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TITLE: SOCIAL MOVEMENT LEARNING: COSATU SHOP STEWARDS CONSTRUCTING KNOWLEDGE THROUGH SOCIAL ACTIVISM

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social movements; social movement learning; adult learning; collective learning; Cosatu; knowledge construction; social constructivism; communities of practice; leadership; collaboration; empowerment

ABSTRACT

This study sought to investigate how shop stewards within Cosatu Western Cape construct knowledge through social activism. The study employed a qualitative research design, using a multiple case study method, where shop stewards and activists were invited to offer their narrative accounts of what type of knowledge is constructed in Cosatu as a social movement. Secondly, the study investigated how shop stewards construct knowledge within this movement and what shop stewards' lived experiences are while constructing this knowledge. Purposive sampling was used to select participants for this study and thematic analysis was performed to interpret the collected data. Working through a social constructivist paradigm lens, that used Community of Practice as its theoretical framework revealed interesting outcomes within this study. These results highlighted important insights into how shop stewards understand the importance of their role within this social movement and why they prefer to construct knowledge in and through Cosatu. It also highlighted the types of learning that occur and how this learning is absorbed through lived experiences. The most significant outcome of this study was that knowledge construction by shop stewards does indeed take place on various levels and in different settings within Cosatu. Shop stewards within this federation indeed view Cosatu as a social movement due to the varied issues that they address within the labour, political, health and education sectors. It is within this social movement space that shop stewards feel a sense of belonging and nurturing when it comes to learning within this social movement. The results of this study may inform, among other possibilities, the modification of the existing educational programmes provided by Cosatu and the formal recognition of shop stewards' roles and responsibilities within this learning space: To invest in further research, collaborating and exchanging knowledge across social movements while investing in a formalised mentorship programme provided by veteran shop stewards.

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My gratitude goes out to God Almighty for leading me down this path. I hold onto Jeremiah 29:11. Thank you for never letting go of me.

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To Paul Bester, Joäo Jardiem and Fadwah Rinquest, I will be forever grateful for your contribution to this study.
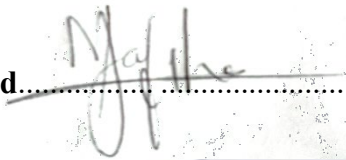
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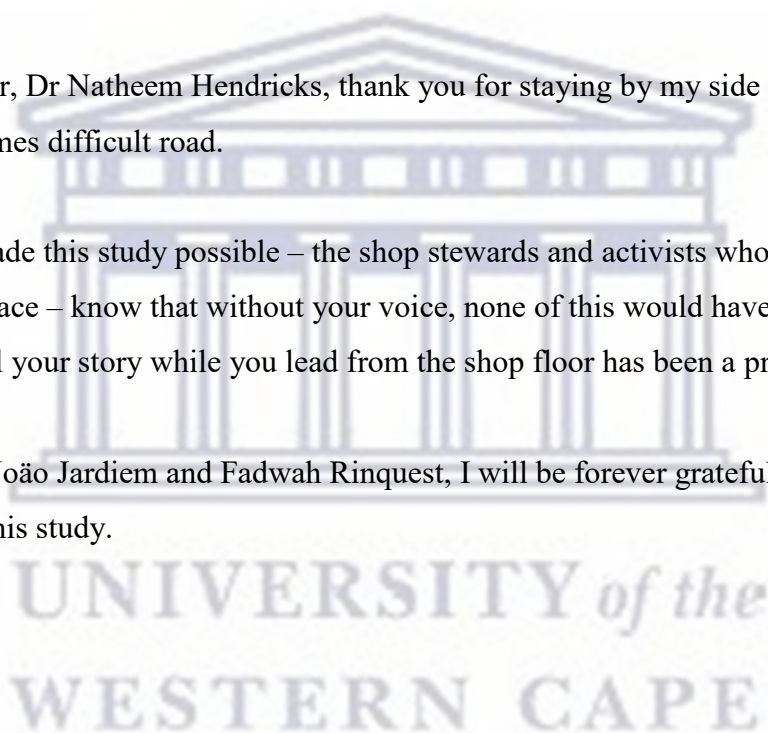
DECLARATION

I, Michelle Jaftha declare that: *Social Movement Learning: Western Cape COSATU Shop Stewards Constructing Knowledge through Social Activism* is my own work, that it has not been submitted for any degree or examination in any other university and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by complete references.

Full name: **Date:** November 2023

Signed....................................

DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my mom, Ellen April. You might not remember reading this or know who I am when attending my graduation due to the impact of the long goodbye. Thank you for all the sacrifices you made and the good values that you instilled in me. I will always remember you, a single mom with a soft smile, a big heart and a strong spirit. You taught me what it meant to be resilient and to believe in myself and my creator. You never gave me what I wanted but what I needed and for that, I will be forever grateful. I am truly blessed because of you. This one is for you. I love you.
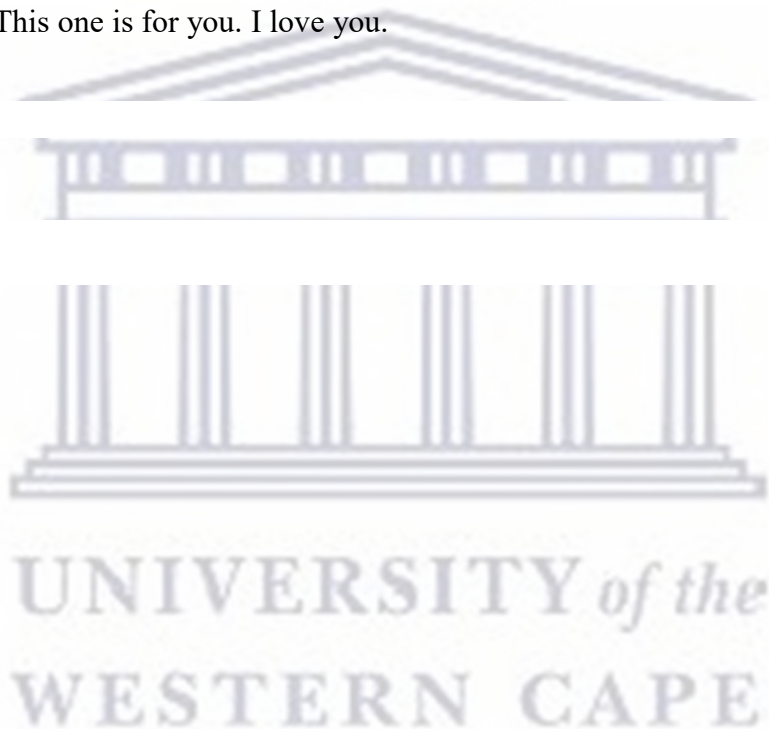
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONSAND ACRONYMS

CoP	community of practice
Cosatu	Congress of South African Trade Unions
Fosatu	Federation of South African Trade Unions
UDF	United Democratic Front
TAC	Treatment Action Campaign
CCMA	Commission for Conciliation Mediation and Arbitration
Tucsa	Trade Union Council of South Africa
Sactu	South African Congress of Trade Unions
ANC	African National Congress
Nawu	National Association of Workers Union
TGWU	Transport and General Workers Union
CWIU	Chemical Worker Industrial Union
SA	South Africa
Nedlac	National Economic Development and Labour Council
ARV	antiretroviral
SGB	school governing body

CHAPTER 1

1.1 Introduction

This introductory chapter provides the context of this study by outlining the background, rationale and problem statement on which the study was based. The Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu) is a social formation that has been active in transforming South African society since its inception (Hirschon, 1998; von Holdt, 2003). Depicting the significance of Cosatu, Philip Hirschon (1998, p. 633) states that by developing a symbiotic relationship with other social movements in the late 1980s, Cosatu 'forced the de Klerk government to lift the ban on political organization in 1990' and so assisted in the transition of South Africa towards democracy.

Throughout history, groups of people have attempted to bring about social change to protect either their existing rights and privileges or to bring about transformation within societies. Across the globe, as far back as the colonial era and especially the 19th century, the impact of social movements was evident (Berberoglu, 2015). With the dawn of the Civil Rights Movement in America and the labour movements in Europe, examples of movements and organizations that have attempted to bring about societal change can be found (Turney, 2011). On the African continent, South Africa was one such country where the birth of social movements contributed to social change both at a local and an international level. Social formations such as the Women's Anti-Pass Campaign of 1956, the Western Cape Anti-Eviction Campaign, the Social Justice Coalition, the Treatment Action Campaign and Equal Education are just a few movements that have impacted policy and contributed to ensuring social justice.

Over the last decade, there has been a global explosion of collective formations aiming to bring about social change. Examples of such contemporary movements include:

- The Pro-Democracy Campaign in 2010 in the Middle East, which became popularly known as the Arab Spring, that brought about regime change in countries such as Tunisia, Egypt and Libya (Alsaleh, 2015; Çakmak, 2017; Rand, 2013).
- The spontaneous protests that were organised under the Black Lives Matter banner during 2013 in America (Hillstrom, 2018; Lebron, 2017).
- The local fallist movements, e.g. Rhodes Must Fall (2015) and Fees Must Fall (2015–2016), that called for the scrapping of university fees, the emancipation of South

African universities and the decolonisation of knowledge within the university curricula (Ahmed, 2019; Godsell, Chikane, Mpofu-Walsh, Ntshingila & Lepere, 2016). These are examples of social movements that worked towards the transformation of institutions.

While the notion of social movement is contested,

> *For this study, I will be making use of Steyn, (2015) definition of social movements: which refers, to a social movement as a cluster of communities or activists, non-governmental organisations, community-based organisations, or a network of activists, with a common cause bound by a collective identity. In terms of this definition, Cosatu is a social movement as it consists of card-carrying members in different provinces of South Africa, and of followers in different communities across the country.*

Cosatu's ability to challenge the state by mobilising its affiliates and other movement supporters can be viewed as a key characteristic of social movements. Social movement scholars confirm that active participation in such movements does result in both collective learning (Kilgore, 1999) and individual learning (Hall & Clover, 2006). Eyerman and Jamison (1991, p. 14) point out that "social movements are not merely social dramas; they are the social action from which new knowledge such as world views and ideologies are constructed". Consistent with these perspectives, some scholars maintain that 'social movements are exceedingly rich social learning environments' (Walters, 2005).

1.2 Background

Drawing from my experience as a shop steward in the retail sector, having gone through the training, workshops and meetings that was conducted by the Cosatu education desk, the movement can be viewed as having a rich history of mobilisation, training and social activism which they draw from. Shop stewards are at the heart of this process and their training is paramount to achieving various labour and social goals when engaging with the government, employers and their communities. Cosatu Western Cape is the only provincial office within this movement that has a dedicated education unit. This unit is responsible for training and educating all shop stewards within the province and consists of representatives from all unions that form part of Cosatu. The education desk is managed by the Education Manager, who is responsible for developing all training materials and facilitating workshops. The Cosatu education unit can be viewed as the school and the education desk the classroom where knowledge is shared and constructed.

Training and development within this social movement are designed around a selection of topics that are developed into a training manual based on the information shop stewards need to perform their duties in the workplace effectively. Content placed within the training manual is extracted from various resources, such as government policy documents, Cosatu Congress Resolutions and historical archives. Reference sources change constantly based on the developments that impact training within and outside the movement.

There are different modes of training delivery within the movement; however, the basic shop steward training is done through workshops based on a yearly calendar of topics. These topics are based on issues and areas that shop stewards will encounter. Training is also facilitated by guest facilitators who are experts within their field of study. An example is the Commission for Conciliation Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA), which would facilitate specific training on labour court matters. Training also happens informally through the slogan 'each one teach one', where senior shop stewards engage novices or other shop stewards from different unions in handling specific cases or situations on the shop floor. This type of communication is integral to the shop steward's ability to learn from their peers regarding what is communicated and how it is communicated. By engaging in this way, shop stewards are constantly exposed to the lived experiences of others within the movement. These lived experiences are shared at conferences, meetings and protest action marches or on the shop floor of workplaces. They are used in conjunction with the facilitated training so that shop stewards can modify, disseminate and construct their own knowledge.

To understand this commitment to education and knowledge construction, one must understand the philosophy underpinning 'each one teach one'. Today it is still widely used within social movements and non-governmental spaces and is based on an African proverb that originated in the United States during enslavement Jogwu, (2010). It was during this time that Africans were seen as possessions and, therefore, denied an education So, when enslaved people learned to read and write, they were responsible for teaching someone else This phrase comes to life when lived experiences are shared.

1.3 Research Site

COSATU is situated at Community House Saltriver, which has a unique history, and is a living heritage and social learning site. Community House became the space from where the first workers movements were established and from this site some of the largest strikes and

anti- apartheid campaigns were organised. One of the most notable protest actions was that of the Purple Rain Protest which saw more than 100,000 people march in September 1989. The site was declared a provincial heritage site in 2010 and serves as a centre where the preservation and commemoration of many anti – apartheid activist who played a role in the liberation struggle and the revival of trade unions are held annually

It is known as a place of activism and a key landmark within Cape Town since the mid-1980s, when it was used to shaped and educate activist in their socio-political quest to fight a better life for all. It is still a space that is widely used by the extended communities that surround it. The building itself houses various NGO's and Trade Unions that focus on labour research, popular education, gender advocacy, HIV / AIDS education., and environmental and youth development programmes. With the move into the 21st century the research site has become a safe space for foreign refugees to come together and form closer communities outside of their own countries. According to Hlatshwayo (2013), Cosatu Western Cape Province is the only branch that have direct and organic links with organisations of migrants.

1.4 The rationale for this study

Adult learning has always been an area of interest to me, and my direct exposure to this type of learning environment through my employment has made this research even more meaningful. The mentoring of activists as well as first-hand experiences and interactions with individuals who have progressed through the movement's ranks without formal education have prompted me to further investigate how shop stewards and social activists construct knowledge within Cosatu.

There has been a plethora of studies done both locally and internationally on shop stewards. On an international level, Lane (1974) and Hyman (1975) investigated the work and functions performed by shop stewards. In South Africa, Webster (1985) and Pityana and Orkin (1992) focused on the same theme. Other studies mainly focused on trade unions' transformation, their role in workplace restructuring, trade union revitalisation and the shift in ideology that could erase shop floor democracy (Buhlungu, 2010; Buhlungu & Webster, 2006; Masondo, 2005; von Holdt, 2003; Finnemore, 1999;), as well as related studies focusing on "social movements as learning sites" and how learning takes place within social movements (Cooper, 2005, p.34).

Adult learning, particularly within social movements, has been researched widely, with scholars drawing on diverse theoretical frameworks and educational theories (Cain & Seymour, 2011). Despite the bourgeoning of scholarship into trade unions as learning sites, limited research has been done into *why* shop stewards and social activists prefer learning within a movement and into the lived experiences that shop stewards go through while doing so.

By conducting this research, a better understanding can be obtained of the following key aspects:

a)   What makes learning discourses different within social movements from other learning sites?

b)   The lived experience that shop stewards obtain while engaging in this learning process within a social movement.

c)   What are the communication features of their interventions?

d)   What type of social change processes do they enhance?

This gap within the research and learning pathways has prompted this study to unlock and contribute to the existing knowledge on social movement learning

1.5 Aim of the study

This study aims to understand how learning and constructed knowledge are produced, shared and disseminated by shop stewards as lived experience within a social movement like Cosatu. It further seeks to understand why shop stewards prefer learning in a social movement environment instead of any other setting and the role that various teaching and learning methods play in constructing knowledge. It is these aims that prompted the following research questions:

- **What is the knowledge constructed by shop stewards in a social movement?**
- **How do shop stewards construct knowledge within this social movement?**
- **What are shop stewards' lived experiences while constructing knowledge in situ?**

1.6 Chapter outline

In this chapter, I contextualised the research study through a succinct introduction followed by the background in which the study is grounded and the research site where the study was conducted. I also outlined the rationale of this study, its aims and the research questions that underpin it.

Below is an outline of the structure of the thesis:

Chapter 1: Provides the background to this study, research site and state the research problem and specifies the research aims and questions, outlining the research approach.

Chapter 2: Presents a comprehensive review of the literature related to this study, focusing on important concepts that are discussed in this study.

Chapter 3: Gives a detailed description and outline of the theory that underpins this study as well as the theoretical framework that guided this research.

Chapter 4: Describes the methodological approach that was adopted in this investigation.

Chapter 5: Zooms in on the data analysis and findings of this research, focusing on themes and sub–themes that emerged during this research.

Chapter 6: Outlines the discussion and ends with the recommendation and conclusion of this research study.

CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

To fully understand adult education and lifelong learning, one must look at how this learning occurs, where it occurs, why it occurs and the individuals who partake in this type of learning process. There are several schools of thought that focus on these. This research study used Lev Vygotsky's social constructivist theory (1978) as the main theoretical framework. However, this cannot be done without fully outlining the various other concepts within the literature that play an equally fundamental role within the adult learning space. Below, I have outlined only those key concepts relevant to this study. Further to this, the theoretical framework of the study will be discussed.

2.2 The nature of social movements

Social movements are "voluntary associations of people and organisations within civil society that respond to particular social, economic, ideological and political issues which members themselves define as important" (Walters, 2005, p. 139). According to Martin (1999, p. 34), social movements share the following three characteristics:

- they articulate a collective identity and their members subscribe to a common cause that the movement expresses collectively;
- they exist in an oppositional relationship with common sense or in opposition to the groups and interests that control power in society; and
- they have a set of beliefs that reflect shared values and purposes within the movement.

Social movements have been used as vehicles to drive change within society as some of the most powerful learning occurs as people struggle against oppression, trying to make sense of what is happening to them and working out ways of doing something about it (Foley, 1999, p. 1–2). Eyerman and Jamison (1991, p. 4) echo the perspective that social movements are rich learning environments when they state that 'social movements as temporary public spaces, and as movements of collective creation that *provide societies with ideas, identities, and even ideals*.'

2.3 Contextual background and history of Cosatu

As soon as the apartheid Nationalist regime came to power in 1948, they initiated a process that prevented black South African workers from belonging to trade unions. Ben Schoeman (1905–1986), the labour minister at that time, was explicit, as described by Lambert (1983, p.27).

> 'if we give [black workers] that incentive to organise and should they become well organised — and again bearing in mind that there are almost 1 000 000 native workers in industry and commerce today — they can use their trade unions as a political weapon and they can create chaos in South Africa at any given time. I think that we would probably be committing race suicide if we gave them that incentive'.

According to Lambert (1983, p 28 -29) Schoeman's statement perhaps explains why the Trade Union Council of South Africa (Tucsa) refused to allow the black trade union to join it. This decision by Tucsa gave rise to the formation of the South African Congress of Trade Unions (Sactu) in 1955. As Sactu was closely aligned with the African National Congress (ANC) in the late 1950s and early 1960s, its leaders were forced underground when the ANC was banned, which resulted in Sactu becoming locally dormant. It was only in 1979 that another mass-based union federation, the Federation of South African Trade Unions (Fosatu), was established to represent the interests of black workers.

The Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu), which was formed in 1985 during the state of emergency, built on the traditions and cultures of Sactu and Fosatu. Some might say that these federations are the true forebearers of Cosatu, which is evident in Cosatu's adoption of their slogans and posture. Fosatu formation was mainly for industrial unions and there was one union for metals and cars (Nawu – which later became Numsa), one for transport (TGWU) and one for chemical workers (CWIU). Fosatu's slogan 'one union, one industry' and aspects of their logo which depicted workers demonstrating with clenched fists held high were later adopted by Cosatu and integrated into their slogan 'one country, one federation' and their logo which depicts workers demonstrating with clenched fists held high. https://saha.org.za/collections/trade_unions.htm

Cosatu, at its launch, brought together 33 unions representing more than half a million workers. These unions were all united in their opposition of apartheid and their commitment to contributing to the building of a non-racial, non-sexist and democratic South Africa (SA).

2.3.1 Learning within Trade Union Federations in Relation to social Movements

While labour issues were central to the work of Cosatu, it identified worker education and learning as critical to strengthening the working class. At its first congress, Cosatu adopted a resolution with the objective of 'facilitating education and training of all workers to advance the interests of the working class' http://cosatu.org.za/docs/policy/2006/consti2006

The adoption of this resolution and having knowledge of the educational activities within the federation is what inspired Cooper (2006), an adult education and trade union scholar-activist, to suggest that Cosatu can be viewed as one of the most significant adult learning institutions in South Africa. Not only is Cosatu a learning institution structurally, but it is also a learning institution due to it being a social movement. Cosatu also fits well into the notion of a community of practice where individuals share experiences, skills and knowledge related to workers' rights and social justice. This collaborative approach is more characteristic of a learning institution.

Cosatu, is also actively involved in providing education and training programmes to its members, through workshops, seminars and other initiatives. They focus on building the capacity of its shop stewards by offering programmes that are designed to enhance and develop leadership skills, knowledge and understanding around labour laws , political and social issues which empower workers to actively engage in the labour movement and broader context in which they operate.

In fact, Hirschsohn (1998) regards Cosatu as a model of social movement unions, thus, as mentioned earlier, social movements should be viewed as sites or environments of learning and knowledge construction (Walters, 2005).

2.4 Situating the Cosatu shop steward

A shop steward, in this study, is defined as a trade union member who voluntarily acts in a union-sanctioned role to represent and defend the interests of employees at a workplace. In this role, a shop steward becomes a significant link and conduit of information between the union leadership and workers http://www.cosatu.org.za/docs/policy/2006/consti2006.

2.5 Shop steward leadership roles and responsibilities within Cosatu

Shop stewards are of interest in this study due to the nature of the position that they hold within the workplace. Most members of Cosatu's central executive committees have come through the ranks as shop stewards over a long period (Ballard, Habib & Valodia, 2006). Elaborating further on this assertion, Ballard et. al (2006) state that shop stewards are elected by Cosatu's constituents based on the way they have represented the interests of workers. A study conducted by Pityana and Orkin (1992) revealed that the knowledge obtained by shop stewards within Cosatu has been mostly through sources of ideology, as most shop stewards were politicised and conscientised by specific historical circumstances of the struggle against the apartheid government.

Shop stewards within Cosatu can be viewed as the foundation of this social movement, due to them being elected by workers at a factory-floor level. This representation forms part of a democratic process that ensures that the voices of the union at the workplace are listened to and respected. It is expected that shop stewards are accountable to the members who have elected them and they are, therefore, mandated to speak and act on workers' behalf. It is required of shop stewards to be committed, hardworking, disciplined, progressive and literate. Upon election as shop stewards, it is expected of them to fulfil various roles, such as acting as a worker, monitoring activities within the workplace, being a lifelong learner and acting as an educator to fellow workers http://www.cosatu.org.za/docs/policy/2006/consti2006.

2.6 Learning within social movements

Various theorists of social movement learning have documented that whatever social movements are or do, they are exceedingly rich social learning environments (Walters, S. (2005). Within most social movements, the organisational and learning practices are intertwined and are shaped by class, race and gender as well as the historical context or a combination of circumstances. Hall and Clover (2005) indicate that the beneficiaries of social movement learning are the participating members of the movement as well as those outside of the social movements who observe and witness the action of the social movements.

Learning within social movements results from a variety of methodologies and activities such as the construction of, reading and listening to poetry, and mass action such as participating in marches, conferences, protest action and political theatre (Hall & Clover, 2005).

Informal learning within social movement has become an under explored space within South African literature. Prior to 1994 most of the literature, narratives and training workshops were conducted by left wing activist yet the literature regarding informal learning within the social movement space is limited. The emphasis on informal learning highlights the importance of understanding how grassroots activists acquire knowledge and develop their skills outside of formal educational structures.

Choudry, (2015, p.6), emphasizes that learning within social movements goes beyond formal settings and extends into the everyday experiences and interactions of activists. These activities can take place in the streets, in informal discussions among activists, in meetings and conferences to highlight but a few. This indicates that learning occurs through the life of the movement and the practices and activities that defines the movements existence.

Robin Kelley's concept of solidarity as a space for informal learning and knowledge production adds another layer to this understanding. It emphasizes the importance of listening to and learning from those directly affected by the issues at hand. By standing in solidarity, activists not only support one another but also engage in a process of collective learning that enriches the movement as a whole. (Steyn, 2022, p. 2).

Overall, these insights shed light on the dynamic and multifaceted nature of learning within social movements in South Africa. They highlight the need for further exploration and recognition of the informal learning processes that contribute to the resilience and effectiveness of these movements. (Steyn 2022, p.3).

2.7 Knowledge construction

The approach to adult learning within social movements focuses on knowledge construction and how social interaction plays a critical role in this type of learning. The types of knowledge created through social movement learning and the ways in which that knowledge is constructed and disseminated have been explored by various adult education scholars over the years (Eyerman & Jamison, 1991; Casas-Cortés, Osterweil & Powell, 2008; Kim, 2011; Kimmerle, Moskaliuk, Oeberst & Cress, 2015; Walters, 2005).

Niesz (2019, p. 227) states that formal education, which is not the main focus in Eyerman and Jamison's (1991) approach, is fundamental to the production and promotion of social movement knowledge. As Eyerman and Jamison (1991) highlight, movements are engaged in a constant process of generating counter-expertise, sometimes from their own resources; sometimes through finding allies in traditional intellectual professions such as academia, journalism and law; and sometimes through pushing the creation of new forms of knowledge. Formal education, according to Eyerman an Jamison (1991) in turn, forms a small component of learning within social movements. The primary purpose of social movements is not to provide learning opportunities for its members. Instead, its primary purpose is to bring about 'social change as a consequence of the activism the movement facilitates'. (Eyerman and Jamison 1991, p. 94) Learning results from participation and is done in formal and formal ways; however, in some cases, learning within social movements is accidental (Eyerman and Jamison 1991, p. 94).

This process takes place during the articulation and framing of the movement's vision, while organising and engaging in collective action and when influencing policy, law, institutions and social life (Smith, 2002). Adult education researchers have argued that social movements are educators: They are not only sites of popular education and other forms of non-formal education, but also important sites of learning through the practice of movement activity (Foley, 1999; Holst, 2002; Rule, 2011). Adult education theorists and researchers have taken up the concept of social movement knowledge, often drawing on Eyerman and Jamison's (1991) formulation alongside the work of Paulo Freire (1921–1997), Antonio Gramsci (1891–1937) and other critical theorists and pedagogues (see Choudry & Kapoor, 2010; Holford 1995; Rule, 2011 as cited Niesz 2019). Although this body of literature offers compelling insights, Flowers and Swan (2011) argue that the actual process of knowledge production in social movements is more often taken for granted than conceptualised as a focus of scholarly inquiry.

Cunningham (1999) regards social movements as major sources of alternative knowledge construction. Supporting this conception, Hill (2004, p. 229) describes knowledge construction that results from social movement learning as 'fugitive knowledge'. This implies that knowledge construction within social movements is not officially controlled by the government or professional intellectuals. These features highlight what the definition of constructivism is. Constructivism refers to the idea that learners construct knowledge for themselves individually and socially; in this regard constructing means learning (Hein, 1991).

Linking to the definition by (Hein, 1991), the *Encyclopaedia of the Science of Learning* (2012) defines constructivism as a 'theory about the nature of reality and knowledge founded on the basis that humans generate knowledge and meaning from their experiences, mental structures and beliefs that are used to interpret objects and events'. It is believed that constructivism focuses on the importance of the individual's knowledge, beliefs and skills through the experience of learning. It is based on the understanding that individuals construct their own knowledge based on a combination of prior knowledge and new information.

2.8 Formal and non-formal learning

The experiential learning theory can be viewed as the foundation of adult learning theory and plays a critical role in the acquisition of informal learning. Conner (2010) states that informal learning is 'a lifelong process whereby individuals acquire attitudes, values, skills and knowledge from daily experience and the educational influences and resources in his or her environment; from family; neighbours; through work and play; from the market place; the library and the mass media.' He coins a further expansion of this definition by referring to informal learning as the acquisition of skills and knowledge outside of learning events through reading and discussion.

Conner (2009, p. 55) defines non-formal learning as any 'organised educational activity outside the established formal system whether operating separately or as an important feature of some broader activity intended to serve identifiable learning objectives. For the purposes of this study, informal learning refers to incidental learning or the acquisition of skills in the workplace, while non-formal learning refers to planned learning interventions that do not lead to formal accreditation. In most cases, the learning that is facilitated by formal learning programmes are often structured and viewed as distinguished, highly priced and of a higher content value and this is more often only available to those that can afford it.

In contrast to this, informal learning is unplanned and normally driven by conversation of an unpredictable, accidental learning nature that has a lifelong process where individuals acquire attitudes, values, skills and knowledge from daily experiences, educational influences and from resources in their environment (Conner, 1997). A further assertion is made by Conner (1997, p. 1), that 'informal learning accounts for over 75% of the learning taking place in organisations today and in some cases can be viewed as, the most valuable learning taking place

serendipitously, by random chance'. John Dewey once described this as educating so that people may share in a common life. Considering this, non-formal educators have a special contribution to make within this space as conversation is central to building communities. Cooper and Walters (2009, p. 126) highlight that an important criterion that distinguishes explicit informal learning from any other learning is 'the retrospective recognition of both a new significant form of knowledge, understanding or skill acquired on your own initiative and also recognition of the process of acquisition'.

According to the literature, there are opposing and contrasting views put forward by Billet and others who do not share the same sentiments when it comes to categorising learning as formal, non-formal and informal (Billet, 2001; Eraut, 2000; Smith, 1999). These learning theorists highlight two key characteristics that drive this notion. First, it would appear that there are intersecting boundaries between these categories. Secondly, categorising learning based on the site where the learning occurred signals an ideological stance rather than an analytical stance (Billet, 2001; Eraut, 2000; Smith, 2001). For the most part, they do not have lesson plans to follow; they respond to situations and experiences. There is no prescribed learning framework, nor are there organised learning events or packages. Outcomes are not specified externally (Eraut, 2000) or accredited.

What is more, those working in informal education, for the most part, have far less control over the environment in which they are operating: 'Informal educators cannot design environments, nor direct proceedings in quite the same way as formal educators' (Jeffs & Smith 1999). Billet (2002) further challenges whether learning can be referred to as informal by arguing that learning is a significant aspect of all human activity and it would be erroneous to classify some of the learning as informal whilst others are categorised as formal (p.2). Concurring with Eraut (2000), Billet (2002) further argues that most learning takes place outside formalised educational settings and that all learning occurs within social organisations or communities that have formalised structures.

2.9 Collective learning
As part of this study, I will examine the intersections between collective participatory learning within social movements and how activists and groups learn while engaged in social action. Of particular significance and interest is the theory of collective learning proposed by Deborah Kilgore (1999), which I will be exploring in more detail.

Collective learning, according to Kilgore (1999, p. 191), is a 'process that occurs among two or more diverse people in which taken-as-shared meanings these can include visions of social justice which are constructed and acted upon by the group'. Collective learning has emerged at a time when much criticism has been levelled at the dominant theories and practices of adult learning. Finger (1995) and Welton (1995) emphasise the displacement of social justice as an important contributing factor of adult learning. Collins (1995) argues that self-directed learning has for a long time been seen as the cornerstone of adult learning and is 'conceptually inadequate to examine the learning process as forces for social change' (p. 2).

Concurring with this statement, Kilgore (1999 p. 192) focuses on developing an alternative to individualised learning, which she maintains is not adequate to explain individual and group learning in collective action. Her theory is an attempt to elucidate how and why learning occurs in groups while engaged in social action. This research is aimed at this significant aspect as it seeks to answer the following research questions:

- **What is the knowledge constructed by the shop stewards in a social movement?**
- **How do shop stewards construct knowledge within this social movement?**
- **What are shop stewards' lived experiences while constructing knowledge in situ?**

Central to this, Kilgore (1999) examines and focuses on the learning community, since shared meaning and identity are dominant features when it comes to collective action. It is through this collective that people develop solutions to problems within society.

Consistent with Kilgore (1999), Finger (1995, p. 116) adds that it is this type of 'collective collaborative effort that brings about change as there is no individual way out', supporting the perspective that learning is a collaborative endeavour. Kilgore (2001, p. 147) states that various participants also engage in an active reconciliation and integration process leading to the emergence of unique, collectively produced ideas, solutions and arguments. Rogers (1984, p. 69) maintains that the educator must 'turn to the facilitation of change and learning'. This is in line with Paulo Freire's (1996) criticism of the traditional role of the educator who is seen as the depositor of knowledge. According to him, knowledge is rather thought to exist within and among the adult learners/members themselves. Freire (1972) values the experiences of the learners/members and promotes collective rather than individual

learning. In response, Kilgore uses the expansion of Vygotsky's (1978) zone of proximal development to describe the interplay among individuals in the group. Although the focus of Vygotsky is individualised learning, it offers a good base for the expansion of his theory as it emphasises social interaction and collaborative learning from more capable peers.

