

**Foundation Phase male student-teachers' experiences during Teaching
Practice: Implications for Initial Teacher Training**

By

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DECLARATION

I, Sive Makeleni, declare that the dissertation titled “**Foundation Phase male student-teachers’ experiences during Teaching Practice: Implications for Initial Teacher Training**” which I hereby submit to the University of Fort Hare is my own work and has not been submitted before by me for any degree at any other university. The work which I have submitted is the result of my independent investigation and all the sources I have used or quoted have been acknowledged by means of full references.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sive Makeleni', is positioned above the signature line.

Signed:

Date: 23 May 2016

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my mother, Nokukhanya Makeleni who taught me not to give up.

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Indeed, it is appropriate to say Ebenezer. I have not done it all on my own because various people played different roles in this study. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to:

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to explore experiences of Foundation Phase male student-teachers during teaching practice. Four Bachelor of Education Foundation Phase male student-teachers were selected for the purpose of this study. Venturing of males in Foundation Phase specialisation is phenomenon. Foundation Phase has been viewed as a female territory for many years. As a result, there are few males teaching in FP.

The study employed the qualitative approach as a suitable approach. As the study sought to explore experiences, a phenomenological design was followed. In a true phenomenological design, unstructured interviews and personal diaries are used for data collection. In this study data were collected through unstructured interviews and personal diaries of the participants. I employed interpretivism as a research paradigm.

The study found that despite South Africa being a democratic country Foundation Phase is still viewed as a female space. Findings reveal that male student-teachers feel that in a democratic country, gender equality should be exercised. The study revealed that teaching profession is undermined. As much as participants reported about insecurities, they also reported about the benefits of being a male student-teacher in Foundation Phase specialisation. One of the benefits reported is knowledge and understanding of child development theories. The participants reported that during TP, they were seen as role-models, as father figures and resources.

The research recommends that Initial Teacher Education Programme should do more in preparing male student-teachers venturing in Foundation Phase. The research also suggests that all stakeholders involved in education should have a programme focusing on developing teaching profession to be a prestigious profession. The government and all education stakeholders should also focus on gender equality within FP specialisation, both in Initial Teacher Education institutions and in schools.

Key Concepts: Teaching Practice, Mentor, Student teacher, Experiences, Anxieties.

ACRONYMS

BEd	Bachelor of Education
CAPS	Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
ECE	Early Childhood Education
FP	Foundation Phase
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SE	School Experience
TP	Teaching Practice
UFH	University of Fort Hare

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Chapter One

Background to the study

1.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the background and context of FP male student-teachers' experiences during TP. The chapter includes the statement of the problem, research questions, the purpose and the objectives of the study, research questions, significance, rationale of the study, delimitations, definition of key words and chapter outline. The chapter concludes with a brief summary.

1.2. Background to the study

Early Childhood Education (ECE) has been dominated by female educators for a long time. According to Koutros (2010, p. 6), classification of teaching as “women’s work” has a history that can be traced back to the mid-1800. This classification has been visible mainly in early childhood education, especially in pre-primary schooling and in primary schooling. Sargent as cited by Baris (2013, p. 109) contends that teaching in early childhood education is an example of a gendered profession that is organized by images, symbols, and social understandings that allow for great distinctions in the enactment of gender roles. Similarly, Peeters (2007) argued that childcare is seen as women’s work that women do naturally and are intrinsically better at. This is also concurred by Carrington (2002) who contends that caring and nurturing are traditionally feminine traits.

The American National Women’s History Museum (2007, p. 1), as cited by Patrick (2009), stated that teaching positions in America were entirely reserved for unmarried, native-born women. In general, female teachers worked for a few years in their late teens and early twenties before marrying and leaving the paid labour force (Ibid). Married women were then responsible for caring for children at home and were required to stop teaching. Similarly in Turkey, kindergarten is called “anaokulu”, meaning school of mother (Baris, 2013). This name sends a message that early childhood education comprises motherly care. This is also concurred by Cameron,

Moss and Owen, as quoted by Peeters (2007) who argues that early childhood care and education is based on a particular concept of care 'mother care'.

Mukuna and Mutsotso (2011) indicate that 97 percent of teachers in early childhood education programmes in Kenya are women. A trend of males teaching in senior grades than in the Foundation Phase (FP) or early childhood education is a global issue (Cunningham and Dorsey, 2004). Lovett (2014, p. 348) asserted that men's and women's roles were characterized by the age of students and subjects taught as well as the administrative functions each of the sexes.

