Mentoring and the preparedness of first-time primary school teachers -
A study of a non-governmental Joint Mentorship Project (JMP)

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of
Magister Educationist in Education Leadership and Management

Student: Malika Ismail
Student number: 2920322
Supervisor: Dr Melanie Luckay

Faculty of Education
The University of the Western Cape, Republic of South Africa

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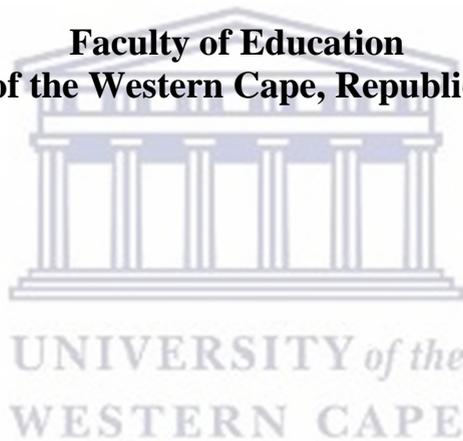
DECLARATION

I, Malika Ismail, hereby declare that this thesis, **"Mentoring and the preparedness of first-time primary school teachers: A study of a non-governmental Joint Mentorship Project (JMP)"** is my own work; that it has not been submitted before for any examinations or degree purposes, in another University or for another qualification. All sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by complete references.

MALIKA ISMAIL

SIGNATURE:_____

 DATE: December, 2019

EDITOR'S LETTER

12 December 2019

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

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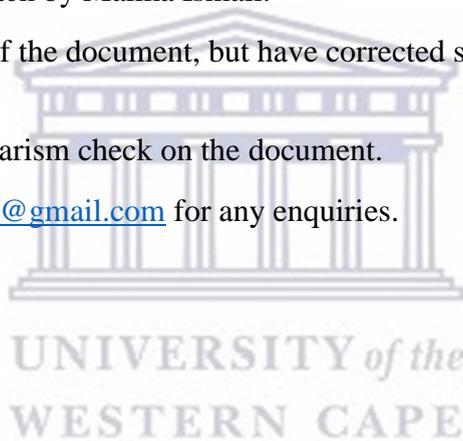

Michelle Prem Chetty

PROOF IT

DEDICATION
I dedicate this dissertation to:

My parents, Gafiedor and Yahya Ismail, who have supported me and made many sacrifices to ensure that we have an education. You both were underprivileged and were subjected to the hardships and the horrors of the apartheid regime and therefore you made sure that we received a better education than what you were afforded. I can never repay you but I want to Shukar/ thank you for opening the doors of opportunity for you knew that for one to improve your life, you need a good education. I will keep on making you proud.

and..

my sister, Rachma Ismail, who inspired and encouraged me throughout my studies and making me understand that the sky is the limit. I will always remember your words "Education is the passport to your future".

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To my cousin Nazreen Begg, thank you for your on-going motivation, support and encouragement. It was lovely to have a writing buddy - someone to share my experiences with and understand what I was going through. The writing retreats together were the best motivating times together. Your support encouraged me to finish what I started.

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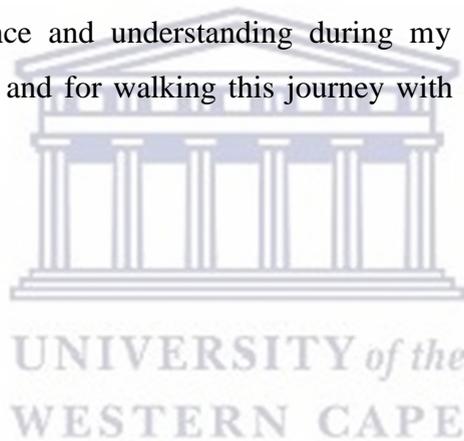
ABBREVIATIONS

ACE - Advance Certificate in Education

AG - Advice and guidance

B.Ed - Bachelor in Education

BTSA - Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment Programme

CAPS - Curriculum and Assessment Policy

DoE - Department of Education

FG - Focus Group

HOD - Head of Department

IEB - Independent Education Board

IQMS - Integrated Quality Management System

IUFM - Institut Univeritaire de Formation des Maitres

JMP - Joint Mentorship Programme

NGO - Non- governmental organization

NQT - Newly Qualified Teachers Project

NST - Natural Science and Technology

NTC - New Teacher Centre

OBE - Outcomes Based Education

PAM - Personnel Administrative Measures

PhD – Doctor of Philosophy

PSP - Primary Science Programme

S.A - South Africa

SACE - South African Council for Education

SAILI - Successful Students in Successful Schools

SAQA - South African Qualification Authority

SASA - South African Quality Authority

SCT - Social Cognitive Theory

SLT - Social Learning Theory

UCT - University of Cape Town

USA - United States of America

UWC - University of the Western Cape

W.C - Western Cape

WCED - Western Cape Education Department

ZPD - Zone of Proximal Development

KEY WORDS

Challenges

First-time teacher

Knowledge

Mentor

Mentoring

Mentorship Programme

Teaching and Learning

ABSTRACT

When a first-time teacher graduate and start working in a school, the first-time teacher is expected to adapt and adjust to the demands of a daily teaching programme (Carter & Francis, 2001). This can be overwhelming by taking on the same responsibility as the more experienced teachers. This can be a reality shock to first-time teachers as they may often be disadvantaged with the fact that they are often unprepared for the real world (Johnson & Kardos, 2002; Carter & Francis, 2001). Furthermore, many schools have appointed first-time teachers, but not all first-time teachers have been given proper support or introduced a mentor or a mentoring programme to help them adjust to their new career. This can contribute to the fact that first- time teachers are unprepared for their new roles and the challenges they may face (Carter & Francis, 2001). I will therefore look at mentoring and the preparedness of first-time teachers, the study will focus on a non-governmental Joint Mentoring Project (JMP). This study aims at investigating how the JMP contributed toward first-time teachers' teaching and learning experiences in selected primary schools.

Data for this study was collected by means of individual interviews, focus group interviews and document studies. The first-time teachers at primary schools were interviewed to obtain information on their personal experiences as well as how the Joint Mentorship Project (JMP) contributed toward their teaching and learning experiences in their first two years of teaching. The mentors were interviewed in order to get another perspective about the contribution of the JMP and their teaching journey. A thematic analysis was used to analyse the information obtained. Responses confirmed that the first-time teachers in the study experienced many challenges in their first two years of teaching. Findings revealed that the first-time teachers experienced challenges such as: transition from university life to teaching, administrative duties, content knowledge, subject difficulty, overcrowded classrooms, discipline, classroom management and resources. However, although the first-time teachers experienced many challenges they received no form of structured support from their schools, especially the experienced teachers and the management team. The first-time teachers revealed that they overcame these challenges with the help of the JMP. The JMP contributed by supporting these teachers to overcome their challenges. They helped the first-time teachers in many ways using various strategies, to which the first-time teachers all responded well. The strategies included: personal coaching, curriculum support, classroom support, workshops and reflections. The support given from the JMP to the first-time teacher has been found to be a major factor in helping the first-time teachers overcome their challenges. The first-time

teacher respondents also indicated that they have gained development through the coaching of the JMP. They have developed positive attitudes towards teaching and many skills that add value to their schools and personal growth. The JMP's mentors have shared how they supported the development of knowledge for effective teaching and learning through content based workshops, CAPS Training, demonstration lessons in the first-time teachers classroom, team teaching whereby the mentor teach alongside the first-time teachers, followed by a reflection and constructive criticism discussion. This JMP mentoring process happens over a two-year period in which the mentors reiterated that the support is based on the needs of the first-time teachers. They have confirmed that a first-time teacher can only grow in the process. The overall findings of the study highlight the positive experiences of support by the JMP reported by the participants.

The study recommends that teacher training institutions, the Department of Education (DoE) and schools have an important role to play in easing first-time teachers into their new role and encourage the use of a mentorship programme, as a mentorship programme has many positive advantages. Teacher training institutions should bridge that theory practical divide. In addition the perhaps the DoE or government should recognize the worth of a mentorship programme and the value it adds to first-time teachers. And once they recognize the value they should establish well-funded and compulsory governmental mentorship programmes available to all first-time teachers. Schools should also provide support to all first-time teachers as mentoring has become an important and successful form of intervention for first-time teachers. Mentoring will help first-time teachers improve in their job performance with regard to teaching and learning.

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INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER

1.1   Introduction

During the apartheid era in South Africa the education that was offered by the apartheid government was used as a tool to disadvantage black South Africans (Gebremedhin & Joshi, 2016). After the apartheid era South Africa has had major plans of reform towards the education system (Gebremedhin & Joshi, 2016). The South African Schools Act (SASA) promoted equal access, quality and democratic governance in the schooling system (RSA, SASA. 1996). This ensured South Africans that all learners enrolled at schools would have the right of basic access to equal and quality education without discrimination, and makes schooling compulsory for children aged 7-14 (RSA, SASA. 1996). The education system promised transformative learning by offering a curriculum that would shape future possibilities for all (RSA, SASA. 1996).

With that being said, it is known that effective teaching plays a huge role in the way learners learn in schools. Although we have a reformed education system offering quality education there are still many challenges that the South African education system is facing. These challenges includes making sure first-time teachers are competent with their teaching skills so that effective teaching and learning can take place. The problem is that there is no formal mentorship programmes in South Africa that is guaranteed to assist first-time teachers with the challenges they may face to improve their quality of teaching and assist them in their first few years when entering the teaching profession.

The Personnel Administrative Measure (PAM) document identifies the core duties and responsibilities of teachers (RSA, PAM. 2016). The document describes what is expected of all teachers, even if you are a first-time teacher. First-time teachers are expected to carry out all the same responsibilities as the experienced teachers (RSA, PAM. 2016). When a first-time teacher graduates and commences working in a school, the first-time teacher is expected to adapt and adjust to the demands of a daily teaching programme (Carter & Francis, 2001). This can be overwhelming by taking on the same responsibility as the more experienced teachers. In addition, this can be a reality shock as first- time teachers may often be disadvantaged with the fact that they are often unprepared for the real world (Johnson & Kardos, 2002; Carter & Francis, 2001).

Many schools have appointed first-time teachers, but not all first-time teachers have been given proper support or even introduced to a mentor or a mentoring programme to help them with the start of their new career. This can contribute to the fact that first- time teachers are unprepared for their new role and the challenges they may face (Carter & Francis, 2001). I will therefore examine mentoring and how it prepares first-time teachers. The study will focus on a non-governmental Joint Mentoring Programme (JMP).

1.2   Background and Rationale

Teaching is complex and can be challenging especially for first-time teachers (Johnson & Kardos, 2002). In order to understand why a mentorship programme, or a mentor, might be a requirement to a first-time teacher, we must understand the challenges new first teachers have to face when starting their career as a teacher. Many researchers have described the reality of first-time teachers and the challenges first-time teachers face (Johnson & Kardos, 2002; Glickman, Gordon & Gordon 2004; Gordan & Maxey, 2000, Ulvik, Smith & Helleve 2009 & Odel, 1990). When a first-time teacher graduates and commences his/her journey as a first-time teacher he/she is faced with new and unfamiliar roles in which he/she is expected to perform and take on the same responsibilities and duties as the experienced teachers. This can be a reality shock for first-time teachers as they are often unprepared for the real world (Johnson & Kardos, 2002; Carter & Francis, 2001). According to Carter & Francis (2001), they are assigned to doing difficult teaching tasks. At the same time they need to adjust to a new environment with specific rules, relationships, ways of behaving and understanding that "Give a particular school its unique character" (Carter & Francis, 2001, p. 250). They also face the challenge of information overload and little time to master tasks and adapt to the daily demands of the teaching programme (Glickman et al., 2004; Gordan & Maxey, 2000; Johnson & Kardos, 2002; Cater & Francis, 2001). The first-time teacher is placed in a classroom and usually left on his/her own as he/she struggles to survive the first years of teaching (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Ingersoll, 2012; Johnson & Kardos, 2002; Carter & Francis, 2001). According to Ingersoll (2012), the first years in teaching can be challenging and is usually a make or break period.

Many times first-time teachers experience frustration, lack of motivation and drive, feelings of stress, isolation and failure during the first few years of teaching (Alexander & Alexander, 2012; Feiman-Nemser, 2012 cited in McCollum, 2014). Consequently, because of the challenges first-time teachers face, many teachers leave the teaching profession during their 2

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to 5 years of teaching (Johnson & Kardos, 2002). Many first-time teachers leave the profession because they have not been lent the proper support, guidance to grow or even have a mentor to help them develop as first-time teachers. This may contribute to the fact that teachers may not be prepared for their new role and challenges they may face. The support provided to the first-time teacher at this time is a critical time to help them to come to terms with this reality shock. Additionally, it will also help them with ways to develop their immediate professional experience and for their long-term professional development (Carter & Francis, 2001). According to Carter & Francis (2001) mentoring is one form of professional development support that is crucial to a first-time teacher. It has been implemented in a number of teacher education and induction programmes (Carter & Francis, 2001). The problems and issues faced by many first-time teachers during their first years of teaching has prompted this research study and thus the aim of this research is look at the mentoring of first-time teachers and to find out to what extent has the JMP contributed and prepared first-time teachers for teaching and learning.

1.3   Motivation for the study

I was motivated to undertake this study because of my own personal experiences as a first-time teacher. In 2012, I started teaching at a primary school in Mitchells Plain, Cape Town, where I entered my own classroom, filled with learners, for the first time. For some reason I thought it would be like the days when I was a learner. Although the teaching space looked similar, it ended up not what I was quite expecting. It was just so different! The dynamics of the classroom were not even what it used to be in my teaching practice classroom.

However my family and friends think that my teaching job is the easiest on the planet because of the time school is dismissed for the learners and the fact that there are so many "holidays''!! They have no idea the amount of challenges that I have experienced in my first years of teaching. It was a difficult period for me as there were so many responsibilities that I had to take on as a first-time teacher. I had no idea what to do at times. I had to teach myself the curriculum, because at university I was trained to teach two subjects only, and I ended up teaching seven subjects. I would take home every day an increasingly huge amount of lesson preparation, planning, marking and administration. It felt as though I was working 24 hours 7 days a week. It was exhausting and very challenging. This was a difficult period for me to adjust to the daily needs of teaching with little to no help.

I had a HOD (Head of Department) who was assigned to me as a mentor teacher on the very first day. This mentor was supposed to play a pivotal role in guiding me as the first-time teacher on aspects of organization in the professional situation and also the practice of teaching a particular subject and doing daily things (Rushton & Suter 2012). But, in reality there was no time for that, my HOD also experienced pressures with her workload and management role and it was difficult for her to assist me with everyday tasks. I felt like I was being a nuisance so I ended up teaching myself and doing things on my own.

However, there was an experienced teacher in my grade who guided and helped me whenever she could, but there was no time for me to go into the experienced teacher's classroom to observe the teaching methods she used and share some practices. I also could not go to just anyone for help because everyone just assumed that I knew what to do with regards to teaching, classroom management, administration and disciplining learners in the classroom. But, I could go to the experienced teacher for anything. I just did not want to be a nuisance because she also had the same workload as I did.

When I spoke to my friends that has graduated with me, they expressed similar challenges, some worse than others. One of them mentioned being part of the Joint Mentorship Project (JMP) and how they were supporting her. Although she expressed her challenges I could identify some of the benefits of her being on the programme. She invited me to some of the JMPs workshops. It was then that I realized the what ifs, what if I had a regular mentor? A regular go-to person? Someone to assist me with daily teacher challenges. How would mentoring contribute to my own growth as a first-time teacher? These questions had influenced me to research mentoring and how it has prepared a first-time teacher.

The Western Cape Primary Science Programme (PSP) saw the need to support first-time teachers and initiated an inventive mentoring project called the Joint Mentorship Project (JMP) for first-time teachers. The JMP is a two-year mentorship model for first-time teachers that has been developed and coordinated by the PSP in collaboration with significant stakeholders in education. The two-year model of the mentorship programme provides extensive support to first-time teachers with training workshops, curriculum implementation, monthly classroom support visits and administration management. The JMP project is known to be effective for fast-tracking the adjustment of first-time teachers to their roles as full-time

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teachers. The aims of the JMP project was to support and strengthen teachers' content knowledge and teaching skills, helping them become more informed, skilled, confident and better prepared for their tasks.

Traditionally, a mentoring programme's importance is known for guiding individuals for a period of time. During this period the mentoring programme often makes use of mentors to guide first-time teachers (Tait, 2003). Therefore mentoring can be defined as an "interpersonal relationship" between a less experienced individual like a first-time teacher and a more experienced individual the mentor (Tait, 2003, p.758). The goal here is to advance the personal and professional development of the first- time teacher (Tait, 2003). According to Tait (2003), at various points in our lives, we all identify and seek to learn something from someone, and often we mirror our mentors. In addition, Tait (2003) adds that mentors and the idea of mentorship have taken on increased awareness these days. Particularly among first-time teacher graduates and those who are dropped suddenly into new and unfamiliar roles and face the challenge of high expectations, information overload and little time to learn to become the master of all tasks (Tait, 2003). While research has shown the benefits of mentoring programs, many first-time teachers do not receive these benefits (McCollum, 2014). There is not much awareness made for long- term support and once-off programmes covered by once-off workshops. Once-off workshops are not very helpful in supporting first-time teachers over a period of time (McCollum, 2014). Studies that I have reviewed show positive contributions made by long term mentoring programmes and show that development is made by first-time teachers when they are part of a mentoring programme (Odell, 1990; Yost, 2002; Hobson, Ashby, Malderez & Tomlinson, 2009; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). A well-designed mentoring programme is fundamental in mentoring first-time teachers into the profession and keeping them in the education system (Arends & Phurutse, 2009). When first-time teachers are provided with the necessary support, they are less likely to leave teaching (Ingersoll and Smith, 2004).

Despite attempts made by the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) to attract and recruit many students into the education stream, there are still too many first-time teachers with very few opportunities for support available in South Africa. There are programmes like the newly qualified teachers project at the University of Cape Town (UCT) or short- term courses offered by the Department of Education in which Curriculum Advisors visits the school to guide teachers. However, this offers minimal interaction time and engagement

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experiences like the JMP. The JMP is a non-governmental organization (NGO) that is aware of first-time teachers that find it hard to adjust to their schools environment and meet the demands of a daily teaching programme. The JMP also knows that it takes a while for first-time teachers to find their feet and develop better ways of managing time, in order to successfully deliver daily lessons that meet the needs of their learners. In addition, the JMP know first- time teachers are also likely to be unsure of what, when and how things need to be done which makes the first few months very stressful for them. To deal with first-time teacher challenges, the JMP was established to offer support and mentorship to newly qualified teachers during their first two years in training. The JMP designed a two-year pilot project that involved 20 first-time teachers and 7 mentors. This project was co-ordinated by the Western Cape Primary Science Programme (PSP). The aims of the JMP are to improve the quality of teaching and learning of first-time teachers by offering support to first-time teachers in training workshops and classroom support to deal with challenges they might have faced. In addition, first-time teachers were encouraged to apply for a mentor. There were more than fifty people who had applied to be part of the programme, but only twenty were selected. This is the reality; not all first-time teachers in South Africa get to experience being a first-time teacher on a mentoring programme. The focus of my study is on the first- time teachers that were part of the JMP programme. This topic can help many understand what a mentoring programme entails and the importance thereof.

1.4   Statement of the problem

Considering the background and rationale as well as the motivation of the study with regard to how a mentorship programme supports first-time teachers. I also noticed the growing amount of first-time teacher graduates each year but little to no support is offered to the first-time teachers. Although there are mentoring programmes to guide first-time teachers, many are short term and once off. This study evaluates a long-term teacher mentorship programme and the extent that the JMP contributed towards first-time teachers' teaching and learning experiences in selected primary schools in the Western Cape.

1.5   Research questions

In pursuance of the aims of the study, answers to the following questions were pursued:

The main research question:

To what extent has the JMP contributed toward first-time teachers' teaching and learning experiences in the selected primary schools in the Western Cape?

The sub-research questions are:

1. What are the challenges the selected first-time teachers experienced at the beginning of their teaching career?
2. How has the JMP contributed toward overcoming these challenges?
3. How has the JMP supported the development of first-time teachers' content knowledge to facilitate effective teaching and learning in the classroom?

1.6   Research Objectives of the study

The research objectives of this study are:

a) To determine the challenges that first-time teachers experienced in their teaching and learning career in the selected primary schools in the Western Cape.
b) To identify and assess how the JMP contributed toward first-time teachers overcoming these challenges in the selected primary schools.
c) To explore and analyse how the JMP supported the development of first-time teachers' content knowledge so that effective teaching and learning can take place in the classroom.
d) To gain a conceptual understanding through the literature review.
e) To make recommendations to the various departments about mentoring that will help first-time teachers.

1.7   Research Aim of the study

This study aims to explore the extent that the JMP contributed toward first-time teachers, in their teaching and learning experiences in the selected primary schools in the Western Cape.

1.8   Theoretical framework

This study is informed by Bandura's (1977) social learning theory. It is further informed by Vygotsky's (1987) socio-cultural theory. The research study concerns mentoring as a social learning. Bandura's social learning theory has previously been termed 'observational learning' or 'modelling' and was built on behaviourist learning theory (Bandura, 1977). The focus of this theory is observation. Banduras social learning theory assisted the researcher to determine how people learn from one another through observing, modelling and imitating. According to Bandura (1977), behaviour is learnt from the environment through the process of observational learning. People usually learn from seeing other people in their social settings and when they admire what they observed then they are more likely to role model

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what they have observed (Yost, 2002, Bandura, 1977 and McCollum, 2014).

Vygotsky's social-cultural theory (1978), entails that social interaction plays an important role in the development of cognition. This theory, on the other hand, helped me understand that knowledge is not just transferred from one person to another, but rather is socially constructed through interactions with others. Therefore, one can say that supportive learning or facilitated learning takes place when being mentored. First-time teachers who are being mentored has the opportunity to be involved in their learning through interaction and collaboration with a more skilled person, the mentor (Vygotsky, 1978). Vygotsky's also believes that everything is learned on two levels, firstly through interactions with others and secondly through the aspect via Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). The second aspect is where the first-time teacher is cognitively prepared, but also requires help from the social interaction to develop fully (Briner, 1999). Both these theories informed my study on how first-time teachers learn through the observation, modelling, imitating as well as through interactions with more experienced individuals.

1.9   Significance of the Study

Every year, day, week, month a first-time teacher is thrusted into a classroom with many different dynamics and challenges. They are often not supported in their classrooms to beat the realities of being a first-time teacher. In South Africa, there are no compulsory mentorship programmes available after graduation. However, in the Western Cape, South Africa I came across a mentorship programme the JMP who sparked an interest in my current study.

There is a need for research on mentoring and how it prepares first-time teachers, in primary schools specifically. In particular, there is a need to know how mentoring and mentoring programmes contributed towards first-time teachers, teaching and learning. The significance of examining mentoring and how it prepares first-time teachers, is reinforced by the studies done by Odell, 1990; Yost, 2002; Hobson, et al 2009 and Ingersoll & Strong, 2011.

These researchers have encouraged the use of mentoring programmes for transition into the teaching profession. In addition, in order to understand the context why a mentorship programme or a mentor might be a requirement to a first-time teacher, one must understand the challenges new first-time teachers have to face when starting their career as a teacher. Researchers, such as Johnson & Kardos, 2002; Glickman, et al 2004; Gordan & Maxey, 2000; Ulvik, et al 2009 & Odel, 1990 have described the reality of first-time teachers and the

challenges first-time teachers face. Yet when you start your career, one is expected to perform and do duties as the experienced teachers. Very often starting off as a first-time teacher can be challenging as the first few years is a 'make or break' period, and the transition into the teaching profession on its own can be a challenging experience for these first-time teachers (Johnson & Kardos, 2002).

The findings of the current study have the potential to affect the views and perceptions of how first-time teachers will see a mentoring programme and encourage the use of mentorship programmes. Thus examining mentoring as a research study and how it prepares first-time teachers in primary schools specifically could benefit the department of education, districts, school principals, teachers, and student teachers. This research study could be significant for many reasons. Firstly, I found that mentoring has been the focus of much literature. However, according to PSP (2014), most literature on mentorship programmes and research has been conducted in other countries. There has similarly not been much focus on first-time teachers and mentoring in South Africa. Therefore, my study can contribute towards South African literature on mentoring and how it prepares first-time teachers in primary schools. Secondly, the findings can show the extent a mentorship programme contributes towards teaching and learning. Thirdly, one can use the findings to encourage mentorship for first-time teachers, which can address first-time teacher challenges. Fourthly, perhaps show how a mentoring programme contributes to overcome those challenges faced in the first years of being a teacher.

Furthermore, the research study's findings might ensure that first-time teachers are well-prepared and would ease into their new career. This might also remedy teacher attrition as stated in the literature that most teachers quit in their first 2-5 years because of the challenges in the beginning of their career.

I predict that from this research the findings might find the value a mentoring programme holds and how it contributes to first-time teachers. After doing this research, perhaps the Department of Education or government would see the worth in mentorship programmes and how it adds value to new qualified teachers. In addition, once they realize the value they can perhaps make governmental mentorship programmes available and compulsory to all first-time teachers.

1.10   Research methodology

A detailed description of the researcher's study choices are available in chapter 3, this section is aimed at providing the reader with an overview to the study's methodology.

1.10.1 Research approach

This study took on a qualitative research approach. Qualitative research has been defined by Shank (2005), as a systematic empirical inquiry into meaning. The qualitative case study method was adopted because this method allows the researcher to explore and gain an in-depth exposure and understanding to the phenomena being studied (Shank, Brown & Pringle, 2014). According to Bell (1999), qualitative case studies are appropriate for researchers because it gives an opportunity for one aspect of a problem to be studied in some depth and gain knowledge through a variety of means such as interviews and observations. Therefore, a qualitative approach was fitting because it allowed the researcher to have individual and focus group interviews with the participants to gain knowledge and understanding on how the JMP has contributed toward first-time teachers' teaching and learning experiences.

1.10.2 Research design

According to Durrheim and Wassenaar (2002), the research design is essentially a plan of how the researcher will systematically collect and analyse the data that is needed to answer the research questions. Although the research design is an important plan it is not a fixed plan that proceeds in a structured linear way therefore Bertram and Christiansen (2014) states that research is a flexible and non-linear that is influenced by practical considerations.

In order to answer the research questions, a qualitative case research design approach was used. In this qualitative case study, the researcher collected data from first-time teachers and their JMP mentors by means of individual and focus group interviews and documentation studies. The collection of data on the first-time teachers occurred at their individual schools. In addition, the focus group data generation and the documentation study records data generation were done at the JMP offices. Through the use of these collection methods the researcher was able to explicate the extent the JMP has contributed toward first-time teachers' teaching and learning experiences in the selected primary schools in the Western Cape.

1.10.3 Research instruments

For a research study to be conducted data generation is one of the most important aspects and it may be accomplished via various research instruments. In this study, for different aspects of the study, the researcher used different instruments to collect data. The researcher used semi-

structured interviews. The interviews was a carefully worded schedule that allowed the participants the freedom of answering freely and semi-structured interviews allowed the researcher to probe for clarity on the information that was being given. The researcher did one-on-one or face-to-face interviews with five first-time teachers at their individual schools at a time that was convenient to each of the participants. All first-time teachers were asked the same interview questions and the interview lasted for 40 minutes.

The researcher then scheduled a focus group interview with four of the mentors to the first-time teachers beforehand at their place of work. The interview questions were open-ended which allowed the mentors to answer comfortably and freely. The focus group interview lasted 52 minutes. The benefit of focus group interviews according to Shank, Brown & Pringle (2014) is that when people collectively address and discuss a problem, this process brings out insights and ideas that might have been eluded when interviewed individually. During the focus group interview, the mentors were able to provide the researcher with additional information that could not be given by the first-time teachers. To gain further information on how the JMP contributed towards first-time teachers' teaching and learning experiences and how the JMP supported the development of first-time teachers' content knowledge to facilitate effective teaching and learning in the classroom. The researcher requested portfolio documents from the JMP of the first-time teachers. This was done to gather more personal information between the first-time teacher and the mentor. In the document study the researcher only used the information relevant to the purpose of the research study.

1.10.4 Data analysis

The purpose of data analysis is to "transform data into meaningful findings" (Thorne, 2000:69). The data for this study was analysed by means of four flows, data generation, data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing and verification. The data collected through the interviews and document studies were all qualitatively analysed. After reading and re-reading the data, it was easy for the researcher to identify patterns and organized the data into meaningful categories. The main themes developed from the data such as the challenges the first-time teachers faced, how they overcame their challenges with the help of the JMP and how the JMP supported first-time teachers content knowledge to facilitate effective teaching and learning were all grouped into categories that were then used to analyse the data called coding. The researcher noted repetitive patterns and possible explanations by comparing the data with one another this can also be termed conclusion drawing.

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1.11 Ethics

According to Vander Stoep & Johnson, (2009) research ethics provides understanding to researchers on how participants should be treated, data generation methods and how the data is handled after being collected. It is important that all research studies follow ethical principles. To carry out this research study, permission was requested from the University of the Western Cape ethics committee. Thereafter, the Western Cape Education Department gave permission to conduct the research study at the selected schools. After the permission was granted, the researcher requested permission from the JMP organization and the relevant school authorities, principals and first-time teachers who were to participate in the study.

The researcher informed participants about the study and they were asked to give their written consent to participate. The participants gave their consent by signing the consent form and thus giving the researcher permission to do the interviews. The intended use of the data was explained to all participants and they understood that they were not forced to partake in the study; allowing participants to decide whether they wanted to participate in the study or not. The researcher asked for consent from participants to audio-record the interview sessions and to use the information obtained during the interview session.

Furthermore, participants were informed that they could withdraw from the study at any time should they wish to do so. The participants were informed that the data collected in the study would not be used for any purposes other than for this study. Confidentiality and anonymity was assured to participants. To protect the identity of the participant's anonymity was used and the first-time teachers and their mentors were coded to protect their identity.

1.12   Thesis layout

Chapter 1

This chapter provides a background and rationale for conducting the study as well as the motivation for the study was presented. The problem statement was presented and the research aims and research questions that the research wishes to answer were discussed. In addition, the theories underpinning the study and the methodology used during the fieldwork is outlined.

Chapter 2

Chapter 2 reviews the relevant literature that supports the framework of this research study. The chapter interrogated the literature based on the research questions. Since the study is looking at the extent the JMP contributed toward first-time teachers' teaching and learning experiences. The chapter looked at what is mentoring or a mentorship programme. Since the research study is based on first-time teachers it was important to identify the challenges these first-time teachers face. The chapter also looked at the contribution of a mentoring programme for first-time teachers, teaching and learning. Mentorship in developed countries and South Africa was discussed. Lastly, the theoretical underpinning to the research study was also discussed. The literature review helped to analyse the relevant data collected for the study. It supports the views presented in the study and helped to establish claims and discussions made of the findings in Chapter 4.

Chapter 3

This chapter contains a detailed description of the researcher's research methodology used in collecting data for this study. The research setting, sampling and research design in the study is outlined. Qualitative methods were used as tools to collect data to find answers to the research questions. The chapter explains the instruments used and the validity and reliability of the instruments. The chapter gives details on how the data was interpreted and analysed using qualitative methods. Lastly, the ethical considerations and limitations of the study are presented.

Chapter 4

The data generated in this study is presented and discussed in this chapter. This chapter presents the findings and analysis from the interviews and document analysis.

Chapter 5

Chapter 5 presents a response to the research problem and gives answers to the research questions investigated in the study. A discussion is presented and recommendations are made based on the study's findings. The chapter further identifies possible areas for further research before the conclusion is made.