The extension of this theory by Wells (1996) applies to situations in which individuals learn collectively. Hence, Kilgore explicates the theory of collective learning by drawing on sociocultural learning theory and Melucci's 1988 new social movement theory. Kilgore refers to the group learning of collective cognition as 'logic of practise' (2002, p. 147). This offers us a lens through which to see the group as a collective while recognising individual contributions to the group's learning process. Kilgore (1999; 2002) offers the collective learning framework as a conceptual tool to view how and why groups learn collectively while engaged in social action. It is from this stance that this research aims to investigate what and how knowledge is constructed as shop stewards perform their roles and functions within Cosatu.

2.10 Situated learning

Humans, by nature, are socially curious beings and learn mostly through social interaction with others. This learning does not take place in an individual's mind but is situated in a context in which the participation of other individuals belonging to the same communities of practice plays a vital role. This type of learning occurs generally when an individual has not intended or planned to learn. Participation and action play a significant role in situated learning and usually go hand in hand when learning is specific to a situation or cause Ataizi, M. (2012).

The following classification according to Lave and Wenger (1991, p. 11) delineates situated learning as 'exploring the situational character of human understanding and communication'. This theory is concerned with how skills/knowledge are acquired in the context within which the learning occurs. They do not define situated learning as the acquisition of propositional knowledge but rather see situated learning in certain forms of co-participation (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 14). The focus is thus on what kind of social engagement provides the proper context to enable learning.

Over the past 20 years, few traditions of learning have dominated adult education discourse in the same way as Lave and Wenger's (1991) theory of situated learning. Their development of a theory of adult learning which situates learning in social and community sites has contributed to understanding knowledge formation through informal learning. Lave and Wenger's work is a sociocultural interpretation of learning that positions and locates learning within the social environment of work or communities. Lave (1991, p. 64) argues that this learning ... is 'neither wholly subjective, nor fully encompassed in social interaction', and it is 'not constituted separately from the social world with its own structures and meanings of which it is part'.

According to Lave and Wenger (1991), knowledge can be acquired in a variety of ways and as adults, we learn to absorb this information and assimilate it. Lave (1996) highlights that through life and lived experiences, many adults bring with them a level of existing knowledge that they either do not transfer but rather synthesise with existing knowledge. This is a key factor within social movements and this research study aims to elicit and explore if this is indeed the case between the novice shop steward and the more knowledgeable veteran shop steward when knowledge is shared.

The writings of Freire (1972) and other humanistic scholars have, over the years through popular education, revealed that within sites of struggle, learning will always occur. These sites may take on the form of neighbourhoods and communities which are often sites of education where we learn to acculturate and resist hegemonic practices in society (Gramsci, 1971; Gramsci & Forgacs, 1988). The practices of activism are usually intricately connected with communities, community development and social movements. Sites of community and social movements are the spaces and places where activists learn through socialisation with one another, by learning in 'communities of practice' (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 31).

2.11 Social activism

Social activism according to Sharp 2005 is an intentional action to bring about social change on behalf of a cause. This could be an action that goes beyond what is conventional or routine. The action might be door-to-door canvassing, alternative radio, public meetings, rallies or fasting. The cause might be any social, political, environmental or humanitarian issue that a group, community or country might have or is fighting for.

According to Sharp (2005), there are three different methods of non-violent action employed by activists. To count as non-violent action, activism needs to go beyond conventional behaviour. In most cases, social activism starts with action that is made up of protest and persuasion such as speeches, slogans, banners, picketing, silent protest, vigils, singing and marches. The second type of non-violent action is more intense and, in most cases, economically driven, such as rent strike, consumer boycott, international trade embargo and a wide variety of strikes. The third type is intervention, including sit-ins, non-violent occupations, fasting and setting up alternative economic and political institutions. All of these, and more, can be viewed as methods of activism of a non-violent nature that are employed to try and effect social change (Sharp 2005, p.4-5).

Three keywords emerged from the data that are relevant to this study: leadership, empowerment and collaboration. I will expand on my literature review by including a short discussion of each one.

2.11.1 Empowerment within social movement

Within South Africa, knowledge, power and resources are still unevenly distributed. These according to (Villeval 2008) are elements that prevents individuals, groups and classes from improving their standards of living.

Villeval (2008) states that empowerment emerges from situations like these, strengthened by various definitions within literature. Craig and Mayo (1995) highlight that 'empowerment is about collective community and ultimately conscientisation, to critically understand reality and to use the power which even the powerless do possess, to challenge the powerful and ultimately to transform that reality through conscious political struggles. Friedman (1992) as cited in Oakley (2001, p. 3) echoes that development involves a process of both 'political and social empowerment to rebalance the structure of power within society'. According to Eade and Williams (1994), 'gaining the strength, confidence, and vision to work for positive changes in their lives, individually and together with others, is the process of empowerment'. It is the latter element of empowerment that Cosatu shop stewards obtain within the movement that allows them to continue engaging and committing themselves to transform their workplaces and communities.

2.11.2 Leadership within social movements

Although leadership in social movements is gaining scholarly attention, it is still an under-explored topic within the literature (Barker et al., 2001; Melucci, 1996). Social movements can be viewed as dynamic, participatory and organised structures that share a collective identity and advocate in most cases for the most vulnerable or marginalised within society (Ganz, 2010). However, the leaders within these movements can be viewed as a critical element due to their ability to 'inspire commitment, mobilise resources, create and recognise opportunities, devise strategies, frame demands, and influence outcomes' (Morris and Staggenborg, 2002). Even though they manage to do all of the above, scholars have noted that leadership in social movements has yet to be adequately theorised (Aminzade, Goldstone & Perry, 2001; Melucci, 1996).

The ability of social movements to recruit, identify and develop good leaders at all levels who interact with constituents and focus on the voluntary participation of members and supporters has made them a sought-after commodity (Morris and Staggenborg, 2002). It is this type of leadership that forges a social movement community and mobilises its resources, constituting a primary source of social movement power. Those who perform this type of leadership work, especially when they work full time, are called organisers, which most Cosatu shop stewards are seen as when it comes to planning marches, protest action, pickets and conferences. Sometimes they are simply called leaders. These movement leaders are normally seen and defined as strategic decision-makers who inspire and organise others to participate in social movements.

2.11.3 Collaboration within social movements

South Africa has a history of racial segregation and Cosatu as a movement has largely brought together shop stewards from different racial and social groups to collaboratively fight for similar demands and workers' rights. Perception of group self-interest, which may be strongly impacted by socio-political freedom, is something that could impact collaboration negatively (Pulido, 2006; Roth, 2010).

Most existing studies on social movements in especially those on the African continent focusses on their resource mobilization, framing strategies, and roles in establishing democracy

(see Maccatory et al., 2010; Ndiaye, 2021; Wienkoop, 2022), neglecting the investigation of how social movements constantly collaborate with NGOs and activists in their advocacy activities and the value added by such collaborations. Since Cosatu is a federation movement that facilitates, organises and coordinates the activities of various unions under its umbrella, activists and shop stewards often find themselves in collaboration with other union members. http://www.cosatu.org.za/docs/policy/2006/consti2006.

This collaboration, in most cases, results in the creation of new knowledge on how to solve labour cases or tackle grievances within the workplace. This type of collaboration stretches even further as it impacts and influences mobilisation efforts between different shop stewards and movements. Through collaboration, support is garnished for solidarity protest action and shop stewards assist each other by keeping the bigger goal of the movement in mind.

However, Cosatu as a movement has been able to straddle this delicate balance and for many years has succeeded in collectively fighting for the rights of workers and the community. Cosatu stepped up in the fight against HIV and Aids to help the Treatment Action Campaign (TAC) force the government to make anti-retroviral medication (ARV) freely available to everyone. This was motivated by the impact this disease had on the affiliate's workers within COSATU workers. This collaboration between the TAC and Cosatu was the first of its kind. This is a classic example of collaboration to achieve a bigger goal and it was instrumental in changing government health policy and worker health rights on the shop floor. The September Commission highlighted in their 12-plan programme that COSATU should rebuild a powerful working-class movement, with social movements, NGOs, intellectuals and students, etc. COSATU should retain its independence while building (Cosatu ,1997).

CHAPTER 3

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Introduction

As lifelong learning became important, the spaces in which this learning occurred for adults started receiving greater attention. Learning outside of the formal schooling system and adult learning became areas of interest within the education space. In South Africa the concept of lifelong learning has been developed by movements such as the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu), as one of the components to restructure the education and training system capable of meeting both equity and development needs. (Sebolai-Mothsekga, 2013) It is with this in mind that I have decided to use social constructivist theory as the framework for this research study.

3.2 Social constructivist theory

This study draws on Lev Vygotsky's (1978) social constructivist theory as the main theoretical framework; however, this cannot be done without fully outlining the other theoretical concepts that play a role within the adult learning space. Social Constructivist Theory is based on the understanding that individuals construct their own knowledge using a combination of prior knowledge and new information. (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 57).

Social-constructivist theory has its origins in constructivism, which should not be viewed as a single theoretical perspective but as an evolving continuation of different aspects of constructivism. This evolutionary spectrum can be divided into three categories or schools of thought:

- Radical constructivism (von Glasersfeld, 1995),
- Cognitive constructivism (Anderson, 1993) and
- Social constructivism (Vygotsky, 1978).

The Vygotskian theory is rooted in the belief that learning and knowledge construction is a 'socially [and] culturally based activity' with the aspects of interaction, history culture and experience playing an intrinsic role in this process' (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 57) .Various studies have echoed and emphasised that social constructivism underpins the importance of 'culture

and context' by understanding society and how society constructs knowledge based on its own understanding (Derry, 1999; McMahon, 1997 in Kim, 2001).

This theory is further grounded in the belief that knowledge creation is a shared experience and that individuals are interdependent when it comes to the learning process and the construction of knowledge (Vygotsky, 1978). It builds on the premise that meaning is co-constructed through multiple interactions and that learning occurs through the construction of new knowledge and meaning from experiences (Jaeger & Lauritzen, 1992, p. 21–23; von Glasersfeld, 1989, p. 121–122). It conceives learning as a social process where the newcomer actively constructs meaning in collaboration with others as they are involved in social activities with one another and the broader community (Vygotsky, 1978).

Vygotsky's social constructivist theory of human learning describes learning as a social process that involves both culture and society. This social interaction plays a fundamental role in the process of cognition (Vygotsky, 1978). If knowledge construction by shop stewards mostly occurs through their social interactions and informal learning by sharing their lived experiences with one another, a lot can be said about them as a community. This community, which shares the same value system and stands in solidarity with each other during strike action and other forms of social activism, can be seen as what Lave and Wenger refer to as a 'community of practice'.

3.3 Community of practice

The phrase 'community of practice' (CoP) is thought to be relatively new, despite its wide use. It was coined in 1991 by anthropologists Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger while researching apprenticeship as a learning model. Its origins may be traced back to social learning theory and it has been investigated by social scientists for a number of analytical reasons. The notion investigates beneficial views of knowledge and learning because learning, according to Lave and Wenger (1991), is inevitably contextual and is part of the process of joining a community of practice. In particular, they argued that learning does not rest with the individual but is a social process that is situated in a cultural and historical context. Wenger defined a community of practice as a community with a joint enterprise, shared repertoire and mutual engagement (Wenger, 1998, p. 73). His focus was to create 'a

language for talking about learning as a human experience, the experience of people as social beings'.

A CoP is further defined by Lave and Wenger (Wenger and Wenger-Trayner 2015, p. 1). as 'a group of individuals who have a similar concern or a love for something, who connect regularly, and who engage in a process of collective learning in a shared area'. It does not have to happen on purpose and might be a random occurrence. Some CoPs, according to Wenger (1998, p. 244), are purposefully developed: they are 'institutionally designed, whilst others have an emergent nature forged via contact and negotiation' Wenger, Trayner and De Laat (2011) caution that 'not everything labelled a community is a community of practice, and that even while a neighbourhood is frequently referred to as a community, it is not always a CoP'. All CoPs have a fundamental structure in that they have three interlocking and mutually constitutive elements: the domain, the community and the practice (Wenger et al., 2002, pp. 23–41):

- A domain is the common enterprise in which the community is involved. Members of a certain domain communicate and engage in common activities (teaching), as well as build connections that allow them to learn from one another. People who engage and learn together are required for the formation of a CoP.
- A community is made up of those who participate in the domain's common business; it reflects the issue to which the community is engaged and oriented, while also representing the community's identity. Members form their common identity via constant contact and participation in their communities' traditions.
- Practice is a common list of resources; 'a collection of frameworks, ideas, tools, knowledge, styles, and methods for dealing with reoccurring challenges' (Wenger et al. 2002, p. 29). It establishes the specialised knowledge that its members share through language, tales and records.

'A community of practise is formed by growing these three aspects concurrently' Wenger-Trayner, and Wenger- 2015).

Furthermore, when persons engage in a CoP, it always involves a process of meaning negotiation, which occurs when two processes – namely participation and reification –

converge (Wenger, 1998). 'Participation entails doing and engaging, whereas reification entails creating artefacts like tools, words, symbols, laws, papers, concepts, theories, and so on, around which meaning negotiation is structured' (Smith, Hayes & Shea, 2017, p. 212). According to Wenger, White and Smith (2009, p. 57), a CoP 'needs both participation and reification to be present and in interaction'. Furthermore, participants in a CoP build and negotiate 'a set of criteria and expectations by which they recognise membership' through participation and reification (Wenger, 2010, p. 180). Wenger (2010) claims that the set of criteria includes mutual engagement; engaging and developing norms, expectations and connections; and shared repertoires and employing communal resources such as language, artefacts, tools, concepts, procedures and standards (Wenger, 1998, pp. 73–85).

The aforementioned criteria may be utilised by communities to define parameters for what it means to be a skilled participant, an outsider or somewhere in between, which is essential for learning to occur in a CoP (Wenger, 1998). The issue is: How do individuals in a CoP make meaning of their involvement and engagement in the CoP? According to Wenger (1998), the notion of practice can help answer this question. Practice is about finding significance in everyday living. Wenger (1998) believes that understanding practices requires the negotiation of meaning.

3.3.1 Legitimate peripheral participation and boundary crossing.

Legitimate peripheral participation (LPP) is a concept developed by anthropologists Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger (1991) as part of their social learning theory, particularly in the context of communities of practice (CoPs). Legitimate peripheral participation (LPP) is a type of situated learning, defined as 'a process that reinforces the focus that learning is ultimately a social activity rather than merely psychological' (Couros, 2003, p. 9). The notion of LPP allows one to comprehend 'how newcomers enter, learn from, and contribute to an existing community of practise over time' (Cuddpah & Clayton, 2011, p. 63).

The concept of full participation – how a newcomer to the society learns to 'think, act, talk, and be a full participant' – is critical to comprehending this concept (Cuddpah & Clayton, 2011, p. 63). Legitimate peripheral participation, write Lave and Wenger (1991, p. 29), 'provides a method to speak about interactions between newcomers and old-timers, about activities, identities, artifacts, and communities of knowledge and practice'. It depicts how freshly

nominated and selected members learn in this case. It is about how newcomers become a part of a community of practice.

The idea of genuine peripheral involvement characterises this process of going from the periphery to the centre. The concept of genuine peripheral engagement is mentioned in Wenger's books, but it does not take centre stage. Instead, it is a fundamental prerequisite for newcomers to be accepted into a CoP. 'Wenger's contribution to the development of this concept resides in his articulation of the particular measures (e.g., observation, special help, tight supervision and so on) that might be done to open up a practise to newcomers.' 'Regardless of how the peripherality of first engagement is achieved,' 'it must engage newcomers and convey a sense of how the group runs., Smith, Hayes, & Shea, 2017.p213).

Lave and Wenger's notion offers an analytical instrument to investigate the issues regarding how members of a society (newcomers) might achieve legitimacy and full participation through their membership in a CoP. 'Shared practises, by definition, generate limits,' writes Wenger (2000, p. 232). While there are limits or borders defined by the shared practices, these borders are described as both flexible and dynamic within the CoPs. Wenger states that these flexible, fluid and dynamic limits foster 'new learning in a number of aspects' (Wenger, 2000, p. 233). He further describes how communities and borders affect learning in the following excerpt:

> 'Communities of practise can foster critical competence, but they can also become enslaved by their own past... centred on themselves... 'Boundaries may be a source of division and isolation... However, they may also be locations of uncommon learning where viewpoints collide and new possibilities emerge' (Wenger, 2000, p. 233).

Borders are crossed through coordination (common practises across boundaries), transparency (dimensions of analysis and assessment) and negotiability of viewpoints (such as one-way or two-way connections). The effect of borders connecting communities is the capacity to have voices across several communities (Wenger, 2000, p. 234). Brokers, artefacts or border items themselves and interactions that occur across various communities and their members are the three basic forms of bridges across boundaries (Wenger, 2000, p. 234). Brokers, according to him, are persons who apply techniques between communities in various modalities, 'such as a targeted border or exchanging information across a single interaction between individuals from different communities' (Wenger, 2000, p. 234).

