research Ethics.

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2) Any adverse circumstance arising in the undertaking of the research project that is relevant to the ethicality of the study, as well as changes in the methodology, should be communicated in writing to this Ethics Review Committee.

3) The researcher 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, accompanied by a progress report.

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, among others, the **Protection of Personal Information Act** 4/2013; **Children's Act** 38/2005 and **National Health Act** 61/2003.

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) Field work activities **may not** continue after the expiry date given. Submission of a completed research ethics progress report will constitute an application for renewal of Ethics Research Committee approval.

Kind regards

Dr C Alers

Chairperson: Research Ethics Review Committee
Department of Public Administration and Management
Office tel. : 012 429-6286;
Email   : alersc@unisa.ac.za

Prof MT Mogale

Executive Dean:
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Office tel.   : 012 429-4805;
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ANNEXURE 5: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

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PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Ethics clearance reference number:
Research permission reference number:

ᵗʰ May, 2019

Title: Factors that led to the turnover of teachers who resigned voluntarily from the profession in the period 2013-2015 in Tshwane South District.

Dear Prospective Participant

My name is Mmatshepo P. Khanya and I am doing research with Prof L Van Jaarsveldt and Prof JC Pauw, a lecturer and retired lecturer in the Department of Public Administration & Management at the University of South Africa (Unisa). I am currently a registered student busy with my Masters in Public Administration. We are inviting you to participate in a study entitled: Factors that led to the turnover of teachers who resigned voluntarily from the profession in the period 2013-2015 in Tshwane South District.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY?

The main objective of this study will be to identify the factors that led to the turnover of teachers who resigned voluntarily from the profession in the period 2013-2015 in the Tshwane South District.

WHY AM I BEING INVITED TO PARTICIPATE?

You have been chosen to participate as you have met the profile required for the study. This study's sole purpose is to obtain information on some of the reasons why you decided to voluntarily resign before retirement age from the teaching profession in the period 2013-2015.
As required by the *Protection of Personal Information Act, nr 4 of 2013, which necessitates the disclosure of how access was gained to the personal information of prospective participants*, contact details of the respective participants have been obtained from the Tshwane South

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District database and permission was also granted by the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct this study and obtain information that will ensure the success of the study.

The approximate number of participants required for this study is 11 former teachers and 1 district director all from the Tshwane South District.

WHAT IS THE NATURE OF MY PARTICIPATION IN THIS STUDY?

The study involves +/- 60 minute face-to-face, semi-structured interviews. The interviews will be audio-tapped to allow the researcher repeated examination of the participant's responses and to supplement for the natural limitations of memory and intuitive glosses that the researcher might place on what the participant say in the interview.

CAN I WITHDRAW FROM THIS STUDY EVEN AFTER HAVING AGREED TO PARTICIPATE?

Participating in this study is completely voluntary and you are under no obligation to consent to participation. If you do decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a written consent form. You are free to withdraw at any time during the completion of the interview without giving a reason. It will however not be possible to withdraw once the interviews are being analysed for the data analysis phase of the research.

WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?

It has become evident that there is a great concern from the Department of Basic Education regarding the increase in the number of teacher resignations, by participating in this study you will be assisting the department in providing empirical information on some of the reasons why teachers resigned in high volumes during the stipulated period. As a participant you will be contributing significantly to the on-going body of research on teacher turnover and the possible causes especially within the Tshwane South District. The participant is therefore regarded as the most valuable component in the study and the successful completion of this study is entirely dependent on voluntary informed consent.

ARE THEIR ANY NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES FOR ME IF I PARTICIPATE IN THE RESEARCH PROJECT?

The researcher does not foresee any harm being done towards participants. However, in an event that confidential information is leaked or exposed to unintended recipient, the researcher

will take the strictest remedial action, and withdraw any participant whose information will be exposed. In an event that this happens, the participant will no longer be part of the study and will be withdrawn immediately. The data contained therein will not incriminate any persons involved in this research.

WILL THE INFORMATION THAT I CONVEY TO THE RESEARCHER AND MY IDENTITY BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL?

Your name will not be recorded anywhere and no one will be able to connect you to the answers you give. Your answers will be given a code number or a pseudonym and you will be referred to in this way in the data, any publications, or other research reporting methods such as conference proceedings. Access to the data collected in this research project will be limited to the researcher only and transcriber only. The transcriber has signed a nondisclosure contract to ensure that he/she does not leak any information. However, answers may be reviewed by people responsible for making sure that research is done properly, including the transcriber, and members of the Research Ethics Review Committee. Otherwise, records that identify you will be available only to people working on the study, unless you give permission for other people to see the records. It should be noted that the anonymous data collected may be used for other purposes, such as a research report, journal articles and/or conference proceedings. A report of the study may be submitted for publication, but individual participants will not be identifiable in such a report

HOW WILL THE RESEARCHER(S) PROTECT THE SECURITY OF DATA?

All the collected data pertaining to this research is kept in a safe environment accessed by the researcher. Hard copy material (field notes taken during the interview and audio recordings) will be kept in a locked cabinet at the researcher's home for a period of five years. Soft copy material (hard drives, flesh discs and audio's) are saved on a computer drive that is password protected, and the password is only known by the researcher. As back up, all data is saved on a Google Drive cloud. Future use of the stored data will be subject to further Research Ethics Review and approval if applicable.

Hard copies will be shredded and electronic copies will be permanently deleted from the hard drive of the computer through the use of a relevant software programme

WILL I RECEIVE PAYMENT OR ANY INCENTIVES FOR PARTICIPATING IN THIS STUDY?

No payment or incentives will be offered for participating in this study.

HAS THE STUDY RECEIVED ETHICS APPROVAL

This study has received written approval from the Research Ethics Review Committee of the College of Economic & Management Sciences, Unisa. A copy of the approval letter can be obtained from the researcher if you so wish.

HOW WILL I BE INFORMED OF THE FINDINGS/RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH?

If you would like to be informed of the final research findings, please contact Ms MP Khanya on (012) 429 6168 or email phutimp@unisa.ac.za or 51410893@mylife.unisa.ac.za The findings are accessible for a period of 1 (one) year. Should you require any further information or want to contact the researcher about any aspect of this study, please contact the researcher on the details provided above.

Should you have concerns about the way in which the research has been conducted, you may contact Prof L Van Jaarsveldt on (012) 429 3771 or email: vjaarlc@unisa.ac.za. Contact the research ethics chairperson of the CRERC General Ethics Review Committee, Prof Ashley Mutezo 012 429-4595 or muteza@unisa.ac.za if you have any ethical concerns.

Thank you for taking time to read this information sheet and for participating in this study.
Thank you.

Ms MP Khanya

ANNEXURE 6: CONSENT FORM

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE RESEARCH

Research Title:

Factors that Led to the Turnover of Teachers Who Resigned from the Profession in the Period 2013-2015 in the Tshwane South District.

Research Objective

The main objective of this study will be to identify the factors that led to the turnover of teachers who resigned voluntarily from the profession in the period 2013-2015 in the Tshwane South District.

I, ... (participant name & surname), confirm that the person asking my consent to take part in this research has told me about the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience of participation.

- I have read and understood the study as explained in the participant information sheet.
- I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and prepared to participate in the study.
- I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty.
- I am aware that the findings of this study will be anonymously processed into a dissertation.
- I agree to be interviewed.

Participant's name and surname	Date	Signature
Researcher's name and surname	Date	Signature
Witness name and surname	Date	Signature

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