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CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the theoretical aspects of this study. It also examines the literature in a broader spectrum, to understand mentoring and how it prepares first-time teachers. The review follows a pattern which is divided into five sections. Firstly, it highlights the concepts that mentorship is linked to, namely what a mentor and a mentee is; what is mentoring for first-time teachers and what a mentorship programme is. In order to understand the context why a mentorship programme or a mentor may be a requirement for first-time teachers, the chapter focuses on the challenges first-time teachers have to face when starting their career. Secondly, it explores the reality of the first-time teachers and the challenges first-time teachers face, it then looks at the possible origins of first-time teacher challenges. Thirdly, the chapter provides a report on mentorship programmes and highlights the contribution and value a mentoring programme holds for first-time teachers as well as, teaching and learning. This section investigates the importance of a mentorship programme and further focuses on studies that have been conducted on the contribution of a mentoring programme for first-time teachers, teaching and learning. Fourthly, it explores mentorship programme in developed countries first, and then it looks at mentorship programmes in South Africa with the focus on the Western Cape Province, Cape Town. Finally, this chapter explores the theoretical framework, I found that Bandura's social learning theory and Vygotsky's social-cultural theory is appropriate to guide the study.

Finally, the sections are concluded by summarizing the five sections and the gaps are revealed. Through the literature, gaps have been identified of what is unknown about mentoring beginning teachers. So filling the gaps is also important for my study, as I want to understand the gaps too.

2.2 Section A: Mentorship

2.2.1 Mentor

There are multiple definitions in the literature when one asks the question who or what is a mentor? A simple answer can then be a direct definition from the dictionary, Hornby (2010) states that a mentor is seen as an experienced person who advises and helps somebody less experienced over a period of time. However, the definition of a mentor may come in many

other forms. Harris (2007) claims that a mentor can be seen as usually a more experienced and senior individual in a workplace that helps and assists younger individuals to discover more about himself or herself, as well as reach his / her full potential and capabilities. The knowledge, advice and resources a mentor share, depends on the format and goals of a specific mentoring relationship; a mentor may assist in a mentee's personal and professional development (Harris, 2007). Among the popular definitions are those that focus on advancing the professional development of perhaps a first-time teacher by someone in a position of authority within the professional context (Chao, Walz, & Gardner, 1992; Fagenson, 1989; Gaskill, 1991; Kanter, 1977; Ragins & Cotton, 1991 cited in Mertz, 2004). For Crosby (1999), a mentor can be seen as a trusted person such as a manager, supervisor or advisor who by mutual consent takes interest in the development of a less experienced individual. A more general definition of a mentor can be someone who you seek advice from that you value, or someone that advises you, whom you believe is beneficial to your career or personal life (Mertz, 2004). A person who helps others who do what they want to do or do it better can also be included in defining a mentor (Alexander & Scott, 1983).

Based on the above definitions, the mentor is seen as an individual that encompasses a learning relationship between themselves and a mentee with an aim to increase and develop the knowledge skills of the mentee. For the purpose of this study, a mentor is understood to be a more experienced person who supports, coaches, guides and develops a less experienced person so that he/she develops both personally and professionally. The role of a mentor according to Lipton, Wellman and Humbard (2003), can be divided into three parts: firstly, to offer support; secondly, creating challenge and thirdly, facilitating a professional vision. With that being said, there are many other particular roles played by a mentor, as Jano (2008) identifies below.

2.2.1.1 The role of the mentor

According to Jano (2008), the mentor is seen as a model, a motivator and a counsellor with a variety of responsibilities, including:

1) Helping others set long term and short term career goals and objectives;
2) to assist with helping the mentee understand the organizational culture and structure;
3) providing guidance and support to the first-time teacher;
4) transferring knowledge and helping others to become critical thinkers and recommending learning opportunities;

5) pointing out areas of strength as well as areas requiring further development to the mentee.

The role of the mentor may change depending on the need and the skills desired by the mentee. Jano (2008) states that the aim of the mentor is to equip the mentee with skills so that they develop into well-adjusted individuals by following the roles of the mentor as stated above.

2.2.1.2 Characteristics of a mentor

While defining a mentor and looking at the role of a mentor is important, it is also critical to look at the characteristics of a good mentor. In order to develop into a good mentor, there are some characteristics that a mentor should have that assist the relationship between the mentor and mentee. These characteristics have been identified by various authors namely: Valeau, 1999 and has also been cited in Jano, 2008 by Brookes & Sikes, 1997 & Lewis, 2001:

1) willingness in wanting to help others;
2) building a good relationship by recognizing that each mentoring relationship occurs in a unique, interpersonal context;
3) high degree of self-confidence;
4) respect and tolerance towards others;
5) a positive and encouraging attitude towards working with others;
6) a desire to being supportive and to make a difference.

Additional characteristics have been identified by Rowley (1999) also include: being committed to the role as a mentor and to the task of helping mentees find success and gratification in their new work, accepting the mentee as the foundation of any effective helping relationship is showing sympathy, understanding and having empathy. As Rogers (1958) pointed out, empathy means accepting another person without making judgments, being skilled at providing instructional support as mentees enter the profession with varying degrees of skill in instructional design and delivery and therefore the mentors should be willing to coach mentees to improve their performance wherever their skill level, and finally having characteristics of a good communicator and listener.

2.2.2 Mentee

A direct definition from the dictionary reads that a mentee is a person who is advised and helped by a more experienced person over a period of time (Hornby, 2010). According to

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Walkington (2005), the mentee's role is one of an active participant. The role of a mentee is to perform tasks and actions within the work or learning environment alongside of the mentor (Lia, 2005). In addition, the mentee perform the associated roles and tasks of the work of the mentor and thus use guidance and support from the mentor to guide them on how they should perform the tasks and to use feedback from the mentor to develop their practice (Lai, 2005). There may be many synonyms of a mentee, such as a novice, protégé, newly qualified person, beginner teacher but for the purpose of this study the mentee will be identified as a first-time teacher. The reason why I chose the word first-time teacher is to place emphasis that the participants in the study comes straight from university and that they were teaching for the first-time and I feel other definitions do not account for this.

In order to assist the relationship between the mentor and the mentee the PSP (2014) has mentioned that the mentees should be:

1) Willing to learn and desire to learn from the person selected as the mentor
2) Commitment, passionate and energetic
3) Respect of authority and understanding towards others
4) Open about ones needs and goals
5) Promptness for all appointments

According to Erwin (2010), mentorship is a two-way street and to be a truly successful mentee, one must show interest in your mentor's professional journey. Also, acknowledge that the mentor has a life outside of the professional setting and the mentee should never forget the time and effort this person is taking to offer the mentee a smoother path on the way to success. Therefore, the mentee should follow through with the commitment to the mentor.

2.2.3 What is mentoring?

According to Meyer and Fourie (2004), the concept of mentoring has a long history; one that they claims comes to us from a Greek folklore. As described in the folklore, In Homer's Odyssey, Mentor was a person and he was the teacher of Telemachus, the son of Odysseus. Mentor was not the average teacher. Odysseus looked around his kingdom to find the wisest teacher to train his son who could one day exercise leadership over his empire. Mentor was more than a wise teacher; he was half god and half man, believable and yet unreachable. Mentor was the union of both goal and path, wisdom personified (Meyer & Fourie, 2004). Although the term 'mentor' is rooted in mythology, it has grown and flourished throughout

the history of education (Janas, 1996). Researchers have given many different definitions to describe mentoring. Mentorship can mean one thing for a developmental psychologist. It can mean another thing to business people and it can mean something else to those in the academic setting. However, in this review I will look at mentorship in the educational leadership setting. Within many professions today, mentors are thought to enhance the professional development and success of capable newcomers (Meyer & Fourie, 2004). According to Meyer & Fourie (2004), professionals also seek mentors when they wish to develop new levels of expertise to advance within their working environment. For Tait (2003) and Harris (2007), mentoring can traditionally be defined as an interpersonal relationship between a less experienced individual, like a first-time teacher and a more experienced individual, the mentor's goal is to advance the personal and professional development of the first-time teacher. For Stead, (2005) mentoring is the process whereby an experienced individual leads and guides a lesser experienced individual towards professional and growth. According to Valeau (1999), mentoring can be seen as a way of helping people make the best use of their own resources, by bringing out the best of their capabilities. It also helps people set goals and then strive to attain those goals. Mentoring can focus on virtually any area of life of the individual, for example business, career, family, health, personal growth, spirituality, intimacy, simple living, and financial development (Valeau, 1999).

At various points in our lives, we all identify and seek to learn from, and often mirror our mentors. They become models for the development of proper problem-solving and decision-making techniques, the demonstration of technical skills, developing interpersonal abilities, and providing personal guidance (Tait, 2003 & Hall, Draper, Smith & Bullough, 2008). These mentors within the educational setting acts as a skill developer to first-time teachers so that first-time teachers may develop good communication skills, a positive attitude to make them successful in the field, the mentor pass on valuable knowledge, insights to the mentee to help them develop their career and acts as a teacher survival tool kit and a resource for the mentees growth (Moore & Amey, 1988). The aim of the relationship is for development and refinement of the first-time teachers skills, abilities and understanding of how certain things work (Moore & Amey, 1988). Tait (2003) further states that mentorship has taken on increased awareness today, particularly among new teacher graduates and those who are dropped suddenly in to new and unfamiliar roles and face the challenge of high expectations, information overload, and little time to learn to become master of all tasks.

Based on the above definitions, mentoring involves a learning relationship between a mentor and a first-time teacher with the skill to enhance the first-time teacher's knowledge, skills and abilities. For this study, mentoring is understood to be a purposeful process, which creates an environment where the first-time teacher can develop both professionally and personally with the guidance of a mentor.

2.2.4 Mentoring relationships and Mentorship programmes

Mentoring programmes and relationships exist in various formats ranging from structured to spontaneous, formal to informal, one on one basis to group settings, virtual to reality (Healy, 1989; Megginson & Clutterbuck, 1995 cited in Jano 2008). According to Jano (2008), there are two types of mentoring relationships that exists one being natural mentoring and two planned mentoring. In the natural mentoring the mentoring relationships develops spontaneously in a more natural relaxed environment. Planned mentoring occurs when participants are selected and matched through a formal process and it includes structured programmes (Jano, 2008). According to Clutterbuck (2005), two kinds of mentoring exists, formal and informal mentoring. Informal mentoring occurs when two individuals participate in a mentoring relationship without intervention or guidance (Clutterbuck, 2005). This would mean that the mentorship being offered is voluntary, and the mentors are mentoring because they choose to. However, Clutterbuck, (2005) adds that formal mentoring occurs when organisations provides structured support to ensure that mentees such as first-time teachers grow and develop professionally. At the same time good relationship building strengthens their knowledge and skills.

For a mentorship programme, mentoring can be seen firstly as an intentional process of an interaction between at least two individuals for/over a period of time. A mentorship programme can be short-term or long term. Short-term in a sense where the mentor helps a mentee to achieve a specific goal or to complete a particular project and long-term where the mentee wants help for a number of project issues and goal or where a first-time teacher is part of mentorship programme that is round about one to two years. It can secondly, be seen as a nurturing process that fosters the growth and skills development of the first-time teacher. Thirdly, mentoring is an insightful process in which the wisdom of the mentor is acquired and applied to the first-time teacher (Shandley, 1989). Fourthly, mentoring is a supportive and often protective process and the mentor within the mentorship programme can serve as a very important guide or reality checker to introduce the first-time teacher to the environment they

are preparing for. Finally, mentoring can act as a process of the professional learning development of first-time teachers.

2.3 Section B: Reality of first-time teachers and the challenges first-time teachers face

2.3.1 Challenges first-time teachers face

In order for someone to understand the context of why a mentorship programme or a mentor is sometimes a requirement to first-time teachers, one must understand the challenges new first-time teachers have to face when starting their career as a teacher. I now look at some literature regarding challenges first-time teachers face. Galton and Macbeath (2008) feels that teaching is not what it used to be, teaching today may be tougher, more challenging, requiring greater resilience and tolerance. Teaching may not be what it used to be, not because the desire to teach has diminished but because teachers now have to deal with pressures qualitatively different than before (Galton & Macbeath, 2008). According to Johnson & Kardos (2002), one of the most critical problems that the teaching profession is facing is how to improve the development of first-time teachers. In addition, Glickman et al (2004) added that teaching has been a career in which the greatest challenges and most difficult responsibilities are faced by those with the least experience. Moreover, Glickman et al (2004) says that first-time teachers in many schools find their first years of teaching a trying and often-defeating experience due to an initial period of challenges and opportunities.

First-time teachers begin their careers facing a number of environmental difficulties such as:

2.3.1.1 Transition into the teaching profession

According to Kuafmann and Ring (2011), many first-time teachers have assumed that once they graduate from university, all they will have to do is apply what they learnt in their first year of teaching. So, first-time teachers start their career full of excitement, energetic and enthusiastic as Kaufman and Ring (2011:52) call these first-time teachers, "spark-plug go getters", and have high expectations as they begin to fulfil their long desired dreams of becoming a teacher. Shakwa (2009) acknowledges that first-time teachers enter the teaching profession with many views on teaching. The first-time teachers might have all these expectations and imagine that they will only promote effective teaching and learning. But the reality of teaching is quickly destroyed by the false impressions that first-time teachers acquired during teaching practice as identified by Uugwana (2010). It however should not be assumed that the teaching preparation at university will enable first-time teachers to adjust

and adapt smoothly to the teaching conditions within the school environment in which they find themselves in because the shift from being a university student to being a first-time teacher in a classroom can be a dramatic one (Arends & Phurutse, 2009). Farrel (2016) states that when first-time teacher's start their career they are expected to carry out the same activities as the experienced teachers. First-time teachers automatically become responsible for managing their classroom, developing lesson plans, addressing the standards, collaborating and the list becomes endless (Farrel, 2016). According to Johnson & Kardos, (2002) the first years of teaching can be a make or break time, and transition from university into the teaching profession can be a challenging and fraught experience for first-time teachers as they may face many difficulties. First-time teachers start their careers facing a number of environmental difficulties such as shortage of resources, lack of time, difficult work assignments, unclear expectations as they are thrown into the deep end in a sink-or-swim type of situation causing a reality shock (Glickman et al, 2004; Gordon & Maxey, 2000; Johnson & Kardos, 2002). The transition shock from being a university student to being a first-time teacher is further compounded by the unknown of a new context of teaching that these first-time teachers must navigate.

Likewise, Uugwanga (2010) states the first year of teaching for many first-time teachers is a fight for survival as they transition from being a university student in training to a full-time teacher can be a dramatic and traumatic experience filled with feelings of anxiety. The experiences and feelings filled with anxiety during the first-time teachers first year of teaching may lead to feelings of frustration, inadequacy and stress if they are not addressed as they struggle to keep their head above water (Farrell, 2016). Uugwana (2010) further describes that the sink-or-swim notion as stated above can be compared to the first-time teacher trying to cope with the many tasks assigned to them. First-time teachers may feel completely overwhelmed by the tasks assigned to them as well as the responsibilities given to them (Ulvik, Smith & Helleve 2009). The process of transition involves shock (Uugwana, 2010, Flores, 2006 and Veeman, 1984). This process according to Veeman (1984) refers to this process as a reality shock when first-time teachers discover the harsh reality of the everyday classroom compared their teaching practice. Therefore, Feiman-Nemser, (2003) suggest that the transition from being a student to being a first–time teacher should be carefully handled because it has been suggested that some aspects of teaching effectively is best learnt on the job during the first months of teaching rather than in the university preparation.

2.3.1.2 First-time teacher support

A variety of studies done by Arends & Phurutse (2009); Freiberg (2002); Hebert & Worthy, (2001) observed that most first-time teachers are placed into their new and unfamiliar classrooms without support or mentoring and this is one of the challenges first-time teachers encounter. Uugwanga (2010) reported that although first-time teachers are often excited about being a first-time teacher very often their schools do not provide the support, encouragement and direction, which they truly need in their first years. This can pose a huge challenge as first-time teachers are expected to sink or swim with little to no support but yet they are expected to develop and show good teaching skills and strategies within the classroom (Arends & Phurutse, 2009). However, it should not also be assumed that because first-time teachers have been trained at university they will be able to fulfil their roles as a teacher without some support. But, Uugwanga (2010) added that some schools staff members are at times unwilling to assist first-time teachers because they assume that first-time teachers know what they are doing because they do not ask for assistance. In contrast, Feiman – Nemser (1983) identifies that it is difficult to provide support to first-time teachers if the kind of support needed is unknown to thethem and since first-time teachers have varied needs. However according to Muthusamy (2015) first-time teachers' experience many challenges and this contributes to them feeling frustrated. These first-time teachers very often lack receiving support from their school management and as a result first-time teachers have to deal with issues on their own therefore in turn causing first-time teachers to feel demotivated (Muthusamy, 2015).

2.3.1.3 Workload

Another challenge first-time teacher's face is the workload. According to Galton & MacBeath, (2008) first-time and experienced teachers constantly struggle to find the balance between their personal and professional lives because of their overload of work. In the study of Muthusamy (2015), teachers felt that the administrative workload and planning is too much and the school day is too short to get everything done at school. Muthusamy (2015) identified that educators find it difficult to plan, monitor and to mark activities in every single learner's book on the same day as time at school is limited. Galton & MacBeath (2008) are in agreement and admits that teachers are working longer hours than expected and they are taking home a large amount of marking, planning, preparation and administration work therefore this is only increasing the workload pressures. Taking work home seems to impact the personal free times of teachers. Galton & MacBeath (2008) discovered that workload is a

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serious problem in many different countries and is also seen as the leading factor for teacher stress, dissatisfaction and burnout leading ultimately to the exit door.

2.3.1.4 Lack of subject content knowledge

Effective teaching requires teachers to have good subject/content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge to promote student learning (Van der Nest, 2012). But, Arends & Phurutse (2009) identified that some teacher education programmes fail to prepare teachers adequately for their teaching task so that effective teaching and learning can take place. Both Veeman (1984) & Ulvik et al, (2009) is in agreement because they claim that the education courses offered at universities does not prepare first-time teachers for the reality of the classroom. The reality is mainly caused by first-time teachers not receiving training at the university to teach content subjects in which the first-time teacher now have to teach in the classroom. The challenge first-time teachers experience at the start of their teaching career is teaching new and unfamiliar content outside subject specialism in which they were not trained for at university. A concern can be raised about the way first-time teachers are being prepared for the realities of the classroom. Mandel (2006) agrees with this concern as he too acknowledges that no one understands what first-time teachers go through at the start of their teaching career as they experience basic issues such as how to integrate lesson/subject content and knowledge or how to teach five hours of material in three hours. No university course or education programme can teach a first-time teacher how to blend knowledge of particular learners and knowledge of particular content in decisions about what to do in specific situations (Arends & Phurutse, 2009).

2.3.1.5 Discipline

First-time teachers since the invention of schooling have had to cope with indiscipline and troubled learners (Galton & MacBeath, 2008). The poor behaviour of learners is a great challenge and is ranked number one in many countries. Discipline issues overflow the classrooms of all teachers and it is even more difficult for first-time teachers as they still need to learn classroom management practices (Galton & MacBeath, 2008). Glickman et al, (2004); Gordon & Maxey (2000) and Johnson & Kardos (2002) are in agreement that discipline is a major challenge as it disrupts lessons which then have an effect on teaching and learning. Some of the discipline issues can be identified by Levin and Nolan (1996) as talking back when being reprimanded, vulgarity, throwing objects around, talking whilst there is a lesson being taught, inattention, bullying and teasing. According to Ramadwa (2018), in an average South African township school, learner ill-discipline is the highest contributor to the

low pass rate. Ill-discipline of learners has not only contributed to low pass rates, but also lead to the frustration of teachers.

2.3.1.6 Classroom management and Overcrowded classrooms

Muthusamy, (2015) defines overcrowded classrooms as one where the number of learners is larger than the number that the classroom is designed to accommodate. Overcrowded classrooms can also be recognized when the enrolment capacity has been exceeded (Muthusamy, 2015). Overcrowded classrooms are a problem in most South African schools and present many challenges for teachers especially first-time teachers this is an international problem too that may lead to limited opportunities for teaching and learning within the classroom Mchunu, (2009) and Galton & MacBeath (2008) identified that there was an intrinsic relationship of learner behaviour to classroom size. Likewise, Arends & Phurutse (2009) acknowledged because of learner discipline and unruly behavior it makes it challenging for first-time teachers to control their large classes and this can be seen as a weakness. In the study done by Arends & Phurutse (2009), South African teachers complain about the abolishment of corporal punishment, arguing that this prompts unruly learners because they are aware that they cannot be hit/caned or receive any sort of physical punishment. Since learners cannot receive physical punishment this contributes to ill-disciplined behaviour and overall classroom management problems teachers are forced to use other forms of discipline. With that being said teachers resolve disputes in the classroom and this disrupts the teachers lesson and it impacts on the teaching and learning time (Norris, 2003).

Onwu and Stoffels, (2005), De Corby, (2005) and Emmer and Stough (2010) cited in Muthusamy (2015) identified more challenges first-time teachers experience when having an overcrowded classroom which I will identify below.

1) Difficulty in monitoring behaviours and activities in overcrowded classrooms.
2) Lack of physical space to move around in the class.
3) Excessive overload of work for teachers.
4) Limited time to meet the needs of all the learners individually for self-activity, motivation, inquiry, discipline, safety and socialization
5) Lack of resources and equipment for classroom practical and physical education lessons.

It is evident that there are many negative challenges that can be associated with large or overcrowded classrooms of first-time teachers.

2.3.1.7 First-time teachers experience similar challenges therefore leaving the teaching profession

According to Galton & MacBeath, (2008) many times first-time teachers exodus the teaching profession after a short period in post. Ingersoll (2003) describes this as the revolving door syndrome and explains that teaching is a profession that loses new recruits very early. Very often, first-time teachers who do not receive adequate support in their first years of teaching leave schools and abandon teaching in favour of other professions. It seems as if Johnson & Kardos (2002), Glickman, et al (2004) and Gordon & Maxey, (2000) are in agreement that most first-time teachers experience very similar challenges and therefore exit the education system. Johnson & Kardos (2002) identified that teacher attrition is an international problem as most teachers quit the profession in their first 2 to 5 years (in some extreme cases, teachers often dropout even before the end of their 1st year). Both Galton & MacBeath (2008) agree that when teachers have challenges they struggle to overcome, they leave schooling within the first 5 years of teaching. At times first-time teachers decide to leave teaching because they are thrust into classrooms with few teaching and learning material (Arends & Phurutse, 2009). However, Arends & Phurutse, 2009 had pointed out that when first-time teachers are in a school environment with nurturing, caring and supportive people, first-time teachers tend to stay in teaching. In contrast, schools that lack supportive and caring people contribute to the growing attrition rate among beginner teachers.

2.3.2 Possible origins of first-time teacher challenges

There may be many factors that could possibly be the origin of first-time teacher challenges. As a personal reflection first-time teachers can be faced with challenges such as dealing with social environment factors or lack of resources. In addition the first-time teachers may be an introvert and too scared to ask for help and therefore personal characteristics may also play a major role in first-time teacher challenges. In addition, Veenman (1984) states that first-time teachers experience many difficulties because they are not trained for the realities of their job and they are many times not trained for certain roles they have to play in their schools. Similarly, Ulvik et al (2009) are in agreement with Veenman (1984) and state that education training courses in which certificates and Bachelors in Education (B.Ed) degrees are offered at universities do not prepare first-time teachers for the reality of being in a real setting of school.

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2.4 Section C: The contribution of a mentoring programme for first-time teachers, teaching and learning.

2.4.1 Studies conducted on the contribution of a mentoring programme

Below are studies that have been conducted on mentorship programmes. The first study conducted by Odell (1990) "Mentor teacher programs" states that in the early 80s there were various reports that expressed concerns about the quality of education in Florida. These concerns provided an "essential drive to teachers and legislation to develop programs to improve the teaching in the public schools" (Odell, 1990:5). A specific target in this context was the teaching efficacy of beginning teachers, efficacy being related to teacher efficiency, effectiveness or ability of first-time teachers. However, the target has been addressed by the implementation of the first-time teacher mentoring programs. This monograph study by Odell, (1990) was aimed to provide the reader with a broad understanding of the concept mentoring and the application of mentoring with regards to teaching and learning. In addition, it also aimed at providing beginning teachers with guidance from mentor teachers to promote the professional development of beginning teachers and "to provide beginning teachers with support and information from mentors to reduce the concerns of the beginning teachers" (Odell, 1990:16-17). Furthermore, specific suggestions for mentoring teachers and establishing effective mentoring programs are derived from the literature. The methodology used for this research was an empirical research approach whereby observations and experiences played a major role.

The findings of the study done by Odell (1990), has identified three studies in which guidance from mentors fostered the development of beginning teachers. The first study found that the competency ratings of beginning teachers who had mentor teachers assigned to them were higher than competency ratings of those who went without mentoring. Another study found that teachers who participated in a mentor programme showed more development compared to those who did not. Mentees that were part of a mentor programme showed the development of skills in the use of "mastery learning, critical thinking, better understanding of the curriculum requirements and better communication skills with learners, parents and others" (Odell, 1990:16). A third study done by Odell (1990) found that teachers in a beginning teacher mentorship program gained significantly in lesson planning, lesson preparation, managing learners and teaching others. In Addition, Odell, (1990) found that when first-time teachers are hit with the realities of being a first-time teacher, a mentor teacher can meaningfully impact a first-time teacher by providing them with emotional support and by

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conveying positive attitudes to the first-time teacher. Furthermore, it was reported that first-time teachers who have mentors who "provide positive feedback, patience and understanding report having fewer concerns and is left feeling more competent and motivated than those without mentors" (Odell, 1990:17).

The research done by Odell (1990) states those experiences with a mentor can be an influential component of learning. Odell (1990) has provided substantive work that suggests that mentoring has a significant influence on the person entering the adult world of work and, indeed may be the core of adult development. Writers such as Sheehy, 1976 and Vaillant, 1977 (cited in Odell, 1990:8) have agreed mentoring has value, at a minimum, in helping a mentee cope with the major stresses of life and at a maximum, as the crux of the mentees' psychosocial development in early adulthood. However Odell's (1990) study mentioned the value of a mentoring programme, while Yost (2002) goes further by saying that mentoring can enhance teacher efficacy. Both Odell (1990) and Yost (2002) agree that mentoring contributes to preparing first-time teachers.

In addition, the second study: "I Think I Can": ' Mentoring as a means of enhancing teacher efficacy', done by Yost (2002) suggest that because good teaching is central to learner achievement, schools must study their professional development practices to determine whether they meet the needs of individual teachers or whether professional development is offered as one size fits all. In addition, activities that encourage teachers to be decision makers, problem solvers, reflective practitioners and researches are important for professional development (Yost, 2002). However, if the focus of professional growth opportunities is not on teacher learning, staff development opportunities will continue to be temporary and ineffective. Much has been written about the use, contribution and value of mentoring first-time teachers as part of induction programs (Odell, 1990 & Yost, 2002). Furthermore, the study was done to investigate if mentoring is a means of enhancing teacher efficacy. To study the programme, Yost (2002) used naturalistic methods of data generation including interviews, document collection and observation. One extended interview was conducted using guiding questions and three focused interviews using scripted questions with each mentor. In addition, Yost (2002) used the journals kept by the mentors throughout the year which provided a long term data source to her study.

This study of a mentor program was conducted at a small Midwestern University. Yost (2002) have demonstrated through her research that mentors and new teachers working together to improve teaching and learning can serve as a model of professional development. In addition Yost (2002) suggests that participation in a mentoring program is valuable not only for first-time teachers but also for the expert mentor too. So, it affects teacher efficacy for both positively. Consequently, it has been said that teacher efficacy has a direct link "to the way students perform in the classroom" (Yost, 2002:196). Therefore, a teacher with "high self-efficacy" tends to provide the most beneficial learning environment for his or her learners (Yost, 2002:196). Yost (2002) adds that research has shown that during the induction stage mentors can serve as valued resources for new teachers but it is often overlooked what the effect mentoring may have on expert teachers.

The third study conducted by Hobson, et al (2009), called: "Mentoring beginning teachers: What we know and what we dont'', proposed that since 1980 mentoring has come to play an increasingly prominent role in supporting the initial preparation, induction and early professional development of teachers. During this time, considerable time, energy and funding resources have been used on the development on mentoring programmes and on the process of mentoring beginning teachers (Hobson et al, 2009). The article aims to identify the value of such developments by reviewing the international evidence base and showing what is currently known – and not known- about mentoring beginning teachers. It also looks at the current evidence on mentoring beginning teachers, particularly in relation to the "benefits and cost of mentoring and those factors which tend to maximize the former and minimize the latter" (Hobson et al, 2009:208). The methodology used to conduct this research was done through empirical studies that tell us about the potential benefits of mentoring for mentees, mentors and the schools education system.

This study reports the findings of international research literature on beginning teachers. According to Hobson et al (2009) their study has suggested that mentoring is an important and effective form of supporting the development of beginner teachers. They documented a wide range of benefits of mentoring for beginning teachers that suggest that first-time teachers often felt increased confidence, reduced feelings of isolation, high self-esteem, professional growth, improved self-reflection and problem solving abilities. In addition, the study also showed that first-time teacher mentoring add more value to mentees as they

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receive emotional and psychological support which according to Hobson et al, (2009:209) has shown to be helpful in "boosting the confidence of beginner teachers, enabling them to put difficult experiences into perspective, and increasing their morale and job satisfaction". Research also points to the impact of mentoring on the developing capabilities of beginning teachers, most notably their behaviour and classroom management skills and ability to manage their time and workloads (Hobson et al, 2009). Hobson et al, (2009) concluded that mentors have more generally been found to play an important role in the socialization of novice teachers, helping them to adapt to the norms, standards and expectations associated with teaching in general and with specific schools.

Additionally, Hobson et al (2009) have identified gaps of what we don't know about mentoring beginning teachers, it refers to the issues concerning which the evidence base is lacking. These relate to: Firstly, the cost-effectiveness of mentoring compared with other methods of supporting and facilitating the early professional learning of first-time teachers. Secondly, how far? and by what means, mentees 'willingness' to be mentored can increase? Thirdly, the impact of mentoring in the short or longer term on the learning of learners taught by mentors and mentees? Finally, does participation in beginner teacher mentoring enhances retention in the teaching profession and the impact? Filling these gaps is also important for my research as I want to understand the above too.

In addition, research literature over the past several years done by, Odell (1990), Yost (2002), and Hobson et al (2009) has encouraged the use of induction and mentoring programs for transition into the teaching profession. Furthermore, the fourth study, "The impact of induction and mentoring programs for beginning teachers: A Critical review of the research" by Ingersoll & Strong (2011), has critically examined 15 empirical studies that were conducted since the mid 1980's, on the effect of support, guidance and orientation programs collectively known as induction for beginning teachers. The aim was to identify if assistance for first- time teachers has a positive effect on three sets of outcomes: teacher commitment and retention, teacher classroom instructional practices and student achievement. The methodology used for this study, Ingersoll & Strong (2011) examined existing studies done. The two researches located more than 500 documents concerned with teacher induction and mentoring. They then excluded documents that were not empirical and narrowed it down to 150 documents. Furthermore, they narrowed it down to 15 empirical studies.

The studies reviewed on teacher commitment and retention, most showed that first-time teachers who participated in induction and mentoring programs showed positive impacts. According to Ingersoll & Strong (2011), for classroom instructional practices, the majority of their studies reviewed, showed that first-time teachers who have participated in some kind of induction program performed better at various aspects of teaching, such as keeping students on task, using effective student questioning practices, adjusting classroom activities to meet student interest, maintaining a positive classroom atmosphere, and demonstrating successful classroom management. In addition, of all the articles reviewed, Ingersoll & Strong (2011) found that for student achievement, almost all of the studies they reviewed showed that students of first-time teachers who participated in mentoring programmes had higher scores, or gains on academic achievement tests. Ingersoll & Strong (2011) concluded that they have identified gaps and relevant questions that have not been addressed such as: Are the content and duration of effective mentoring programmes similar across setting? Or does the programme need to be tailored to settings to be effective? Does effective induction programmes in urban, low-income public schools necessarily differ from effective induction in suburban, affluent schools? Are some types of induction programmes better for some types of teachers than for others? Moreover, are induction and mentoring programs particularly helpful for new teachers whose formal preparation is relatively weak, or are they helpful regardless of the quality of pre-classroom preparation?. These questions have not been addressed but further research need to be conducted to illuminate these issues. All the studies that have been reviewed shows positive contributions made by a mentoring programme and show that great development is made by first-time teachers when they are part of a mentoring programme (Johnson et al, 2001; Shakwa, 2001; Odell,1990; Yost, 2002; Hobson et al 2009 & Ingersoll & Strong, 2011).