Another option to transcend borders is to 'serve as a butterfly, fluttering across borders and spreading information in the process, or as a bee, buzzing news into diverse groups' (Wenger, 2000, p. 236). Boundary items that serve as artefacts, common language and shared procedures can be beneficial to more than one CoP (Wenger, 2000, p. 236). The final significant bridge is the border interactions, which keep the boundary in place.

In summary, the social constructivist theory lends itself as a perfect lens through which social movements can be viewed. It allows the researcher to immerse themselves in the theory and creates the notion that everyone has the ability to construct their own knowledge in a way that makes sense to them based on prior experience and skill or by merely sharing in each other's lived experiences. Further to this, it plays a crucial role in fostering informal learning, promoting collaboration and enhancing the collective expertise of its members.
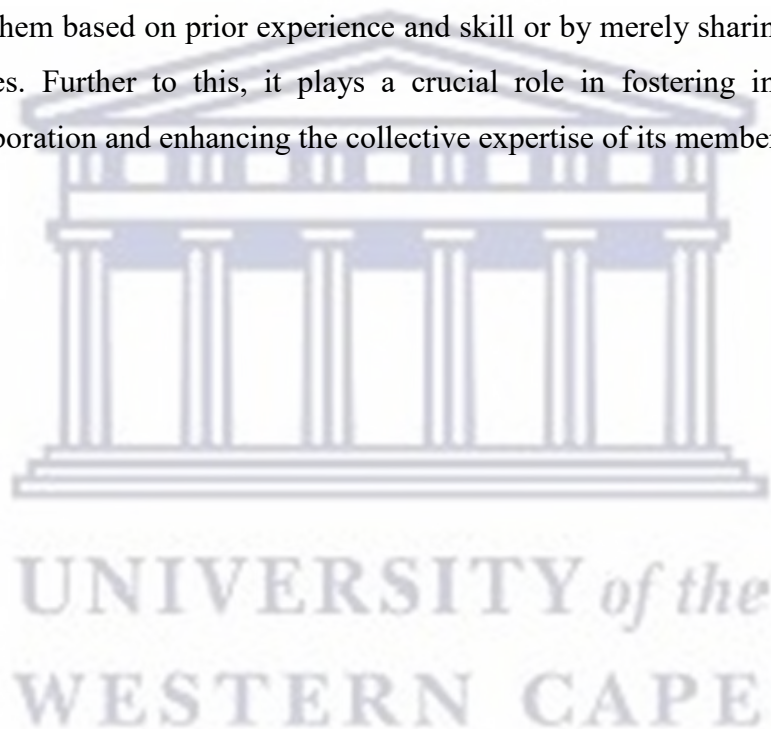
CHAPTER 4
METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

This section describes the methodological approach that was adopted in this investigation. Following this, an overview of the research design and the methods used to gather data will be provided. A discussion of the strategies that were used to analyse the data will then follow. This section concludes with a discussion of the delimitations of this inquiry.

4.2 Methodological approach

This is a qualitative investigation that is situated within an interpretive paradigm that emphasises experience and interpretation. Ontologically, the interpretative paradigm assumes that knowledge/reality is (socially) constructed, while epistemologically, it assumes that the knower and the known are intertwined (Mukhopadhyay & Gupta, 2014, p. 111). This research paradigm sought to construct meaning and understanding which is based on the interpretation's participants attached to the social events they experienced (Henning, 2004, p. 21). A key purpose of the interpretive research paradigm was to offer a descriptive analysis and to provide a comprehensive understanding of the social phenomenon instead of explaining universal laws and rules. This was the most appropriate approach to use to investigate how, why and what Cosatu shop stewards have learned within a social movement.

This investigation was based on a single case study of a qualitative nature using an interpretive perspective to analyse the rich data that were collected. Qualitative research is naturalistic and attempts to study the everyday life of different groups of people and communities in their natural settings (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). According to Babbie and Mouton (2001), it is particularly useful in the study of educational settings and processes allowing for an interpretive approach to the subject matter. It also aims to study 'human action from the insider perspective', (Babbie & Mouton, 2001, p. 270). This is done due to uncertainty about the dimensions and characteristics of the problem and therefore it uses 'soft data and in return gets rich data' (Babbie & Mouton, 2001, p. 270).

There is a close connection between constructivism and interpretivism. Interpretivism often focuses on important features of joint connotations and understanding, whereas constructivism extends this understanding with knowledge as it was created and interpreted (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). It is incumbent on the researcher to be aware that the nature and construct of knowledge take place within a socially constructed environment. This environment, according to (Mouton, 1996:133), provides the researcher with a rich number of opportunities to observe, investigate and understand the various learning processes that might occur within a social movement like Cosatu. It further lends itself to the 'gathering and documenting of the subtle experiences' by participants when gathering data through strategies such as 'participant observation, written text such as qualitative surveys, and face-to-face interviews' in the context that this knowledge was constructed (Babbie & Mouton, 2001, p. 273).

Interpretive studies, 'seek to explore people's experiences, emotions, views and perspectives (Henning, 2004, p. 2), which was a key aspect when it came to the Cosatu shop stewards, the situations or positions that they were placed in and their ability to acquire the knowledge that was needed. Furthermore, a 'qualitative interpretive paradigm does not concern itself with the search for applicable laws and rules but seeks to produce a descriptive analysis that emphasises a deep, interpretive understanding of a social phenomenon (Henning, 2004, p. 2). This approach gave the researcher greater scope to address issues of influence and impact and opened the platform to questions such as *Why?* and *How?* in particular (Deetz,1996).

The qualitative interpretivist perspective fits well with this research as it allowed me to interpret the local verbal and non-verbal communication and meanings while conducting interviews. This gave me a better understanding of the broader historical, economic, political, linguistic, ideological, geographical and cultural milieu within which Cosatu shop stewards operate. The decision to use qualitative research as a data collection method was based on the 'context, purpose, and nature of where the research will be located (Brysman & Burgess,1999, p. 45).

4.3 Research design

This research study made use of multiple case studies which include two or more cases within the same study to examine the Cosatu shop stewards' process of constructing knowledge within a social movement. Snow and Tom (2013), highlight that the case study research method is just one method used to study social movements. They further note that it's important to define and

understand the characteristics of the case study. For this research investigation, the working definition below was used:

'A case study is a study that focuses empirically and analytically on a case of something, that is a single instance or variant of some phenomena rather than on multiple instances of that phenomenon' (Snow & Trom, 2013, p. 147).

Yin (2003, p. 4) further elaborates on this definition stating that the case study:

'… allows the researcher to explore individuals or organizations, in a simple manner through various complex interventions, relationships, communities, or programs and supports the deconstruction and the subsequent reconstruction of various phenomena.'

To conceptualise what a case study is, one needs to understand its core characteristics as outlined by various authors (Lofland, 1996; Orum, Feagin & Sjoberg, 1991; Snow & Anderson, 1991; Snow & Trom, 2013; Yin, 1989). These include (a) investigation and analysis of an instance or variant of some bounded social phenomena that (b) seeks to generate a richly detailed and 'thick' elaboration of the phenomenon studied through (c) the use and triangulation of multiple methods or procedures that include, but are not limited to, qualitative techniques.

Two approaches guide the case study methodology, those of Stake (1995) and Yin (2006), who both base their approach to case study on a constructivist paradigm. Even though they employ different methods, their philosophical underpinnings ensure the exploration of the topic of interest and reveal the essence of the phenomenon (Baxter & Jack, 2008).

For this investigation, I have used Yin's (2003) approach, which focuses on the constructivist claim that truth is relative and that it is dependent on one's perspective (Baxter & Jack, 2008). This paradigm 'recognises the importance of the subjective human creation of meaning but doesn't reject outright some notion of objectivity' (Miller & Crabtree, 1999, p. 10). According to Searle (1995), constructivism is built upon the premise of a social construction of reality. One of the advantages of this approach was the close collaboration between the researcher and the participants while enabling participants to tell their stories (Crabtree & Miller, 1999). Through these stories, the participants were able to describe their views of reality which

enabled the researcher to better understand the participants' actions (Lather, 1992; Robottom & Hart, 1993).

The case study design was well suited to my research study as it falls within the criteria outlined by Yin (2003):

a) The focus of the study was to answer 'how' and 'why' questions; which is exactly what my main research question and sub-questions do.

b) You cannot influence or manipulate the behaviour of those involved in the study. The data collected were based on participants' own experiences and knowledge construction, therefore manipulation of the data was not possible as each participant's experience was different.

c) The boundaries are not clear between the phenomenon and context. In this research study, the phenomenon under study was to analyse the process that shop stewards utilised or implemented to construct knowledge.

I covered contextual conditions because I believe they were relevant to the phenomenon under study. There have been many research studies done about Cosatu shop stewards; however, no research has been done on how and why they construct knowledge through a movement like Cosatu. It was therefore important to understand what made them prefer to construct their knowledge in this way and how the construction of knowledge took place.

4.3.1 Data collection and sampling

The participants for this research study were selected through purposive sampling, which is a strategy used to identify and select interviewees who are suitable to participate in the research due to their special qualities (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016, p. 2).

Etikan et al (2016, p. 2) explain that:

'[Purposive sampling] is a non-random technique that does not need underlying theories or a set number of participants. Simply put, the researcher decides what needs to be known and sets out to find people who can and are willing to provide the information by virtue of knowledge or experience.'

The selected participants were shop stewards who were all Cosatu members and form part of the Education and Training Programme within Cosatu Western Cape. Their offices are located at Community House in Salt River, which was the research site where this study was conducted.

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The interviewees were both male and female old-timers, novices and experienced shop stewards. Such a combination of participants provided a deeper and broader understanding of how and why shop stewards have constructed knowledge within this movement.

4.3.2 Interviews

In qualitative research, interviewing is a fundamental method for gathering insights into participants' perspectives and experiences. Miles and Huberman (1994) emphasize the importance of face-to-face interaction between the researcher and participant to delve into the everyday world of the participants, allowing them to express their thoughts and experiences in their own terms. This immersion in the participant's world involves understanding their symbols, language, and conceptual frameworks.

Schurink (1998) underscores the necessity of collecting data in the participant's own words and from their frame of reference to truly grasp their experiences. In the present study, individual interviews were chosen as the primary method of data collection. Unstructured interviewing, which allows for flexibility and exploration of topics as they arise, was particularly suitable for exploratory-descriptive studies like this one.

The study utilised two types of interviews: unstructured individual interviews following a loose schedule, which allows for spontaneity and in-depth exploration of topics, and semi-structured individual interviews, providing a balance between flexibility and some predetermined questions or themes to guide the conversation. These approaches enabled the researcher to gain rich insights into the participants' perspectives and experiences within their own contexts.

A one-hour-long semi-structured interview was conducted with two participants at a time at their place of employment. In addition, the Provincial Education Manager sent an online Google questionnaire via WhatsApp to shop stewards who agreed to be part of this research study. The data collection methods that were used ensured that a wide variety of experiences and viewpoints were captured both via electronic recording and notes that were made. This data was discovered to be of great significance to this inquiry.

It was crucial for me as the researcher conducting this study to have a complete understanding of the shop steward as an adult learner and what it means to learn in a social movement. It was

for this reason that I decided to use semi-structured interviews guided by an interview schedule as part of my research design. This allowed me to obtain more in-depth data from a different perspective.

Five (5) themes guided the semi-structured interviews:

- Consciousness and solidarity
- Protest action, communication and knowledge construction
- Shop stewards' experiences
- Culture of learning within social movements
- Communities within social movements.

All interviews were conducted with individuals at a time and on a date that was convenient for them. The interviews were done face to face and the interviewees were made aware that the interviews were being recorded. Even though the interviewees had signed the consent form, that consent had been granted for the recording and the interview was mentioned audibly. Interviewees were also informed of the ethical considerations of the study for the sake of the recording. A complete interview guide is attached as Appendix C.

Questionnaires are a familiar tool within research, and qualitative questionnaires can be delivered in a variety of ways, e.g. 'hard copy, post, email attachment or via online software', the latter of which has pretty much become the norm today (Braun, Clarke, Boulton, Davey, & McEvoy, 2020). Braun et. al. (2020) further state that questionnaires not only facilitate affordability by being able to access larger populations, but also allow the researcher to gather information about a more diverse sample by the pure nature of their design. It is exactly this diversity of voices that matters for the quality and validity of knowledge, as this knowledge might inform practice (Braun et. al., 2020). Analyses of qualitative questionnaire data are typically presented as thematically organised patterns developed from across the entire dataset, illustrated by vivid and compelling excerpts from participants' responses (Opperman et al., 2014; Peel, 2010 as cited in Braun et. al, 2020).

Technological developments and the COVID-19 pandemic have offered many opportunities for designing and developing user-friendly web-based questionnaires. Google Forms is a cloud-based data management tool used for designing and developing web-based questionnaires. This tool was provided by Google Inc. 10 and is freely available on the web to anyone who wants to use and create web-based questionnaires. This research tool gave me the flexibility of anywhere, anytime access to the data.

For this study, an additional letter was mailed to the Secretary of Cosatu requesting permission to send the Google online questionnaire to all participants. A Google questionnaire link was sent via WhatsApp to all shop stewards who consented. The questionnaire consisted of 21 open-ended questions. The questionnaire was self-administered and participants were able to type in their responses as well as select responses that they identified or have experienced from a pre-determined response list of options. By typing in their responses, participants were allowed to give a rich and multifaceted account of their 'experiences, narratives, practices, positionings, and discourses' that would be of interest to this qualitative study (Braun & Clarke, 2013).

Table :1 Participant questionnaire distribution

Questionnaires	Questionnaires distributed	Questionnaires received
Google Online	50	20
Hard copy	25	21
Total questionnaires received		41

The shop stewards who were invited to participate did so because of their interest in the project. The voice of the shop stewards is silent within the various volumes of literature both in the academic and the social movement union space.

Fifty (50) shop stewards were approached to complete the online Google questionnaire and the link was sent via the Education Manager to all of them. Of the 50 requested, only 41 questionnaires were completed. Due to data constraints and challenges with load-shedding, only 20 shop stewards completed the questionnaire online; the remaining 21 completed the questionnaire in hard-copy form. This was a factor that I did not anticipate at the time. With load-shedding being a daily issue, it meant that shop stewards had to reserve the battery life of

their phones for more important work and personal matters and preferred completing the questionnaire in hard copy. This proved to be a huge challenge as there was no research funding to cover the cost of printing and I decided to fund it myself.

I decided to apply the COVID-19 protocols in this regard when handling the copies as I was now forced to handle several copies that came from various participants and precautionary measures were put in place while capturing the data. This was unforeseen but deemed a necessary precaution.

Even though 21 shop stewards indicated that they would prefer to complete a hard-copy questionnaire, I decided to make 25 hard copies of each document: the consent form, the information sheet and the Google questionnaire. This allowed shop stewards to take the questionnaire home and complete it in their own time. Most felt that reading through the questions when they were relaxing would be much better.

I approached five shop stewards to do the one-on-one interviews. Unfortunately, one passed away before the interview could be conducted, one resigned from the company and one was no longer a shop steward when it came time to conduct the interview. This made two of the five shop stewards that I'd approached ineligible. Thus, two interviews were conducted with the remaining eligible interviewees, which lasted one hour each. The following categories emerged from the data that were collected from the questionnaires and interviews.

4.4 Data analysis

In an attempt to collect all the said data, all ethical protocols needed to be followed. This study started during the COVID-19 pandemic and even though I collected my data after restrictions were lifted, I still upheld COVID-19 regulations while collecting my data. This was done due to the nature of having hard copies of the Google questionnaire as part of my data collection instruments.

4.5 Ethical considerations

4.5.1 Introduction

According to De Vos, Strydom, Fouché and Delport (2011), research should be based on mutual trust, acceptance, cooperation, promise and well-accepted agreements and expectations between the researcher and participants. Welman, Kruger and Mitchell (2005) take this a step

further and focus on the general principles of research ethics that specify that (a) no harm should be inflicted and (b) all participants can freely partake or withdraw from the research study at any time. I will now outline how this information was made available to all participants.

4.5.2 Informed consent during COVID-19

With the onset of COVID-19, the process of data collection was affected in various ways. Considering the different lockdown regulations, the researcher took extra care to adhere to all COVID-19 protocols. The health and well-being of participants and the researcher took priority when collecting data.

Participants were required to give consent when participating in the research study and due to COVID-19, a copy of the participant consent form was sent electronically to all. Participants had the option of verbally giving their consent, which was recorded before the interview commenced. Alternatively, they could sign and return the participant consent form. This process minimised the handling of any paper-based research documents in order to avoid the contagion during the pandemic.

Due to the electronic nature of my research, I made sure that participants who partook in the online interviews had a stable internet connection or access to Wi-Fi or data.

When a participant did not have access to an internet connection or a smartphone to do the online interview, the following steps were taken to adhere to all COVID-19 protocols:

1. An agreed-upon meeting place was sought where social distancing of 1.5 metres could be observed.
2. The researcher ensured that all items used, e.g. chairs, desks and pens, were sanitised in the presence of the participant.
3. The researcher made available at the entrance of the interview room hand sanitiser, disposable gloves and masks for participants to wear, since they were requested to remove theirs and put on disposable ones before entering the interview room.
4. The use of disposable gloves was important for both the researcher and participants when handling and signing the participant consent form as this minimised the risk of infection.

5. The signed participant consent form was placed in a clear A4 zip lock bag as the form carried the risk of coming into contact with the contagion since the novel coronavirus could reside on paper for two to three days.

4.5.3 Voluntary participation

Participants were informed that their participation within the study is of a voluntary nature. Should anything within the interview process make them feel uncomfortable or I they felt that they no longer wanted to participate in the research study they were under no obligation to continue.

Due to the nature of the POIA Act the information of shop stewards on their data base could not be shared externally. The researcher then approached the Education Manager and it was suggested that participants be invited via the Education desk of Cosatu, to partake in the research study. Only those who respond would be invited to complete the online Google questionnaire.

4.5.4 Confidentiality/Anonymity

All participants' responses to the Google questionnaire were anonymous. Every effort was made by the researcher to preserve participant confidentiality and anonymity by doing the following:

- Assigning code names or numbers to participants to be used on all research notes and documents.

- Participant data were kept confidential except in cases where the researcher was legally obligated to report specific incidents.

4.5.5 Risk

Even though the emotional and personal risk was not high during this study, consideration was given to participants who might experience any personal or emotional risk during this research. Assistance with the referral to a community organization was available at the request of the participant. Were a participant at any point to feel uncomfortable in sharing certain information, they had the right to decline to answer any or all questions and could terminate their involvement at any time.

4.5.6 Data storage

All data were stored on an external hard drive, with the different folders saved under pseudonyms, and were kept in a locked space identified by the researcher. No one had access to the information unless requested in writing and approved by all research parties. All field notes, interview transcriptions and any other identifying participant information was kept in a locked cabinet in the possession of the researcher. Disposal of data after the set five-year period will be done by formatting all external devices and shredding all transcripts and notes.

4.6 Conclusion

In conclusion, the methodological approach employed in this research was rooted in the interpretive paradigm, emphasising experience and interpretation within a qualitative investigation. The ontological stance assumed that knowledge and reality are constructed; while epistemologically, it acknowledged the intertwined nature of the knower and the known. The interpretive research paradigm was chosen to construct meaning and understanding based on participants' interpretations of social events, specifically investigating how and why Cosatu shop stewards decide to learn within a social movement.

The qualitative nature of the research, conducted through a case-study approach, aligned with an interpretivist perspective, focusing on the everyday life of Cosatu shop stewards within their natural settings. This approach, guided by interpretivism and constructivism, sought to explore participants' experiences, emotions, views and perspectives, avoiding the search for universal laws and rules in favour of providing a descriptive analysis and a deep interpretive understanding of the social phenomenon.

The choice of the case study research strategy, particularly following Yin's (2006) constructivist approach, allowed for an in-depth exploration of how and why Cosatu shop stewards construct knowledge within the social movement. The methodology involved semi-structured interviews and online questionnaires, employing purposive sampling to select participants who could provide valuable insights. The research design, focusing on 'how' and 'why' questions, respected the contextual conditions and blurred boundaries between the phenomenon and its context.

Data collection limitations, such as the impact of load-shedding on online questionnaire completion, were encountered and addressed during the study. The adoption of COVID-19 protocols ensured the safety and well-being of participants and the researcher during data collection.

Ethical considerations played a crucial role, emphasising informed consent, voluntary participation, confidentiality and risk mitigation. Participants were given the flexibility to choose their preferred mode of participation and efforts were made to minimise any potential risks associated with data collection.

The methodological approach, research design and ethical considerations collectively shaped a comprehensive framework for investigating how and why Cosatu shop stewards construct knowledge within a social movement. The findings derived from this rigorous and ethical research methodology contributed to a deeper understanding of the complex processes involved in adult learning within the context of Cosatu as a social movement.
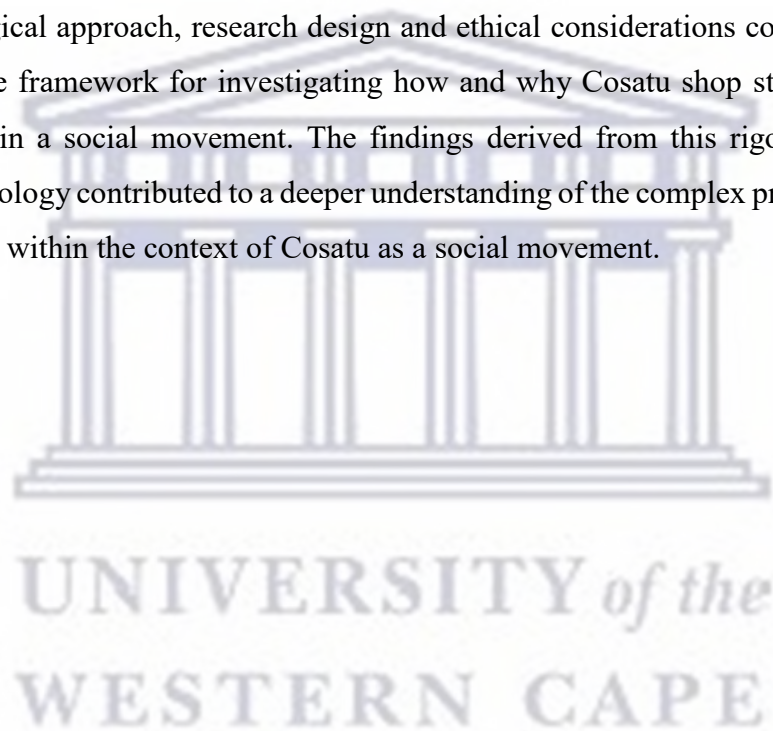
CHAPTER 5
DATA ANALYSIS

5.1 Introduction

In this study, the researcher drew on Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis as a foundational method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns within qualitative data. Thematic analysis was described as providing flexibility for novice researchers, allowing for a rich and detailed exploration of data without being bound to a specific theoretical framework. Braun and Clarke emphasised the importance of thematic analysis in qualitative research, suggesting it as the first method to be learned by novice researchers due to its core skills applicable to various analyses. The authors proposed a six-step framework for analysis, involving familiarity with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing and defining themes and, finally, drawing conclusions based on the results.

This research employed both one-on-one semi-structured interviews and a questionnaire, aiming to enhance reliability and validity while amplifying the voices of those involved in creating cultural elements within the context of a social movement. The study also explored the impact of Cosatu as a social movement on cultural and political change, highlighting strategies used to foster awareness, unity and knowledge construction through diverse cultural activities on the shop floor. This was seen through workers' lunchtime pickets, the creation of posters for various demonstrations and meetings and the support for communities with regard to the closure of schools and clinics in vulnerable communities. These instruments employed a comprehensive approach to understanding and strengthening the voices of shop stewards and social activists involved in innovative cultural practices. The following findings were recorded during this study, from which several themes emerged from the data.

5.2 Findings and discussion of results
5.3 Introduction

Below are the findings and the discussion of results in the form of themes and sub–theme that emerged while analysing the data. Each theme has a short introduction and is followed by a summary of the core elements that emerged from the data.

Shop stewards' biographical information

Table 2: Participants' biographical information

Online		Hard Copy	
Gender		Gender	
Male	11	Male	13
Female	9	Female	8
Total	20	Total	21
Age (years)		Age (years)	
25–35	6	25–35	4
36–45	5	36–45	8
46–50	1	46–50	6
50+	8	50+	3
Total	20		21

The above table represents the participants who took part in the research study. The data showcase both the age and gender of participants who took part in this research study. The following can be said about the data:

1. Within this study the focus of age was not a key factor, the focus was on the length in years that the participant has been a shop steward which contributed to them either being considered a veteran or novices.

2. In terms of gender, there were slightly more males than females becoming shop stewards.

However, no actual inferences could be drawn as being elected as a shop steward was not dependent on gender or age, but rather on what the nominated shop steward had done within their constituency, their ability to lead and their willingness to take up the position.

The above graph outlines the number of years that each participant had been a shop steward. It gives a good indication of what percentage are novice, experienced and veteran shop stewards based on the number of years that they had been a shop steward. These data tie into the lived experiences of shop stewards where they refer to engaging with those who are more experienced and learning from veterans regarding how to handle certain labour matters on the shop floor.

Theme 1: Empowerment, conscientisation and social justice
Empowerment, conscientisation and social justice are key reasons for shop stewards becoming part of a social movement like Cosatu. It can be seen as a turning point in shifting their thinking and awareness creation when exposed to these processes. This critical shift in thinking and doing is what makes Cosatu shop stewards key role players when it comes to engagements.

Sub-theme: The journey of becoming a shop steward

This theme explores the transformative impact of becoming a shop steward, and the process of individual awareness creation and active community engagement. It highlights the interconnectedness between workers' issues and broader societal concerns, emphasising the role of shop stewards as active participants in community organisations. This conscientisation

becomes key when shop stewards decide to join Cosatu. As is highlighted by the shop stewards' voices below, it is clear that conscientisation and social justice are just some of the types of knowledge and awareness shared within and through this movement:

- 'I was introduced by a family member while I was in trouble and learned the hard way how much shop stewards were needed.' (Online Participant 8)
- 'I saw the need to be the voice for the voiceless.' (Online Participant 20)
- 'Seeing the hardships that workers went through …' (Online Participant 4)
- 'Yes, I know more now about the budget speech than before. I did not always understand how things fit into each other because I never had enough information or never understood.' (Interview Participant 2)

The aspects of social justice within their communities came out strongly and there was a renewed sense of understanding by shop stewards of the role they play in their communities and the assistance that they can give once exposed and empowered by the knowledge that they have gained while being a shop steward. Some of the participants had this to say:

- 'Yes, becoming a shop steward helped me realise actually what is happening in the community, there is so much Gender Base Violence happening in our country that we are actually not aware of even in the country. South Africa's crime rate is the highest, becoming a shop steward also made me aware of following the news.' (Interview Participant 1)
- 'Yes. My political awareness was raised when I became a shop steward.' (Online Participant 4)
- 'It's made me more aware of issues in the community in terms of speaking out for voiceless people who are afraid of speaking out against politicians in positions who do not deliver on promises.' (Interview Participant 2)
- 'Yes, I know more now about the budget speech than before and can understand how it will affect myself and the community.' (Interview Participant 2)
- 'I did not always understand how things fit into each other because I never had enough information or never understood.' (Online Participant 16)

The majority of shop stewards saw themselves as change agents not only on the shop floor but within their communities. The fact that shop stewards feel they can effect change within

their communities answers the research question of what types of knowledge are being created and shared within a movement like Cosatu. The knowledge that is being shared in this case is not only being used to empower workers on the shop floor but also to create awareness about social issues within their respective communities. This knowledge is multifaceted and speaks of how they have constructed the knowledge that they have been exposed to for their own understanding and feel confident to engage their communities when disseminating this information. Overall, the theme celebrates the idea that movements such as Cosatu serve not only as advocates for workers but also as integral components of creating awareness within communities and other movements with whom shop stewards have regular interactions.

This transformation and knowledge construction by shop stewards created further awareness and capabilities. Not only did shop stewards realise that they could effect change but also the reason they wanted to create that change and take up this role. The following narratives of people who became shop stewards are all characterised by passion, devotion and a sense of duty. They highlight the range of reasons for assuming this position.

- 'I was elected by members based on trust and having the guts to speak on their behalf.' (Online Participant 17).
- 'My father was a politician who died in exile that is why I became a shop steward.' (Online Participant 19)
- 'I was told by my mother to join, there was no one to represent nurses.' (Online Participant 2)
- 'I saw the need to be the voice for the voiceless.' (Online Participant 4)
- 'Being made aware of how people struggle to make a living and seeing family and friends being retrenched made me help others.' (Interview Participant 1)

Reflecting on the research question, these narratives illuminate shop stewards' lived experiences which create a sense of commitment in a social movement like Cosatu. In sharing their own experiences, shop stewards connected with their communities and workers on the shop floor on a much deeper level as there were elements of trust and leadership displayed.

However, none of this would have been possible without shop stewards having to navigate and face challenges when trying to serve both the workers on the shop floor and their communities. For some, it has been a huge transition. Even with the knowledge that was gained through workshops and sharing their experiences, committing to the cause was very difficult as everyday life took over. Below is an account of their experiences when deciding on joining other organisations outside of the movement.

- 'Yes, the Palestine movement.' (Participant 1 hard copy)
- 'Yes, I am a street committee member.' (Online Participant 14)
- 'No, I don't have time.' (Online Participant 7)
- 'Yes, I'm a member of ANC and SACP because I believe that complaining doesn't help you much need to be actively involved.' (Interview Participant 1)
- 'No, work and house responsibilities take too much of my time.' (Participant 12 hard copy)
- 'No, but after I went to a School Governing Body (SGB) workshop at Cosatu I understood how the school my daughter attends functions.' (Interview Participant 2)
- 'Yes, I also became involved in street committees in my community, and have a leadership position as chairperson at the soccer club.' (Interview Participant 2)
- Solidarity for me is important because businesses can be forced to a decision when there is enough pressure.' (Online Participant 1).
- 'To become one, in everything...one voice, one response, and one reaction to 'gain success and reach the end goal that leads to victory.' (Participant 2 hard copy)
- 'Solidarity is an important tool it shows how strong can you be.' (Participant 3 hard copy)

It is clear that the type of information that is shared within Cosatu is of immense value and speaks directly to the research question about the types of knowledge that shop stewards receive and construct, and how acquiring this knowledge allows them to plough back into their respective communities. This is done by joining community organisations and sports clubs and by sharing the knowledge that they have acquired, and they make a lasting impact within their respective communities. It is indeed this balancing act and commitment that showcases the multifaceted nature of their roles.

In summary, this theme explores how becoming a shop steward can have a transforming effect, bringing people's awareness of bigger societal and national issues outside of the workplace to the fore. All of the respondents agreed that a crucial part of the shop steward's duties is to promote union and political education, which raises awareness; however, these voices illustrated how concerns that they previously overlooked were brought to light by working as a shop steward. Thus, the theme also highlights how awareness creation becomes an essential component of the steward's duties. It does not only become a source of empowerment and knowledge creation for shop steward but the community at large.

Theme 2: Knowledge construction through solidarity and participation

This theme encapsulates the essence of solidarity as understood by shop stewards in the context of practical actions, which extend to protest actions and marches. This theme and its sub-themes link directly to my research questions on the types of knowledge that are constructed, how this knowledge is constructed and their lived experiences while doing so.

Sub-theme: Solidarity – shop stewards' perspectives on the strength of unity

This sub-theme focuses on how shop stewards view and experience solidarity and the impact it has on unity and protest action within a movement like Cosatu. Shop stewards see solidarity as a collective strength where affiliates from different organizations unite for a common cause. The theme conveys a sense of standing together, symbolising unity and strength against challenges and is illustrated by expressions like:

- 'United we stand ... divided we fall.' (Participant 21 hard copy)
- 'An injury to one is an injury to all.' (Online Participant 7)
- 'Solidarity for me is when all affiliates come together from different organizations and stand together as one for the same thing.' (Interview Participant 2)
- 'It teaches you camaraderie and unity and that we are all one when it comes to our problems with management.' (Interview Participant 2)

- 'Solidarity to me means that we all stand together for a particular cause even if it does not affect you directly.' (Interview Participant 1)

It is this solidarity that allows Cosatu shop stewards to effectively collaborate with members from other unions within the federation movement. In most cases, it is the essence of the understanding of solidarity that extends to practical actions, such as 'providing strike support and presenting memoranda to authorities' (Online Participant 5). This theme ties into the research question on shop stewards' lived experiences and how they understand what it means to be in solidarity with others. It also clearly outlines how they have constructed knowledge based on the concept of what solidarity means to them. This highlights what shop stewards learn while actively participating in social movement activities. This understanding of what solidarity is and what effect it has on community and worker demands allows shop stewards to demonstrate it practically.