2.5 Section D: Teacher mentorship programmes in developed countries

2.5.1 Developed countries

While there are much literature that highlights the importance and the positive contribution mentorship programmes have in helping first-time teachers survive their first years of teaching (Johnson et al, 2001; Shakwa, 2001; Odell, 1990; Yost, 2002; Hobson et al, 2009 & Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). In 1984 Veenman stated that formal mentorship programmes has not been implemented extensively but many years later literature still reveals that in developing countries formal mentorship programmes have not been comprehensively implemented. However, developed countries like the United States of America (USA) have

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established a formal mentorship programme for first-time teachers (Kearney, 2014, Hammond, 2017 & Howe, 2006). Also developed countries such as Switzerland, Japan, France, New Zealand and China have also established formal mentorship programmes (Wong et al, 2005). These 6 countries have adopted systemic approaches to establish highly developed mentorship programmes for their first-time teachers. According to Wong et al, (2005) and Hammond, (2017) the 6 countries above provides well-funded support and preparation that reaches all first-time teachers, incorporate multiple sources of assistance, typically lasts at least two years, and goes beyond the imparting of mere survival skills. There is also institutional commitment to not only funding but resources and partnerships that help to ensure the success of the mentorship programmes (Hammond, 2017). The next paragraphs will highlight and report on the systemic approaches these countries have adopted to develop these first-time teacher mentorship programmes.

United States of America (USA)

The USA has mentorship programmes available to first-time teachers in their first year or two of teaching (Hammond, 2017 & Howe, 2006). The USA has established two systemic approaches to support first-time teachers through the New teacher Centre Induction Model that was developed and is managed by the New Teacher Centre (NTC) and the Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment Program (BTSA) (IES, 2015 & Howe, 2006). When first-time teachers are part of the BTSA programme they receive one-on-one mentoring and continuous support in their first two years of professional development (Howe, 2006). Mentors of the BTSA programme receive specific training so that first-time teachers can benefit greatly (Howe, 2006). In contrast the NTC work closely with school districts and the USA department of education in order to design, develop and implement mentorship programmes that are aligned to provide good one-on-one mentoring and professional development to increase teacher effectiveness (IES, 2015). However, both mentorship programmes offer workshops and consultations and their aim is to assist first-time teachers in their first-years of teaching.

Japan and China

In Shanghai China, new teachers join a culture of lesson-preparation and teaching-research groups. While lesson study groups are the mode in Japan. These two countries have become much more aware of the fact that it is important to develop first-time teacher's skills and develop positive attitudes during the first years of their teaching careers. Furthermore, studies done by Britton, Raizen, Paine & Huntley (2000) & Moskowitz & Stephens (1997) are in

agreement that outstanding and significantly noteworthy mentorship programme practices have also been found in both China and Japan.

In China, immediately after the first-time teacher's graduate, responsibility for training them occurs through a minimum of one - three year internships for all first-time teachers of which some schools extend to five years (Howe, 2006 & Wong et al, 2005). According to Fulton, Yoon & Lee (2005) the Chinese teaching culture is that all teachers learn to engage in joint work to support first-time teachers teaching and their personal learning as well as the learning of their learners. Therefore, the mentorship programme is designed to help bring first-time teachers into this culture. Kearney (2014) & Fulton, et al (2005) both further revealed the first-time teachers receive a half-day of training per week and classrooms are open to observations by any teacher at any time and later constructive feedback is given. There is a collection of learning opportunities at the school and district level for first-time teachers such as; district level workshops and courses, mentoring and a district hotline that connects first-teachers with subject specialists (Wong et al, 2005 & Fulton et al, 2005). This is only but a few mentioned the government implements many policies to help first-time teachers develop themselves and their love for teaching (Wong et al, 2005).

Furthermore, Wong et al (2005) & Fulton, et al (2005) states that teaching in Japan is regarded as a high status and honorable occupation. Therefore according to Howe (2006) & Kearney (2014) Japan spends a great amount of money on mentorship activities for each first-time teacher over a mentorship period of 1 year, the expenditure of this is considerably more than most nations. The district department of education is in charge of running mentorship programmes and activities too (Kearney, 2014).When first-time teachers enter the teaching profession they receive a reduced teaching load and are assigned guiding teachers (mentors) (Kearney, 2014 & Wong et al, 2005). Wong et al (2005) believes that the Japanese system using mentor teachers is the key to success for first-time teachers. In Japan as in China teaching is viewed as a public activity open to scrutiny by many therefore first-time teachers should teach in public and this is called the Japanese method for improving teaching, first-time teachers are then critiqued by their mentors, principals or even others (Wong et al, 2005, Kearney, 2014 & Fulton, et al 2005). For first-time teachers this practices is a learning curve with the overall goal being to improve their teaching (Kearney, 2014). The mentorship process welcomes first-time teachers into open practices and provides these first-time teachers with regular opportunities to observe their peers, their mentors and other teachers in the

school. There is no special arrangement made for this as teaching is organized to allow for such open observations. Through all these practices first-time teachers can develop and perfect their teaching skills under the mentorship of more experienced and skilled colleagues (Howe, 2006 Wong et al 2005 & Kearney, 2014). Thus according to Wong et al (2005) first-time teachers receives help from many teachers since most experienced teachers believe it is their responsibility to help new teachers to become successful. In addition Japan allow groups of first-time teachers, facilitators and experienced teachers from different schools to meet on a regular basis for discussion and reflection and this helps to improve teaching and learning in first-time teachers classrooms (Howe,2006).

New Zealand

Howe (2006) stated that if one is to compare much of the USA's states teacher mentorship programmes one will note that Japan and New Zealand is far more comprehensive. New Zealand was found to be concerned with leading mentorship and internship programmes for first-time teachers from a standpoint of efficiency and socialisation of the first-time teacher into the existing school culture with an emphasis on assistance rather than assessment (Simmie, de Paor, Liston & O' shea, 2017). First-time teachers in New Zealand take part in a 25-year old Advice and Guidance program that extends for two years programmes for first-teachers are mandated for a 2-year timeline (Wong et al, 2005, Kearney, 2014 & Simmie et al 2017). In New Zealand the mentorship programme is called the Advice and Guidance (AG) programme where first-time teachers are given the first year as a continuation of the initial training they received at college. They are only allowed to become qualified registered teachers after the completion of at least two years of mentorship and classroom experience. Like other successful programs comprehensive, orientations, mentoring, observations and in-service training are provided (Howe, 2006, Irvine, Aitken, Ritchie, Ferguson & McGrath, 2009 & Kearney, 2014). The AG program is seen as the initial mentorship phase for the life-long professional development of teachers (Wong, et al, 2005 & Irvine et al, 2009). New Zealand makes use of a variety of mentorship activities and does not place a great deal of responsibility for assisting first-time teachers on a single mentor because help is provided by all teachers (Kearney, 2014). Throughout the education system there is a universal commitment to support first-time teachers (Wong et al, 2005 & Kearney, 2014). According to Wong et al (2005), Howe (2006) and Kearney (2014) every first-time teacher receives a reduced teaching load with fewer duties, manageable teaching assignments and 20% released time to participate in support activities, teachers and school administrators are willing to

invest in the effort to support first-time teachers because schools are required to provide AG. Both Japan and the USA have similar practices in place whereby comprehensive in-service training extended internship programmes, mentoring and reduce teaching are given to first-time teachers (Howe, 2006). The national Ministry of Education provides first-time teachers with teaching resources and mentorship to acquire knowledge and professional development skills (Wong et al, 2005 & Kearney, 2014). In addition first-time teachers are being observed by experienced teachers which are followed by constructive feedback. First-time teachers are offered personal support, appraisals for their improvement (Wong, et al, 2005) Teachers' attitudes toward the professional development of first-time teachers are critically important. Experienced teachers consider it their duty to pass on to the next generation of teachers their knowledge, skills, and experience (Howe, 2006).

Switzerland and France

In Switzerland, first-time teachers are involved in practice groups, where they network to learn effective problem solving. While in France, first-time teachers work for an extended time with groups of peers who share experience practices, tools, and professional language. According to Howe (2006) significantly noteworthy mentorship practices have been found in both France and Switzerland.

As in New Zealand, facilitated peer support in Switzerland is an important mentorship strategy. Also like Japan, Switzerland has programmes to allow groups of first-time teachers, facilitators and experienced teachers from different schools meet together on a regular basis for discussion and reflection (Howe, 2006). According to Wong et al (2005) and Kearney (2014) in the Swiss system teachers are assumed to be life-long learners from the start first-time teachers are viewed as professionals. Therefore, the ultimate goals of the mentorship programme is for first-time teachers to be life-long learners and so that they can seamlessly transition from university life to work life. The mentorship programme in Switzerland extends over a period of two years and there is shared responsibility with running these programmes between the universities, schools and professional development centres (Kearney, 2014). Mentorship in Switzerland begins in pre-service education and continues over a period of two years then continuous development programmes throughout a teachers'careers (Fulton, et al, 2005). Their program is characterized by the teams of teachers formed in pre-service education and continues in schools when their formal training finishes.

The teams work together and offer support and encouragement or self-evaluation of the first year of teaching (Fulton et al., 2005 & Howe, 2006).

Mentorship begins during student teaching whereby student teachers teach as teams of three student's networking with one another (Wong et al, 2005). It continues for first-time teachers in practice groups and is carried forward in mutual classroom observations between first-time teachers and experienced teachers. Thus mentorship moves effortlessly from teacher pre-service days to first-time teaching continuing professional learning. First-time teachers focus on developing professionally as a person, to improve teaching and learning (Wong et al, 2005). Wong et al (2005) states that Switzerland introduces a variety of mentorship elements and activities for pre-service and first-time teachers, other than having one single mentor, the activities include: student networking, practice groups, observations between first-time teachers and experienced teachers, self-evaluation of the first year of teaching that reflects the Swiss concern with developing the whole person as well, counseling and courses.

According to Howe (2006), comprehensive programmes for first-time teachers are found in many Asian countries like China and Japan. In addition to these countries both Britton et al, (2000) and Moskowitz & Stephens (1997) has identified noteworthy practices in Switzerland and France. In Addition, in France a first-time teacher is referred to as Stagiaire, which can roughly be translated as someone who is undertaking a stage of development (Wong et al, 2005). A pedagogical advisor, appointed by the regional pedagogical inspector is provided for all first-time teachers in France. When first-time teachers need advice the advisors give it, but first- time teachers are encouraged to proceed on their own to become confident within the teaching fraternity and also join the mentorship programme that is made available to them (Wong et al, 2005 & Kearney, 2014).

According to Wong et al (2005) and Kearney (2014) in France, all first-time teachers are part of a mentorship programme. The length of the mandatory programme is known to be 1 year in which the university, district and school work together to take responsibility for first-time teachers (Kearney, 2014 & Ladd, 2007). All first-time teachers are also required to attend sessions in the week at the nearest IUFM (Institut Universitaire de Formation des Maitres); the institution was created in 1991 to handle teacher education and development. When attending these sessions at the IUFM, first-time teachers teaching loads were reduced by 33% and they were allowed to leave school early on those days (Kearney, 2014). The main aim of

this programme is for first-time teachers to have focused discipline, increase both the intellectual status of teacher education and the professionalism (Wong et al, 2005 & Kearney, 2014).

On the programme at the IUFM experienced teachers are there to assist first-time teachers and provide formative experiences. Formation is the name given to the process a first-time teacher undergoes to become a member of the teaching profession; formation translates roughly as development or shaping (Wong et al, 2005). Furthermore, in France it has been said that first year teaching and learning about teaching take place in various settings and flexibility is required as first-time teacher's move between institutional settings. First-time teachers are encouraged to observe one another's classes on numerous occasions. The first- time teachers then work with different teachers because this brings first-time teachers into contact with a great number of different people in different roles. Additionally, the mentoring process ends after the first year of teaching but the French view it simply part of teacher formation, it is the method by which the system takes in new members (Wong et al, 2005)

Mentoring first-time teacher programmes has been implemented in different ways across different countries. I have identified mentorship programmes in developed countries in which I illuminate the varied mentoring practices and activities that forms part of their individual first-time teacher mentoring programmes. The common features found to the programmes in these countries are each country provided well-funded support, the programmes are structured, emphasized collaboration, encourage development and professionalized learning. There is also partnership with the districts, universities and schools that ensure success of the mentorship programmes.

2.6 Induction mentorship programmes in South Africa (Western Cape)

Unlike other countries, South Africa currently has no standardized induction or mentorship programme available for first-time teachers. However, in South Africa, although there is no formal mentorship programmes currently available there has been a number of research studies who emphasized the need for induction mentorship programmes for first-time teachers (Koeberg, 1999; Arends & Phurutse, 2009; Ubisi, 1999) cited in (Uugwanga, 2010). Arends & Phurutse (2009) cited in (Uugwanga, 2010) emphasized that in cases where support for first-time teachers are maintained in schools, it usually comes from the school district office, departmental heads, principals, School Governing Bodies (SGBs),

or NGO mentoring companies. In addition, schools that are able attempt to provide support within the school, but there is no standard system-wide allowance in personnel deployment, funding for a reduced timetable, or any other additional resources to ease a first-time teacher into their first years of teaching. For the majority of South Africa's schools that are stretched for resources, first-time teachers are required to perform at the same standard and do the same volume of work as an experienced teacher (CDE, 2015).

The importance of teacher induction and mentoring in South Africa has been officially recognized at the national level since 2005. The need for teacher induction and mentoring was raised in 2005, when the Ministerial Committee on Teacher Education issued its report, A National Framework for Teacher Education in South Africa (DoE, 2005a). It has also been reported that all first-time teachers should be required to participate in a formal mentorship programme for at least a period two years (DoE, 2005b, p14). In 2006 and 2011, the Department for Basic Education produced strategy documents highlighting the need for meaningful mentoring programmes for first-time teachers (Hickman & Dharsey, 2014). However, actions could have lagged behind good intentions. There has been no literature found on any formal mentorship programmes in the Western Cape area other than one non-governmental organization (NGO) the Joint Mentorship Project (JMP) and one programme called the Newly Qualified Teachers Project (NQT). Below I will have a brief look at the NQT project as well as the JMP to shed some light on what these two programmes are organized for first-time teachers.

2.6.1 The Newly Qualified Teachers Project (NQT)

The NQT Project is an initiative of the School of Education at the University of Cape Town, which aims to address the significant attrition rates amongst first year teachers in South Africa, Western Cape, Cape Town. What we know from the literature above is that early career teacher attrition rates are high internationally (Johnson & Kardos, 2002, Glickman, et al, 2004 and Gordan & Maxey, 2000), and South Africa is no different: in 2014 alone, 14 000 teachers left the teaching profession in South Africa (CDE, 2015). The attrition of qualified teachers is so severe that the projected number of qualified teachers in 2025 is only 7 per cent higher than in 2013 (CDE, 2015). Many friends I know have also left South Africa to teach abroad.

The NQT Project seeks to provide support in multiple ways to first-time teachers in their first year of teaching. They do this through a series of workshops on issues they know first-time teachers may find challenging such as behaviour management, lesson planning and relationship management with colleagues. The NQT project also providing online resources in the form of videos and lesson plans, school visits, lesson observations, tips first-time teachers can use in their classrooms and recruiting of in-school mentor teachers where feasible to provide more one-on-one support (NQT project, 2018).

The NQT project has a set curriculum and a short course programme for the newly qualified first-time teachers in which they offer workshop support to first-time teachers. The course involves 8 workshops of 2 hours each that run throughout the school year. The programme at UCT asks a nominal fee of R500 for the course to assist in covering costs. However, in the event that a first-time teacher would like to participate but is unable to pay this fee, they will try to consider a waiver (NQT project, 2018). The NQT Project is steered by an Advisory Committee who provide insight and expertise regarding how the project can serve first-time teachers there are also input from various stakeholders, including local government and in-service teachers (NQT project, 2018).

2.6.2 The Joint Mentorship Project (JMP)

In 2010, the organization set up the Joint Mentorship Project hosted by the Primary Science Programme's (PSP) (Hickman & Dharsey, 2014). The JMP in the Western Cape is a two-year cycle of classroom mentorship, training and support for first-time teachers, to fast-track their adjustments to the school environment and set good practice early in their careers so that they are well prepared to teach. The JMP involves a group of 30 first-time teachers who participate over the two-year period in needs-driven workshops and intensive classroom support. They JMP found that access to the right support and resources during this crucial period in a first-time teacher's career can make a big difference (Hickman & Dharsey, 2014). These first-time teachers are selected as mentees based on an application that includes a motivation letter.

According to Hickman and Dharsey (2014) all first-time teachers enrolled in the project is assigned a PSP Mentor who will coach, guide and support them over the two-year period. The first-time teachers are supported monthly according to their needs. The mentors visit the first-time teachers in their school to discuss the challenges and difficulties they face and a

tailored plan of integrated support is drawn up. The mentors also join the first-time teachers in their classroom to observe the way they conduct lessons and to assist with additional obstacles and tackling these issues through coaching, training and materials support. The JMP's purpose for their project is understood to be a purposeful process which creates an environment where the first-time teacher can develop both personally and professionally with the guidance of a mentor. The programme covers all aspects of a teacher's role, from teaching strategies and classroom management to school policies, administration and how to build relationships with children parents and colleagues (Hickman & Dharsey, 2014).

2.7 Theoretical Framework

This study is underpinned by the conceptual framework of Bandura's social learning theory (1977) and Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory (1978). Both theories can be related to how first-time teachers learn. Bandura social learning theory suggest that people learn from one another through modeling, observing and imitating. Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory suggests that an individual learns new experiences through interactions with his /her socio- cultural environment. This study explores the application of both Bandura and Vygotsky's theories to investigate how mentoring play a role in preparing first-time teachers.

2.7.1 Bandura social learning theory (SLT) (1977)

At the center of this study is the ability of both individuals the mentor and the first-time teacher who are able to learn from one another through observation and modeling. This learning bears the characteristics of Albert Bandura's Social learning Theory (1977). The research focuses on mentoring as a form of social learning. Since this study concerns mentoring as a social learning, its theoretical framework is based on the social learning theory (SLT) by Bandura (1977) and Bandura's social cognitive theory (SCT) (1986). Bandura's (1977) SLT had previously been termed 'observational learning' or 'modeling', and was built on behaviorist learning theory. The focus of this theory is observation. This theory suggests that people learn from one another through modeling, observing and imitating (Bandura, 1977). Bandura's SCT started as the SLT but then it developed into the SCT in 1986 and theorizes that learning occurs in a social context with a dynamic and reciprocal interaction of the person, environment and behavior. For first-time teachers who have been mentored, the study mentioned above, shows that role modeling was significantly associated with skill development (Yost, 2002). Modeling a mentor's skills and practices appear to play an important role in influencing first-time teachers.

In the social learning theory, Bandura (1977) states that behaviour is learned from the environment through the process of observational learning. In addition, new patterns of behaviour can be acquired through direct experience or by observing the behaviour of others (Bandura, 1977). According to Mc Collum (2014), people learn from seeing other people in social settings and that learning involves a relationship between people and their environment. Additionally, first- time teachers that admire their mentors and view them as role models may be more observant on their mentor's behaviour and then more likely to try behaviours that they observed their mentor accomplished successfully (Bandura, 1977) (See figure 2.1 below). Bandura (1977) believes that humans are active information processors and think about the relationship between their behaviour and consequences. Observational learning could not occur unless cognitive processes were at work (Bandura, 1977).

Individuals that are observed are called models for example, a first-time teacher observing a mentor. These models provide examples of behaviour to observe and imitate (Bandura, 1977). First-time teachers usually observe their mentors and at a later time they model or imitate the behaviour they have observed. (See figure 2.1 below)
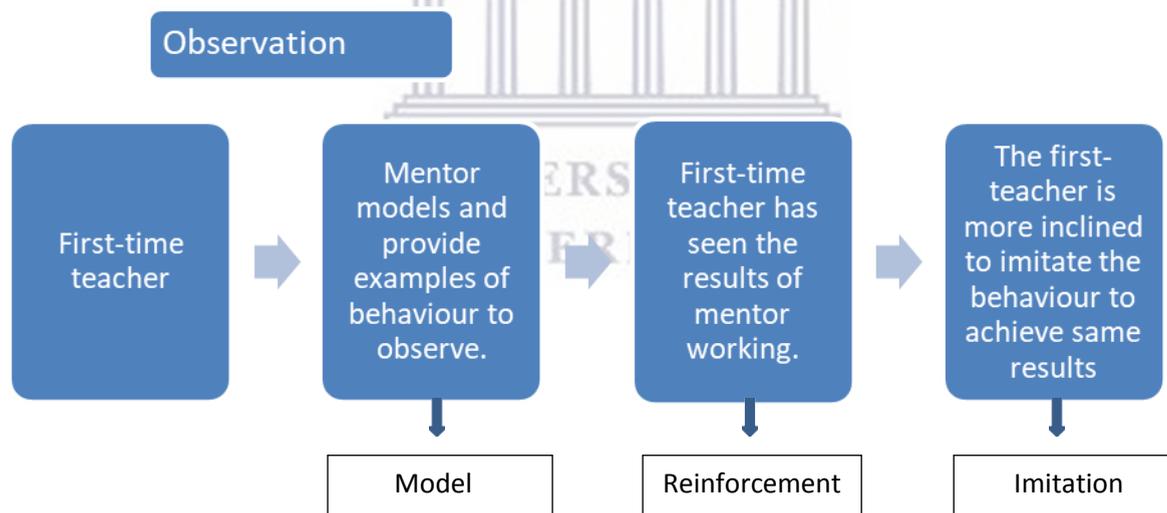
Figure 2.1: Bandura's observational learning – individual's behavior are learned through observation of others (Models) with the main elements being observation and imitation (Bandura, 1977)

According to this theory, individuals learn by observing the consequences experienced by others. In essence, this theory explains that first-time teachers may observe how different behaviours in other colleagues or their mentors are either rewarded or punished and then follow the behaviour that are rewarded. In addition, there is a link between mentoring and social learning; the link is evident in the fact that mentoring is an intentional process designed to support the process of self-learning and learning through self- actualization, making it a social learning process as explained by Bandura's (1977) social learning theory.

2.7.2 Bandura social cognitive theory (SCT) (1986)
In 1977, Bandura introduced Social Learning Theory (SLT), which further refined his ideas on observational learning and modeling. Then in 1986, Bandura renamed his theory Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) in order to put greater emphasis on the cognitive components of observational learning and the way behavior, cognition, and the environment interact to shape people. According to Vinney (2019) SCT is a learning theory which provides a framework for understanding how people actively shape and are later shaped by their environment. In particular, the theory details the processes of observational learning and modeling, and the influence of self-efficacy on the production of behavior (Vinney, 2019).

In the SCT the first-time teacher is viewed as comprehensively integrated with the environment within which he or she is learning. According to Bandura, (1986) the first-time teacher's behavior, cognitive responses and environment all work together in order to create learning. Bandura explained how humans function using a model of triadic reciprocality in which behaviour, cognitive factors, and environmental events all operate as interacting bases of each other. Stated differently; environmental events, personal factors, and behaviours are seen as interacting in the process of learning (Van der Nest, 2012) (see Figure 2.2 below).

Behaviour

Albert Bandura's
theory

Personal factors
(Cognitive, affective,
& biological events)

Environmental
factors
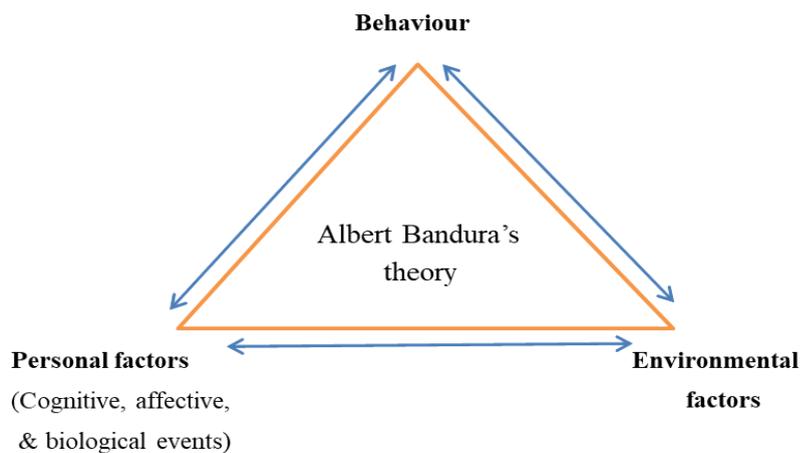
Environmental factors would include:

Social aspects- peers, family and teachers etc.

Physical factors- layout or size of the classroom or the temperature of the room etc.

Figure 2.2: Bandura's Model of Triadic Reciprocality in which learning is influenced by the interaction of Behaviour, Environmental, and personal factors (Bandura, 1986 cited in Van der Nest, 2012)

All three factors seem to play an important role in the learning process and these factors are constantly influencing each other. The environment and a person's behaviour are interlinked. According to Schunk (2004) cited in Van der Nest (2012) Banduras social cognitive theory explains that social factors such as feedback from an experienced teacher or mentor (elements of the environment) can affect personal factors of first-time teachers such as their goals, effectiveness of their job, attributions and processes of self- regulation such as planning, monitoring and controlling distractions. These social influences in the environment and personal (cognitive) factors may encourage the behaviours that lead to achievement such as perseverance, determination, motivation and learning.

In order to explore if the JMP contributed toward first-time teachers' teaching and learning experiences, this study drew on the collaboration of Bandura's three domains; personal, behaviour and environment to ensure learning. The first-time teachers in the study were exposed to social learning experiences through being part of the JMP over the period of two years. The JMP addressed the three elements of Banduras SCT, by providing the first-time teachers to learn through participation in workshops such as discipline, lesson planning, content learning (personal), observation of modelled lessons or team teaching with the mentor (environment) and implementing the lessons learnt within their own class (behaviour). Banduras model shed light and understanding on how first-time teachers learn when part of a

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mentorship programme. In particular, how the interaction of the first-time teachers in their natural environments under the guidance of a mentor result in learning.

In addition to Bandura's SLT and SCT, I also draw on another theory Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory (1978) whereby individuals like first-time teachers can learn from one another through interactions.

2.7.3 Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory

Vygotsky's (1978) approach was the first modern psychological study which looked at the view of human development which takes into account the cultural and social experiences of development (February, 2016). Vygotsky's theoretical framework is that social interaction plays an important role in the development of cognition (Vygotsky, 1978). According to Vygotsky's beliefs, everything is learned on two levels, namely firstly, through interactions with others and secondly the aspect via the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). Thus in the second aspect the Zone of Proximal Development is the area of investigation where a learner is cognitively prepared, but also requires help from the social interaction to develop fully (Briner, 1999). A mentor in this case, who is much more experienced, is able to provide the first-time teacher (mentee) with a framework to support the first-time teachers evolving understanding of knowledge and development of skills (Briner, 1999). The ZPD refers to a physical or cognitive space; it refers to the gap between a first-time teacher's actual level of development (what the first-time teacher already knows) and his or her potential level of development (what the first-time teacher is capable of under the mentor's guidance or in collaboration with more experienced teachers (Vygotsky, 1978) (See Figure 2.3).
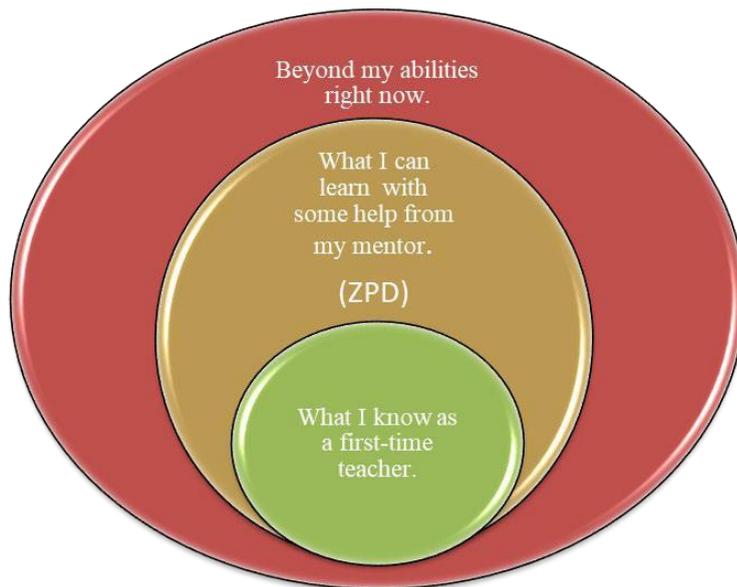
Figure 2.3: Identifies the notion of Vygotsky's 1978, Zone of Proximal Development in which first-time teachers are can be taken from what they know to beyond their abilities.

According to Vygotsky (1978) his beliefs is that the construction of knowledge is not an experience that should be isolated. He also describe that knowledge is not just transferred from one person to another, but rather is socially constructed through interactions with others (Vygotsky, 1978). With this perception, knowledge may be constructed when first-time teachers actively engage socially in talk and activity about shared problems and tasks (February, 2016). It can be assumed that to make meaning is thus a dialogic process that involves people in conversations. Learning in a socio-constructivist environment takes place in conjunction with a more experienced member such as a mentor. Therefore, one can say supportive learning or facilitated learning takes place. First-time teachers being mentored have the opportunity to be involved in supportive or facilitated learning. In Vygotsky's (1978) concept of the ZPD he emphasized teaching as mediation or facilitation. The idea is that individuals learn best when working together with others during joint collaboration, and it is through collaboration with more skilled persons that one learns and internalizes new concepts (Vygotsky, 1962 cited in Shabani, Khatib & Ebati, 2010). Throughout the learning process, a more experienced person supports a less experienced person by structuring tasks, making it possible for the less experienced person to perform them and internalize the process (Florence, 2016).

The emphasis is on collaboration so a first-time teacher will be motivated to learn when encouraged and supported by the mentor who has more experience and knowledge to share.

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First-time teachers who had mentors or experience teachers assigned to them, are more motivated to learn and they develop skills in the use of mastery learning, critical thinking and better understanding (Odell, 1990). In addition in the ZPD, a mentor and first-time teacher will work together on various tasks or even a level higher that the first-time teacher could not otherwise perform alone (McCollum, 2014).

Additionally, learning is a social process that is aided by others who are more capable (Vygotsky, 1978). Vygotsky's social constructivist viewpoint and the concept of the ZPD can also be used to describe the interactions between mentors and the first-time teacher (Vygotsky, 1978 cited in McCollum, 2014). Vygotsky argued that social interactions transform learning experiences and that first-time teachers acquire knowledge over time while working closely with their mentors (Clark & Byrnes, 2012 as cited in McCollum, 2014). For example, the first-time teacher observes his/her mentor and discuss how they would do the lesson, in this way they then also show development when they contribute to their learning (McCollum, 2014).

2.8 Conclusion

As the of aims of this literature was to look at mentoring and the preparedness of first-time teachers and to investigate mentoring and how the mentoring programme prepares and contribute to first-time teachers' teaching and learning. What this review has shown is that there are no formal governmental induction programmes currently available in South Africa for all first-time teachers. However, during the years 2006 and 2011, South Africa's Department of Basic Education has produced strategy documents highlighting the need of formal mentoring programmes for all new first-time teachers. However, up until today no formal mentoring programmes are available to teachers offered by the Department of Basic Education.

 In the first section on mentorship we explored the terms mentorship which linked to a simple explanation based on the available research. So the available evidence shows that mentor and mentee is related to mentorship. It has been said that a mentor are thought to enhance the professional development and success of newcomers (mentees) such as first-time teachers (Meyer & Fourie, 2004). Tait (2003) and Harris (2007) are in agreement that mentoring can be defined as an interpersonal relationship between a less experienced individual like a first-time teacher and a more experienced individual, the mentor, where the goal is to advance the personal and professional development of the first-time teachers.