The general aim of solidarity is to bring people together. This aspect is no different for shop stewards, as they come together as a community, emphasising the sense of shared concerns and the collective efforts to address common challenges. It also links and underpins the social constructivist theory that has been used in this research study, which is grounded in the belief that knowledge creation is a shared experience and that individuals are interdependent when it comes to the learning process and the construction of knowledge (Vygotsky, 1978).

These narratives expressed by shop stewards answer directly the research questions of how this type of knowledge is constructed and the preference for doing so in a social movement environment. In summary, this theme illustrates the shop stewards' belief in the transformative power of unity, underlining the significance of solidarity and participation as driving forces in advocating for the rights and well-being of workers.

Sub-theme: The voice of protest action

The following sub-theme elicited several strong sentiments from shop stewards about why they feel that protest action is a voice that is heard by both the government and employers. Shop stewards had the following to say about why they felt protesting was a way of communicating.

- 'Different forms of protest action such as service delivery and the burning of tyres, the barricading of roads sends out different types of communication which

not only involves union members but the community at large.' (Interview Participant 1)

- 'Shop stewards had the following to say about why they felt that protesting was a way of communicating.' (Interview Participant 2)
- 'Without protesting government and management will not listen.' (Online Participant 5)
- 'Protesting was seen as the best weapon and language that is understood.' (Online Participant 15)
- 'History has shown that protest actions work.' (Online Participant 9)
- 'Protest action and strikes made me understand, follow, and apply the law.' (Online Participant 20)
- 'Protest action has shown solidarity and unity among the different unions' and 'shop stewards got to know each other better' (Interview Participant 2).
- 'My leadership skills improved and when it comes to negotiations we are taken seriously.' (Online Participant 17)
- 'For me as a shop steward protest action should be the last option.' (Participant 7 hard copy)
- 'Yes … There is unity in numbers, and sometimes the protest action is the only way to carry over a story or issues.' (Online Participant 16)
- 'Yes, I do protest sends out a clear message with what you want the government to know and fix … Yes, to get the government to listen.' (Participant 5 hard copy)
- 'It is a way of communication expressing grievance in the public domain for gathering solidarity and sympathy to the outside world.' (Online Participant 3)
- 'Every single citizen has the right to protest peacefully and lawfully if politicians in positions do not deliver on promises.' (Interview Participant 1)

Even though shop stewards had expressed huge support in favour of protest action as a form of communication, others did not agree with this notion and felt that it did more harm to the country. These were their responses when asked this question:

- 'For me as a shop steward protest action should be the last option.' (Online Participant 8)

- 'No, what I don't like is the way protesting is done, burning tyres, burning busses, and killing innocent people.' (Online Participant 11)
- 'Blocking people from going to work.' (Participant 14 hard copy)
- 'Children not going to school.' (Participant 12 hard copy)
- 'Damaging of government properties, damaging roads.' (Participant 3 hard copy)
- 'When they do protest the poor are affected the most.' (Participant 17 hard copy)

Moreover, this theme also reflects a commitment to peaceful protest and highlights the importance of showing support even when an issue may not directly impact an individual. It gives a clear indication that shop stewards see protest action as a way of expressing themselves and having learned that this is a method that works gives them hope. This learning happens on several levels: by watching what took place in history, by actively partaking in the action and by listening and being in conversation with veterans and other activists.

Sub-theme: The impact of struggle songs in protest action

The role that struggle songs played in the rich history of South Africa cannot be denied. They have a deep-rooted history associated with pain and suffering in the pursuit of a non-racial, free and democratic South Africa. This theme focuses on the significance and the role that struggle songs play in the emancipation and expression of what shop stewards want to convey. Below are several views expressed by shop stewards regarding what they feel the emotional and historical impact of singing these songs is for them today and how singing impacts their fight for worker rights.

- 'It's not only a reminder of the past and struggle.' (Online Participant 7)
- 'But also, a feeling of respect to those who paid the ultimate price.' (Online Participant 1)
- 'Feeling of freedom.' (Online Participant 17)
- 'Struggle songs make us feel strong to raise our voice.' (Online Participant 19)
- 'Songs is fuel emotions and give us more spirit.' (Online Participant 3)
- 'Struggle songs also a message that you want to bring over.' (Online Participant 16)
- 'Very moving and makes you humble and think what the struggles we have been
- through.' (Participant 15 hard copy)
- 'It takes us back to the struggle years.' (Participant 5 hard copy)

- 'Emotional and feelings of strength.' (Online Participant 11)
- 'Struggle songs does not ask for race.' (Online Participant 1)
- 'I feel stronger but most of the songs I really do not understand but I do get a feeling of unity.' (Participant 15 hard copy)
- 'I do not understand all of them but the ones that I do understand I sing along with.' (Participant 10 hard copy)

- 'It also gives me a sense of belonging' (Online Participant 4).
- 'When I start singing struggle songs with my comrades, I feel like we are one.' (Online Participant 3)

Not only do struggle songs create a profound emotional and motivational impact on shop stewards during protest action, but the responses that they elicit convey a range of emotions, from a sense of respect for those who sacrificed for the cause to feelings of love, unity and freedom This theme underscores the significance of struggle songs as more than just musical expression; they serve as a reminder of historical struggles, a unifying force and a means of conveying messages. The emotional connection to these songs is palpable, with participants expressing feelings of humility, motivation, nostalgia and a sense of achievement.

The theme also further addresses the role of struggle songs within Cosatu, by highlighting their importance as a foundational element of the movement. The songs are seen as a unifying force, teaching about the history of the movement and serving as a means of communication that transcends words. It is not only through shop stewards' lived experiences that they connect on a deeper level with struggle songs; there is also a heritage and history that lends itself to this. This is another key way that shop stewards construct their knowledge. Singing songs that tell the stories of the struggles of veterans and heroes allows them to learn through this oral history process. This creates a space for them to learn informally through song.

In summary, this theme paints a vivid picture of the emotional resonance and unifying power of struggle songs, emphasising their integral role in shaping the collective identity, history and motivation within the context of Cosatu shop stewards and protest action. It also links with how they further construct knowledge through songs, deconstruct the knowledge and learn from history.

Theme 3: Equal education through learning and knowledge construction

This broad theme focuses on the reasons shop stewards prefer to learn through a movement like Cosatu, what the drivers are for wanting to learn in this way and what their experiences are while doing so. It also sheds light on what types of learning take place within this movement and how this knowledge that is being transferred is constructed by shop stewards in their quest to disseminate it to their workers and constituents. It is broken down into sub-themes to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the complexities that are involved.

Sub-theme: Complexities of learning within and through a social movement

This theme revolves around the ethos of 'each one teach one,' emphasising the collective responsibility to share knowledge and empower others within the organization. The responses highlight a positive and collaborative approach, underlining the idea that neither age nor experience should be seen as a barrier to teaching and learning in the quest for constructing knowledge as learning is viewed as a lifelong process.

Shop stewards shared their various experiences on what the slogan means to them, giving a personal account of the impact that it had on them.

- 'The knowledge you have of the organization you should pass it on to the next one doesn't matter what age you are.' (Participant 16 hard copy)
- 'It means extending knowledge acquired from one to others.' (Online Participant 2)
- 'Each one teach one is a simple technique for impacting a small piece of understanding to a group.' (Participant 7 hard copy)
- 'It's important that what you have learned not to keep for yourselves but to share it.' (Online Participant 13)
- 'Everyone should know their rights stand for them and remind one another.' (Online Participant 18)
- 'We can take a person and mould her or him and teach them to the best of your ability of the knowledge you have learned.' (Participant 9 hard copy).
- 'Share your knowledge with the broader community;' (Online Participant 1)

- 'To help where you can and to take care of someone that needs your help on the shop floor.' (Online Participant 11)

- 'It means that what I know I need to teach my comrade.' (Online Participant 20)

- 'To help each other because you are never too old to learn and whatever you know you should share.' (Participant 13 hard copy)

- 'It means to share whatever you know with other shop stewards so that you all can become stronger together.' (Participant 15 hard copy)

- 'Each person should be helping the next one.' (Online Participant 19)

- 'To help our members and comrades to be empowered with knowledge gained from the top.' (Participant 1 hard copy)

- 'It is the commitment that you make to other shop stewards to help them where you can.' (Participant 21 hard copy)

In summary, this theme encapsulates the value placed on sharing knowledge and fostering a culture of learning, support and empowerment. 'Each one teach one' is not just a slogan but a commitment to helping one another grow and strengthen the collective knowledge base within the organisation.

Sub-theme: Lifelong advocacy – nurturing knowledge in a social movement

This sub-theme revolves around the complexities of learning within and through a social movement, with a specific focus on the transformative experiences within Cosatu. The responses highlight the multifaceted nature of learning, encompassing formal and informal education, exposure to different cases and the unique attributes that a powerful movement like Cosatu has.

- 'By attending workshops and conferences I felt a bit lost not knowing what to expect.' (Online Participant 10)

- 'The more I attend the better I will begin to understand.' (Online Participant 14)

- 'This is a different platform, and you can learn different things from different individuals and cultures.' (Online Participant 4)

- 'Everything that is taught within Cosatu is based on real cases and are relevant.' (Online Participant 11)

- 'Learning through Cosatu was easy, I was happy with the opportunity that I was given.' (Participant 17 hard copy)
- 'Learning within the movement helped me to write better minutes, run and chair meetings properly.' (Online Participant 19)
- 'I have also learned to carefully listen to management responses to our demands.' (Online Participant 13)
- 'I believe that it is necessary to learn from all people from all walks of life not only those who are educated.' (Online Participant 1)
- 'Learning in this way for me has happened by exchanging ideas and I have learned more than what I was aware of.' (Online Participant 20)
- 'By learning through Cosatu I have read all types of material that were available, especially labour movement history.' (Online Participant 7)
- 'I feel like I am part of something bigger and prefer learning with other adults than sitting with younger students.' (Participant 14 hard copy)
- 'Learning through Cosatu is more hands-on … I feel much more developed in political issues and can actively play a role in planning protest action, strikes, and other working-class action and issues.' (Interview Participant 2)
- 'I learned that I do not speak for myself or represent myself.' (Online Participant 11)

It is in this breadth of learning experiences within Cosatu that knowledge extends beyond traditional labour issues. Participants mention gaining knowledge about financial management, climate change, gender-based violence and even delving into political literature such as works by Lenin. Not only is Cosatu seen as an umbrella of affiliates, providing a comprehensive learning environment where individuals can gain knowledge about labour matters but also broader societal and political matters.

It is this nurturing nature that prevails within Cosatu that draws shop stewards to want to learn. The practicality of having training explained using real cases as examples allows for deeper interactions between members. Even though this cohort is made up of a fair balance of novice, experienced and veteran shop stewards, there is a common factor that they all share.

Sub-theme: 'Each one teach one' shop steward's learning journey within Cosatu

Not only does Cosatu provide a unique platform where learning can take place for the enrichment of skills and the broader personal and professional development of its participants, but it also allows them to navigate the unfamiliar without being judged.

Within this space, the accessibility of informal education is within each shop steward's reach as information is deconstructed and simplified, which, for shop stewards, is seen as a strength allowing them to understand not only complex policies and resolutions but also how to implement them. Shop stewards shared their views as follows:

- 'Learning through Cosatu makes it easier to understand the issues, you are given first-hand information from people who have experienced all the challenges of being a shop steward on the shop floor.' (Interview Participant 2)
- 'With any group or movement, you are always learning.' (Online Participant 11)
- 'Not being judged when you learn through a movement like Cosatu cause, everyone is there for the same reasons … Cosatu is also the only union that offers shop steward training, and this is something that helps all shop stewards.' (Interview Participant 1)
- 'Talking to older shop stewards was the best way to learn about what is happening within the movement and how to deal with issues in the workplace … I was accepted and not judged.' (Participant 3 hard copy)
- 'It is a powerful movement and one of the only federations that has an education desk that does training and workshops for their shop stewards. Within a movement like Cosatu, there is always a lot of information that is being shared. You don't have to have degrees or have completed matric to become a shop steward the movement teaches you through workshops and by attending meetings and conferences how to do things … Learning this way has empowered me.' (Online Participant 16)

Within this learning journey, shop stewards are exposed to diverse forms of constructing knowledge, which allows them to effectively advocate for and represent workers in the workplace. This empowering growth that individuals experience within Cosatu can be attributed to the type of content that is shared within these learning spaces. Shop stewards explained what types of education programmes they were exposed to.

- 'CCMA training, Political education, Collective bargaining and much more.' (Participant 6 hard copy)
- 'We have programs that deal with labour related matters, and this is where I learned communication skills which helped me a lot in labour related cases.' (Online Participant7)
- 'Grievance training, general shop steward training.' (Interview Participant 2)
- 'Cosatu provides various workshops on GBV, budgets, and how to do elections of members.' (Online Participant 3)

This theme also revolved around the continuous effort to enhance awareness among shop stewards beyond the workplace. It acknowledges the existing courses and workshops while also highlighting the perceived gaps and the potential for additional programmes. The theme emphasises the crucial role of awareness creation by addressing broader societal issues and the need for a proactive approach to expanding educational initiatives within Cosatu and in collaboration with other social movements.

Below is a diagram that shows the different skills that shop stewards have gained while learning through Cosatu.

Figure 2: Skills development of shop stewards

As demonstrated in the diagram above, shop stewards indicated that they have gained various skills while being shop stewards. Learning within the movement is described as contributing to practical skills development. This includes improved minute writing, effective meeting management and enhanced listening skills during interactions with management. The importance of learning from individuals of all educational backgrounds and exchanging ideas and practices becomes a valuable means of learning and provides a holistic understanding of the information that is shared. There is a sense of belonging and achievement of something bigger when learning through Cosatu due to its communal nature of learning with other adults. The practical exposure that is given to shop stewards within this movement is of immense value. It allows them to be hands-on in becoming actively involved in the planning of protest actions, strikes and other working-class actions, fostering a practical understanding of political issues.

There are still gaps within the Cosatu education desk training programmes that should be addressed. Bullying in the workplace should be seen as an important issue. Soft skills and other courses should also be offered as this lends to capacity building and development. The reopening of the union library is an important element that will allow shop stewards to become actively involved in their own learning.

Theme 4: Shop stewards as a community of practice

This broad theme focuses on shop stewards as a community of practice (CoP) and highlights the connection with the theoretical framework that outlines this study. Not only does this theme answer the question of shop stewards' lived experiences while engaging in a social movement like Cosatu, but it also shows why the community of practice is a fitting theoretical framework to use for this study. The situated notion of learning is evident within Cosatu and this is further expanded upon by the shop stewards' responses during this study.

Sub-theme: The value of lived experiences with and in movements

This sub-theme takes its focus from the relationship between learning and the social situation in which learning takes place. It is at this point that one needs to identify the space in which this learning occurred rather than what knowledge was acquired; it is in space or social context in which the engagement occurred that is of importance. What aligns Cosatu with the process of situated learning is the fact that shop stewards do not

gain abstract knowledge which they then have to reapply at a specific time during their learning process. Instead, they acquire the skills to perform by actually engaging in the learning process through legitimate peripheral participation within their communities of practice.

Below are the shop stewards' first-hand accounts of how this learning takes place for them within Cosatu.

- 'I felt a sense of belonging within Cosatu.' (Online Participant 5)
- 'As a shop steward, I feel empowered because you are taught based on life experiences.' (Online Participant 4)
- 'I was always excited and willing to learn, I stole with my eyes by observing.' (Online Participant 18)
- 'Fear did set in at times, but I had assistance from shop steward colleagues.' (Online Participant 20)
- 'I had different experiences at different times while learning, at first, I felt overwhelmed then excited and also fearful of the unknown.' (Participant 8 hard copy)
- 'Engaging in something new was always a challenge.' (Participant 1 hard copy)
- 'I felt happy because now I had the opportunity to learn more.' (Online Participant 9)
- 'I found that workshops were very enriching and hype you up as a shop steward.' (Online Participant 11)
- 'During my training and attending workshops, I gained confidence by learning from leaders.' (Participant 21 hard copy)
- 'Shop stewards always go out of their way to help each other.' (Online Participant 1)
- 'The older shop stewards who have years of experience who we call veterans are always willing to show us the ropes.' (Participant 15 hard copy)
- 'Yes, when any shop steward has a problem, the others always try to help.' (Participant 7 hard copy)
- 'Our education manager also assists when we ask for help.' (Online Participant 13)
- 'Yes, when we come together, we always discuss what is happening at our own workplace.' (Online Participant 1)

- 'We talk about the cases that we are struggling with and because I have been a shop steward for many years, I know all the more experienced comrades and they normally help with cases and tell us how and what we need to do.' (Interview Participant 2)
- 'Yes, I always help my fellow comrades and they help me when we have cases.' (Online Participant 6)
- 'It allowed me to interact with like-minded people.' (Online Participant 3)

Shop stewards have mentioned various relevant aspects that identify them as a community of practice. They are a group of people who meet regularly to discuss certain matters that are not only linked to the workplace but also societal challenges. Not only do shop stewards identify with this community, they also learn from and within this community of practice. Various shop stewards have indicated that they do get assistance from veteran shop stewards who are more than willing to help them. The idea that legitimate peripheral learning takes place within Cosatu is evident in that shop stewards not only feel free to learn from others within this environment but how and where they do it is also important to consider.

In summary, this theme highlights the interconnectedness of shop stewards as a community of practice, where shared experiences, mutual assistance and a culture of learning contribute to the overall strength and effectiveness of the movement within Cosatu.

Theme 5: Communication strategies within social movements
The intricate landscape of communication within Cosatu delves into the internal challenges faced by the movement, its reliance on diverse communication channels and its strategic response to pressing economic issues affecting workers. It also emphasises the role of communication in creating awareness and fostering positive social change.

Sub-theme: Communicating the Cosatu way
This sub-theme centres on the communication channels utilised by shop stewards within the movement, highlighting the diverse methods that enable effective collaboration and information sharing. The theme recognises the importance of staying connected and informed, emphasising the adaptability of communication strategies to cater to the needs and preferences of shop stewards.

Communication plays an important role in any organisation's day-to-day operations and shop stewards need to know and understand what has been communicated in order to disseminate the correct information to the workers on the shop floor. In most cases, the shop stewards are the link between the workers and the Cosatu office or education desk. It is through various protest actions and other forms of mass action that communication can be skewed and a different narrative can be shared that could harm the image of the movement. Different viewpoints were shared by shop stewards as to why they think communication is important and what the different types of communication strategies used within Cosatu are.

External communication through Cosatu

- 'We have marches so that our voices can be heard because everything goes up but your salary stays the same it can be incorporated through the economic crisis that we are currently in educating everyone on how the cycle works because all of these issues go together.' (Interview Participant 2)
- 'Cosatu will always release media statements.' (Online Participant 3)
- 'Cosatu is connected with the workers.' (Participant 19 hard copy)
- 'Workers are made aware of what is happening in companies such as Eskom and other companies that get money from the government.' (Participant 6 hard copy)
- 'We take to the streets to protest or strike.' (Online Participant 3)
- 'Cosatu is creating awareness by having lunchtime pickets like the ones we had in October … We had a picket about the high-interest rates and the high cost of living.' (Online Participant 2)

Internal communication between Cosatu and shop stewards

- 'They make us aware and teach us how to understand certain stuff like negotiations, interest rate hikes, labour brokers, and how this affects us as workers.' (Online Participant 5)
- 'Cosatu is known to help communities with labour and social issues we are asked to mobilise against these issues that affect our own households and communities … Cosatu always creates awareness about these things.' (Interview Participant 1)
- 'Communication is a form of creating awareness of issues that have reached a boiling point with people … It is a powerful means within communities for ordinary

people to create positive social change, like the issues of schools that were closing down in our communities.' (Interview Participant 2)

- 'Social media also plays a role of how things are communicated in the movement and outside of the organisation.' (Interview Participant 1)

- 'My problem is that the media always shows us in a negative way which has a bad effect on what we want to say … They only focus on what went wrong or if there was damage done during a strike or protest action … The media plays a big part of how communication happens in Cosatu.' (Interview Participant 1)

- 'Yes, there is a lot to learn, and we cannot go to workshops every week, so we get messages via WhatsApp and emails.' (Participant 20 hard copy)

- 'All types of communication are shared with shop stewards but at certain events, there are rules about how to communicate.' (Participant 13 hard copy)

- 'Strikes, picketing, everything that has a big impact on workers' programs.' (Online Participant 5)

- 'We have our normal once-a-month Exco meeting with discussions about what's happening in the workplace with members and cases.' (Participant 2 hard copy)

- 'I also visit various schools to check up on members and assist with problems.' (Participant 10 hard copy)

- 'Communication between shop stewards happens mostly in monthly meetings at conferences and when we have protest marches.' (Participant 9 hard copy)

- 'We share everything related to workers' rights that are not being respected … We use various ways to communicate these days … Facebook is popular and so is WhatsApp because it is cheaper … When we organise pickets and protests, we do it via WhatsApp or Facebook but also still have face to face meetings with our members … Posters are also popular with shop stewards because you don't have to say anything just hold your poster and get the message across.' (Interview Participant 2)

- 'Different types of communication are shared … At times only the exco is included but on other occasions, all shop stewards are included, and communications are done mostly via WhatsApp and meetings.' (Interview Participant 3)

In summary, both internal and external communication strategies play a pivotal role in a movement's rise or fall. These strategies are responsible for mobilising not only the community

but also recruits who will act as shop stewards and take over the reins in future. Any movement must have a competent communications person who knows how to handle any public space. In the case of Cosatu, communication has always been a strength.

Due to the economic situation in South Africa, Cosatu as a movement has changed its strategy when it comes to strike and protest action. There has been this huge drive back to basics, having lunchtime pickets at strategic places or in front of workplaces to create awareness of both political and societal issues. This has been an effective approach as there has been no loss of income for workers. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, training was moved online and various podcasts were developed which workers could listen to when it suited them. This had a positive impact as shop stewards were not obligated to be at a workshop in person.
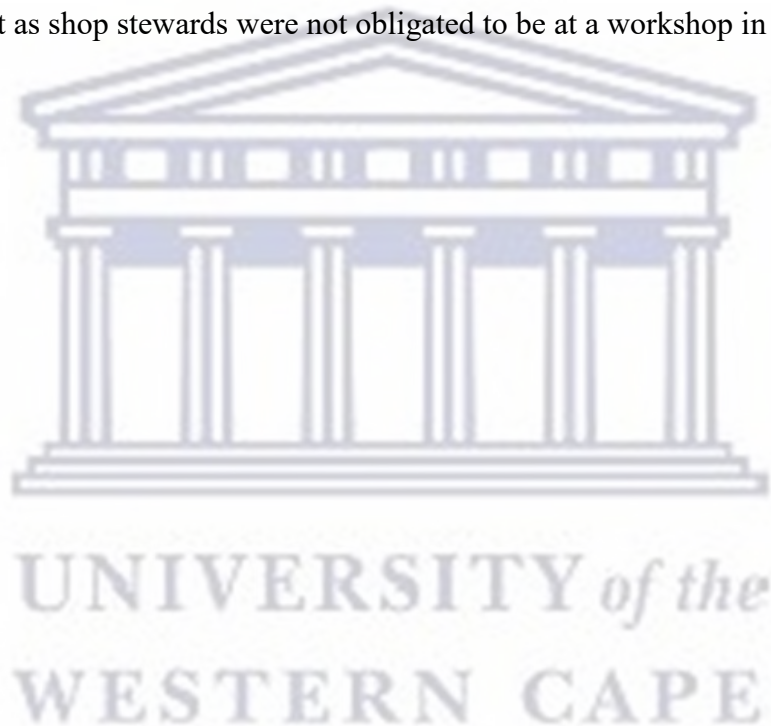
CHAPTER 6
OUTCOMES AND CONCLUSION

6.1 Introduction

This study was the first of its kind within the Cape Town Metropole and the Western Cape. The delimitations of this study were as follows:

- Only shop stewards within the Cape Town Metropole were used in this study. This was done to narrow the scope of the research and due to proximity to the head office of Cosatu where the education desk is situated and shop stewards meet regularly.

- This study only focused on shop stewards' knowledge construction, their yearning for wanting to learn through and within a social movement like Cosatu and what their lived experiences were while doing so.

Suggestion for future research

The formal recognition of shop stewards' roles within this space by government and industry within South Africa. The types of knowledge exchange and cross–movement collaboration within social movements. The development of and training of veteran shop stewards in formalised mentoring programmes within social movements. However, these outcome areas that emerged have broader implications for the results of this research study and are beyond the scope of this thesis.

The study found that there is indeed a connection between social movements and shop stewards' reasons for wanting to construct knowledge within this movement space. It further dissects the reasons they prefer to do so by actively listening to their voices and translating them into a study that showcases the significance of studying with and through a social movement like Cosatu. The reasons shop stewards prefer to do so and what impact that learning had on their lived experiences was also explored. I hope that the outcomes of this study will help Cosatu as a movement to enhance its education programmes and implement, design and collaborate with like-minded movements to effectively make a significant impact within the research space.

6.2 Recommendations

The recommendations of this study are based on the findings and conclusions presented in the thesis:

First, the study findings goal is to achieve increased recognition and support for social movements, particularly organisations like Cosatu, as vital contributors to education and knowledge construction. This involves advocating for enhanced institutional and governmental backing for social movements engaged in empowerment, critical consciousness and community development.

Secondly, the study envisions the integration of effective pedagogical practices observed within social movements into formal education systems. This entails fostering collaboration between formal educational institutions and social movements to exchange best practices, thereby enhancing overall learning outcomes.

Furthermore, the study suggests the establishment of mentorship programmes within this social movement to formalise the guidance and support provided by veteran members, including shop stewards, to newcomers. The scope of these mentorship initiatives should extend to collaboration with external communities and organisations for a more holistic impact on individuals and communities.

In addition, the study advocates for the encouragement of documentation and dissemination of knowledge generated within social movements. This would involve supporting initiatives that promote the publication of case studies, best practices and lessons learned from the experiences of social movements.

The study also emphasises the importance of facilitating collaboration and knowledge exchange between different social movements and organisations to harness collective wisdom and strategies. Exploring opportunities for joint initiatives that address common social, political, or economic challenges is seen as a key outcome.

Furthermore, the study aims for the formal recognition of the roles and responsibilities of shop stewards within the broader labour and social justice frameworks. This involves advocating for organisations and industries to acknowledge and appreciate the leadership and educational contributions of shop stewards.

The incorporation of technology in learning is another outcome, where the study encourages the embrace and enhancement of technology, such as WhatsApp and other digital platforms, for informal learning and knowledge sharing within social movements. Additionally, there is a call to explore the development of online platforms that facilitate continuous learning and engagement for members of social movements.

Finally, the study proposes that public awareness efforts are needed to highlight the positive impact of social movements on education, empowerment and community development. The goal is to promote a more nuanced understanding of social movements as dynamic learning environments contributing to positive societal change.

6.3 Conclusion

In conclusion, this thesis highlighted that there is indeed a relationship between the different forms of knowledge construction that take place within social movements and through informal learning within Cosatu. Empowerment and critical consciousness are at the heart of understanding why shop stewards prefer learning through social movements.

The nature of social movements and activism is to move or activate others, to create change and in the process and bring them along in the pursuit of social or political development. Activism is the cornerstone of social change and throughout history, people have come together motivated by a common purpose and have forced governments, organisations and political parties to change policy, address inequalities or merely shift opinion.

Drawing from this research and in particular the role of shop stewards – which is to facilitate, educate, strategise and organise while leading activities from within the confines of their space – we look at the impact Cosatu as a movement has on shop stewards and the different ways they construct knowledge. This is all done to move and conscientize the public. This learning elicits elements such as collaboration, leadership and empowerment, and when matched with skills gained through prior knowledge, it leads to critical reflection and engagement. This engagement is further expanded upon with veteran shop stewards who act as mentors who assist with challenges within communities and the shop floor where these shop stewards live and work. In this regard, social movements in themselves become the true facilitators that Lave and Wenger (1998) refer to as communities of practice (CoPs).

A fundamental fact about a CoP is that it cannot just be created. These communities have some form of history that brings them together as well as a common goal that they work towards. This became evident while engaging with shop stewards about why they decided to become shop stewards. When learning through social movements, shop stewards became the communities of practice by leveraging their own and collective power, knowledge and voice to advocate for those who are marginalised. This type of leadership within a community of practice has two advantages:

First, the CoP space within the social movement provides an opportunity for networking, coalition building, organising and skills development in collaboration with others who are doing the same. Coming together with like-minded people creates a sense of connectedness for a common purpose and a sense of belonging. This was evident in many of the shop stewards' responses.

Secondly, as the shop stewards intentionally and routinely engaged within the CoP – be that in formal or informal ways – learning constantly takes place. This constant engagement and learning with and from others allowed their identity to align and this created a sense of mastery in various areas. Cosatu as a social movement provided its shop stewards with authentic engagement, access to discussions on pressing issues that impact communities and opportunities to mobilise and organise for those issues. This growth happened at various levels of their learning journey irrespective of where they found themselves. For many shop stewards, the CoP within Cosatu became a space of sustenance and renewal where they could find support, advice and strength to tackle the issues on the factory floor.

This interaction and practical engagement positioned shop stewards in such a way that they actively become legitimate peripheral participants. It is in this space that social movements find themselves becoming the main facilitators as the space lends itself to be a place where collaboration is viewed as a natural element that is created automatically to enhance the pedagogical space. Unintentionally, social movements like Cosatu become the catalyst in the drive for a different type of pedagogy, one that does not only align with practical implementation but theoretical application through observation, engagement and conscientisation. The tangible results are seen each year when a new group of shop stewards decides to take up the position and fight for those who do not have a voice. This space where

knowledge is so freely created and shared is indeed a place where education, growth and the construction of different types learning takes place.

It is therefore important that Cosatu be recognised as a social movement where knowledge is constructed in a different yet effective way that allows shop stewards to actively and willingly participate in their own empowerment and learning.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Research site letter – Request for permission to conduct research

Appendix B: Cosatu letter – Request for permission to conduct research

Appendix C: Interview guide for semi-structured interviews

Appendix D: Google online questionnaire

Appendix E: Information sheet – Semi-structured interviews

Appendix F: Information sheet – Google online questionnaire

Appendix G: Consent form – Semi-structured interviews

Appendix H: Consent form – Google online questionnaire

Appendix I: Ethical Clearance Letter

Appendix A

University of the Western Cape
Faculty of Education Robert
Sobukwe Road
Bellville, 7535

The Centre Manager
Community House
41 Salt River Road
Salt River
7925   30 March 2023

<u>**Re: Letter requesting permission to conduct research**</u>

Dear Mr Jardiem

My name is Michelle Jaftha and I am a registered Master's student at the University of the
Western Cape in the Faculty of Education, student number 9820569, enrolled in a Masters'
degree in Adult Learning and Global Change. As a requisite, I need to complete a research
project as part of my degree.

The topic of my research is: *Social Movement Learning: Cosatu Shop Stewards*
Constructing Knowledge through Social Activism

The aim/objectives of the study are:

To understand how knowledge construction as a lived experience of shop stewards occurs
within Cosatu.

The research questions are:
1. Why do shop stewards prefer to construct knowledge within a social movement like
   Cosatu?
2. How do shop stewards construct knowledge within this social movement?
3. What are their lived experiences while doing so

I hereby seek your consent in writing, to conduct this qualitative research study on your
premises (Community House, Salt River) as part of the research being conducted with shop
stewards of Cosatu. Should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to
contact me or my supervisor. Our contact details are as follows:

Supervisor: Dr. Natheem Hendricks *Tel: 021 959 3002* *Email mnhendricks@uwc.ac.za*	*Researcher: Michelle Jaftha* *Cell: 063 703 7910* *Email: 9820569@myuwc.ac.za*

Your permission to conduct this study will be greatly appreciated.
Kind Regards,
Michelle Jaftha

University of the Western Cape. Private Bag X17. Bellville 7535. South Africa.

http://etd.uwc.ac.za/

Appendix B -

University of the Western Cape
Faculty of Education
Robert Sobukwe Road
Bellville,
535

The Provincial Secretary
Congress of South African Trade Unions
Community House
41 Salt River Road
Salt River
7925   11 March 2021

Dear Mr Bester

Re: Letter requesting permission to conduct research

I am a registered Master's student at the University of the Western Cape in the Faculty of Education, student number 9820569, enrolled in a Master's degree in Adult Learning and Global Change. As a requisite, I need to complete a research project as part of my degree.

The topic of my research is: *Social Movement Learning: Cosatu Shop Stewards Constructing Knowledge through Social Activism*

The aim/objectives of the study are:
To understand how shop stewards, construct knowledge within a social movement like Cosatu
The research questions are:

1. Why do shop stewards prefer to construct knowledge within a social movement like Cosatu?
2. How do shop stewards construct knowledge within this social movement?
3. What are their lived experiences while doing so?