In addition, what we discover in the second section is that the reality of first-time teachers are that they face many challenges at the start of their career. Glickman et al. (2004); Gordan & Maxey (2000); Johnson & Kardos (2002) found that the major challenges teachers face are environmental difficulties, such as resource shortages, lack of time, difficult work assignments, unclear expectations, a sink-or-swim mentality, and a total reality shock and they all are in agreement that the first years of teaching are a make or break time and that the transition from being a student to entering into the teaching profession can be a challenging experience for first-time teachers. Based on this, one can therefore understand and see why a mentorship programme or a mentor may be an important requirement to first-time teachers as they enter their teaching profession.

So in the third section, we see the value mentorship programmes contributes to first-time teachers' teaching and learning. According to Johnson, Birkeland, Kardos & Kauffman , (2001) & Shakwa, (2001) mentorship programmes are important as it can be used as a tool for shaping the professional culture at the school and this would not only benefit new teachers but all teachers involved in the programme as first-time and experienced teachers may learn from one another. Mentorship programmes also provide positive attitudes of novice teachers and prevent them from reaching the point of burn out. What was striking is that Odell (1990) emphasized in his research that beginning teachers who have had mentors assigned to them show good development skills and increased teacher efficacy and because of the mentoring programmes available teachers where retained into their teaching profession. In this section a review has been done on studies conducted on the contribution of a mentoring programme for first-time teachers' teaching and learning by Odell (1990); Yost (2002); Hobson, et al (2009) and Ingersoll & Strong (2011). They all encourage the use of induction and mentoring programmes for the transition into the teaching profession. Furthermore, all their studies suggest first-time teachers who have participated in induction and mentoring programs show a positive impact. While all the studies done by the above mentioned authors highlight the importance and positive contribution of mentorship programmes in guiding first-time teachers to survive their first years of teaching. Yet, formal mentorship programmes have not been implemented on a large scale especially in developing countries. Therefore, the fourth section explores induction programmes firstly in developed countries such as Japan, China, New Zealand, Switzerland and France and then it looks at induction programmes in South Africa with the focus on the Western Cape. The final section focuses on the theoretical framework that surrounds the study. The study is based on theories

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surrounding effective mentoring programmes leading to the preparedness of first-time teachers. The conceptual frameworks that frame the study is Bandura's social learning theory and Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory.

While reviewing the literature the views of the authors comes out intensely as it acknowledges how a mentorship programme contributes and prepares first-time teachers for their career. The relevance of these articles made an impact on the decisions of my research topic. This study will might affect the views and perceptions of how first-time teachers will see a mentoring programme and encourage the use of mentorship programmes. In addition, my wish is that this study will open the eyes of people in the management positions in education such as governmental officials, departmental officials and principals, etc. so that they can see the value in mentoring programmes, to develop their first-time teachers and therefore making first-time teachers more effective and efficient within their new unfamiliar working environment.

Gaps have been identified on what we do not know about mentoring first-time teachers. Gaps such as: firstly, what are the challenges first-time teachers experienced at the beginning of their teaching career? Secondly, how has a mentorship programme contributed toward overcoming these challenges? Thirdly how far and by what means, mentees' 'willingness' to be mentored can increase? Fourthly, does a mentorship programme support the development of first-time teachers' content knowledge to facilitate effective teaching and learning in the classroom? Fifthly, does participation in a mentoring programme enhance retention in the teaching profession and the impact? Finally, are mentoring programmes particularly helpful for new teachers whose formal preparation is relatively weak, or are they helpful regardless of the quality of pre-classroom preparation? Filling these gaps is important as I want to understand the above too but further research needs to be conducted in the field that will illuminate these issues. My focus for this study is to look at mentoring and how it prepares first-time primary school teachers.

CHAPTER 3
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the research design and methodology that were used in the study. It offers motivation for adopting a qualitative methodological approach as being most appropriate for answering the main research questions and sub-questions. With the aim being to investigate mentoring and how the JMP has contributed toward first-time primary school teachers. I introduce the chapter with a brief overview of the methodological approach underpinning the study, as well as with an explanation of the research design, methods and sampling procedure. The sampling gives a description of the procedures and issues regarding the selection of the participants and is thereafter followed by the methods of data generation. The processes of data generation analysis as well as issues of limitations are discussed. Finally, this chapter concludes with aspects of validity and reliability, as well as the ethical considerations pertaining to the study.

3.2. Approach to the research study.

This study will take on a qualitative approach to the research. This study was conducted with the support of the Primary Science Programme (PSP). Participants were those individuals who were part of the mentorship training offered by the PSP's Joint Mentorship Project (JMP) during the years 2013-2014. These participants were all first-time teachers who were part of the JMP programme and their mentors. This study was conducted after school as the researcher did not want to disrupt the daily teaching time of the teachers in thestudy.

3.3. Research setting

The study was conducted with five mentees from five multiracial and multilingual township primary schools in the Western Cape, South Africa. The five mentees participated in the JMP during 2013-2014. Four of the five schools are in Mitchells Plain, and one school is situated in the Belhar area in Cape Town. Mitchells Plain is a Coloured township[1] and also known to be one of the largest townships in South Africa. Mitchells plain was built during the 1970s to provide housing for Coloured's who were forcefully removed from their homes in other areas

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[1] The term Coloured township in South Africa usually refer to the underdeveloped racially segregated urban areas that was built during the apartheid era for non-whites, namely Blacks, Indians and Coloureds.

due to the implementation of the Group Areas Act[2]. The Group Areas Act assigned racial groups to different residential areas during the Apartheid era[3]. This was to exclude all non-Whites from living in developed areas, which were restricted to Whites only. The developed areas were Sea Point, Landsdowne, District Six, etc. Mitchells Plain is no longer officially a "Coloured township," there are other races including diverse class backgrounds of the population who resides in Mitchells plain too. However, majority of its residents are still Coloured. The area is facing many challenges such as gangsterism and drug abuse.

The four primary schools where the study was conducted are located in the same area of Mitchells Plain as described above in Cape Town, Western Cape. Learners in these four schools share the same socio- economic backgrounds. Most of the learners at the different schools are described by teachers in the study as coming from a poor socio-economic background. The socio-economic background means that the learners live in poverty with parents obtaining a limited income or their parents are unemployed and other social problems are rife in the areas where the learners reside.

The other primary school is located in Belhar, Cape Town, Western Cape, South Africa. Belhar is also a suburb of Cape Town. Belhar has similarities to Mitchells Plain in terms of the socio-economical background, crime, drugs and gangsterism but this only exist in certain parts of Belhar. Fortunately this school is situated where there are minimal, to no, drug and gangsterism activity in that part of the Belhar area. However, the teacher described that most of the learners whom attend the school do not come from that area and that they come from poverty stricken areas such as Delft, Bishop Lavis and Ravensmead where their socio-economical background is similar to those learners from Mitchells Plain.

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[2] The Group areas act was the title of three acts of the Parliament of South Africa enacted under the apartheid government of South Africa. The acts allocated racial groups to different residential and business sections in urban areas in a system of urban apartheid. An effect of the law was to exclude non-Whites from living in the most developed areas, which were restricted to Whites only. The law led to non-Whites being forcibly removed from their home for living in the wrong areas.

[3] Apartheid was a system of institutionalised racial segregation that existed in South Africa from 1948 until the early 1990s

3.4. Research Sampling

In qualitative research, the number of subjects or participants from which data were collected is called sampling (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011). This sampling is using a number of individuals for my study in such a way that these individuals represent the larger group from which they were selected. The research sample for this study consisted of five mentees and their mentors from the selected primary schools that were part of the JMP. The participants are teachers who are referred to as first-time teachers and their mentors that were part of the JMP between the years 2013-2014.

3.4.1 Purposeful sampling

There are a number of sampling strategies that are used in educational research. This study used purposeful/ purposive sampling to show how the JMP contributed toward first-time teachers' teaching and learning experiences at the start of their teaching career. The participants of this study were purposefully chosen by the researcher. The five mentees were chosen purposefully because of their availability to be part of the research study and they were all part of the JMP who received in-service training from the same university. According to Palys (2008) & Creswell (2012) cited in McCollum, (2014) in qualitative research, researchers use purposeful sampling to purposefully select key participants or sites that will best help them to have a better understanding of the research problem.

In addition purposeful sampling, according to Shank, Brown & Pringle (2014) & Creswell, (2012) cited in McCollum, (2014) consists of persons who have unique backgrounds or characteristics that make them the target of closer individual study. Otherwise it is used when the selection of people and location of the study is planned. According to Dolores & Tongco (2007:147), purposive sampling is the "deliberate choice of an informant due to the qualities the informant possesses". This means that this study has a purpose in mind and the sample is thus selected to include and exclude those who do not suit the purpose. The information gathered through purposive sampling will generate useful data for the research topic.

3.4.2 Participants

Research participants were drawn from the second cohort group of the JMP during the years 2013-2014. In 2013-2014, twenty-three first-time teachers were mentored by five mentors. Five first-time teachers and 3 mentors were selected to participate in the study. Each of the mentors mentored one or two of the participants in the study. All the first-time teachers completed their in-service training at university in 2012 and started their first year of their

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teaching career in 2013. Of the twenty three participants five first-time teachers were purposively selected on the basis of the following criteria:

- Same in-service training at the same university
- First time primary school teacher.
- All 23 JMP mentees were contacted only 5 responded with availability to assist with the research study.
- Plenty first-time teacher challenges.
- Schools are situated in challenging areas.
- First-time teachers are teaching subjects or phases which they were not trained for.
- The five schools are close to where I currently work and live.

In addition the mentors were selected based on the first-time teachers who were selected as participants in the study.

3.5. Research Methods

3.5.1 Qualitative methods

The research methodology was undertaken qualitatively. Qualitative perspectives takes its own approach to the process of doing educational research (Shank, Brown & Pringle, 2014) therefore a qualitative case method was adopted. This research methodology allowed the researcher to gain an in-depth exposure and understanding to the phenomena being studied (Shank, et al, 2014). According to Bell (1999) and Shank et al (2014), qualitative case studies are appropriate for researchers because it gives an opportunity for one aspect of a problem to be studied in-depth and gain broader knowledge through the use of interviews, observations, focus groups, material analysis, historical records, interpretive analysis and participant analysis.

According to Bless, Higson-Smith & Kagee, (2006), qualitative research allows one to find meaning in the 'words and sentences' used to describe participant's experiences. Rather than identifying the JMP, first-time teacher and mentor perspectives on quantitative data which may result in the loss of meaning. Qualitative research involves observing events in all or most of their complexity, rather than focusing on just a few aspects in this way the researcher gained more insight into participant's attitude and behavior (Bless et al, 2006). It might also be important to recognize that these viewpoints may not be the view of all mentors or first-

time teachers about mentorship, the beliefs of individuals allow for many interpretations and in this the true viewpoints can be found. The individual view of the person being examined is exactly what qualitative researchers are interested in (Bless et al, 2006 & Shank et al, 2014).

For the purpose of this study qualitative methods were used to complete the data generation process. This study focuses on gaining understanding and meaning on how mentoring prepares first-time primary school teachers at the beginning of their teaching career. Through the qualitative approach the researcher was able to explicate the extent in which the JMP contributed toward first-time teachers' teaching and learning experiences in the selected primary schools in the Western Cape. In addition, the study interrogated first-time teacher challenges and how the JMP supported first-time teachers towards overcoming these challenges. It further interrogated how the JMP supported the development of first-time teachers' content knowledge to facilitate effective teaching and learning in the classroom.

The researcher made use of document studies, these were portfolios kept by the PSP of each JMP first-time teachers' audio recordings of the semi-structured interviews whereby the researcher interviewed the individual first-time teachers and thereafter made use of focus group interviews with their mentors that were part of the JMP. The collected data from the participants through interviews, focus group and documents study were coded and transcribed using thematic analysis. Using these key instruments such as document studies, audio recordings of interviews and focus groups the researcher has ensured that the phenomenon has been investigated by means of different sources of information, to triangulate data (Henning, Van Rensburg and Smit, 2004).

This study only made use of qualitative approaches to provide the researcher with the opportunity to gather, organise and interpret information through interacting with the participants in their own natural environment. During the interviews with the participants the researcher was able to question, interpret and then understand the views of the participants with regards to the phenomenon being studied.

3.6. Qualitative Research Design

According to Bertram and Christiansen (2014), once a researcher has identified a research question, he or she develops a research design. The design is the actual plan for answering the research questions (Shank et al, 2014) and the strategy that describes the procedure of

how the researcher will systematically collect and analyze the data that is needed to answer the research questions (Durrheim, 2002). Shank et al (2014) states that the research designs is not a fixed plan that proceeds in a very structured, linear way. Bertram and Christiansen (2014), states that research is a flexible and non-linear process that is influenced by practical considerations.

Bertram and Christiansen (2014) suggest that a research design should answer the following questions:

- What evidence or data must the researcher collect in order to answer the research questions?
- How will the researcher generate data? Or what methods of data generation will be used?
- What will the researcher do with the data once they have been collected?
- How will the researcher analyze and make meaning from the data?

In order to answer the research questions a qualitative research case design approach was used. Shank et al, (2014) and Leedy & Ormrod, (2014) define a case study as a close up study on an individual, a group of people or a programme over a period of time or until the researcher has gained an in-depth understanding of the research being studied. In this case study, the qualitative data generation occurred at the schools of the first-time teachers and at the JMP offices. It was important to the researcher to investigate and seek clarity on the phenomena being studied. The main intention was to look at mentoring and how the JMP has prepared first-time primary school teachers' ease into their new career as they transition from being a student to a first-time teacher. Through the use of one-on-one and focus group interviews and documentation study, the researcher was able to explicate the extent the JMP contributed towards first-time teachers' teaching and learning experiences in the selected primary schools in the Western Cape.

3.7. Research Instruments

For the aspects of the study the researcher used different instruments for the data generation. The key method used for data generation was interviews to gain insight into the focus of the study. The semi-structured interview was employed so that first-time teachers could express the challenges they faced as first-time teachers, how the JMP contributed towards overcoming these challenges and to focus on the first-time teachers' teaching and learning experiences. The mentors were interviewed and the researcher made use of focus group interviews so that mentors could collectively address the topic on their first-time teachers and

the contribution they made towards the first-time teachers professional development. Thus according to Shank et al (2014), when people collectively address a topic or problem, the process often brings out insight and ideas that might have been eluded individually. The responses from the participants were audio recorded and the mode of the interviews was face-to-face. To gain further analytical depth into the experiences of the first-time teacher the researcher drew on document analyses and critically analyzed the following documents that were available to the researcher from the PSP, JMP:

- Interviews between the mentor and first-time teacher
- Classroom observations
- First-time teacher's portfolio which contains personal information and their term reflections.

The following instruments were used to collect data for this research study:

- Interviews/ semi- structured interviews in which participants were audio taped individually.
- Focus group interviews in which participants were audio taped collectively.
- Documents study, gaining access to private or specialized data given to the researcher by the PSP.

3.7.1 Interviews

Briggs & Coleman (2007) draw a distinction between three different types of face to face interviews, which includes the following: the structured, semi-structured and unstructured interview. Structured interviews usually require short answers or the ticking of a category by the investigator, as in a written questionnaire (Briggs & Coleman, 2007). According to Briggs & Coleman (2007) structured interviews is useful when a lot of questions are to be asked which are not particularly contentious or deeply thought- provoking it has yes / no answers or quantification like always, often, sometimes, rarely, never. If the area under investigation requires more thoughtful answers the semi-structured interview would be better.

Semi- structured interviews include carefully worded schedules which allow participants to more freedom in answering their questions (Briggs & Coleman, 2007). The semi- structured interview schedule tends to be most favoured by educational researchers as it allows respondents to express themselves at length (Briggs & Coleman, 2007). Very often the questions are followed by probes (Briggs & Coleman, 2007). The reason for follow up questions (probes) is to extract more information on the specific question (Coleman, 2012).

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Unstructured interviews are in-depth interviews which roam freely and require great skill. They are often used by researchers, working in an interpretive paradigm in which they use more than one type of interview and are sometimes in fields such as psychotherapy, but the practitioners receive extensive training in interview techniques (Briggs & Coleman, 2007). Unstructured interviews are skillfully handled and can last between two to three hours (Briggs & Coleman, 2007).

The study employed the interview method as one of its primary forms of data generation. The semi-structured interview method was used as an instrument to conduct the research. All the interview questions were related to the research topic and were developed from the main question and the sub-questions. The interview questions were structured to extract information that assisted the researcher in answering the research questions. Since this type of interview allowed for probing it allowed the researcher to probe questions to obtain descriptive data to understand things better (Briggs & Coleman, 2007).

According to Bertram & Christiansen (2014) researchers uses the semi-structured interview method extensively in working towards its aim of exploring and describing people's perception and understandings that might be unique to them, interviewing is a useful method, since it allows the researcher to ask probing and clarifying questions, and to discuss research participants' understandings with them.

Semi- structured Interviews have several advantages and these were highlighted by Betram and Christiansen (2014) as follows:

i)   The researcher is present during the interview with the respondent, and thus can make the questions clear which cannot be done with a questionnaire.

ii)   A researcher can ask more questions to obtain more detailed information if the respondent has not given sufficient detail initially.

iii)   Usually it is easier for respondents to talk to an interviewer than to write long responses in a questionnaire.

iv)   You can collect much more detailed and descriptive data in an interview than through using questionnaires.

v)   Interviews is a good method to use for gaining in –depth data from a small number of people.

All interviews were carried out in the language choice of the participant, either English or Afrikaans. Permission was received from the participants of the study for the interviews to be audio recorded. Refer to appendices A and B.

3.7.1.1 Individual Interviews

The five mentees were interviewed individually in a one-on-one situation. A one-on-one, or also known as face to face interaction, which allows one to observe the body language and observe for visual clues (Coleman, 2012 cited in Briggs & Coleman 2007). According to Coleman, (2012) the face-to-face interviews usually provide more extensive and memorable responses, the interactions tends to be much richer.

The interviews were conducted at the five primary schools in Cape Town, Western Cape. Each interview was scheduled with the first-time teacher and conducted on different days with a time that was convenient to each of the participants. The interviews were conducted after school hours with the participants to avoid interrupting contact time and interfering with lessons. Each interview lasted 30 to 40 minutes. The researcher had not acceded 40 minutes keeping in mind that any interview longer, when transcribed can become overwhelming and time consuming (Betram & Christiansen, 2014).

The individual interviews were audio-recorded with a digital voice recorder and the researcher made notes while interviewing the first-time teacher. The digital audio recordings of interviews with the first-time teachers gave a precise summary of the responses between the interviewer and the interviewee and can be saved for one to go back and reference (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014). The researcher can rewind to listen to the dialogue repeatedly to get clarity on the interview. Furthermore, the tone, body language, pitch of the speech could be assessed and the audio recorded information is transcribed which can thus be used for relevant direct quotes in the research reports when writing up the data analysis (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014).

3.7.1.2 Focus Group Interviews

Focus Group (FG) is an in-depth interview accomplished in a group. In group interviews participants influences each other through their answers to the ideas and contributions during the discussion (Frietas, Olveira, Jenkins & Popjoy, 1998). In this study semi-structured interviews were conducted with the four mentor participants in a FG set up. The interview concentrated on the topic of the researcher's interest. According to Shank et al (2014) when people collectively address and discuss a problem, this process often brings out insights and

ideas that might have been eluded when interviewed individually. In addition the FG interviews also permits a richness and a flexibility in the collection of data that are not usually achieved when applying an instrument individually; at the same time permitting spontaneity of interaction among the participants (Frietas et al, 1998).

The mentors were interviewed to provide the researcher with additional information that the first-time teachers have omitted. The FG interview with the mentors of the JMP gave the researcher insight into the views and experiences of the mentor with regards to how the JMP contributed towards first-time teachers and how the first-time teachers responded to the two year mentoring as well as the process within the JMP. The interviews were conducted at the JMP offices at the Edith Stephens Wetland Park in Phillipi, Cape Town, Western Cape.

The FG interviews were scheduled with the mentor participants beforehand. The FG interview was supposed to be 30-40 minutes but ended at 52 minutes. The interview questions were open-ended which allowed the participants to respond freely and comfortably. This allowed the mentor participants to take their time to respond to the questions. The researcher then probed questions based on the responses of the participants which guided the discussion. The interviews were audio-recorded using a digital voice recorder. The recordings were sent to the researchers laptop and thereafter sent to the researchers mobile phone. Later it was transcribed verbatim and then used for the analysis of the data.

3.7.2 Document study

According to Coleman (2012) documents refer to data that are written or recorded for personal use. However, it can also be secondary data that had been recorded by other researchers for a specific purpose (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014). A researcher may use this data and analyze it in a different way for a different purpose as these records can be rich sources of information, insights and meaning (Bertram, Christiansen, 2014; Shank et al, 2014). To gain further information on how the JMP contributed toward first-time teachers' teaching and learning experiences the researcher has requested to use portfolio documents which was given by the PSP, JMP for the researchers study. The researcher made use of the portfolios of the first-time teachers. The portfolios consisted of many documents that were now readily available to the researcher. The portfolios included interviews between the mentors and first-time teachers, first-time teacher classroom observations, personal information on the progress of the first-time teacher, mini term reports and termly reflections.

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One of the key advantages of using secondary data is that the researcher does not have to collect their own data (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014). The researcher used the documents that were needed for the purpose of the study. The interviews conducted with the first-time teachers and mentors gave the researcher insight into the experiences of the participants, and the analyses of the documents provided by the PSP gave further insight for the study.

3.8. Validity and Reliability of Instruments

Before research can be of value in any other way, each and every research study needs to be reliable (Shank et al, 2014). Another major requirement of a research study is that it needs to be valid. According to Seltiz & Wrightman, (1976:182).

 "Validity is about the accuracy, credibility and truthfulness of findings, whereas reliability is concerned with consistency, stability and repeatability of the informants account as well as the investigators ability to collect and record information accurately".

In addition, reliability in qualitative research is to make sure that the instruments used to collect data are accurate and stable (Shank et al, 2014). The key concept for qualitative reliability is the notion of trustworthiness (Shank et al, 2014; Bertram & Christiansen, 2014; Hamilton & Corbett- Whitter, 2013). This refers to the degree that the researchers can trust the data that they are collecting from their participants. Trustworthiness can be bolstered by using data that can be confirmed by other participants and by collecting data from credible sources (Shank et al, 2014 & Hamilton & Corbett-Whittier, 2013).

Validity in qualitative research simply refers to the extent to which the findings of the research are accurate or credible and it is up to the researcher to have taken steps to ensure that this has been maximized (Hamilton & Corbett- Whittier, 2013). According to Shank et al, (2014) and Hamilton & Corbett-Whittier (2013) this can be achieved through triangulation of the data generation instruments. When triangulation is used, researchers seek to gather data from two or more relevant and credible sources. Shank et al, 2014 & Bertram & Christiansen, 2014 and Guion, Diehl & McDonald, (2011), also states that triangulation is a method used by researchers to check and establish validity in their studies by analyzing a research question from multiple perspectives.

To obtain valid data the researcher approached members of the PSP, JMP of the Western Cape and 3 first-time teachers at different schools who were not involved in the study but they were part of the JMP in a different cohort to validate the instruments used in the study.

They were required to comment on errors such as typos, language and more specifically check on items in terms of clarity and ambiguity and so forth. The interview questions were asked to be ranked using: **Strongly agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly disagree**.

- **Strongly agree** that the interview questions are relevant

- **Agree** that the interview was relevant but changes can be made to make it clear

- **Disagree** that the interview questions are relevant and clear but perhaps changes can be made.

- **Strongly disagree** interview questions not valid to the research content.

Certain questions were eliminated from the interview questions. The researcher checked for quality and clarity of the questions by eliminating the interview questions that was ranked strongly disagree and for disagree it was eliminated if there were no changes that could be made to the question to make it relevant and clear.

A trail interview was done with these participants that were not part of the research study to identify any problems that may be encountered in the main research study which may interfere with the validity of the study. The interview questions went through a thorough validation process.

The researcher made sure that the data collected through interviews and document studies were reliable. The same interview questions were given to each of the first-time teacher who was participants in the study. The information given by the first-time teacher participants in the interviews could be confirmed by their mentors and also the document portfolios which displayed reflections of the first-time teacher over a period of two years. The information in the portfolio documents is a credible source.

The researcher obtained data from more than one relevant source namely through individual and focused group interview questions and document analysis. The researcher used the triangulation method within the interview questions, by asking the same questions in more than one way. Then the researcher checked to see if the respondents have answered the two questions in a similar way. The interviews were done with the first-time teacher and their mentors on different occasions. The researcher wanted to find out how the JMP contributed towards first-time teachers' teaching and learning experiences. The same interview questions were asked to all first-time teachers and it was related to the main question. A similar set of

questions were asked to the mentors in their focus group interview on how they contributed towards first-time teachers' teaching and learning experiences. This was tested through triangulation, as this will enable the researcher to see if the data collected from one source confirms or contradicts the data collected from a different source (Bertram and Christiansen, 2014). Find the attachment of the interviews for the first-time teachers and their mentors in appendices C and D.

The researcher used all data collected from participants, obtained through individual and focus group interviews as well as portfolio documents to gain information for the research study. The information underwent triangulation in order to affirm validity and reliability of the findings.

3.9. Data Analysis

According to Thorne (2000:69), the purpose of the data analysis is to "transform data into meaningful findings". Miles and Huberman (1994:10-11) cited in Bertram & Christiansen, (2014) and Hamilton & Corbett-Whittier (2013), define data analysis as consisting of four flows, data generation, data reduction, data display, conclusions drawing and verification. Shank et al (2014) define qualitative data analysis as sorting and organizing, reflecting, synthesizing and narrating. They further add that once data have been collected, researchers need to make a decision on how the data will be analyzed (Shank et al 2014).

The data generation for this qualitative study consists of the following:

- Individual interviews with the first-time teacher
- Focus group interviews with the mentors from the JMP.
- Document studies (portfolios of the first-time teachers). The portfolios consisted of the following information: Interviews between the mentor and the first-time teacher, Classroom observations, and term reflections.

Before the researcher started the data analysis process the researcher organized the data so that the researcher can become familiar with the data collected. The data collected through interviews and document studies were all qualitatively analysed. The interviews were audio-recorded and thereafter transcribed verbatim on the computer. The responses were read and re-read and this helped the researcher understand what was said. This made it easy to identify patterns and organize the data into categories. The data was grouped and organized into

categories and themes. The researcher used this method to analyse and find the relationship between the data this is called coding. Coding can be defined as marking the segments of data with symbols, descriptive words, or category names or how you define what the data you are analyzing are about (Thorne, 2000). Data reduction was used to reduce data and to eliminate the data that did not help the researcher to answer the research questions. According to Bertram & Christiansen (2014), data reduction involves organizing and sorting data into codes or categories and then looking for patterns or relationships between these categories. Data taken from the interviews and document study of the various first-time teachers and their mentors were compared. When comparing the data with one another the researcher discovered who had similar or different experiences and thus found the relationship and possible explanations between the various pieces of data. This can be termed conclusion drawing in which the researcher note patterns and possible explanations (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014). The researcher then verified the validity of the findings by returning to the data to assess the effectiveness of the analysis.

3.10. Research Ethics

3.10.1 Gaining Access

Before the researcher could conduct any research and collect any data. The researcher made application to the University of the Western Cape Educational Research Committee. This application included a submission of the proposal of the research study, methodology on how the data would be collected including relevant permission letters and supporting documents. After the proposal has been accepted by the research committee of UWC, application was made to the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) to ask for permission to conduct the research study at the selected schools. After written permission was granted by the Western Cape Education Department, the researcher asked permission from the PSP organization, relevant school authorities, principals and first-time teachers who were to participate in this study. Permission letters to carry out the research study was sent to all. The research aims and other expectations were clearly explained to all the participants.

3.10.2 Ethical Consideration

Ethics is an important consideration in research, particularly when research involves humans and animals (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014). It is also important that all research studies follow ethical principles. Therefore, several ethical issues were addressed before the study could commence. Orb, Eisenhauer & Wynaden (2001) and Bertram & Christiansen (2014)

state, that any research that includes people requires an awareness of the ethical issues. Such as consent from all participants agreeing to participate in the study as well as reassurance given to participants that there anonymity would be guaranteed. According to Wragg (2007), it is important to obey the code of ethics which guides the research and practice confidentiality in which the interviewer is fully aware of the interview and the purpose thereof. The following ethical procedures were agreed to before the research began.

3.10.2.1 Consent

The researcher informed participants about the study using an information sheet and thereafter obtained written consent from the participants. The consent of all participants whom agreed to participate in the study was voluntarily. The researcher gave all participants a clear explanation of what the research study expects of them so participants understood that they were not forced to partake in the research study. However, they were told that their willingness to participation in the study would be honored. Participants were informed that they could withdraw from the study at any time if they wished to do so. The researcher obtained consent from the participants for the audio-recording of the interview sessions, as well as for the use of the information obtained during the interview session.

3.10.2.2 Confidentiality and protection from harm

Participants were also informed that they had the right to withdraw from the study if he/she felt that it would cause harm or embarrassment to himself/herself. The participants were informed on how the information would be made public and the data collected in the study would not be used for any purposes other than for this study. In addition, participants were assured that all participants would remain anonymous and the data and information would remain confidential.

3.10.2.3 Beneficence

All participants were informed how the research would benefit them, either directly or broadly to other researchers or contribute to South African literature at large. The research aims to contribute to positive change, even if this will only happen in the long term. The participants in the study were aware that they had the right to the findings of the instruments being used and could request a copy at any time should they wish to do so.

3.10.2.4 Procedure of ethics before and after participants gave their consent and cooperation

The ethics conformed to the ethical standards laid down by the Senate Research Committee of the University of the Western Cape

- Before starting with this study, the researcher obtained ethical clearance from the University of the Western Cape.
- The PSP, JMP permission letter to conduct research on the NGO. (APPENDIX E)
- The principals' permission letters to conduct research at the schools.(APPENDIX F)
- Permission to conduct the research study was required from the research department of the Western Cape Education Department.
- The purpose of the study was explained and a written information letter was given to all participants to inform what the research study is about and how the findings will be used.
- Only selected first-time teachers and their mentors whom where part of the JMP were asked to be participants in the research.
- The research population will only include first-time teachers that were mentees to the JMP between the years 2013-2014 at selected primary schools in the Western Cape.
- Information sheet and a consent letter to participate was given. (APPENDICES A and B).
- Participants were informed that they could withdraw from the research study at any time as they had the right to freedom and self-determination.
- Names of schools and participants were kept anonymous and information gathered from interviews was kept confidential.
- At the end of the research study the findings of the study conducted were made available to all participants and the JMP team.

3.11 Limitations of the study

There are many mentoring programmes. However, the researcher has only researched one mentoring programme in the Western Cape. This might have limited the researcher to gaining more information and views of other first-time teachers that is/was part of another mentoring programme. This study was limited to one mentorship programme in the Western Cape therefore the results of this study cannot be generalized for all programmes in South Africa. Only five mentees and their mentors were interviewed for the study. As time would have not allowed the researcher to do every one that was part of the mentoring programme 2013-2014 cohort.

3.12 Conclusion

This chapter focused on the research design and methodology. The research design used for the study was a case study design it assisted the researcher to explore the extent the JMP contributed toward first-time teachers' teaching and learning experiences in the selected primary schools in the Western Cape during the data generation process and data analysis. This chapter described the approach to research, data generation methods, data analysis, validity and reliability; ethical issues were all discussed in depth. In the next chapter the research findings derived from the semi-structured interviews, focus group interviews and the document studies are discussed in detail.

CHAPTER 4

DATA

ANALYSIS:

PRESENTATION OF THE FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

The aim of the study was to look at mentoring and how it contributed toward first-time teachers' teaching and learning experiences. This chapter presents the data, analysis and the findings that were obtained in the research study. The findings were obtained through semi-structured interviews with five first-time teachers that participated in the JMP. Focus-group interviews were conducted with the respected mentors of the first-time teachers who participated in the study. To gain further understanding into their experiences the researcher drew on document analysis of the first-time teachers portfolios. The first part of the chapter outlines the participant information of the first-time teachers and their mentors who participated in the study. In the second part of the chapter, the findings are discussed in terms of the themes that emerged from the data analysis. A brief summary of the chapter follows at the end with the main findings that emerged from the research.

4.2 Background of Participants and Context

This study was conducted in Cape Town, Western Cape, with five first-time teachers from different schools. Nine participants participated in the research study, of which five were first-time teachers and four were mentors from the Primary Science Programme. The first- time teachers were all females who participated in the JMP offered by the PSP during 2013 and 2014. Three of the mentors were females and one of them was a male. The identity of the participants involved in the study has been kept confidential and no names are mentioned in the dissertation. They were assured of their anonymity and confidentiality at all times. Instead of revealing the names of the participants, pseudonyms were assigned to all of the participants. First-time teachers are indicated by the letter T and the number 1-5 and the mentors are identified by the letter M and the number 1-4. Table 4.1 below indicates the participants code.

Table 4.1 Participant codes that was used to protect the identity of the participants

Teacher 1	T1
Teacher 2	T2
Teacher 3	T3
Teacher 4	T4
Teacher 5	T5
Mentor 1	M1
Mentor 2	M2
Mentor 3	M3
Mentor 4	M4

Before presenting the data analysis and findings discussion profiles of each of the participants are presented using the data obtained from the document analysis and the interviews.

Table 4.2 Profiles of the first-time teachers during the years 2013-2014

First-time teachers participant code	Profile of the first-time teacher
T1	Teacher T1 graduated from the University of the Western Cape with a Bachelor in Education Degree (BEd), trained to teach in the Senior Phase (grades 7 to 9). She majored in English and Mathematics during training. In 2013, she managed to get a post at a primary school where she took up a teaching position in a grade 5 class. She taught all subjects to her class. The number of learners in her class ranged from 43- 45 in the two years. This mentee was very involved in extra-curricular activities such as table tennis, netball, chess and the spelling bee competition.
T2	Teacher T2 graduated from the University of the Western Cape with her B.ed degree. She is trained to teach grade 4-9, majoring in English and

	Life Orientation. She was appointed and started in a grade 4 teaching post. When she started teaching she was required to teach all subject areas. The number of learners in her class ranged from 48-50 learners. She is currently the Head of Department at her current school.
T3	Teacher T3 graduated from the University of the Western Cape with her B.Ed degree. She is trained to teach grades 4 to 9, majoring in English and Life Orientation. During 2013-2014 she taught grade 5. When she started her teaching career in 2013, she was required to teach all subject areas. The number of learners in her class ranged from 34 to 37 over the two year period. She is currently the Head of Department at her current school.
T4	Teacher T4 graduated from the University of the Western Cape with a B.Ed degree majoring in English and Life Orientation. She is trained to teach grades 4 to 9. In 2013-2014 she taught grade 5. In 2013, she taught all subject areas and in 2014, she taught all areas excluding Mathematics. The number of learners in her class ranged from 38 to 39 over the two year period. She was involved in cricket and she was the senior coach for hockey.
T5	Teacher T5 graduated from the University of the Western Cape with her B.Ed degree. She is trained to teach grades 4 to 9, majoring in English and Life Orientation. She began her teaching career as a grade 6 teacher at a primary school for 6 months. Although she was trained to do grades 4 to 9 she ended up at a school teaching grade 2 in 2013-2014. She taught all subject areas. The number of learners in her class ranged from 38 to 43 over the two-year period.

Table 4.3 Profiles of the mentors that were part of the JMP during the years 2013-2014
The mentors in the study are all based in Cape Town and work in the Cape Metropole for the NGO, Primary Science Programme (PSP).

Mentors participant code	Career profiles of the mentors
M1	M1 studied at Hewat Teachers Training College and received a Higher Diploma in Education. She then completed an Advance Certificate in Education (ACE) part time through Rhodes University. She was then

	accredited through the Independent Education Board (IEB) as an Assessor and a Designer and Developer of Assessment. She continued to develop further by completing a South African Qualification Authority (SAQA) Level 1 and Level 2 mentoring training through North West University.
	She taught in Mitchells Plain for 14 years before she was seconded for a year in-service training to be a lead teacher in a Western Cape Education Department (WCED) project called 'Get in Set'. This took place during the time period when there were many curriculum changes with regards to Outcome Based Education (OBE). She completed the full year training and resigned from teaching the following year to start working for a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) as a teacher trainer and Science Facilitator. She first worked at Successful Students in Successful Schools (SAILI) (an NGO affiliated to UCT) for 5 years. She then started working at Primary Science Programme (PSP) from 2005, where she still works. Her mentoring started at the inception of the JMP project in 2011 and she has been mentoring for almost 7 years now.
M2	M2 studied at Zonnebloem College, a teachers training college where she received a Higher Diploma in Education. She then completed an Advanced Certificate in Education in Technology at Rhodes University. Thereafter she did her BEd. Hons at the University of the Western Cape and her Post Graduate Diploma in Information and Communication in Technology in Education. She then furthered her studies by doing her Master's in Education at the University of the Western Cape. She has 27 years of teaching experience at a primary school in Mitchells Plain. She taught grades 1to --7. She joined the PSP and became a full-time mentor from 2013 and has been mentoring for 5 years now.
M3	M3 received her education and training through a number of institutions she studied at Hewat Teachers Training College Teachers' and received a Teaching Certificate and then a Teaching Diploma. She completed a Higher Diploma in Education at Roggebaai College. Thereafter she completed a Bachelor of Arts Degree at the University of South Africa. She continued her educational studies by completing her B.Ed Honours

	at the University of South Africa. She furthered her studies by completing her Master's Degree and PhD in Curriculum Studies at the Stellenbosch University. She then completed a Module in Mentorship and Coaching at the University of the North West. M3 is well a very motivated teacher. Before joining the PSP as a Science and Mathematics facilitator in 2008, she taught at Grassy park Primary for over 23 years.
M4	M4 has completed a Bachelor of Science at the University of Fort Hare. He then furthered his studies by completing B.Ed Honours in Science. He then continued with his studies by completing his Master's degree in Education at the University of Concordia, USA. He taught for two years at a High school in Khayelitsha and then joined the PSP and JMP in 2013 as a Science and Maths facilitator. He has been a mentor for five years.

4.3 Findings

The next sections present the main themes that emerged from the interviews and document analysis. The data of the research study are displayed using extracts and quotations from the interviews and document analysis to support the findings.

The main themes that emerged from the study on the extent the JMP contributed toward first-time teachers' teaching and learning experiences can be divided into the following:

1. Reality and challenges first-time teachers face.
2. Overcoming challenges with the support of the JMP.
3. Skills development gained through the JMP.
4. How the JMP support the development of knowledge for effective teaching and learning.

Each theme was unpacked and described within detailed sub-themes summarised in Table 4.4. In the next section each of these questions will be addressed by being linked to a theme as shown in Table 4.4 in Chapter 4, namely, Question 1 is addressed through theme 1; Question 2 is addressed through themes 2 and 3; and finally Question 3 is addressed through theme 4.

Table 4.4 Detailed sub-themes summarised

Theme	Theme Description	Sub themes	Addressing RQ
1	**Reality and challenges first-time teachers face.**	• Transformation from university life to being a first time teacher. • Administrative duties • Content knowledge and subject difficulty • Overcrowded classrooms • Discipline and classroom management • Resources	RQ1: What challenges has the selected first-time teachers experienced at the beginning of their teaching career?
2	**Overcoming first-time teacher challenges with the help of the JMPs.**	• Personal coaching • Curriculum support • Classroom support • Workshops offered/reflections	RQ2: How has the Joint Mentorship Programme (JMP) contributed toward overcoming these challenges?
3	**What development have the first-time teachers gained by being part of the JMP?**	• Positive attitude • Skills • A Help adding value to their school • Personal and Professional growth	RQ2: How has the Joint Mentorship Programme (JMP) contributed toward overcoming these challenges?
4	**How the JMP supported the development of knowledge for effective teaching and learning.**	• Content- based workshops • Demonstrations and Observations • Team teaching • Reflection	RQ3:How the JMP supports development of first-time teachers content knowledge to facilitate effective teaching and learning in the classroom?

4.3.1 Theme 1: Reality and Challenges first-time teachers face.

The reality of first-time teachers is that they may face many challenges at the start of their profession. Zubeida Desai the previous Dean of the Education department at the University of the Western Cape (UWC) cited in PSP, 2014:4 says that:

"The first few years of teaching are usually challenging for beginner teachers and there are indications that many new teachers drop out quite early in their careers. This is not unique to South Africa."

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It is evident that the first few years for first time teachers can be challenging because adjusting to a school environment and the demands of a daily teaching programme can be overwhelming and in the first few months the demands on your time and energy can be taxing (Dharsey, 2014). First-time teachers are also often unsure of what, when and how things need to be done which makes the first few months a stressful, strenuous and often tumultuous time (Dharsey, 2014). It is no surprise that attrition rates are internationally high and that South Africa is no different. Zorina Dharsey, Director of the Primary Science Programme (PSP) expressed:

"I remember my first year of teaching as if it was yesterday. The first few months were the worst, and within a short time I was ready to run away from the school, the learners and from teaching forever" (Dharsey, 2014).

The first-time teachers that were part of the study acknowledged that they had specific challenges due to being a first-time teacher. In the next section the primary challenges experienced by the first-time teachers are outlined and described in detail, under the following headings: Transition from the university life to being a first-time teacher; Administrative duties; Content knowledge and subject difficulty; Overcrowded classrooms; Discipline and classroom management and resources

4.3.1.1 Transition from university life to being a first-time teacher

Many first-time teachers assume that upon graduation from their teacher education programs, all they will have to do is to apply what they have learned at university (Farrell, 2016). Most first-time teachers arrive at their new school excited, enthusiastic and full of energy or as Kaufmann and Ring (2011:52) call them, "spark-plug go-getters", with high expectations as they begin to fulfil their long desired dream of being a teacher (Farrel, 2016). The expectation of being fully prepared for their school career was not the reality when these first-time teachers entered their first year of teaching.

All the first-time teachers, namely, T1, T2, T3, T4 and T5, agreed that when they were initially appointed to their first teaching post they were excited and ready to teach but when they arrived at school they were overwhelmed. For instance, T3 and T4 mentioned that when they arrived at the school, they had not been assigned a mentor to guide them with the day-to-day tasks a teacher needed to do, such as term planning, daily planning, registers, filing etc. However, they were told they could ask their colleagues or Head of Department (HOD) for

help. In contrast, T1 and T5 were assigned as mentees to their HODs. T2 had said that she was not assigned a mentor but she was not scared to ask anyone for help stating:

"I'm new to this profession and I don't mind asking for help-it is a learning process right?"

According to T1, T2, T3, T4 and T5 from their first day at their schools they were expected to carry out all of the same activities as their experienced colleagues. Once these first-time teachers were appointed, they immediately became responsible for managing their classrooms and all the additional responsibilities that comes with being a teacher. Although these first-time teachers were assigned some form of mentors at their schools, they still felt they didn't want to become a nuisance as their HODs and colleagues had the same amount of work as them and thus they assumed that the experienced teachers would not have time to assist them or answer all their questions.

These first-time teachers reported that they were asked how the first day and the second day perhaps even how the first week with the learners went and thereafter it appeared as if the experienced staff members assumed that the first-time teachers were settled and coping well in their classrooms. Thus, first-time T3 said that she felt *"isolated at times and did not feel a sense of belonging to the school or teaching profession."* According to Brandt (2005), teacher isolation is a significant problem for all teachers, but he believes that the lack of collegiate interaction is especially relevant to first-time teachers.

The transitional shock from the university pre-service training to being a first-time teacher was further compounded by the unknown of a new context of teaching which these new teachers must navigate (Farrell, 2016). In contrast, M3 stated that what she has observed on a personal level is that the first-time teachers were *"very intelligent, energetic who has the potential to become extremely good teachers."* M3 further stated *"the University prepared first-time teachers well and all they need is a helping hand to bridge the theory-practical divide."* Subsequently she explained that universities can only do what they do best, meaning to theorise and to lump this huge amount of theoretical knowledge on to the *"receptive minds and sometimes the not so receptive minds, but that is what their function is."*

On the contrary, T1, T2, T3, T4 and T5 did not feel the same way as M3 because they believed that their practical module at the university could have better prepared them for the classroom. All five of these first-time teachers struggled when they started with their first

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teaching position. The challenges they faced decreased their enthusiasm for their new profession and work life as a first-time teacher immediately became hectic as they tried to keep their heads above water. T2 stated, *"I was no longer eager and excited to go to school"* and T5 stated, *"Moving from university into a school setting with everything being new and somethings unknown I felt like I lost my passion for teaching"*. The list of challenges faced by these first-time teachers is significant and therefore I now turn to a discussion on the challenges the first-time teachers in the study experienced at the beginning of their career.

4.3.1.2. Administrative duties

Administrative duties are one of the core responsibilities of a teacher according to the Personnel Administrative Measures (PAM) document (RSA, PAM, 2016). Administrative duties assist with the daily functioning of a school to ensure that the education of the learners is promoted in a proper manner (RSA, PAM, 2016). The first-time teachers were surprised by the amount of administrative duties they had to complete in order for teaching and learning to take place. The first-time teachers in the study complained about the amount of what they perceived to be unnecessary administration duties.

Mentor M2 stated: *"Our mentees complained about the administration tasks which took up a lot of their teaching time.''* T4 stated that: *"administration tasks is out of this world to much at times"* and T2 felt that certain administration tasks were unnecessary. She stated: *"some admin things asked are just for filling purposes, who even looks at it?"*

These first-time teachers felt that they were not prepared for these administrative duties, nor did they know how to complete certain things, such class registers, classroom period registers, misconduct registers, filing, planning, report writing, analysis etc. According to T5, during her first month of teaching she had to do her baseline for Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS). IQMS is a system adopted by the Department of Education (DoE) to ensure competence in the teaching profession. When she was asked by the school management team to get her files in order for the IQMS process, T5 stated: *"I was unaware what IQMS was or what files I needed to get ready."*

T5 then stated that: *"during my first term we had to do IQMS baseline and my head of department (HOD) just told me to get my files ready for when he comes to assess me. I did not know what exactly this educator's portfolio needed to contain even."*

T1, T2, T3, T4 and T5 explained that doing their administrative files was very difficult, as they did not know what had to be placed in the files. The administrative files for educators

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included: educators portfolio, assessment portfolio and lesson plan portfolio.

T3 exclaimed, *"we weren't taught how to do this file business!, the teachers at my school had to learn by due dates, like if a file is due today then they will teach you how to do it today or you had to go ask somebody's file to see and then copy the structure for your own files."*

The first-time teachers also complained about having to complete the class register. While all of their schools had different systems to complete their class' attendance register, which they now claim they easily understand, but stated that they would have felt less stressed about this task should they have been taught how to complete it on arriving at the school in the first place.

T4 stated, *"it's easy to do my register now that I know what and how to do it but I must admit it takes of my teaching time"*.

T4 complained that doing the classroom register was taking up her teaching time. T4 stated: *"the register took a lot of time especially on a Friday when it was due to go to the office."* T1, T2 and T4 said that their main administrative challenge on a Friday was and I quote T2 and T4 *"the collection of civvies money",* which they had to do weekly. T2 stated: *"This duty was not difficult at all however it interfered with teaching time."*

T1 stated that "*collection of civvies on a Friday is a headache and time consuming because I have to look for change* (monetary change) *for my learners every week".* In addition, T4 added that the collection of school fees and other monies also often became a problem when having to take the money to the secretary's office.

T2 said that one of her major administrative challenges was when she had to hand in her learner portfolios of the learners who were at risk in her class. Learners at risk are the learners who are at risk of not proceeding to the next grade at the end of the year. T2 stated: "*my biggest challenge was being asked for my learners at risk I'm like all these words are foreign, all these terms are new and you just don't know where to go or what to do".* The list of learners at risk must be accompanied by the learners' portfolio, which contains a number of forms that should be filled out by the educator in which you state the barriers to learning of the specific learners, your recommendations and the intervention strategies that you used to support the learners.

Lesson plan preparation was also a challenge to the first-time teachers. All of them stated that '*'planning lessons was very different to the ones you were taught to do at university.''*

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According to the document analysis the challenge for these first-time teachers was that they had more administration that needed to be done when it came to lesson preparation as they had to plan for each term, each week and each day so this was an overflow of admin work in which they did not know how to do at first. The first-time teachers indicated that they had all received a template to help prepare their lessons. When the researcher probed the question based on the challenges, the first-time teachers were experiencing she asked T4 if the schools way of lesson planning was difficult. T4 replied, *"Lesson plans were not difficult if you knew what to do and if someone actually showed you what to do, but it can be a lot."*

The first-time teachers also said that they did manage to do the administrative tasks but they struggled to keep abreast with the marking of learners' classroom books and the Department of Basic Education (DBE) English and Mathematics activity books, which contributed to excessive marking workloads for teachers.

Based on the responses of the first-time teachers regarding their administrative duties, it is clear that they had difficulty completing certain tasks. It is also clear that certain administrative duties were challenging as they interfered with teaching and learning, as well as the lack of support and the absence thereof in the pre-service training.

4.3.1.3. Content knowledge, subject difficulty and language barrier

It seems obvious that if you are going to teach a subject, then you should really know a lot about the subject, right? And that quality teaching starts with good subject knowledge. However, this is not the reality of these first-time teachers as they faced major difficulties with teaching, content and subject knowledge they were not trained to teach.

During the years 2012-2014 the new Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) was being implemented. The Minister of Basic Education, Angie Motshekga, appointed the task team to introduce the new policy that was implemented in grade R-3 and grade 10 in the year 2012 and grade 4-9 and grade 11 in 2013 and grade 12 in 2014 (DoE, 2011). T4 stated: *"Although knew I that most of the experienced teachers had attended workshops on the implementation of new curriculum, it was still difficult to ask for help with regard to the content and subject knowledge because I knew that they were also learning and experiencing CAPS for the first time."*

The five first-time teachers in the study were requested to teach all the subjects, whereas they have only been trained to teach in two subject areas at the university. According to T2, she stated: *"I thought that when I had completed my university degree, I would only teach in the*

two subject areas in which I was trained for, namely English and Life Orientation." However, when she arrived at her school and started her teaching she had to teach all subject areas. T2 stated: *"so doing all subject areas ....(pause) that was a challenge on its own. You know uhm... not really having the background knowledge and stuff of all the other subjects."* T5 had other challenges regarding content knowledge. T5 was trained in the intermediate and senior phase to teach grades 4 to 9, however she got a permanent position at a school in a grade 2, in the foundation phase class. Since that was a permanent post, she decided to take the post regardless of the fact that she was not trained to teach grade 2. T5 stated that *"for a while I regretted my decision"* however she went on to note: *" It was a huge struggle to adjust to teaching foundation phase learners, I felt like I had no clue how to teach, what methodologies to use and how to use concrete apparatus etc."* M2 reported that she witnessed the struggles that T5 endured as she was not foundation phase trained.

T1 experienced similar challenges with regard to content knowledge. She was trained at university to teach grade 7-9 English and Mathematics, but when she started her career, she got a grade 5 post and taught all the subject areas. She also explained that because she needed a post she just took the grade 5 post and automatically she had to teach all the subject areas. It was only later that she realised the challenges she faced of not knowing the content of the subject areas in which she was not trained. T1 expressed herself saying *"I literally had to teach myself at night or before I did the lessons with my class I had to do the lessons around all the subjects I was not trained for which was quite challenging for me''*.

Subject and content difficulty was one of the challenges the mentors observed. M4 saw this as a huge challenge and he stated that *"we could detect that they could have majored in Life Skills or Languages during their B.Ed training but when they get to primary school they realise they are teaching all subjects and those include the critical subjects like Mathematics and Science.''* This is a huge problem as South Africa's Mathematics and Science results are already low compared to the rest of the world (Mzekandaba, 2016). M4 stated, *"how can a teacher who has not been trained in Mathematics and Science be asked to teach these subject areas to their learners."* M4 further explains that one must think of someone who last did Mathematics or Science in high school in grade 9 and now find themselves 7-8 years later teaching these learning areas.

M4 stated: *"How much can they remember from those years and that's the main challenge"*. T2 acknowledged that she did Mathematics when she was in high school and then added that in her first year of teaching she coped with the Mathematics grade 4 curriculums, but she

struggled to teach the section on division. She stated, *"I am honest that in my first year my learners went to grade 5 without me teaching them division. It was difficult I didn't know how to teach it even after my colleague explained it to me."*

Another challenge that was encountered by these first-time teachers were large, overcrowded multicultural and multilingual classes, specifically, learners who were from different cultural groups and who spoke different languages as their mother tongue at home. T3 acknowledged that in her class there was a language barrier. T3 said, *"Most of my learners came from outside the community in which I was teaching. These learners' mother tongue was isiXhosa or Afrikaans and the medium of instruction at the school is English. Therefore, it was difficult to teach the content subjects to my learners in English."* Mentor M1 is in agreement with T3 as M1 said that language barriers is a challenge first-time teacher's face particularly in grade 4. Foundation Phase learners are taught in their mother-tongue and in grade 4 teachers have to teach the content subjects to them in English. M1 stated: *"that is a huge language barrier problem because firstly the learner don't know how to express themselves like when they are doing an investigation or practical they cannot communicate what they see. So language is a vital role to play there."* Mentor M4 responded that basically the challenge was to support first-time teachers in dealing with learners who could not read and write in the medium of instruction of the school.

From the study and the responses, I found that first-time teachers had many challenges with regard to content knowledge and subject difficulty, which was influenced by various elements. The first-time teachers taught in grades and subject areas in which they had not been trained. One of the first-time teachers also experienced a language barrier in her class, which made it difficult for her to teach the content to these specific learners. These first-time teachers were out of phase, out of subject and out of grade teachers.

4.3.1.4 Overcrowded classrooms

The learner-teacher ratio for public schools nationally in South Africa on average in 2013 was 29:1 and in 2014 30:1. (DBE, 2013 and 2014). The DBE 2014 states that when the learner teacher ratio is exceeded this results in overcrowded classrooms. The researcher's observation from the document analysis and the reflection in table 4.2 profiles of the teachers has shown that the learner totals does not reflect the reality in the first- time teachers classrooms. Therefore, teachers are ending up with the challenge of overcrowded classrooms. Principal, Riyaadh Najaar, of Spine Road High School in Mitchells Plain, Cape Town states

that overcrowding of classes in public schools had become the norm (Tswanya & Hlati, 2017). He further reiterated that "*Overcrowding is a major concern in our schools; it's a challenge as quality of teaching and learning is lost. This means both for both parties, the teachers and the learners, they suffer. It has a negative impact on the learners and we can see it in their behaviour*" (Tswanya & Hlati, 2017).

All five first-time teachers dealt with overcrowded classrooms. T1 expressed; "*the first thing that I was encountered with was having 45 learners and it was my first time (*referring to teaching*) which is a big amount of learners.*" All first-time teachers complained about their classes being overcrowded making it challenging in the classrooms to conduct certain lesson.

T2 said that it was difficult in her grade 4 classroom as some of her learners worked at a slow pace and struggled to read and write, "*it's hard to focus just on them or go back to them or even reach them for that matter and some of them ended up repeating the grade.*" T2 also stated: "*I had 48-50 learners my class is so full I can't even move around because the learner desks are on top of one another and lets not even go to group work activities or Natural Science practicals.*"

M2 reported that she feels that the overcrowding of public schools classrooms in the Western Cape is affecting the quality of teaching, as she is certain that all first-time teachers develop with teaching experience but conditions such as an overcrowded classroom can limit teachers from achieving their goals of becoming effective teachers. Furthermore, M1 felt that had large classes were a significant challenge for her first-time teachers. To illuminate the challenge of overcrowded classrooms M1 used classroom experience to illustrate an example. She said that they always taught their first-time teachers that Natural science as a subject area must be hands on "*doing practical work, thinking what they doing, writing what they doing afterwards to make it complete and to make it efficient.*" She went further and said if you enter a classroom and the whole room is full where you can barely move up and down in front of the classroom. "*How do you make that practical work possible and conducive for the situation you're in?''*

What the researcher gathered from the responses, is that larger classes take a toll on a teachers' ability to manage time, tasks and behavior; and also to organise the setting and environment of the classroom. M1 and M2 both had stated that this is also where discipline issues stem from.

4.3.1.5 Discipline and classroom management

When we refer in 4.3.1.4 to overcrowded classrooms we find that this impacts on discipline and the management of classrooms. From the document analysis the first-time teachers reflected difficulty in monitoring discipline and behavioural issues in their overcrowded classrooms. The participating first-time teachers described discipline as the biggest problem in managing their classrooms. According to T1 and T3, they taught in schools where there were socio-economic issues and they felt that this contributed to the issue of discipline. Although T3 admitted that the environment in which she taught was much more poverty-stricken than the area in which T1 taught. T3 said that some learners in her class had said they were part of a gang in the area. She felt that they were not interested in school work and only made an effort to come to school because of the feeding scheme. T3 stated, *"These naughty boys are the ones who disrupt me during teaching time and I wasn't taught how to deal with them."*

T1 stated that *"I think that I had discipline issues because of the community that we come from."* T1 resides from the same area in which her school is situated. So, she is aware of the socio-economic status of the area and what is happening in and around the community. She felt that discipline was not an easy task in her first two years of teaching and found it to be quite challenging. M1 reported that some first-time teachers on the JMP programme during the years 2013-2014 had serious discipline problems in which the first-time teachers thought they had not chosen the right profession. Some of the first-time teachers felt that they were not cut out for the reality of teaching.

T5 and T4 indicated that their classrooms were quite noisy and it was difficult to control the noise levels. T4 indicated that she had tried to use group work to manage her classroom noise levels but admitted that the challenge was that this did not always work.

The first-time teachers in the study felt that classroom management is one of the most important components of effective teaching in the classroom. T1 felt that classroom management is necessary in order for her to keep her class running smoothly throughout the year that will in turn enable her learners to be successful. She felt incompetent as she struggled to contain the discipline issues at times. The first-time teachers said that they could not ask for help with discipline issues as the experienced teachers at their schools because they experienced the same challenge. M3 and M4 felt that this challenge is more noticeable

for first-time teachers as some of them had not yet developed discipline management strategies.

4.3.1.6 Resources

Resources were also a challenge to the first-time teachers as it impacted teaching and learning in their classrooms. A lack of resources was a concern for 4 of the 5 first-time teachers. T1, T2, T3 and T4 all encountered a lack of resources as a key problem. These four first-time teachers reported that at times there were not enough resources in their classrooms to conduct effective and quality teaching and learning especially with Natural Science as it requires learners to investigate with concrete apparatus/resources. T5 stated that her school was equipped with sufficient resources for teaching and learning, however she felt that her challenges with regard to resources was that she was not taught at the school or university how to use some of these concrete apparatus.

The first-time teachers reported that the classroom tables and benches were in bad condition and some tables did not have enough chairs. Also those who had benches said some of the benches had no back support which made it uncomfortable for the learners to sit for long periods of time, which affected their learners' concentration levels. T3 reported that because some benches had no back support some of her learners were always seen lying forward on the bench resting on their books looking as though they had no interest in the lesson. Due to the condition of the benches, mentors have reported that it was difficult to arrange the benches for group work activities. M1 indicated that the benches had a slight slant to them making practical Natural Science lessons difficult, especially when the learners need to measure what was inside the beakers, as the benches were not straight. M1 stated that it was difficult to conduct practical lessons with water or even when they had to apply heat, because they were afraid that the beakers might fall from the tripod stands as the benches were not level, and tables were not steady and conducive for the situation.

T4 indicated that in her first year of teaching, when CAPS was first introduced, there were very little resources available and her experienced colleagues could not help her with resources such as wall posters, charts and other classroom material. She often found herself buying or making resource materials, which was time consuming considering her teaching workload. She also mentioned that buying and making her own resources became very costly. The first-time teachers also reported that they would often buy their own additional learning

resources to assist them with teaching and learning in class as the schools did not always buy extra teaching and learning support material.

Textbooks were also a concern in the first-time teachers' classrooms. These teachers indicated that when CAPS policy was implemented there was one textbook for each learner. However the next year textbooks became a problem as some learners had damaged, lost or not returned the textbooks to school. T3 had stated that *"I feel like these textbook shortages are a problem because… (pause) there were no proper system in place to collect text books at the end of the year."* These first-time teachers had challenges with textbooks because there was a shortage and not enough for each learner instead they had one textbook shared between two learners per desk. Although some of the first-time teachers said that having the learners share a textbook were not a challenge as they found that the learners worked better together. The first-time teachers also expressed that some days they found that learners did not want to share the textbooks with one another for various reasons and this caused problems in disrupting teaching and learning time. T2 indicated that borrowing textbooks to and from other grade 4 classes became confusing and disruptive because at times they could not complete the same subject area at the same time and this then affected the classroom timetable.

Equipment used for practical lessons were a problem at these first-time teachers schools as they indicated that Natural Science in the new curriculum involves a significant number of practical and hands on activities. The teachers indicated that most of their Science and Mathematics resources were borrowed from their mentors because their schools did not have equipment for each class. Equipment that the first-time teachers indicated were missing from each classroom was apparatus such as beakers, tripods, thermometers, scales, Earth balls, iodine solutions and for Mathematics counters, mathematics sets, 3D shapes, analogue and digital clocks, measuring apparatus such as scales, measuring tapes, measuring cups, rulers, number lines, balance scale, and body scale. However, T3 indicated that she was sure that the school must have had some of this equipment but over time it has gone missing due to vandalism and theft of school property. In addition M2 indicated that one of her first-time teachers schools had a Science kit that was sponsored by the Primary Science Programme (PSP) but educators at the school did not know how to use the equipment and therefore they never made any use of the kit.

As it is evident from the responses, resources were a problem and a huge concern. We then noticed that it is a concern to majority of the first-time teachers' schools. In fact, there is a general problem with resources in some schools since the apartheid years as some schools were well-resource, while other schools were poorly resourced (Gebremedhin & Joshi, 2016). However, the first-time teachers claim that their schools try their best to resolve some of the resource problems but that school finances continue to constrain the school's ability to provide the necessary resources in all the classrooms.

4.3.2 Theme 2: Overcoming first- time teacher challenges with the help of the JMPs

During the interviews, the first-time teachers were asked to give details on how the JMP contributed toward overcoming their challenges in order for effective teaching and learning to take place. The JMP mentors were asked to give details of how they assisted their mentees to overcome their challenges.

The first-time teacher participants had many first-time challenges and the JMP contributed by helping these teachers to overcome their challenges. They helped them in many ways using various strategies to which the first-time teachers all responded well. They assisted the first-time teachers to cope with the realities of their job as T3 stated that the reality of her teaching job was hectic. According to M3, it wasn't a matter of reality hitting these first-time teachers hard. M3 indicated that: *"first-time teacher's toolboxes weren't deep enough with options that they could draw from to say that in the event that I encounter this situation this is what I can do. First-time teachers have the knowledge and the skills but they need to be guided and to show how to develop and apply what they have been taught"*. M3 suggested the following. Scenario:

"Imagine yourself being thrown into the deep dark ocean and you only have a torch and you have to find your way, you have to float and manage with everything." M3 states that it's like a huge tidal of wave of things that is demanded and required of you but you do not have what is needed and so you just feel like giving up. Just when you are about to give up suddenly along come a pair of helping hands that just to help you to keep afloat long enough to manage with everything. The helping hands can be referred to the JMP. Below we look at the contribution that the JMP made in supporting these first-time teachers' teaching and learning

experiences. In the following section, how the mentors in the JMP supported, coached and mentored first-time teachers over a two year period is discussed in detail.