I am hereby seeking your consent in writing, to conduct this qualitative research study with shop stewards who have attended training through non-formal, informal, and collective learning within your organization. Should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me or my supervisor. Our contact details are as follows:

Supervisor: Dr. Natheem Hendricks	Researcher: Michelle Jaftha
Tel: 021 959 3002	Cell: 063 703 7910
Email mnhendricks@uwc.ac.za	Email: 9820569@uwc.ac.za

Your permission to conduct this study will be greatly appreciated.

Kind Regards,
Michelle Jaftha

Appendix C - Ethics Number HS23/4/41

Schedule for semi-structured interviews

Title: *Social movement learning: Cosatu shop stewards constructing knowledge through social activism*

There will be six themes that will guide the interview schedule

- Consciousness and solidarity
- Protest action, communication and knowledge construction
- Shop stewards' lived experiences
- Culture of learning within social movements
- Communities within social movements

Google online questionnaire

Survey study title: *Social movement learning: Cosatu shop stewards constructing knowledge through social activism*

The purpose of this study is to understand how learning within Cosatu as a social movement takes place. What shop stewards' lived experiences are while they go through different types of learning within this movement.

Question 1

How old are you?

Question 2

What is your gender?

Question 3

How long have you been a shop steward?

Question 4

What type of union do you belong to?

Question 5

Do you think becoming a shop steward has made you more aware of issues within your community and the country?

Question 6

Are you involved in any organizations/movements outside of Cosatu, such as community groups or NGOs and why?

Question 7

Do you think that protest action is a way of communicating and why?

Question 8

Why have you decided to learn through a movement like Cosatu?

Question 9

What does Cosatu mean to you as a shop steward on the shop floor?

Question 10

What skills have you developed while being a shop steward?

Question 11

As a shop steward, what is your understanding of solidarity when it comes to protests and marches?

Question 12

What is your feeling and understanding of the slogan 'each one teach one'?

Question 13

What types of education programmes do Cosatu and your union provide to shop stewards?

Question 14

Do you think that shop stewards come together as a community and why?

Question 15

How does Cosatu react to economic issues such as electricity, food and petrol increases that affect workers, and how can this be incorporated into an education programme?

Question 16

Do you think enough courses and programmes are being done for shop stewards when it comes to creating awareness?

Question 17

What type of effect does struggle songs have on you as a shop steward?
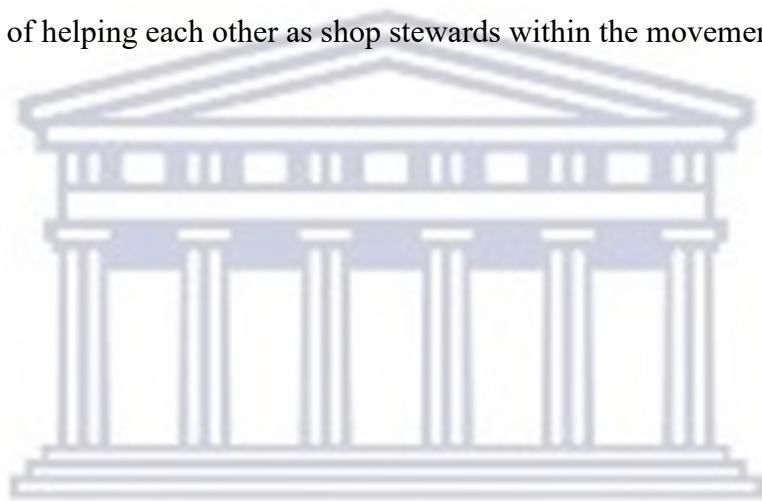
Question 18

Do struggle songs play an important role in Cosatu?

Question 19

What type of communication is shared among shop stewards?

Question 20

Is there a culture of helping each other as shop stewards within the movement? Can you explain?

Appendix E- Ethics Number HS23/4/41

Information sheet: Semi-structured interview participant

Topic: *Social movement learning: Cosatu shop stewards constructing knowledge through social activism*

Dear Participant

I, Michelle Jaftha, (student number 9820569), am pursuing my Masters in Adult Learning and Global Change (MALGC) degree in the Institute of Post-School Studies at the University of the Western Cape, South Africa. I would like to invite you to take part in my research project. Please take the time to read the following information carefully and please feel free to ask questions if anything you read is not clear to you or if you need more information.

What is the study about?

The purpose of this study is to understand how social movement learning by shop stewards within Cosatu contributes to knowledge construction.

Why are you being invited to participate?

The interviewees are invited due to their participation in the education and training programme within Cosatu, Western Cape. They will be made up of novices, veterans and experienced shop stewards who can provide a deeper and broader understanding of why shop stewards prefer to construct knowledge in a movement like Cosatu.

What will you be expected to do in this study?

All the participants will be asked to share their lived experiences, challenges and reasons for wanting to learn through a social movement as opposed to any other learning environment. Each of the five participants will be requested to do a one-hour semi-structured interview. The information shared by participants alongside the online questionnaire data will become the only data for this research study.

What are the potential risks involved in this study?

Even though the emotional risk might not be high during this study, consideration has been given to participants who might experience any personal or emotional risk while conducting this research. Assistance with the referral process to a community organization can be provided

at the request of the participant. The participant has the right to withdraw from the study at any time.

What are the potential benefits of this study?

The benefits of this research are outlined as follows:

To gain a better understanding of:

- Why shop stewards prefer to construct knowledge through a social movement like Cosatu.
- How they go about constructing the knowledge gained through this movement.
- What their lived experiences are while doing so.

What COVID-19 protocols are in place?

All COVID-19 protocols are in place; however, it is not needed due to the lifting of restrictions.

How is confidentiality managed in a focus group?

No focus group interviews will be conducted.

What can I do to maintain confidentiality in a focus group?

No focus group interviews will be conducted.

In terms of the requirements of the Protection of Personal Information Act (Act 4 of 2013), please note additional information:

What type of personal information will be collected?

The participants will be required to complete a consent form. No other personal information will be requested or required during the one-on-one interview. Information regarding participants' learning experiences and how they learn within the organization as well as their lived experiences when partaking in various learning activities will be guided by an interview schedule.

Who at UWC is responsible for collecting and storing my personal information?

The researcher is the only person who will be responsible for collecting any personal information. The responsibility of storing the information lies solely with the researcher and the supervisor who will have knowledge of how and where this information will be collected and stored.

Who will have access to my personal information outside of UWC?

The organisation/company is the only entity that will have access to the research material, as a copy of the final thesis results will be shared with them. Any personal information will be replaced by pseudonyms e.g. Participant 1 or Participant A.

How long will my personal information be stored?

Electronic data will be kept on the researcher's/supervisor's password-protected computer for five years and deleted thereafter. Hard copies will be kept in a locked drawer for five years and destroyed thereafter.

How will my personal information be processed?

All personal information will be handled solely by the researcher during the data collection process as well as the data analysis process. The only other individuals that will have access to the personal information after it has been coded is the supervisor and the external examiners. A pseudonym or numerical number will be used to protect a participant.

Who do I contact for further information?

Should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me **Michelle Jaftha** (cell **0637037910),** or via email (9820569@myuwc.ac.za). Alternatively, you may also contact my supervisor **Dr Natheem Hendricks** at the Institute for Post-School Studies at the University of the Western Cape (UWC), at (mnhendricks@uwc.ac.za, (cell **074 152 7502**)

To report any adverse or unexpected effects emergent from this research, please contact our research office below:

Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee Department of Research Development
University of the Western Cape Private Bag X17
Bellville 7535
Tel: 021 959 4111
Email: research-ethics@uwc.ac.za

This information sheet is for you to <u>keep</u> so that you can be aware of the purpose of the study. With your <u>signature on the attached consent form</u>, you indicate that you understand the purpose of the exercise.

Appendix F - Ethics Number HS23/4/41

Information sheet: Google online participant

Topic: *Social movement learning: Cosatu shop stewards constructing knowledge through social activism*

Dear Participant

I, Michelle Jaftha, (student number 9820569), am pursuing my Masters in Adult Learning and Global Change (MALGC) degree in the Institute of Post School Studies at the University of the Western Cape, South Africa. I would like to invite you to take part in my research project. Please take time to read the following information carefully, and please feel free to ask questions if anything you read is not clear to you or if you'd like more information.

What is the study about?

The purpose of this study is to understand how social movement learning by shop stewards within Cosatu contributes to knowledge construction.

Why are you being invited to participate?

The interviewees are invited due to their participation in the Education and Training Programme within Cosatu, Cape Town Metro (Western Cape). They will be made up of novices, veterans, and experienced shop stewards who can provide a deeper and broader understanding of why shop stewards prefer to construct knowledge in a movement like Cosatu.

What will you be expected to do in this study?

You will be expected to partake in a Google Online Questionnaire and will be asked to share your lived experiences, challenges, and reasons for wanting to learn through a movement like Cosatu as opposed to any other learning environment. The information shared by participants alongside the data o obtained from unstructured interviews will become the main data sets for this study.

What are the potential risks involved in this study?

Even though the emotional risk might not be high during this study, consideration has been given to participants who might experience any personal or emotional risk while conducting this research. Assistance with the referral process to a community organization can be done at the request of the participant. The participant has the right to withdraw from the study at any time.

What are the potential benefits involved in this study?

The benefits of this research are outlined as follows:

To gain a better understanding of:

- Why Shop Stewards prefer to construct knowledge through a social movement like Cosatu
- How do they go about constructing this knowledge gained through this movement? and
- What their lived experiences are while doing so

What Covid 19 Protocols are in place? (If applicable)

All Covid COVID-19 protocols are in place, however, it is not needed due to the lifting of restriction

How is confidentiality managed in a Focus Group?

No focus group interviews will be conducted.

What can I do to maintain confidentiality in a Focus Group?

Not applicable, as no focus group interviews will be conducted.

In terms of the requirements of the Protection of Personal Information Act (Act 4 of 2013), please note additional information:

What type of personal information will be collected?

Information regarding participants' learning experiences and how they learn within the organisation will be asked during the interview sessions as well as in the Google online questionnaire. Participants will be asked beforehand if they would like to partake in the online questionnaire and only those who agree will become part of the study. The online questionnaire does not require the participant to complete their name and surname but does ask for age and gender. No other personal information will be required as the link will be sent via the Education Desk and Manager of Cosatu.

Who at UWC is responsible for collecting and storing my personal information?

The researcher is the only person who will be responsible for collecting any personal information. The responsibility of storing the information lies solely with the researcher and the supervisor will have knowledge of how and where this information will be collected and stored.

Who will have access to my personal information outside of UWC?

The organisation/ company is the only entity that will have access to the research material, as a copy of the final thesis results will be shared with them. Any personal information will be replaced by pseudo names e.g. participant 1 or participant A.

How long will my personal information be stored?

Electronic data will be kept on the researcher's/supervisor's password protected computer for five years and deleted thereafter. Hard copies will be kept in a locked drawer for five years and deleted thereafter.

How will my personal information be processed?

All personal information will be handled solely by the researcher during the data collection process as well as the data analysis process. The only other individuals that will have access to the personal information after it has been coded is the supervisor and the external examiners. A pseudo name or numerical number will be used to protect participants.

Who do I contact for further information?

Should you need any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me **Michelle Jaftha** (cell **0637037910),** or via email (9820569@myuwc.ac.za). Alternatively, you may also contact my supervisor **Dr Natheem Hendricks** at the Institute for Post School Studies at the University of the Western Cape (UWC), at (mnhendricks@uwc.ac.za, (cell **074 152 7502**)

To report any adverse or unexpected effects emergent from this research, please contact our research office below:

Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee Department of Research Development
University of the Western Cape Private Bag X17
Bellville 7535
Tel: 021 959 4111
Email: research-ethics@uwc.ac.za

This information sheet is for you to <u>keep</u> so that you can be aware of the purpose of this study. With your <u>signature on the attached consent form</u>, you indicate that you understand the purpose of this research study.

Appendix G

Project title: *Social movement learning: Cosatu shop stewards constructing knowledge through social activism*

Researcher: Michelle Theresa Jaftha

Please <u>initial</u> the boxes to show your agreement and understanding of what is expected for this study.

1. I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet explaining the above research project and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the project.

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason and without there being any negative consequences. In addition, should I wish to withdraw, I may contact the lead researcher at any time to do so.

3. I understand my responses and personal data will be kept strictly confidential.

4. I give permission for members of the research team to have access to my responses without revealing any part of my identity.

5. I understand that my name will not be linked with the research materials and that I will not be identified or identifiable in the reports or publications that result for the research.

6. I agree for the **anonymised** data collected to be used in future research. (*Circle the appropriate answer*). Yes / No

7. I hereby agree to be audio recorded. (*Circle the appropriate answer*). Yes / No

In terms of the requirements of the Protection of Personal Information Act (Act 4 of 2013), personal information will be collected and processed:

☐ I hereby give consent for my personal information to be collected, stored, processed and shared as described in the information sheet.

☐ I do not give consent for my personal information to be collected, stored, processed and shared as described in the information sheet.

Name_____

Signature_____

Date_____

_____   _____   _____

Name of Participant   Date   Signature
(*or legal representative*)

_____   _____   _____ _____

Name of person taking consent Date   Signature
(*If different from lead researcher*)

_____   _____   ____ _____

Supervisor   Date   Signature

Copies: All participants will receive a copy of the signed and dated version of the consent form and information sheet for themselves. A copy of this will be filed and kept in a secure location for research purposes only.

Researcher:	**Supervisor:**	**HOD:**
Michelle Jaftha	Dr Natheem Hendricks	Dr Seamus Needham
063 703 7910	074 152 7502	021 959 95 95
9820569@myuwc.ac.za	mnhendricks@uwc.ac.za	sneedham@uwc.ac.za

Appendix H

Project title: *Social movement learning: Western Cape Cosatu shop stewards constructing knowledge through social activism*

Researcher: Michelle Theresa Jaftha

Please <u>initial</u> the boxes to show your agreement and understanding of what is expected for this study.

1. I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet explaining the above research project and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the project.

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason and without there being any negative consequences. In addition, should I wish to withdraw, I may contact the lead researcher at any time to do so.

3. I understand my responses and personal data will be kept strictly confidential.

4. I give permission for members of the research team to have access to my responses without revealing any part of my identity.

5. I understand that my name will not be linked with the research materials, and that I will not be identified or identifiable in the reports or publications that result for the research.

6. I agree for the **anonymised** data collected to be used in future research. (*Circle the appropriate answer*). Yes / No

7. I hereby agree to be audio recorded. (*Circle the appropriate answer*). Yes / No

In terms of the requirements of the Protection of Personal Information Act (Act 4 of 2013), personal information will be collected and processed:

☐ I hereby give consent for my personal information to be collected, stored, processed and shared as described in the information sheet.

☐ I do not give consent for my personal information to be collected, stored, processed and shared as described in the information sheet.

Name_____

Signature_____

Date_____

_____   _____   _____

Name of Participant   Date   Signature
(*or legal representative*)

_____   _____   _____ _____

Name of person taking consent   Date   Signature
(*If different from lead researcher*)

_____   _____   ____ _____

Supervisor   Date   Signature

Copies: All participants will receive a copy of the signed and dated version of the consent form and information sheet for themselves. A copy of this will be filed and kept in a secure location for research purposes only.

Researcher:	**Supervisor:**	**HOD:**
Michelle Jaftha	Dr Natheem Hendricks	Dr Seamus Needham
063 703 7910	074 152 7502	021 959 95 95
9820569@myuwc.ac.za	mnhendricks@uwc.ac.za	sneedham@uwc.ac.za

UNIVERSITY *of the*

WESTERN CAPE

Appendix: I   28 September 2023

Mrs. MT Jaftha

IPSS
Faculty of Education

HSSREC Reference Number: HS23/4/41

Project Title: Social Movement Learning: COSATU
Shop Stewards Constructing Knowledge through Social
Activism.

Approval Period: 22 September 2023 – 21 September 2024

I hereby certify that the Humanities and Social Science Research Ethics Committee of the University of the Western Cape approved the methodology, and ethics of the above-mentioned research project.

Any amendments, extension or other modifications to the protocol must be submitted to the Ethics Committee for approval.

Please remember to submit an annual progress report at least two months before expiry date. Failure to submit your annual progress report on time will result in the immediate lapse of your ethics approval and you will have to resubmit an entirely new ethics application.

For permission to conduct research using student and/or staff data or to distribute research surveys/questionnaires please apply via: https://sites.google.com/uwc.ac.za/permissionresearch/home

The permission letter must then be submitted to HSSREC for record keeping purposes.

The Committee must be informed of any serious adverse events and/or termination of the study.

Ms Patricia Josias
Coordinator: Research Ethics
University of the Western Cape