4.3.2.1 Personal coaching

Personal coaching in the study is known for the mentors providing first-time teachers with emotional support and conveying positive attitudes to the first-time teachers. The respondents pointed out that the JMP's support was what really kept them going and developing as first-time teachers. T3 explained that sometimes when there is lack of support and guidance at schools this contributes to teachers leaving for overseas posts. She mentioned that some of her colleagues had left for Abu Dhabi due to not feeling supported in their teaching. T3 explained that she only received support from the second term and at that point she already felt that teaching wasn't the right profession for her. Everything at that stage felt overwhelming, the learners did not listen to her, and their marks were poor. At her school the perception was that learner's results were related to how well the teacher was teaching, so if the learner's marks were low it meant that you are a poor teacher. Which means that a teacher's teaching is measured against the learners' results. She said *"I was at breaking point"*. When things got to this point, she was introduced to her mentor, M4. M4 had to first motivate and personally coach the first-time teacher before he could help with the challenges she was facing. T3 agreed because she felt that her mind-set should be positive because she stated *"in teaching if you are negative your results will be negative."* So T3 was coached by her mentor into developing a much more positive attitude and thereafter they took on her teaching challenges one at time.

Teacher T5 stated, *"my mentor supported me by doing sit down check-in sessions with me to find out what areas I needed support in and just generally to see how I was coping."* T4 indicated that the JMP *"supported me greatly"* although she did not have her own mentor in her first year she still attended the available workshops presented by the PSP and the JMP team supported her through various forms of communication, like telephone calls, emails and personal meetings giving great ideas on how to go about dealing with the challenges she faced. The respondents suggested that the JMP created a caring and supportive environment and this helped them find the balance between various aspects of their social and personal lives as well as their career. The document study of the teacher portfolios revealed that the aims of the JMP was to support first-time teachers by responding to the needs expressed by the first- time teacher in relation to their challenges. The first-time teachers were supported over a period of two years by a mentoring process that included: individual consultations,

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workshops, reflective group consultations, classroom observation, demonstration lessons and team teaching.

4.3.2.2 Curriculum support

Curriculum and content support was needed as these first-time teachers were only trained for two learning areas, but when they secured their first teaching post, they were obligated to teach all subject areas. The document analysis of the teachers' portfolios revealed that the first-time teachers in the study lacked content and curriculum knowledge required for their teaching role and they needed mentorship support especially with regard to content planning and implementation of the lessons within their overcrowded classroom.

The five first-time teachers reported earlier, that when they started in their first year of teaching, the CAPS document had been newly implemented and their experienced teachers were also only learning to teach within the CAPS; therefore the first-time teachers could not really ask the experienced teachers for support with the development of the content knowledge in their lesson preparation. Indeed M1, M2 and M4 responded to the question on how the JMP supported first-time teachers' curriculum knowledge of CAPS by stating that this support involved offering training workshops and demonstration of lessons requested by teachers. Consequently, the mentors felt that although these first-time teachers had recently completed their studies, the mentors still felt the need to enhance their skills and competencies by providing them with the ability to understand the curriculum better. They felt that the first-time teacher required being needed to be familiar, knowledgeable, skilled and competent in the curriculum in order for their learners to benefit. Teacher T1 noted that the JMP assisted them by going over the curriculum with them at the beginning of each term in order to help first-time teachers to prepare for the new term: *"they literally went through every topic that needs to be covered in the CAPS document each term."* The first-time teachers reported that these curriculum training sessions they would receive training, planning, they were assisted with developing lesson plans for each subject. The training sessions also showed the teachers how to conduct these lessons in their classes. They also received resources such as information handouts, printable resources and JMPs subject hand books. T4 stated that "*after the curriculum training sessions I felt ready for the new term because I just knew what to do"*. These first-time teachers also reported that the sessions were so informative that they could use what they learnt in the training session and go back to the

classroom and teach the lessons in exactly the same manner that they were taught in training. They felt that they were now ready to teach the subject areas in which they had not been trained to do with more skill and confidence.

The JMP mentors furthermore indicated that they offered curriculum and content support for any subject area in and out of the classroom. M4 said, *"Our main focus areas are Science Mathematics and Languages but then we also support the first-time teachers with whatever subject that they are teaching."* M1 explained that they had to respond to the needs of the first-time teachers. So if they need assistance in a particular subject area then that is where the mentor was going to render the support. If they found that first-time teacher had to teach all the subject areas, then in the first year, they focus on developing the main subject areas of the first-time teacher such as Science, Mathematics and English these are also the JMPs main strength as indicated by M4 and M1.

T2 indicated that when she was struggling with Mathematics as stated in challenges above. She could call on any mentor to assist her with for example, on a topic like how to teach division. She indicated that once she requested a demonstration lesson on division, her mentor, M1 then asked M4 to assist T2 with Mathematics, as M4 was the Mathematics expert at the PSP. T2 stated *"the second year I tried the Mathematics division with my new class, and now I am telling you I'm on top of the world. I'm a genius!"*

According to the mentors, the JMP also showed their first-time teachers how to integrate lessons into the curriculum. An integrated curriculum is described as one that connects different areas of study by cutting across subject-matter lines and emphasizing the unifying of concepts. Integration focuses on making connections for leaners and allowing them to engage in relevant and meaningful activities that can be connected real life (Jenkins & Boyd, 2016). The JMP according to M1 integrates Science with Languages to show how language plays a vital role in any learning area. M1 explains that Mathematics can also be brought in wherever possible especially since some Mathematics concepts have a relationship with Science and the word sums can be related to languages. M2 says that it is important to show the first-time teachers how to integrate the curriculum as they believe as mentors that the learners in the classroom can learn so much by connecting their knowledge from the one subject with another. M2 said *"imagine doing a science lesson and you learn mathematics, and English in one lesson …. (pause) the learners are engaged so much more"* Knowing how to effectively

integrate the curriculum can help teachers and their learners become more successful in the classroom (M1).

4.3.2.3 Classroom support

All the first-time teachers in the study indicated how appreciative they were when the JMP had offered them classroom support. According to M1 and M2 the JMP acts on the needs of the first-time teacher. In order to see what kind of support is needed by the first-time teacher the mentors complete a consultation to find out the strengths and weaknesses of each first-time teacher as well as the obstacles they encounter in their schools. In the consultation the first-time teacher and the mentor works on long term and short term goals and they try to work towards it. The consultations are one-on-one and the mentor helps the first-time teacher to plan for the term, look at tasks to be assessed and assists the first-time teacher manage their administrative tasks.

The mentors indicated that they have a set strategy for rendering classroom support. At first M1 indicated that they first observed the first-time teachers teaching to gain an understanding of their teaching style, and then assess their needs and abilities. Later, the mentors give lesson demonstrations to first-time teachers in their classes with the learners. Whilst the mentor is doing the demonstration, the first-time teacher observes the lesson. Each lesson is followed by a reflection session where the first-time teacher gives feedback on what he/she observed and how she/he will improve the lesson. M1 indicated that *"in the first year we opt to do mostly demonstrations so the mentee can see the various teaching strategies and methods being used to make lessons exciting and learner centered".* It is then followed by the first-time teacher doing the same lesson that the mentor modelled in the demonstration lesson, to a different class. Here the mentor observes the first-time teacher's lesson which is then followed by constructive feedback. M4 continues to explain that in the second year they opt to do more team teaching and only do demonstration lessons when it is requested by the first- time teacher. M4 stated that team teaching is where the mentors teach alongside the first-time teacher. They first plan the lesson together then the mentor teaches one part of the lesson and the first-time teacher does the other part or vice versa. All of these sessions are followed by consultations in which the first-time teacher can reflect and the mentor provides feedback. M1 stated *"yes, so this is basically how we work and I mean if you do this for two years consecutively the first time teachers can only grow in the process."*

T1, T2, T3 T4 and T5 indicated how they have been supported in their classrooms by their mentors from the JMP. All five first-time teachers explained how they were taken through the classroom based support programme. They shared their experiences on how they observed their mentors demonstration lessons, how they modelled the same lessons, and how they then team-taught.

The following are some of the novice teacher comments with regard to the mentoring process:

"There would be times she would come in to do a lesson so that I observe. Then there would be times when I did a lesson where she would observe and then give you constructive criticism and input as to what I can change or what I can do better" (T2).

"There were certain lessons that she would come and do for me and some she would come do with me because I didn't have all the resources so she would bring it to the classroom and we would co teach or she would first teach and model the lesson then the next lesson I would teach and so forth'' (T1)

"We had classroom visits where he would do demo lessons for me where he would teach and then the next time he would come and we would do shared teaching where he will explain and I will explain and while he is explaining I will help the learners with the activity and the other way around" (T3).

"I received classroom-based support by observations, demonstration lessons, team teaching this all took place during monthly visits" (T5).

"The first time my mentor came there, she just knew which lessons I was going to teach, she offered to model the lesson and then I was able to teach it afterwards"(T4).

The first-time teacher participants also indicated that the JMP mentors had helped them in many other ways with classroom support and they had not just followed their classroom support strategies. T4 mentioned classroom resources saying *"the one thing that I really appreciated about my mentors classroom-based support was that she came into the classroom with resources and everything she thought I might need, she brought me so much resource materials for NST (*Natural Science and Technology*)."* T3 had also indicated that her mentor also brought resources that were needed for practical lessons because her school did not have equipment and resources for NST. T5 noted that her mentor M2 brought her

reading materials on methodology and techniques to use when teaching foundation phase learners.

In addition, T2 said that her mentor supported her with her personal well-being. She added that in her first year of teaching she had 50 learners and that she did not expect to have that amount of learners coming straight from university. She explained that her mentor M1 was such a *"sweetie she would come in randomly and ask how am I doing? Are you okay? Are you coping? Am I not too stressed?"* She felt that this support was amazing and just what she needed it was not school related but for her own well-being and sanity.

T2 and T3 also said their mentors M1 and M4 had literally taken them through a step-by-step process on how to do certain administration things in the classroom. T2 said *"She took me through the process of separating certain administration stuff, like the timetables, financial books, assessments etc. because you had to have files for all of this, she helped me make files for each of these things , she taught me how to do things like my register."* T3 also said that her mentor M4 had a one-on-one session with her on how to do her files and he sent her an email thereafter with the index for each file. She added *"He just helped me to get organised because everything was everywhere."*

Figure 4.1 below identifies how classroom support was given to the first-time teachers by their mentors.
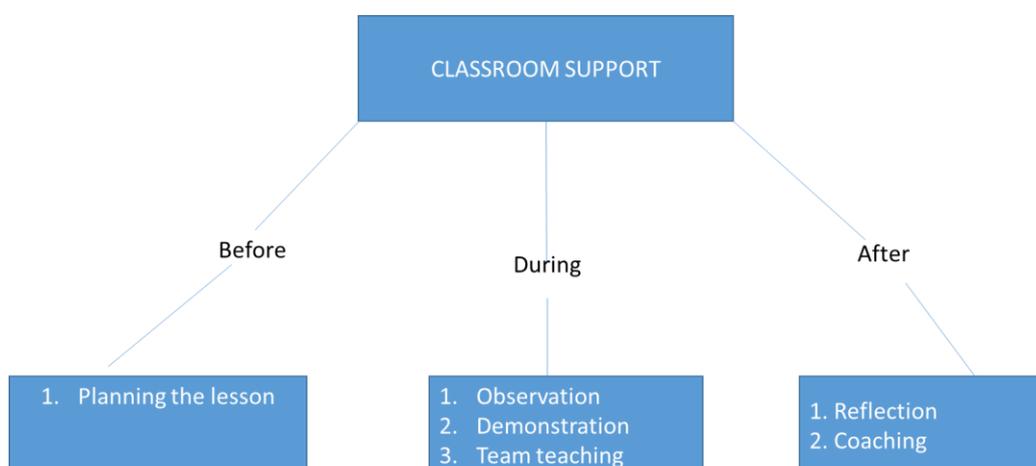
Figure 4.1: JMP classroom support process

4.3.2.3 Workshops offered / reflection

Participants both mentors and first-time teachers identified the importance of workshops in the 2 year mentorship programme. These first-time teachers had acknowledged that the workshops that were presented by the JMP helped to improve their teaching skills, knowledge and competencies. According to M4 the JMP offered support to the first-time teachers by either inviting them to attend workshop courses or through classroom support. At the workshops there were various topics in which the JMP offered support in. Some of the workshops focused on 'Getting ready as a first time teacher', 'How to manage the classroom environment with discipline', 'administration', 'time management when doing planning', 'Preparation for lessons and how to go about it' and 'Tools that can help to increase the efficiency of work for first-time teachers'. According to the mentors, there were also workshops on intervention strategies and IQMS.

Psychological workshops were also offered to first time teachers on "Stress management and 'How to deal with trauma in school'. Mentor M3 explains that the training workshops were not decided in advance, but were developed from what was observed by the mentor during classroom visits. The content of the workshops was shaped around the needs and challenges of the first-time teachers through the observations of the mentors.

T2 indicated that the workshops were very helpful as it assisted her and the rest of the first-time teachers in dealing with the various challenges that they had faced daily. According to T2 the workshops taught her strategies on how to go about most of the day-to-day tasks and struggles in her class. T2 especially mentioned that the workshops had even helped the first-time teachers with how to personally and professionally organise themselves: *"we were taught how to manage our time and to be organised and stay on top of things especially since we have so much admin"*. In addition, T1 said, *"the workshops taught me how to gear up and supplied me with several resources in order for me to cope and be successful in my classroom.''* T3 was in agreement and explained that she enjoyed the workshop sessions so much because she felt that the first-time teachers also got an opportunity to learn from one another. All the first-time teachers indicated that the workshops helped them in many ways and when they left the workshops they felt good because they left with *"new knowledge and a deeper understanding"* and they left feeling more confident with how to go about doing certain things.

The JMP also had a specific workshop with first-time teachers at the end of each term to reflect on the term. According to the mentors the JMP implemented this reflection workshop

in order for first-time teachers to reflect on their practices to ensure that quality teaching and learning was taking place within the classroom. Reflection can be a valuable tool for self-development (Brooks & Sikes, 1997) that helps make the first-time teachers to become aware of how they are teaching, giving them the opportunity to reflect on their practices such as what worked and what has not and thereafter act upon those reflections which in turn makes them better teachers. Teachers who explore their own teaching through reflection may develop changes in attitudes and awareness, which may benefit their professional growth (Mathew, Mathew and Peechattu, 2017). When reflection was included in the workshop the first-time teachers had the opportunity to reflect on the term and the mentors provided constructive feedback. The other first-time teachers also got an opportunity to share and give input on how they deal with specific challenges they experienced M2 said, "*the first-time teachers use the workshop as a platform where they share their challenges and give advice on how to improve, for example learner discipline or group work. Very often teachers look surprised to find out that they are not the only ones who experience for example learner discipline.*"

T3 indicated that she felt that by reflecting on what had happened at her school she was able to assist other first-time teachers in the same position as her. She said that at times she felt good knowing that other first-time teachers could relate to her reflections on her teachings and that other first-time teachers had indicated that they had faced the same daily struggles as her. T5 added that the reflection session were great because they provided the first-time teachers with a different kind of support where they were able to relate to one another. The sessions also provided feedback so that the first-time teachers could find better ways to improve on their teaching skills or the struggles which they faced. M4 stated that *"the reflection sessions were not just about finding out the negative aspects, we share positive things too."* M2 mentioned during reflection, first-time teachers mainly highlight what has not gone well during a lesson. The mentors indicated that their first-time teachers learnt to manage themselves and their teaching through reflection.

M1 mentioned those first-time teachers who were not part of the JMP one-on-one mentoring also got an opportunity to benefit from the workshops offered by the PSP so they got to share classroom experiences. The importance of support given from the JMP to the first-time teacher was found to be a major factor in helping the first-time teacher overcome their challenges.

4.3.3 Theme 3: What development have the first-time teachers gained by being part of the JMP

The first-time teachers were asked about what development they gained through the mentoring of the JMP.

4.3.3.1 Positive attitude

When the first-time teachers were asked about how the mentoring programme positively influenced the way they approached teaching and learning all five first-time teachers expressed that the JMP influenced their attitude in a positive way. The first-time teacher participants expressed that JMP influenced them to become more optimistic in the way they approach teaching and learning. T5 explained that because she was taught many teaching and classroom strategies she felt more confident to teach in her class and it left her feeling very positive. T5 stated, *"I try my best to do things positively in my class and therefor I am able to make all my lessons interesting and fun for my grade 2 learners."* She believes that when she makes the lessons more spontaneous and interactive the learners are more engaged with one another and they enjoy the lessons and learn better. She says that she no longer has the mentality that, *"if we don't have all the resources I cannot assist my learners in their learning"*, but she developed a new motto that focuses on, *"I now work with what we have and what we don't have we make."*

Teacher T2 feels more confident in teaching all subject areas and she recognises that the support she has received through the JMP has influenced her positively. She feels that she now understands the content of the subjects that she is teaching and tries her best to make learning as interesting and as fun as possible. So that her learners can apply what they learn in class and relate it to their everyday lives. T3 explained that the mentoring programme positively influenced her attitude to the teaching profession. She says that when she started her teaching career she was very negative and became despondent with the workload. She initially felt that it was not fair that a first-time teacher should have to teach all the subject areas, especially those in which she was not trained. She says there were days when she did not know what she was teaching and yet she had to teach so she just wrote notes on the board, which the learners had to write down. All this changed when she became a first-time teacher to the JMP. She explains that when she started on the programme she started feeling positive, especially when she attended the workshops and was taught the content, teaching styles and shown demonstrations. These all made her excited to present the lessons to her learners. T3 felt that her discipline improved significantly because of this and that she now had a new way

of thinking, as she understands the work better. According to the responses of T4 she has gained a lot of confidence in what she teaches and how she teaches.

In addition, T4 felt despondent just like T3. She had a B.Ed degree but was still not confident to present lessons that she had not been trained to teach. She explained that the JMP mentors coached her to persevere, and supported her by listening to her complaints, challenges and allowed her to vent her frustrations. They then provided her with help and sound advice. She added that *"you never have to feel uncomfortable about sharing your challenges because you knew they were there to support you all the way and that gave me a positive outlook on my future as a teacher."* The teacher, T1 stated that she developed positive energy straight from her mentor M1. She explains that her mentor always came with positive energy, she always had a happy face and was so excited and ready to teach and demonstrate lessons to her learners. She then also adopted that attitude and took it to her classroom irrespective of the kind of day she was having or how she was feeling. She explained that she just wanted her learners to see her as being positive and then in turn she saw her learners also became positive, *"positive little human beings ready to learn"*. Therefore, her positive attitude towards her work has influenced her learners as well, and in turn has helped with the way she approaches teaching and learning.

4.3.3.2 Skills

When the first-time teachers were asked what skills they have gained through the support of the JMP. All the first-time teachers indicated that the mentors of the JMP helped and provided them with opportunities to acquire new skills. They also stated that the mentors helped them to identify the skills that they already had and then provided them with expert advice to help them to improve on these skills so that they can succeed in the teaching profession. T4 explained how the JMP helped to equip not just her but the rest of the first-time teachers on the programme with skills. She stated: *"They* (referring to the JMP and the mentors) *had such a lot of workshops and classroom support in which they trained us to an extend where you felt so equipped. Uhm,* (pause) *when you left there, it was almost like, why didn't somebody tell me this while I was studying? So it felt almost as if I was actually ….* (pause)*...like I was doing my degree quickly, like a crash course at the mentoring programme.''*

The teacher T5 has reported that the JMP not only helped her with the development of new knowledge but also with the skills that she needed to execute her role as a grade 2 teacher effectively which she was not trained for. She specifically mentioned that she learnt the skill

of managing her class and becoming an effective disciplinarian. She gave examples saying that when her learners became disruptive and too noisy her mentor taught her not to shout at them but rather use count down techniques or sing some rhymes or even call the unruly learners one side instead of addressing the matter in front of the whole class. T2, T3 and T4 also agreed that they were taught the skill of managing their classrooms. T2 noted that she was taught specifically valuable classroom management skills that have assisted her to train her learners in such a way that they know they come to school to work hard and learn. She says that she now gets through the day working with her leaners together as a team. T3 explained that she uses a different strategy where she carries a discipline book around recording the behaviour or misconduct of learners. Should their names appear thrice in the book their parents are called in. She explained that this method has worked well for her. T1 indicated that she became an effective disciplinarian by learning the skill of relationship building. Her mentor recommended that she get to know her learners, their learning styles and abilities, and then arrange the classroom in such a way to make group work possible. So she would put them in various groups so that teaching and learning would be easier.

Administration was one of the challenges that these first-time teachers all faced. They acknowledged that before joining the JMP they were not well prepared in dealing with administration work. However, the first-time teacher participants said they could now demonstrate their competencies in time management, assessment planning and organisational skills which all linked to administration skills. The coaching by the JMP seemed to adequately provide them with skills needed for their administration tasks.

T5 described how her mentor M2 helped her to improve her administration skills by showing her how to do filing and lesson, lesson preparation, etc. She explained that after she mastered these skills she was able to manage her time more effectively which left her more time to do other daily administration duties. T2 also reported that her time management skills improved after being on the JMP. She feels that you get better at things after you have been shown how to do it and you practiced it a few times. She gave the example of how she feels and said that she definitely became better at setting up exam papers because she had enough time to sit with the papers and check them before handing them in for moderation. She said that her head of department (HOD) did not send them back to make several changes with negative feedback as had happened previously. She felt that the guidance she received from her mentor, on how to better manage her time, helped her to better prepare her for all the

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administrative duties. She felt that she improved on her administration skills, improved each year. Both T3 and T4 felt that their organisational skills improved. T3 explained that she was taught by her mentor M4 how to organise herself by developing a filing system for her notes on discipline, planning and assessments from workshops and meetings that she has attended. She also invested in a diary to keep track of her weekly schedule as well as for planning for what lies ahead. She said that this has helped with improving with her organisational and time management skills. T4 said, *"so the skill I learnt and gained there is organising skills"*. She explained that she never had a system until she was taught by her mentor and this helped her to manage her time better.

Another skill that T1, T2, T3, and T5 felt that they have developed in is communication skills. They reported that by developing this skill they have also became better listeners and this has boosted and built there confidence level and helped to build their leadership skills and abilities. Teacher T5 and T3 both explained that they learnt how to better communicate with their colleagues in a respectful manner, even if they disagreed with them. T5 says "*I now know how to express my view and opinions respectfully.*" T3 explained that her mentor M4 taught her when and how to address people in the workplace *"when to speak and how to say something."* Both T5 and T3 said that when they mastered the skill of communication, they learnt how to say no respectfully to their colleagues. T3 said that *"when I started out I did not want to step on anyone's toes, so my mentor helped me in saying no respectfully."* Based on their responses it seemed as if they were tasked to do many things and did not know how to say 'no'.

According to T2 she was always good at communicating however she developed the skill of better listening to her colleagues. She said that she was always a confident person but she admits that coming into an environment where there are senior educators she felt very young and inexperienced. She said *"you are forever seen as the 25 year old, you can't just come in and voice your opinion"*. She claims that she had to build confidence to find ways to approach the older colleagues at her school to discuss her ideas. T1 said that she also learnt the skill of listening, not just to her colleagues but to her learners as well. She notes, *"I had to learn the skill of listening if I want my kids to listen and that's where it comes into my teaching and learning as well."* T1 said that understanding your learner's helps with communication in your classroom and that she became a better teacher when she developed listening skills. Thus participants all express how they experienced support in developing

skills to implement changes in their classroom teaching and learning practices. T3 and T1 also stated that because they learnt good communication skills this improved their leadership skills as they were now able to take charge. They ascribed this due to the fact that their senior management team SMT recognised their input because the following year they were selected to be the grade heads for their respective grades.

4.3.3.3 Adding value to their school

During the interview teachers were asked, *"how did the mentorship programme helped you to add value to your school?"* T1 responded by saying that her mentor inspired and motivated her to become a leader at her school. She said that her M2 always told her to avail herself and participate in school activities to gain experience beyond just teaching and learning. She got involved in the extra-mural activities and was always complemented on her organisational and leadership skills by her colleagues. Due to this T2 claimed that her involvement in the JMP improved her confidence level which made her role as a teacher more meaningful, because she knew what and how to execute the tasks assigned to her. She explained that her leadership abilities were intensified over the two year period and she became very involved in her school's activities. In fact she took the lead in organising events, the discipline of the school and lesson planning of her grade. Due to the changes in her approach and development she feels that she has added value to the school.

She found out that the learners' literacy levels were extremely low and felt that she can contribute towards improving their progress. She started a book club in conjunction with the community library. She also started a 'Soul buddies' club at the school which helped improve learners' awareness of issues that affect their daily lives in their community. These learners are also taught to make positive and healthy choices in life. In addition, she is now a member of the discipline committee and she is currently the safety officer at her school. She said *"I'm involved in so many things at the school I also started cricket."* T2 took the initiative to start a new sport code at school because there was only athletics, soccer and rugby. Due to the lack of finances at her school, she approached the cricket association to ask for assistance. They were then able to assist her and then she started mini cricket at her school. She decided to improve her knowledge about cricket and did a course and she became a cricket coach. She explained that she was part of the administrative side of athletics, and motivated the athletic committee to invest in athletic outfits. The management approved the decision and purchased the outfits for the athletes. *"So I've been busy and involved and that's how I contributed and added value to my school."*

T3 indicated how she felt she contributed towards the teaching and learning at the school. Due to the skills she has displayed she was made head of Mathematics, although she was not trained in Mathematics at university. She notes that *"because I had no choice but to teach maths I developed myself by going to all the JMPs content Mathematics workshops and I became so good! Practice makes perfect"* She explained that she shared new ideas and practices with colleagues on a Friday when they had staff development. She served on the curriculum committee and she would regularly research on how to improve the literacy and numeracy at school. She developed a daily reading programme for English and daily mental Mathematics programme to improve the Language and English at her school and this is how she felt that she was able to add value to her school.

T4 explained that she added value to the school by joining most of the committees where she felt that she could make a difference specifically committees pertaining to sport and culture. She then realised that she can't serve on both the sport and culture committee, as this was not sitting well with the staff. However, when she attended a JMP workshop at the mentors encouraged her to stay serving on the committees, because they felt she could add value with her skills. Due to their encouragement she became second in charge and that boosted her confidence even more. She also started Hockey as a new sport code at her school. She said "*I again spoke to my mentor M4 and the other mentors and they encouraged me to start hockey because they knew the school use to have this sport code but not anymore.*" The principal was happy that she was bringing the sport code back. She is now co-ordinating the hockey at her school.

T1, T4 and T5 said that they shared what they had learnt from their mentors and the workshops offered by the JMP with their colleagues. T5 said she specifically shared Mathematics and English teaching strategies and techniques. The experienced teachers at her school found these methods interesting. T2 copied and shared all the workshop materials she received at the JMP workshops she attended with the colleagues in her grade. She also said that in her second year on the programme she was confident in doing the experiments and she would offer to show the colleagues in her grade how to do it in their classrooms. She noted that the older teachers never used to do experiments because they felt stressed with not having enough resources. She then gave them ideas on how to improvise and make it possible in their classrooms. So she showed them how to improvise as well. T4 said that she explained all the things to her colleagues that her mentor helped her with. In this manner she had the opportunity to share her knowledge with her colleagues and explain to them step-by-step how

to teach a new concepts which her mentor demonstrated to her class. Her colleagues were very curious and happy to learn from her.

T3 and T1 had shared their new knowledge with the more experienced teachers at their respective schools by doing demonstration lessons in the staffroom so that the whole staff would benefit. T3 explained that she introduced the concept of sharing best practices at her school. She demonstrated lessons that she observed or learnt at the JMP workshops or she had round table discussions on things she thought the educators found challenging. She added that at times she asked the principal for permission to allow the educator(s) to sit in on her classroom lessons if they have difficulties with a specific content area. T1 said that every Wednesday her school has teacher development sessions in which they would teach a lesson that they felt confident to teach. So they modelled different lessons and strategies for teaching and learning which educators could implement in their own classrooms to improve on their teaching and learning.

4.3.3.4 Personal and Professional growth

The first-time teacher participants were asked if their experiences as a first-time teacher helped with their personal and professional growth. The first-time teacher participants all said the mentorship programme assisted them to develop professionally and it added to their personal development. They said that by having regular one-on-one meetings, consultations, classroom support, content and personal well-being workshops with the JMP have helped them to develop personally and professionally as a first-time teacher overtime.

T5 had said that every experience and encounter with M2 has shaped and moulded her into the kind of teacher she is today. She further stated that when she first got her grade two permanent post, she felt as if she was failing herself and her learners, but being part of the programme gave her the opportunity to fill the gap between what she knows and what she did not know and it helped her realise that all she needed was support. Today T5 supports her colleagues with challenges they may face and in turn she has developed personally and professionally. T2 is in agreement with T5 that being part of the JMP has helped her develop personal and professionally, stating that *"having a mentor for a two year period, man that two years were the best two years because it helped me really find myself and because of that I was able to achieve a lot. I have achieved so much more than people who have been here for 20/30 years"*. T2 explained when asked how the JMP added to her personal and professional development, she said that she was encouraged by her mentor M1 to get involve

with school activities. Due to that advice she always availed herself to serve on the school's committees and events. She mentioned that she initiated new programmes and activities at the school in which the teachers and learners are able to develop holistically. M1 stated that T2 has always been motivated and that she has developed so much professionally and is now the HOD at her current school. She became HOD in her 5th year of teaching.

T3 also indicated that she has developed personally and professionally with the help of her mentor. She says that she was made the head of her grade from her second year of teaching. T3 acknowledged that the encouragement she received from her mentor M4 helped her to become more involved at school. She indicated that she was even able to assist on mentoring other first year teachers at her school although she was also a first-time teacher. T3 said that she in a short period of time she has made huge strides and developed professionally because in her 3rd year of teaching she became the HOD of the Intermediate phase at her school.

T4 discussed how the JMP mentors all played a huge role in her personal and professional development. She stated that for her the huge amount of support she received enabled her to decide to go back to university to do an honours degree in her second year of teaching. T4 explained, *"I went back to university but I struggled but every time I saw the mentors of the JMP they would encourage me not to give up because the beautiful thing of it all is that many of them who were our mentors were also still studying and showed us that it doesn't matter how many challenges you are facing, you can still become an achiever"*. T1 shared that she became very confident in most things she was doing at school. Her experience with the JMP and the support of her mentor helped her greatly to become this self-confident person. She stated *"because of the JMP the things that I do and partake in at school you would swear I have been teaching for many years"*. T1 has indicated that she has been so motivated since she has been on the programme. She shared, *"I did not just want to become a normal teacher. I am studying now further and just want to go beyond the point. I want to be involved in making teaching and learning more effective for our teachers and learners irrespective of the environment, the JMP mentors inspire me!"* T1 is currently completing her Master's degree in education to make her bigger dream possible.

M1 expressed how proud she was of her first-time teachers in the cohort 2013-2014. She noted that as mentors they encouraged their first-time teachers to initiate things. She also mentioned that some of them became subject heads which was wonderful because it is for subjects that they were not trained to teach. Due to the JMP workshops the first-time teachers

developed the passion and love for subjects such as English, Mathematics and Science. M2 and M4 added that besides some of the first-time teachers being subject heads, some of them have become a HOD in their first three years of teaching. M3 explained that she was tremendously proud of the personal and professional development of the first-time teachers and she believes that their innovative ideas have been a huge contribution to their schools. M1 indicated that some first-time teachers have started innovations, e.g. sharing of best practices where every teacher has to showcase the lessons and topics which they are good at. This has now become a weekly staff development session where all teachers take turns to showcase their best practices. M1 also indicated that these young first-time teachers accepted responsibility to do and initiate new activities that have never happened at their schools, such as taking charge of variety shows , prize giving's or even starting a new club at the school. M1 stated that, *"they take charge of things the more experienced teachers does not want to do but others eventually offer help and support when they see the success of it."*

M3 has indicated that the first time teachers have *"delighted us and exceed all expectations and gone beyond our wildest dreams in some cases"*. She believes that any mentorship programme is definitely an investment and that a little bit of love, attention and support can do so much for anyone that want to learn. M2 and M3 have also indicated that the JMP was not the only driving forces behind the successes of the first-time teachers. They believe it was the first-time teachers' own ambition and energy that was the driving forces behind them using the resources and applying what they know and have learnt. M4 said that he has so much admiration for these first-time teachers who have grown so much professionally and who are now continuing with their studies. M1 was in agreement with M4 about admiring these first-time teachers but she also felt that developing personally and professionally is essential and believes that the JMP and the mentors have assisted first-time teachers in their ongoing development. She notes, *"you can have the world coming down on you but if you have that one person standing behind and supporting you, you are willing to take on any challenge and I think that makes a big difference."*

4.3.4 Theme 4: How the JMP supported the development of knowledge for effective teaching and learning

According to the document analysis it was discovered that the JMP developed a model to support first-time teachers to deliver quality teaching and learning. Figure 4.2 identifies the JMP model that includes seven steps used by the JMP to support first-time teachers. The model of the JMP was designed to match the context of South African first-time teachers.

The model can be adjusted to the context in which the first-time teachers are teaching. The JMP model is informed by Anderson and Shannon's (1998) proposed model that focused on the processes within a mentoring programme to support first-time teachers. The JMP model extended the mentoring activities in Anderson and Shannon's (1998) model by including workshops as an additional activity. The model includes seven steps which will be described briefly.

Step 1: Recruiting of first-time teachers.

The mentoring project starts by recruiting first-time teachers from their University education institutions. First-time teachers are encouraged to write a letter of motivation to apply to be part of the programme. They need to identify whether they teach in a disadvantaged school, and indicate their willingness to commit to participating voluntarily in all aspects of the mentoring programme, this includes developing their pedagogical content knowledge and practical teaching skills. The document analysis revealed that a number of first-time teachers show interest in the programme, but due to lack of funding only a certain amount of first-time teachers can be selected to be part of the intensive classroom support project.

Step 2: Identifying challenges of the first-time teachers.

To determine the needs and challenges of the first-time teacher in terms of their pedagogical content knowledge, the teachers are requested to write 3 basic baseline tests concerning Mathematics, Natural Sciences and classroom management. The biggest challenges experienced by first-time teachers are lack of curriculum and content knowledge therefore they do the test so that they know where to start helping the first-time teacher. Over the two year period the mentor identifies the issues that the first-time teacher find challenging and aspects that each individual needs to improvement on. During the reflection and consultation sessions the first-time teacher identify and communicate their concerns, challenges and areas they need to improve.

Step 3: Introduction of the JMP to schools.

The project is presented to the participating first-time teachers, as well as to the school management team and the liaisons of the involved schools. The project requires the first time teacher's and the school's commitment they therefore sign a memorandum of understanding accepting the roles and responsibilities assigned to each of the role-players in the collaboration.

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Step 4: Classroom observation and support

During this stage the document analysis revealed that the first-time teacher are in contact with their individual mentors who will support them in school and stimulate their pedagogical growth and expanding their content knowledge over a two year period. The mentors at this stage start with their initial observation of first-time teacher to determine their teaching abilities, and the needs they might encounter at their schools. During the two years the mentees are visited once a month by their mentors. After each classroom support visit a reflection session follows to discuss how the first-time teacher can improve on her teaching skills, areas that they need support in and challenges they experience in their teaching practices. This step is very crucial in the process, as it is vital for the development of the first-time teachers teaching skills, curriculum knowledge and the continued relationship between the mentor and the first-time teacher.

Step 5: Workshops

In addition to the observed needs and challenges of the first-time teacher. The first-time teachers need to attend workshops which are developed and offered to them once a term to address their particular training needs. The workshops received are discussed later in this chapter. The first-time teachers also make use of the workshop platform to network, share ideas and their experiences in the classroom, and to communicate the challenges they face at their schools.

Step 6: Conference- sharing best practices

At the end of the two years, the first-time teachers have to present cases of best classroom practices, e.g. how to teach division in Mathematics, how to introduce place value in Mathematics, how to make science fun and practical, managing positive classroom behavior, ongoing development etc. in the presence of their colleagues, lecturers, family members and fourth year & Post Graduate Certificate in Education students. Most of the presentations are based on the input of the workshops which the first-time teachers used and implemented in their teaching practices.

Step 7: Reflecting on the JMP

At the end of each cycle all stakeholders collaboratively reflect on the outcomes of the project. Action research proposed by Riel (2010) is a useful process for this purpose, in

facilitating systematic inquiry into practice. First-time teachers reflect on their development and the areas they still need to develop in, and the mentors also evaluate the processes within the project. There is a reflection with the principals and school management teams that focus on the benefits that the JMP has towards whole school improvement. At the end of each cycle participants in the JMP do a post-test to determine if, and how their pedagogical knowledge has improved.
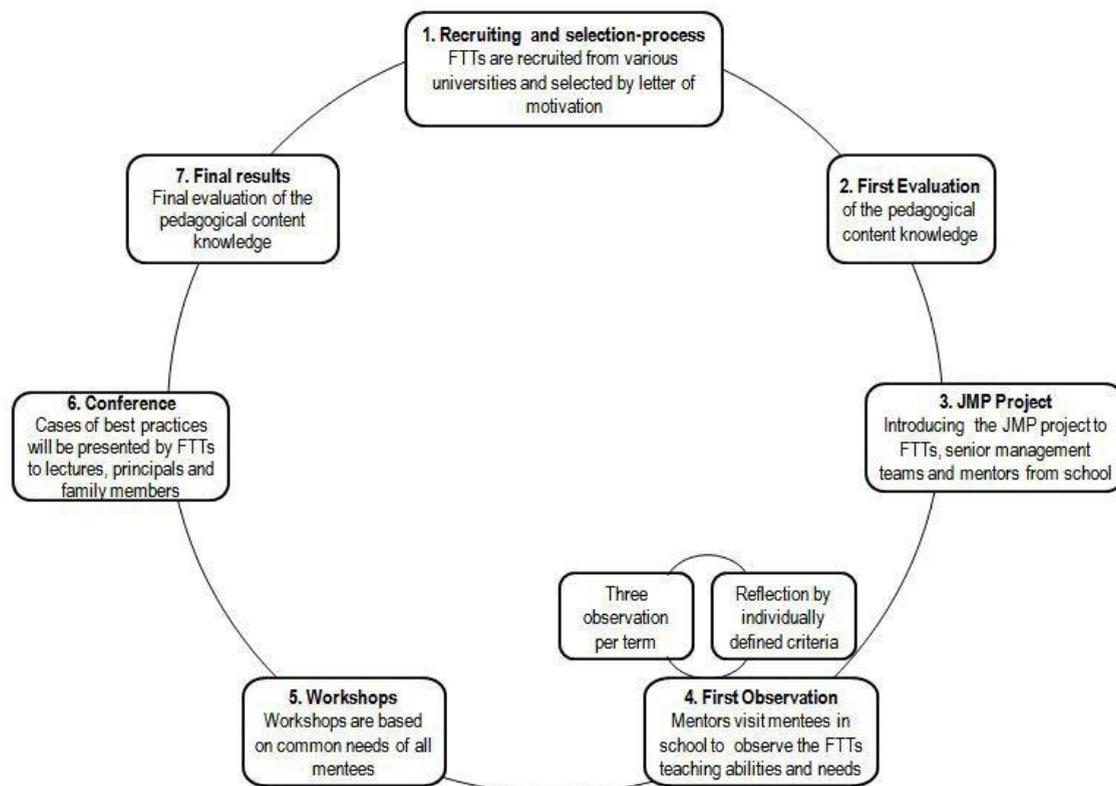
Figure 4.2 Joint Mentorship project Model of teaching and learning.

During the interviews the mentors of the JMP were asked how they supported the development of the first-time teacher's in their knowledge for effective teaching and learning.

4.3.4.1 Content based workshops

As stated previously curriculum and content support was needed as these first-time teachers were only trained for two learning areas but when they got their first teaching position they had to teach all the subject areas. The documents analysis of their teacher portfolios revealed that the first-time teachers lacked content knowledge required for teaching in all the subject areas. Therefore the JMP introduced workshop training to improve their curriculum and

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

content knowledge. According to M3 all first-time teachers received termly workshop training with regards to content knowledge to support them in the subject areas in which they lacked the content knowledge. M1, M2, M3 and M4 were all in agreement that first-time teachers needed the mentorship support workshops especially with regards to content planning and the implementation of these lessons within their classrooms.

M3 stated that the workshops also supported areas like classroom management, discipline, lesson planning, assessment and managing school administration. M1 and M2 explained that the first-time teachers were invited to join once a term their cluster project workshop where the JMP mentors offered training courses every term. Teachers participate in the six hour content based training course on the first Saturday at the start of each term. The first-time teachers were trained in the critical aspects of the relevant curriculum strands or themes for the term. M1 stated, *"in the content based workshops we take them through the terms work and its grade specific, so the first time teachers get to work with experienced and other first time teachers. They learn from one another's experiences. They get to interact and learn from each other and experience the whole terms work."* M1 and M4 both indicated that first-time teachers in the content workshops are able to see not only what have to be taught from the CAPS document but they are taught how to plan lessons, assess it, do an investigation in Natural Science and Technology (NST) and to get ideas from experienced teachers. M4 stated that, *"the advantages of these courses are they don't only develop their content knowledge but they also bring in the methods on how to teach it in the classroom."* T1 stated that in the content based workshops she received so much help with understanding the new CAPS curriculum. Both T2 and T4 said that in the workshops all first-time teachers received supporting materials and classroom resources for the term.

M1 also stated that first-time teachers are invited to their Innovation project workshops. According to the document analysis the Innovation project offers short courses to teachers to improve and deepen content knowledge. These courses are presented after school from 3 o'clock till 5 o'clock. It covers topics for CAPS in the following subjects for primary school teachers:

Table 4.5 Innovation Project workshops for primary school (Grade R-7) teachers

Phase	Grade	Subject
Foundation Phase	R – 3	Literacy, Mathematics and Life skills
Intermediate Phase	4 -6	Natural Science and Technology, Mathematics, Language and Social Science
Senior Phase	7	Mathematics, Language and Natural Sciences

T3 and T4 both indicated that they enjoyed the innovation project workshops because they could choose which subject areas they needed to extend their knowledge in. They reported that they attended the workshops and would come out feeling refreshed and ready to teach what they have learnt. T1 stated *"there was plenty of workshops offered over the two years and even after the two years, after the programme I still went to workshops whether it was on a Saturday or during the week if I may be forgot something then I am like ok I need to go back and I need to go to that workshop because I forgot certain things then I go back and just develop again"*

T3 has also mentioned how much she felt she had grown by just attending content workshops. She stated,

> *"I only studied languages and life skills at university, but when I started I was placed in a class where I had to teach everything myself, it was classroom based. My knowledge of Natural Science was grade 12 and my knowledge of Social Science was grade 9. So I really struggled with those subjects and going to the workshops and even the lessons he helped with, the demo lessons, I really understood the content much better, I comprehended it better in order to give it over to the learners, because I had no clue as to what was going on in those books until I came to the content based workshops."*

4.3.4.2 Demonstrations and observations

After the workshop training each term first-time teachers received monthly classroom support visits. These monthly visits were conducted to support the development of the first-time

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teachers' content knowledge and teaching methods for effective teaching and learning. During these monthly visits first-time teachers were assisted with implementing practical lessons within their large classrooms. M4 explained that demonstration lessons were done by the mentor whilst the first-time teacher observe lesson. The first-time teacher can then model the same lesson for their mentor, receiving constructive feedback afterwards. According to M1, M2, M3 and M4 in the first year of mentorship they mostly do demonstration lessons. M1 explained that during demonstration lessons first-time teachers absorb teaching strategies from their mentors and they see how their mentors use different methods to make lessons exciting, learner-centred and hands on. Then these first-time teachers learn how to bridge the gap between their theoretical knowledge and the practical application.

M4 stated that *"when we support the first time teachers in their classroom through doing a demonstration lesson this helps the first time teacher see how they can adapt what they observed the mentor is doing. Then also by the mentor observing the mentee it is followed by a constructive discussion that's when the mentor share how the first time teacher can possibly improve going forward."*

The first-time teachers expressed their feelings regarding the demonstration lessons from their mentors. T2 stated, *"I enjoyed demo lessons so much my mentor would do lessons where I observed a specific lesson and then I could then teach that lesson confidently in the years to come you know."* She further stated that, *"there would be times she (referring to her mentor) would come in to do a lesson so that I observe. Then there would be times when I did a lesson where she would observe and then give you know constructive criticism, input as to what I can change or what I can do better in the lessons to come."*

T3 introduced the idea of demonstration lessons to her principal and staff, by sharing what she has gained from the workshops. Since then demonstration lessons take place on a Friday in their staffroom. The principal had asked her to demonstrate what she had learnt from her mentor during class visits. She demonstrated lessons on topics that the staff find problematic or challenging in their classes. For example if the learners are struggling with rounding off, she would then demonstrate how they can possibly teach a rounding off lesson on the Friday. T3 stated that *"we mainly do it on Language and Maths because that is our schools weaker areas according to the school systemic results."*

At first T3 was the only one who did the demonstration lessons, but thereafter everybody on the staff had the opportunity to do demonstration lessons in areas in which they felt confident

to teach. After each demonstration lesson teachers would give input on how the lesson can be improved or done differently. T3 felt that this had improved their schools literacy and numeracy results tremendously.

4.3.4.3 Team teaching

Another way the mentors supported the development of the first time teachers knowledge for effective teaching and learning was through team teaching. Team teaching is coordinated teaching by the mentor alongside the first-time teacher. M1 stated that when she and her first-time teacher conduct a lesson together *"we plan together so I teach part of the lesson and the first time teacher does the other part."* M1, M2, M3 and M4 have all mentioned that in the second year of the mentorship programme they choose to do more team teaching and then leave the demonstration lessons only on the request of the first-time teacher. According to M1 team teaching helps with focused curriculum implementation, classroom management, group work or handling difficult learners and it encourages first-time teachers to teach aspects of a lesson that they are comfortable with while the mentor to guides the first-time teacher in the classroom. M1 also feels that when they team teach it creates a safe environment where the first-time teacher can comfortably develop under the guidance of the mentor to ensure quality teaching and learning. M4 is in agreement with M1 as he stated that team teaching gives learners a richer experience in their learning process and it also increases teacher effectiveness with regard to curriculum and classroom practice. M2 feels that team teaching helps with implementation of new ideas, information, skills and in gaining confidence in teaching especially when the first-time teacher is trying new methods or strategies.

M1 and M4 indicated that team teaching help to connect the concepts and content taught in the class with the outside world. The mentor helps to make the connection and show relevance of the curriculum to the learners' lives. At the same time M4 identified that if a first-time teacher does not have a good grasp of the concepts they are teaching, then having the mentor team teach with them allows them to address the issue seamlessly. The mentor helps with the implementation of new knowledge or difficult concepts within the learners' context. Team teaching also allows the mentor to show differentiated teaching and learning styles to help with learners' learning barriers in class.

The first-time teachers all displayed a positive attitude towards the demonstration lessons and team teaching. T4 stated:

"what I really appreciated about my mentors classroom support was that she came into the classroom with resources and everything she thought I might need. The first time she came there, she just knew which lessons I was going to teach. I didn't have resources, she brought me such a lot of resources and materials, and she offered to demonstrate the lesson. And then thereafter I was able to teach it on my own."

T3 and also explained how positive she felt about the demonstration lessons and team teaching, stating:

"we had classroom visits where he (referring to mentor) *would do demo lessons for me and next time he would come we would do shared teaching where he will explain and I will explain and while he is explaining I will help the learners with the activity and other way around. He would also bring resources because our school doesn't have, especially with the Natural Sciences, so he would bring the needed resources. This made me and my learners extremely happy and grateful."*

T1 explained that there were certain lessons that her mentor would come and do with her because she did not have all the resources. Her mentor would bring the necessary resources to the classroom and they would team teach, or her mentor would do the lesson first and then the first-time teacher would teach the next lesson. T1 stated that *"at all times she* (referring to mentor) *was helping me and she didn't come in all the time but she came in when necessary and when I needed her. That was the most important thing and it helped me a lot because she guided me and from there I could do things on my own."*

4.3.4.4 Reflection

The document analysis has shown that the JMP has supported the development of the first-time teacher's knowledge for effective teaching and learning by encouraging first-time teachers to become reflective practitioners. According to M3 it is important for first-time teachers to reflect on their work to improve their classroom practices. She further notes that when one reflects on what has happened, what worked and what did not work well, it help teachers to improve on their practices.

M1 is in agreement with M3 and explained that they try to develop the first-time teachers into being reflective practitioners. She further explained that they encourage first-time teachers to reflect after each observation lessons, demonstration lessons, team teaching lessons, classroom support visit on the lesson that was presented and at the end of each term. This

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will encourage first-time teachers to reflect on their teaching practices in the absence of their mentors. M1 encourages her first-time teachers to consider:

"How can I improve on what I done? What worked for me? What changes can I bring about so next year when I have to do this again I don't have to reinvent the wheel I can do the same but bring in the changes that did not work because maybe my context has changed, my situation where I find myself or the learners are just totally different and you need to approach it differently."

T5 stated that she enjoyed the reflection and feedback sessions as they provided feedback on her progress which helped her to see how much she has grown in her teaching, as well as what she still needs to improve on going forward. T3 also enjoyed reflective sessions. She explained that once a term when the first-time teachers met at the content workshops, they reflect together on their development as a teacher and their professional development was also discussed. During those sessions first-time teachers learn from one another by sharing their ideas, best practices and preparing for the term ahead. She says that they too reflect what happened in the previous term and how one can improve it in the terms that follow.

Below are some of the first-time teacher's reflections after they received classroom support for a term:

"I have learnt that practical examples help learners extremely well. When learners are involved it gives them a chance to discover learning by themselves. The interesting thing that I've come across with my mentor is that one doesn't need expensive resources to make a lesson work. Learners can even collect bottle tops and that can help with fractions and counting etc. My mentor walks around the class while she is teaching and this keep the learners focused. The word wall helps with my intervention learners, they always go back to the word wall when they have forgotten something. The JMP programme is extremely useful and helpful to me. It builds up my confidence in so many ways.'' (T1)

"I am really not very creative when it comes to Mathematics and Science, but I try. My learners have enjoyed the lesson offered by my mentor. I learnt that using practical examples to explain concepts to the learners. In addition I have learnt to find out whether learners have listened and learned one should assess what was learnt. Learning activities are therefore an important part of the lesson.

Furthermore I learnt that having a new face in the class get the learners excited. When integrating lessons with one another the learners can see that the subjects are not learnt in isolation, but they are connected. Therefore as a result of what I mentioned above I can say that the visit was informative, fun and definitely memorable. I believe that learners and I have learnt. I had the opportunity to do this lesson in which I have observed with the other two English classes. I might not have done it with all the vibe my mentor did but I tried my best and I know I captured the outcomes." (T2)

"The visit was very helpful and effective. I'm always feeling so relieved that I have someone who can help me in the classroom with Natural Science and Mathematics lessons. I am also happy for the resources I received from my mentor. It is very difficult to find activities that are on par with CAPS because this is a new curriculum. I feel more at ease after this session and it's always nice to have my mentor walk into the classroom and help when I feel I cannot go on anymore." (T3)

"Today I feel very disappointed at my learner's poor behaviour. I lost control of the class. The situation became chaotic. Next time I need to be more organised. After my reflection with my mentor I realised that next time I should be more firm and assertive or else the learners will take advantage. My mentor also taught me how to handle the learners as she explained that because the lesson was so interesting the learners became excited and I should allow them to be excited too. With the help of my mentor I am bettering my teaching and I am growing." (T4)

"I struggled with home language planning as I was not trained in this subject at university. So planning for this and other learning areas is still a challenge. M2 (removed participants name) *provided me with very effective planning documents that I am very excited to use. My mentor and her team made a huge impact in my development as a first-time teacher in the foundation phase. I have so much confidence in my teaching ability for this grade. There is still much room for improvement."* T5 continued in her reflection by saying *"M2* (removed participants name) *helped me realise the importance of reflection in my teaching and how reflection will help me to be more effective in what I teach."* (T5)

In the document analysis of the teacher's portfolios there is also evidence of the mentors reflecting on their first-time teacher mentees. M1 reflected saying that T1, T2 and T4 have grown and developed so much over the period of two years. M1 added that all three her first-time teachers have

> *"settled into the teaching profession comfortably and that they have built a very good relationship with their learners. They are both hardworking and dedicated to young teachers .They have become more firm, assertive but also kind. Their classroom walls is taking shape nicely and it adds to the learning environment she is trying to create. They are encouraged to develop wordlists for the content subjects as this will strengthen the literacy and numeracy (LITNUM) in their classrooms after they were advised to have wordlist their classroom walls became language rich and showed evidence of wordlists for the different subjects."*

In addition M4 and M2 have also indicated that their first-time teachers have settled well into the profession. M2 stated that: *"my mentees was well driven and eager to learn."* Both mentors M4 and M2 mentioned in the document analysis that after many demonstration, observation and team teaching activities the first-time teachers were able to actively engage their learners skillfully to reach the teaching outcomes.

4.4 Summary

This chapter presented the data analysis of the qualitative data collected through semi-structured interviews with first-time teachers, focus group interviews with their mentors and document analysis of the teacher portfolios that were submitted. Themes emerged from the data analysis process revealed the experiences of the first-time teachers and their mentors and the extent the JMP contributed towards first-time teachers', teaching and learning experiences in the selected primary schools in the Western Cape.

The findings and responses revealed that the first-time teachers from the various schools in the Western Cape have faced many challenges during their first two years of teaching. It is evident that the first few years of teaching can be challenging as they struggle to adjust to the new school environment and meet the requirements of the daily teaching programme. The first-time teachers were faced with many challenges such as the transition from university life to being a first-time teacher, along with the administrative duties, content knowledge and subject difficulty, overcrowded classrooms, discipline, classroom management and resources.

The first- time teachers felt that they did not get much assistance from their mentors at school and they often had to deal with challenges on their own.

The first-time teacher participants in the study indicated that the JMP has contributed to them overcoming the challenges they experienced in their first two years. The first-time teacher respondents have pointed out that the support of the JMP is what really kept them going and developing as first-time teachers. The first-time teachers further explained that the JMP mentors helped them by doing personal coaching, offering curriculum support, classroom support as well as offering them workshops to help improve their knowledge of the curriculum and to improve their teaching skills and competencies. The first-time teacher participants have reported on the positive contribution that the JMP added to help them overcome their challenges.

Not only did the first-time teachers benefit from the JMP, but the school has also gained knowledge on what mentoring could look like if implemented at the schools. When the first-time teachers were asked how the mentoring programme influenced the way they approach teaching and learning. All 5 first-time teacher participants expressed that the JMP had firstly influenced them to become more positive in the way they approach teaching and learning, while at same time the programme provided with opportunities to acquire new skills. They identified that their mentors helped them to identify the skills they already have and provided them with their expert advice to help improve on these skills. The first-time teachers also indicated that they felt that their mentors helped them to add value to their schools and with their personal and professional growth.

The findings also revealed that the JMP supported the development of first-time teachers' knowledge for effective teaching and learning. It was revealed that the first-time teachers' lacked content knowledge required for their teaching role due to the fact that they were only trained for two subject areas but when they got their teaching post they had to teach all subject areas. Therefore the curriculum and content support that was provided by the JMP assisted them to cope with teaching all the subject areas required. The first-time teachers also received monthly classroom support in which the mentors did demonstration lessons. Another way mentors supported the development of the first-time teacher was through team teaching together with their first-time teacher. Each visit was followed by an in-depth reflection in order for teachers to improve their classroom practices and encouraging them to become reflective practitioners. The next chapter presents the discussions, recommendations and conclusion.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the major findings derived from the data presented in Chapter Four. This chapter further proposes recommendations, the limitation and conclusions of the study. The objective of this study was to investigate mentoring, and how the Joint Mentorship Project prepares and contributes toward first-time teachers', teaching and learning experiences in selected primary schools in the Western Cape.

The conclusions presented in this chapter therefore serve to answer the main research question, namely: *To what extent has the JMP contributed toward first-time teachers' teaching and learning experiences in the selected primary schools in the Western Cape?*

5.2 Main findings

In order to provide a coherent sequence to this section I have aligned the three headings to the research questions that emerged from the main research questions as set out in Chapter one. This therefore also provides a framework for the conclusions drawn from the findings of the research study and the literature review.

5.2.1 Research question 1: What challenges has the selected first-time teachers experienced at the beginning of their teaching career?

5.2.1.1 The reality and challenges first-time teachers face

On the basis of the findings, it can be concluded that the first-time teachers in this study experienced many challenges which are aligned with the first-time teachers' challenges in studies done by Johnson & Kardos, (2002), Glickman et al, (2004), Gordan & Maxey, (2000). The challenges experienced by the first-time teachers ranged from the transition of university life to being a first-time teacher, administrative duties, a lack of content and subject knowledge, overcrowded classrooms, discipline and classroom management. The challenges faced by these teachers can be due to the lack of training and preparation during their pre-service training, as well as the organisation of the school where the teachers are teaching. It can be concluded that they found the transition into the teaching profession quite difficult as they were placed in teaching positions which they were not trained for.

The lack of subject and content knowledge can be as a result of first-time teachers not being trained to teach subjects such as Mathematics and Natural Science, but was expected to do so. This is one of the worrying areas, since curriculum- and content delivery is one of the main focuses of schooling. It also has huge implications for the learners' learning in Mathematics and Science.

According to the PAM document administrative duties are viewed as one of the core responsibilities of a teacher, as it assists with the daily functioning of a school (RSA, PAM, 2016). The first-time teachers often felt underprepared for these duties as they did not know how to do administer some of these duties. They often felt overwhelmed by the amount of administrative work they had. This can be ascribed to the lack of support at their schools as they were not guided as to what was expected of them. They could easily decide to exit the teaching, but their involvement in the JMP motivated them to keep going.

Further findings of the study also revealed that the first-time teachers were dealing with overcrowded classrooms which impacted on the learners' behaviour and their classroom management. This is likely to impact the quality of teaching and learning because it can limit a teacher from achieving their goals of becoming effective teachers. The learners' behaviour gave the teachers a feeling of being incompetent as they had to do more crowd controlling than teaching which they viewed as a very important component for effective teaching.

The first-time teachers' inability to use resources and the inadequate amount resources they had affected their teaching and learning. This might be due to their pre-service training which according to them was mainly based on theory and the experiences they had during their practise teaching did not sufficiently prepared them on how to incorporate and use appropriate resources in their lessons. On the other hand, what can also argue that it can be due to their qualifications, as they were not able to observe lessons in the subjects which they are now expected teach.

From the findings we can infer that the first-time teachers were faced with many challenges. However, they received support from the JMP to overcome these challenges, as it will be discussed in the next section.

5.2.2 Research question 2: How has the JMP contributed toward overcoming these challenges?

5.2.2.1 Overcoming first-time teacher challenges with the help of the JMP

Regardless the challenges the first-time teachers had faced at the beginning of their teaching career, the first-time teachers in this study were fortunate enough to participate in a mentoring programme which supported and guided them through their first two years of teaching. The support and guidance from their mentors allowed the first-time teachers to developed different ways of dealing with their challenges they experienced in their classes. The elements of the JMP, such as the personal coaching, curriculum support, classroom support, workshops offered, as well as the reflection sessions seemed to have a great influence on the individual teachers' professional and personal development, as the support is based around the needs of the first-time teachers. A mentoring programme that focusses on the needs expressed by first-time teachers seems to have great value in the way the teachers respond and act upon the challenges they experience.

The JMP training workshops had a huge impact in developing the teachers' knowledge and skills to confidently teach the subjects they were not trained for. The knowledge and skills gained through the workshops increased the teachers' subject- and content knowledge, as well as how manage their learners' behaviour, this resulted in enhancing the teaching and learning of these subjects in their respective classes. The nature of the workshops (hands-on and practical) made it possible for teachers to go back to their classes and confidently implement what they have been exposed to during a workshop. The JMP encouraged teachers to plan and prepare their lessons way in advance. Teachers were exposed to lesson planning during workshops and they had to plan their lessons with their mentors in preparation for a lesson that they co-taught. This seemed to have helped teachers with the planning and preparation of their own lessons.

The teachers seem to have greatly benefitted from the once a month classroom support as it gave them an opportunity to observe good teaching practices and exposed them to different strategies on how to manage their learners. The classroom support rendered by the JMP is nicely scaffolded (Vygotsky, 1978) to give teachers enough time to improve their teaching. Firstly the teachers observe the mentor demonstrating and modelling (Bandura, 1977) lessons teachers feel they are not able to teach, later they would co-teach, and when teachers gained enough confidence the mentors in turn observe the teachers' lessons. The study revealed that the JMP strengthened the teaching abilities of the first-time teachers by doing team teaching.

Because the lessons were done in the teachers' classes they felt safe and comfortable to teach alongside their mentor. They saw it as guidance to equip them to later do things on their own.

One of the biggest problems teachers had was to teach their lessons effectively with a large amount of learners who display behavioural problems that they could not deal with. During the observation of lessons demonstrated by the JMP mentors, teachers have gained a lot of insight on how to manage their learners through group work, which was one of the methods that some of them steered away from. Learning through observation (Yost, 2002) allows teachers to develop skills needed to become an effective teacher.

Several of the first time-teachers reported that the lack of resources was another challenge they were faced with. The JMP provided them with the resources during classroom support and they were trained how to make resources using recycled material to make the learners' learning more meaningful.

The personal coaching at the beginning of the mentoring programme added great value because it motivated teachers to become the effective teacher which they envisaged (or liked) to be and gave them a different perspective of what teaching actually entails. The study further revealed that the JMP has supported the development of first-time teachers' knowledge for effective teaching and learning by encouraging first-time teachers to become reflective practitioners. Through the reflection teachers were able to communicate their frustrations and anxieties, and it allows them to reflect on their teaching practices. The JMP provided reflection workshops and after each classroom support visit the mentor provided the first-time teacher with the opportunity to reflect followed by constructive feedback. Mentoring in the context alongside the first-time teacher gave the mentors a good picture of the challenges the teachers experience and based on their observation they gave authentic feedback to the first-time teacher.

The role of the mentor in a mentoring relationship and the way in which the first-time teacher responds to the support and guidance are vital for any mentoring programme. The JMP mentors and their first-time teachers have established good relationships during the project. The first-time teachers in this study felt safe to share their challenges with their mentors because they know that their mentors will respond to it in the best way they can. The mentors of the JMP have motivated and encouraged the first-time teachers which resulted in the first-time teachers to look at their teaching differently.

5.2.3 Research question 3: How the JMP supports the development of first-time teachers content knowledge to facilitate effective teaching and learning in the classroom?

5.2.3.1 What development has the first- time teachers gained by being part of theJMP

It was interesting to see what the study revealed about the development of the first-time teachers and what they gained through the coaching and mentoring of the JMP over the period of two years. The confidence the first-time teachers expressed about their classroom teaching ability after the mentorship and coaching has increased, as they are now able to support the other teachers at their school. The JMP mentors said that after the two year mentorship the first-time teachers adopted a more positive attitude, became more competent in various skills, could help to add value to their schools, as well as showing personal and professional growth.

The findings revealed the first-time teachers expressed that the JMP had influenced them into being more positive in the way they approach teaching and learning. The first-time teachers also revealed that they recognised the support given by the JMP with regard to classroom strategies, teaching styles, content knowledge, lesson preparation and how this all contributed to the them being more confident and positive. The study revealed that because of all the above the attitude of the first-time teachers towards the teaching profession has changed too.

Mentoring first-time teachers encourages school improvement by increasing the teachers' knowledge, improving the skills and positively influencing their attitudes, will increase the learners' achievement. The study confirms that the first-time teachers acquired and improved skills due to their participation on the JMP. Odell (1990), Sheechy (1976), Vaillant (1977) and Hobson et al, (2009) are all in agreement that a mentoring programme holds value and plays a prominent and effective role in supporting the skills development of first-time teachers. The JMP provided expert guidance on how to improve their skills needed to be successful teachers. The study revealed the skills the first-time teachers learnt and improved include the following: classroom management and being an effective disciplinarian, learning the skill of relationship building, time management skills, administration skills, organisational skills, assessment skills, leadership skills, communication skills, listening skills, leadership skills and critical thinking skills. The JMP encouraged first-time teachers to help add value to their schools. Because the first-time teachers were now confident the JMPs mentors motivated the first-time teachers to avail themselves and participate in school activities to go beyond just teaching and learning. Two of the first-time teachers said their

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leadership skills intensified over a period of two years and they became more involved in the schools extra-curricular activities.

The findings revealed that the first-time teachers had all developed professionally after the JMP had added to their personal development. The study has shown that the mentors had played a huge role in the personal and professional development of these first-time teachers. It is the emotional support and encouragement that is provided by the mentors during the two year period, the constructive feedback that allows first-time teachers to make mistakes without any judgement that allows these first-time teachers to grow professionally.

The study revealed that these first-time teachers had grown personally they are now more confident, better at communication, became better listeners, committed, able to manage their time better, developed a positive attitude, became a better leader and this made them succeed at growing professionally.

The study reveals that these first-time teachers had grown vastly professionally. The first-time teachers could now set specific, attainable goals in order to achieve success. Two of the first-time teachers had furthered there studies in their second year and achieved their honours degree, and one of the teachers is currently busy with her Master's degree. The success of the teachers can be ascribed to their change in attitude which stems from the support and guidance of their mentors, as well as their willingness to learn and implement. However, the one mentor from the JMP feels that what matters the most for personal and professional growth is that there are mentors that believe and push first-time teachers to the depth of their abilities.

Mentoring can fast-track teachers' teaching career, as in the case of the JMP. Of the five teachers in this study two of them are now head of departments at their schools. After the two years on the JMP the teachers in this study are participating in the Each One Teach One project, which stems from the stems JMP. If first time teachers join their school, then they can be assigned to mentor the new first-time teachers coming in. This implies that not only did the first-time teacher benefit from the project, but the school has also benefitted from the project.

5.3 Implications

One of the essential goals of this research study on mentoring is also related to how it contributes towards first-time teachers' teaching and learning experiences. The overall aim of this project was to look at a specific mentorship programme called the Joint Mentorship Project. Then identify how this programme has contributed and prepared first-time teachers so that effective teaching and learning can take place in their classrooms.

Mentorship programmes deserve much more attention in South Africa specifically because at the end of the day effective teaching plays a huge role in teaching and learning of all learners. Looking at the challenges experienced by the teachers in this study, it necessitates for all first-time teachers to be mentored whether it is at school- or district level in order for them to overcome their challenges, and to retain teachers. Various studies have encouraged the use of mentoring programmes for the transition into the teaching profession (Odell, 1990; Yost, 2002; Hobson, et al 2009, Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). And while research has shown the benefits of being part of a mentoring programme, many first-time teachers do not receive these benefits. This is quite sad as there are very few opportunities available in South Africa for first- time teachers to be part of a mentorship programme. If teachers are not getting the necessary support to help them overcome their challenges at the beginning of the career they are going to leave teaching or they will take up a teaching position abroad.

If the Department of Education adopts a mentoring policy they need to create a greater awareness of mentoring amongst the teaching body. This implies that teachers' pre-service training must include a module on mentoring.

The mentoring programme in this study has shown to be a very effective one as it addressed the needs of the first-time teacher and not assuming that all teachers have the same challenges. The one-on-one mentoring approach displayed by the JMP seems to have a great effect on the teachers' personal and professional development. If mentoring is done at school level then a mentoring model similar to the JMP can be implemented as the first-time teacher will have access to the mentor when a problem arises. The school based mentors' teaching time can be reduced in order for the mentor to observe the teaching practices of the teacher or to demonstrate lessons which the teacher finds problematic.

The findings of this research study point out the need for more or compulsory mentorship programmes. Therefore, the recommendations for further research follow below.

5.4 Recommendations

This part of the chapter makes recommendations to three institutions namely; the universities, the D.B.E, and schools to encourage the use of mentorship programmes. Mentoring and mentorship programmes foster the development of first-time teachers (Odell, 1990). In addition recommendations as to what these three institutions can do to value a mentorship programme so that in future first-time teachers will get much more support and guidance to will help them ease into their first years of teaching. Recommendations to the JMP will also be discussed below. These four institutions are discussed below.

5.4.1 University institutions

5.4.1.1 Final year in-service training or longer practical periods at school

The study revealed first-time teachers were not trained for the realities of teaching. Therefore, a recommendation would be to have the final year education students have 1 year set aside for in-service training. This would give students enough practical experience for working in a classroom environment. These students will definitely gain experience from their practices. Whilst it was discovered that the first-time teachers reported the university institutions has prepared them well with theoretical knowledge but they identified they lacked practical knowledge. It can be strongly recommended that the universities send their education students for longer periods on teaching practice.

5.4.1.2 Content Focus

The findings revealed that the expectation that universities should prepare teachers fully for their school career was not the reality when these teachers entered their first year of teaching. The first-time teachers were under prepared for the realities of teaching because they had so many challenges with regards to administration duties, content and subject difficulty, classroom management, and resources. However, teachers are required to have this knowledge and skills to in order for teaching and learning to take place successfully in the classroom. It is recommended that this skills development training be given as courses during their teaching practical classroom module. This should also be integrated within their module curriculum. Also more CAPS training should be given to focus on the national curriculum to assist with content and subject difficulty.

5.4.1.3 Supportive development mentoring programmes for students

As the findings revealed that one of the mentors of the JMP claimed that the universities has not failed first-time teachers, and it has not contributed towards first-time teachers dealing with so many challenges. The mentor claimed that a university is there to do what they do

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best and that is to theorise and give students theoretical knowledge. It is recommended that a form of supportive development mentoring programme be made available to the first-time teachers within the education department at the university in their final year of study. This development programme can serve as an orientation programme that is aimed at helping first-time teachers breach that theory and practical divine. The first-time teachers, teaching skills and competencies could be enhanced.

5.4.1.4 Mentoring short courses for management at universities

It is recommended that universities offer short mentoring courses to the managers at schools

such as the principals, deputy principals and head of departments. This course will help these managers develop a nurturing skill to support, care and help develop first-time teachers. These managers will also then in turn be professionally trained as mentors and this will add so much value to their schools.

5.4.2 Department of Basic education (DBE)

5.4.2.1 Mentorship programmes for first–time teachers

South Africa does not have compulsory mentorship programmes currently available for all first-time teachers that graduates. However, it is recommended that South Africa's DBE establish and develop well-funded mentorship programmes for all first-time teachers entering the world of education work for the first-time. The DoE can adapt a model similar to that of the JMP so that all first-time teachers can benefit. This mentorship programme should be compulsory just like the formal mentorship programmes established in Switzerland, Japan, France, New Zealand and China as revealed in the literature review.

5.4.2.2 Paying for short course for management at the universities

Following the above recommendation of 5.4.1.4. on mentoring short courses for management of schools at university institutions. It is recommended that the DBE pay for the fees at institutions for the further development of all educators. This will perhaps motivate these mangers to further develop themselves without having to fork out payments to institutions themselves.

5.4.2.3 South African Council for Educators (SACE) first-time teacher point system

SACE is the South African Council for Educators and was established to uphold the education profession in South Africa. SACE registers all qualified South African teachers,

which means you need a SACE registration number before you can teach. This is compulsory and ensures that all teachers adhere to the same standard. SACE also manages the Continuing Professional Teacher Development CPTD system and encourages the development of teachers through a point system. The point system is there for educators to record their developmental workshops on the SACE website and will act as a record of your development journey.

With all this being said it is recommended that when a first-time teacher commences his/her first year of working at a school. He or she must during the first year attend as many workshops, short courses, seminars and conferences that will help that first-time teacher grow professionally. Only after the first-time teacher has built up a certain amount of points should he/she be issued with their SACE certificate. Teachers would also then be expected to continue to develop their knowledge and skills each year by recording their points so that they would not lose their SACE licenced certificate. This will definitely develop their professional skills as teachers after all teachers are known to be life-long learners.

5.4.2.4 Support workshops for first-time teachers by the DBE or district officials

Workshops should be conducted by the DBE or departmental district officials as intervention programmes to help deal with first-time teacher challenges. These workshops will help contribute to building and enhancing the skills, knowledge and competencies of all first-time teachers. When the DBE recognises the needs of first-time teachers and host workshops based on the needs of these teachers the professional development of these teachers will be more effective. It is important to have and develop skillful and competent teachers to help build better learners that will in turn build a better South Africa.

5.4.2.5 Continuous research

The recommendation is that the DBE officials and departmental district officials should recognize that first-time and all teachers are central to the improvement of educational quality. Therefore, continuous efforts should be made by these officials to research and investigate possible ways to enhance the knowledge and skills for all educators to better teaching and learning of the learners.

5.4.3 School Institutions

5.4.3.1 Open door policy

The study revealed that the first-time teachers where afraid to ask for help from their experienced colleagues or the HODs. It is recommended that the experienced teachers and HODs at schools should offer assistance, guidance and support to first-time teachers to provide developmental experiences. These experienced educators and HODs should be encouraged by the principal to have an open door policy. So that first-time teachers would feel comfortable to communicate and bring difficult issues or situations under the attention of experience teachers or HODS and seek advice from them. This will create a positive attitude among first-time teachers and a culture of friendly openness thus this would show that there are people who cares and want to support them with whatever their needs are.

5.4.3.2 Enhance teaching skills of first-time teachers

It is recommended that first-time teachers teaching skills be enhanced through having regular classroom checking's and scheduled lesson observation visits by the HOD. The study revealed that first-time teachers have many struggles with content teaching. So by having regular classroom and lesson observation it will provide the HODS with a better idea of the teaching methodologies, skills and abilities of the first-time teacher. This will assist the HODs with giving constructive feedback and putting in place appropriate strategies that will enhance the first-time teacher's content, pedagogical and teaching skills.

5.4.3.3 Workshops

With the above being said the schools should organise workshops and training programmes. The workshops should be based on the challenges revealed in the study; content and subject difficulty, administrative duties, overcrowded classrooms, discipline, classroom management, resource improvising and around the training needs of first-time teachers and all teachers. This will be interventions to all educators and a means of improving their knowledge, skills and abilities to assist with effective teaching and learning. These workshops are recommended to be continuous and not once off and the school must do follow up evaluations to identify if the training needs were met and what other areas they can focus on developing. This might play a role in improving teaching and learning.

5.4.3.4   Mentorship for first-time teachers

Many first-time teachers are thrust into classrooms without the necessary support and mentorship (Arends & Phurutse, 2009). Therefore a recommendation would be to have principals, deputies, HODs and experienced teachers assigned to first-time teachers as mentors. These mentors should provide the first-time teachers with support and assistance with things like lesson planning, filling and other admin activities. They should also assist first-time teachers with teaching methods and how to handle certain discipline issues. When these first-time teachers have their own go to person that will guide, support and give them constructive criticism and feedback they will become better at teaching and learning. This mentorship relationship will also help them enhance their self-confidence because they would have their own mentor to go to for assistance.

5.4.3.5   Development for all teachers

If principals are concern about the teaching and learning taking place at the schools then it is recommended that they encourage first-time and all experienced teachers to professionally develop themselves at all times. There are many ways to develop themselves they can further there studies or attend short courses, go to workshops, seminars and conferences. After all educators are lifelong learners. This also means that when a first-time or experienced teachers development is nurtured, the school would gain value from their employment period.

5.4.4 The JMP

The PSP's JMP supports first-time teachers over a period of two years. The JMP helps first-time teachers adjust to the demands of the profession through various techniques. At the end of the 2 year period the study claimed that first-time teachers are able to implement the curriculum with good sound knowledge and they are much more confident in managing their classrooms and workload much better after they were part of the programme. The findings revealed that the programme is doing great work and adding so much development and value towards first-time teachers and their respective schools. It is recommended that the JMP should try to get the WCED on board so that they can be sponsored by the department. In this way they can get more trained mentors to work for the PSP so that more teachers can be reached through the JMP.

Referring to 5.4.1.4 mentoring short courses for management. It is recommended that the JMP offer a short mentoring course to managers of different schools such as principals, deputy principals and head of departments. This course should equip these managers with

professional development and the necessary skills to develop first-time teachers at their

schools. At the end of the mentorship course these managers should receive a recognised

certificate that will enable them to be professional mentors.

5.4.5 Recommendation for further studies

The study highlighted a mentorship programme and the study revealed the value it holds

when a first-time teacher joins a mentorship programme. There is a need to expand research

on mentorship programmes in South Africa. Based on the findings of this study there were

questions that emerged that calls for further research investigation. Some of these are:

- The impact of mentoring in the short or longer term on the learning of learners taught by first-time teachers that has been mentored.
- What are the cost-effectiveness of mentoring compared with other methods of supporting and facilitating the early professional learning of first-time teachers?
- How far and by what mean, mentees willingness to be mentored can increase?
- Does the participation in first-time teacher mentoring enhances retention in the teaching profession and the impact?
- Does the effective mentorship programmes in urban, low income public schools necessarily differ effective induction in suburban, affluent schools?
- Are mentoring programmes particularly helpful for first-time teachers whose formal preparation is relatively weak, or are they helpful regardless of the quality of pre-classroom preparation?

5.5 Limitation of the study

The aim of this study was to explore the JMP and how it prepares first-time primary school

teachers. This has been achieved but the study was constrained by a number of limitations.

Discussed below are some of the limitations that were experienced.

1. Since there are other mentorship programmes available in the Western Cape. This study only focuses on one mentorship programme. This can limited me to gaining more information and views of other first-time teachers that is/was part of another mentorship programme.
2. I have only interviewed 5 first-time teachers and their mentors of the JMP. As time might have not allowed me to do everyone that was part of the mentoring programme during the years 2013-2014. Also participants cancelled on interviews. The interviews were

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rescheduled but often there were participants who were not able to reschedule and this also impacted the number of participants that partook in the study.

3. This study was limited to 5 primary school first-time teachers in the Western Cape therefore the results of this study cannot be generalized for all South African primary schools and their first-time teachers.

4. I have found similarities between my research findings and those undertaken by other researchers in other countries. I acknowledge that my findings may be situation setting specific and this may not be applicable to other contexts.

5. One of the areas t that I was unable to address in my study was the impact the time period in years of mentorship had on the first-time teachers. This limitation was because I was already engaged in exploring a broad range of first-time teacher challenges and the contribution of the JMP in terms of first-time teachers' development in teaching and learning.

5.6 Conclusion

The aim of the study was to explore how the JMP has prepared and contributed towards first-time teachers' teaching and learning experiences in the selected primary schools. The findings of this study revealed that the first-time teachers had faced many challenges when they started their career as a first-time teacher. The findings also revealed that the JMP has contributed towards first-time teachers overcoming these challenges. The JMP developed the first-time teachers based on the need of the first-time teachers.

It further highlighted that a mentorship programme has valuable and positive impact on first-time teachers teaching and learning. The JMP played an effective role in facilitating first-time teachers in order for successful teaching and learning to take place in the classroom. The current study revealed that when a first-time teacher is mentored, guided, coached and supported, they become confident, skilled individuals who perform better at various aspects of teaching.

In search of studies on mentoring in South African primary schools, it is noticed that South African researchers have not focused much on this area of study. However, this study will hopefully affect the views and perceptions of first-time teachers and encourage them to be part of a mentorship programme. It is my greatest wish that the DBE see and recognise the value in mentoring programmes so that they too can develop these programmes to help

nurture first-time teachers to make their first years a pleasant one so that better teaching and learning can take place in our South African schools.

APPENDIX: A
PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Research Title: Mentoring and the preparedness of first-time primary school teachers. A study of a non-governmental Joint Mentorship Project (JMP).

What is this study about?

This is a research project on mentoring and how it prepares first-time primary school teachers. The focus is on the non-governmental Joint Mentorship Project(JMP). I am inviting you to participate in this research because you were a mentee or mentor to the JMP between the years 2013-2014 at selected primary schools in the Western Cape. You will be able to give information on your experiences as a mentee/ mentor of the JMP and the extent the JMP has contributed toward your teaching and learning experiences. The purpose of the study is to find out the extent in which the JMP has contributed toward first-time teachers' teaching and learning experiences in the selected primary schools in the Western Cape.

Should you agree to participate in this research study?

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this qualitative research study. First-time teachers will be asked to take part in an individual semi-structured interview and mentors in a focus group interview. All interviews will take about 30-40 minutes. The interview will be audio-recorded and transcribed. I will be conducting this interview to gather data to investigate how the mentoring progamme contributed toward first-time teachers' teaching and learning in the selected primary schools in the Western Cape that were part of the JMP. This study will include individual interview questions based on your experiences as a first-time teacher and your experiences with the JMP. The study will also include a focus group interview with the mentors to gather information about the first-time teachers. The findings of these interviews will be used to gather data for my research. The research being carried out is to submit a thesis in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Masters in Education (M.Ed).

Would my participation in the study be kept Confidential?

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Your details are confidential and will only be used for research purposes and will remain confidential at all times. The audio recording of the interview will not have your personal details on it like your name and the school you are and it will be locked away. This is to protect your confidentiality.

Anonymity: Participants will remain at all times anonymous/ There will be no disclosure of individual details. The documentation (mentee portfolio's) from the JMP which includes interviews, observations and mini term reports on each mentee will be requested from the JMP with the permission of the mentees. This is to gain information and data for my study but individuals will remain anonymous in report.

Voluntary participation

You as the participants will not be forced to take part in the research you must be willing to participate in this study. However your participation is crucial for the completion of the task we have at hand.

Informed consent: Your signed consent to participate in this research study is required. The consent form is included in this information sheet so you have a choice to participate in the study or not

A copy given

I am willing to send the transcript of the interview back to the interviewee for verifications and a copy of the complete research will be sent to the participants.

Are there any risks involved in participating in this research?

There are no risks that are known to me if you are participating in this research.

What are the benefits of this research?

You will not benefit from participating in the study. However the information obtained from the participants may help future first time teacher graduates. The findings might find the value a mentoring programme holds and how it contributes to first- time teachers. After doing this research perhaps the Department of Education or government would see the worth in a mentorship programmes and how it add value to new qualified teachers. In addition, once they realize the value they can perhaps make governmental mentorship programmes available and compulsory to all first-time teachers.

Any further questions?

The research is conducted by Malika Ismail. In case you have further questions or wish to know more feel free to contact me M. Ismail via Email at 2920322@myuwc.ac.za Should you have any questions regarding this study or wish to report any problems you have experienced related to the study, please feel free to contact my supervisor, Dr Melanie Luckay Faculty of Education at: 021 9592260 or email her at Mluckay@uwc.ac.za

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APPENDIX B

RESEARCH CONSENT FORM

Research Title: Mentoring and the preparedness of first time primary school teachers. A study of a non-governmental Joint Mentorship Project (JMP).

The study has been explained to me. I understand the purpose of this study. I have read the information sheet and I voluntarily agree to participate in this study. I am aware of the ethical considerations that will guide this research. I understand that my identity will not be disclosed and that I may withdraw from the study at any time should I feel uncomfortable and this will not negatively affect me in any way.

This consent form establishes that you have read and understood what taking part in this research study will involve. Please tick all boxes that apply.

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet.

2. I understand that taking part is voluntary and that I may
   withdraw at any time, without giving a reason.

3. I agree to take part in the above study.

4. I agree to participate in a semi- structured individual interview/ focus
   group interview with the researcher.

5. I agree to the interview consultation being audio recorded.

6. I give consent for interview recordings to be used by the researcher.

7. I give permission for my quoted words to be used in a report but
   understand that my name will not be mentioned .

8. I give permission to make use of my/the mentee portfolio from the JMP
   but understand I will remain anonymous at all times.

Participant's name:………………………………………………….

Participant's signature:…………………………………………………

Date:………………………………………………………………………

Researcher's details:

Ms M. Ismail Email: 2920322@myuwc.ac.za

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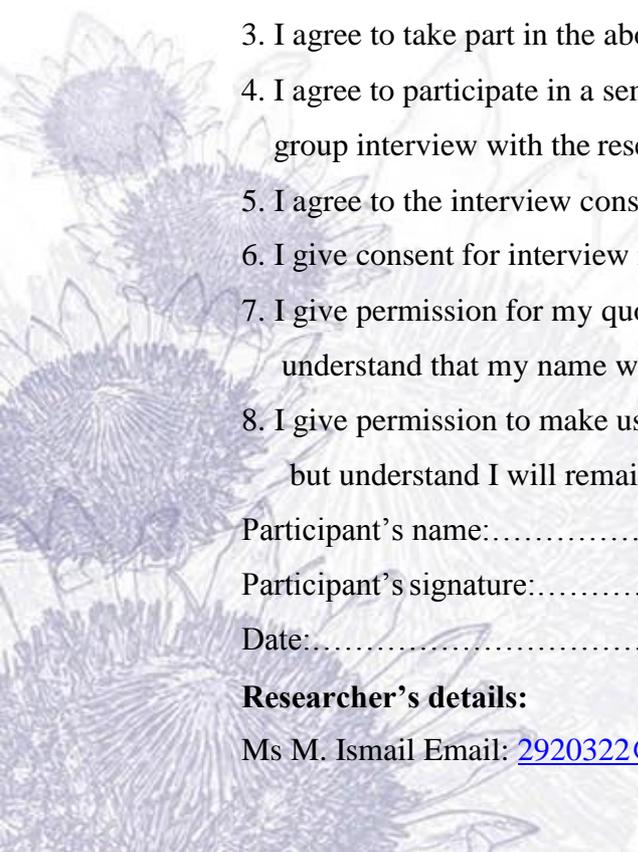
APPENDIX C:
FIRST-TIME TEACHER
INTERVIEWS

DATA GENERATION

I am conducting this interview to gather data to investigate how the JMP contributed toward first- time teachers' teaching and learning in the selected primary schools in the Western Cape. The participants of this interview will be first- time teachers that were part of the mentoring programme.

There are 17 interview questions and it will take about 40 minutes of your time.
Thanking you in advance.

Interview

1. How did you find out about the mentoring programme?
2. What challenges have you encountered in your first years of teaching? Please provide me with examples on the challenges you encountered.
3. How do you think the (mentoring programme/your mentor) has supported you in dealing with the challenges mentioned?
4. How did your mentor provide you with classroom based support?
5. When you became a mentee what new knowledge have you shared with more experienced teachers?

6. What negative aspects did you experience as a mentee?
o What guidance was given by your mentor was it enough? explain

7. What skills development have you gained from your mentor/ mentoring programme? Explain by giving examples.
8. What effect has this support had on your content knowledge to enhance your pedagogical skills to facilitate effective teaching and learning in yourclassroom?
9. Have you had training workshops offered by your mentorship programme to enhance   teaching and learning?
o What kind of workshops have you received?

10. How did the mentoring programme positively influenced the way you approach teaching and learning?

11.   What value did the mentoring programme add to your personal development at school? Explain and please provide me with examples

12.   How did the mentorship programme help you to add value to your school?

13.   Why do you think having a mentor is important?

14.   Do you think your experiences as a mentee helped with your professional growth for your career?

15. Will you recommend a mentorship programme to any first- time teacher? Why

16.   Please summarize what you feel you can do, or do differently, as a result of the mentorship programme.

17. How would you improve the programme so that it is more beneficial to teaching and learning?

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APPENDIX D:
MENTORS FOCUS
GROUP INTERVIEW

DATA GENERATION

I am conducting this interview to gather data to investigate how the JMP contributed toward first-time teachers' teaching and learning experiences in the selected primary schools in the Western Cape. The participants of this interview will be the mentors that were part of the mentoring programme.

There are 14 interview questions and it will take about 40 minutes of your time. Thanking you in advance.

Interview

1. What is the Aim of the JMP?
2. Why was this NGO started?
3. What challenges has your second cohort mentees experienced at the beginning of their teaching career? Please provide me with examples on the challenges they have encountered.
4. How have the JMP/ mentors contributed toward overcoming these challenges?
   ➢ What support have you given the first time teacher in dealing with the mentioned challenges?
5. What challenges did you experience as a mentor?
6. How did you as the mentor overcome these challenges?
7. What are the subjects that the JMP offers support with?
   ➢ Is this in the classroom and out of the classroom?
8. How has the JMP support the development of first-time teachers' content knowledge to facilitate effective teaching and learning in the classroom?
9. Do you think you have given him/her enough support and guidance?
10. How has your mentees grown over the two-year period?
    ➢ What skills development have your mentees gained from you as the mentor/ mentoring programme? Explain by giving examples.
11. How has the mentoring programme positively influenced the way the mentees approach teaching and learning?

Private Bag X17, Bellville, 7535
South Africa
Tell +27 (0) 21 959 2260
Email: mluckay@uwc.ac.za
Website: www.uwc.ac.za

12. Has the JMP add value to their personal development at school? Explain and please provide me with examples.

13. Will you recommend a mentorship programme to any first- time teacher?Why?

14. How would you improve in the programme so that it is more beneficial to teaching and learning?

APPENDIX E:
JMP CONSENT LETTER

Dear Dr Zorina Dharsey

RE: Permission to use portfolios of mentees being interviewed

I have done interviews with 5 of the JMPs mentees to gain insight to the focus of my study. The 5 mentees were part of the JMP during the years 2013-2014.

To gain further analytical depth into the experiences of the mentees I would like to draw on document analyses (JMP and portfolio's of mentees) and critically analyze the following documents that will only be available to me from the JMP.

- Interviews between the mentor and mentee
- Reflections
- Mentees portfolio which contains personal information and their mini term reports on each mentee.

The topic: Mentoring and the preparedness of first-time primary school teachers. A study of a non- governmental Joint Mentorship Project (JMP).

Yours sincerely
 Malika Ismail
2920322@myuwc.ac.za
Ismailmalika09@gmail.com
University of the Western Cape
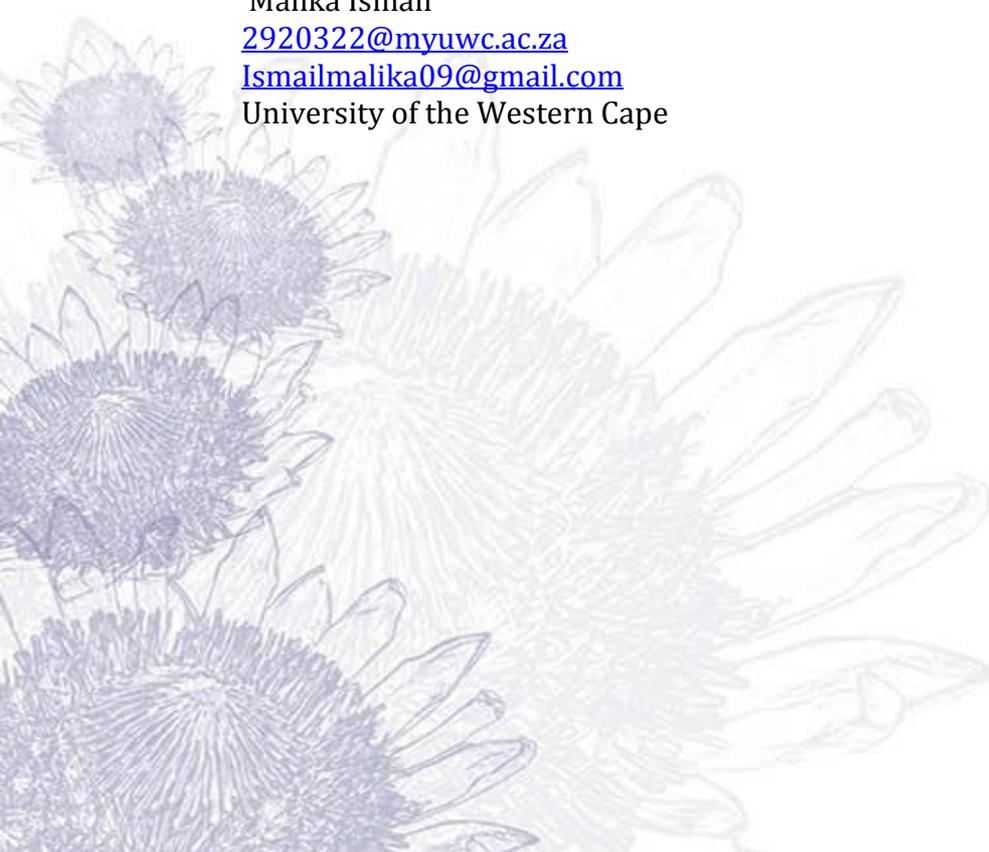
Appendix F:

Letter of permission to conduct research

Dear Principal
RE: Fieldwork for Master's in Education thesis.

Topic of study: Mentoring and the preparedness of first-time primary school teachers.

A study of a non- governmental Joint Mentorship Project (JMP).

I herewith would like to apply for permission to perform a research study at your school. I have chosen your school because I would like to interview the first-time teacher at your school that was part of the Joint Mentorship Project (JMP) during the years 2013-2014. The JMP mentoring is understood to be a purposeful process which created an environment where first-time teachers can develop both personally and professionally with the guidance of the Primary Science Programme (PSP) mentors.

I am currently enrolled for my M.Ed Thesis at the University of the Western Cape. I hereby wish to request permission to come and conduct an interview with one of your teachers based on her experiences while being part of the JMP as a data gathering exercise for my thesis. The information gathered shall only be used for research purposes. The name of the school and teachers name shall not be disclosed to anyone.

When I have completed my data analysis, I will give you a summary report of my findings at the school. For the ethical consideration in the data gathering I would like a stamp of the school and your signature will be suffice for the purposes of proof of consultation and permission by the school management.

Yours in Education

Malika Ismail (Principal Researcher)   Supervisor: Dr M. Luckay

…………………….......   …………………………………

APPENDIX G

Ethics Reference Number: HS17/2/8

23 March 2017

Ms M Ismail

 Faculty of Education

Project Title: Mentoring and the preparedness of first-time primary school teachers. A study of a non- governmental Joint Mentorship Project (JMP).

Approval Period: 23 March 2017 – 23 March 2018

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 a progress report in good time for annual renewal.

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

Ms Patricia Josias
Research Ethics Committee Officer
University of the Western Cape

PROVISIONAL REC NUMBER - 130416-049

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Western Cape
Government

Education

APPENDIX H
REFERENCE: 20170223 –8609
ENQUIRIES: Dr A T Wyngaard

Ms Malika Ismail
3 Strelitzia Street
Lentegeur
Mitchells Plain
7785

Dear Ms Malika Ismail

RESEARCH PROPOSAL: **MENTORING AND THE PREPAREDNESS OF FIRST-TIME PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS: A STUDY OF A NON GOVERNMENTAL JOINT MENTORSHIP PROJECT (JMP)**

Your application to conduct the above-mentioned research in schools in the Western Cape has been approved subject to the following conditions:
1.   Principals, educators and learners are under no obligation to assist you in your investigation.
2.   Principals, educators, learners and schools should not be identifiable in any way from the results of the investigation.
3.   You make all the arrangements concerning your investigation.
4.   Educators' programmes are not to be interrupted.
5.   The Study is to be conducted from **23 February 2017 till 30 June 2017**
6.   No research can be conducted during the fourth term as schools are preparing and finalizing syllabi for examinations (October to December).
7.   Should you wish to extend the period of your survey, please contact Dr A.T Wyngaard at the contact numbers above quoting the reference number?
8.   A photocopy of this letter is submitted to the principal where the intended research is to be conducted.
9.   Your research will be limited to the list of schools as forwarded to the Western Cape Education Department.
10.   A brief summary of the content, findings and recommendations is provided to the Director: Research Services.
11.   The Department receives a copy of the completed report/dissertation/thesis addressed to:
        The Director: Research Services
        Western Cape Education Department
        Private Bag X9114
        CAPE TOWN
        8000

We wish you success in your research.

Kind regards.
Signed: Dr Audrey T Wyngaard
Directorate: Research
DATE: 27February 2017

Lower Parliament Street, Cape Town, 8001
tel: +27 21 467 9272   fax: 0865902282
Safe Schools: 0800 45 46 47

Private Bag X9114, Cape Town, 8000
Employment and salary enquiries: 0861 92 33 22
www.westerncape.gov.za

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