Petersen (2014, p. 3) reveals that in South Africa, teaching in the early grades is often accompanied by simplistic images of FP teachers as 'nannies' and 'caregivers,' both of which are generally associated with a woman's rather than a man's role in society. This assertion implies that males in early childhood education and in the FP have a challenge of negotiating their professional identity. Sumsion (2005, p.112) talks about male teachers "facing the challenge of negotiating" what he calls their "otherness" in relation to their female counterparts.

The culture of nurturance seen in primary schools challenges males who work within the primary context (Lovett, 2014). This is because these men are often perceived to be doing women's work(Ibid). This result in males avoiding doing things viewed as female activities. Although men are willing to position themselves as nurturers, they are not prepared for the caring role that is associated with being a primary school teacher, particularly becoming too close or when caring raises consternation among others (Smith, 2004).

There is evidence indicating a need for male participation in early childhood education. Some reasons relate to policies and practices promoting gender equity and a desire to have both sexes equally represented in spheres of society (Berg, 2004). Equality is one of the values enshrined in the constitution of South Africa (Republic of South Africa (RSA) 2006). In other parts of the world, greater prominence is given to concerns about boys' academic achievements and behaviour (Carrington, 2002; Cushman, 2007). Other countries emphasise a need for male role models (Sargent, 2001, p. 117). Duku (2006, p. 70) also concurs that most children in South Africa,

especially in the Eastern Cape, stay with a female single parent. This implies that children do need a male figure who will be a role model. Jones (2009, p. 29) argues that if men are more visible in the early childhood setting carrying out caring roles, this could potentially help to counter stereotypes of both men and women, reduce sexism and generally advance gender equality. This shows a need for male educators in early childhood education.

Sanders (2002) highlighted that all male early childhood teachers have to defend their choice of a profession to family, friends, and female teachers in their own profession. Foundation Phase is claimed by women as their space, so males have to negotiate their identity within this space. Makeleni (2014) found that there are few male educators in F.P The study also highlighted that female educators still claim the space as suitable for women. This implies that male teachers have to negotiate their identity.

This study explores experiences of male FP student-teachers during Teaching Practice (TP). Teaching Practice is a requirement for any student-teacher to qualify for teaching degree or diploma. It allows student-teachers experience in the actual teaching and learning environment (Ngidi & Sibaya, 2003, p.18; Marais & Meier, 2004, p. 220; Perry, 2004:2). Gujjar, Naoreen, Saifi and Bajwa(2010) asserted that a number of terms such as the teaching practice, student teaching, teaching practice, field studies, infield experience, school based experience or internship are used to refer to teaching practice This implies that students have to be in actual classrooms teaching learners in schools.

During TP in Jordan, student-teachers are introduced to elements of schools' culture and its interactions, which help them to form and review their own teaching philosophy (Hamaidi, Al-Shara, Arouri & Awwad,2014). Moreover, it provides student-teachers with opportunities to discuss practical teaching experiences with specialists and, thus, link the theoretical aspect of these experiences with the practical one (Ibid). This implies that these are the goals for all student teachers despite their gender. The school's culture is shown as an important aspect during TP. A study by Hamaidi et al. (2014) highlights challenges that include: the lack of guidance provided by TP supervisor (lecturers), the difficulty in communicating with cooperative teachers (mentors) and inadequate support provided by cooperative teachers. Kaleptwa and

Igomu (2013) state that in Nigeria student-teachers tended to develop negative attitudes towards TP. The study revealed that female students showed more positive attitude to teaching practice than male students. In this study, male attitudes focused on how they teach and not experiences on negotiating their identities.

The purpose of TP is to develop several competencies in the trainee teacher which include: interpersonal, pedagogical, intercultural and psychological competencies (Mapolisa & Tshabalala, 2014). Gender stereotypes still characterise who teaches in the FP (Makeleni, 2014). As such, there is a need for male mentors at FP (Ibid). Mashiya (2014) revealed that male student teachers faced an unwelcoming environment when they first arrive at schools for TP. Experienced teachers had to explain the FP grade span to them because they were under the impression that the students were confused about where they were going to do their TP. This indicates that experienced teachers have no confidence in males having suitable knowledge about FP teaching.

1.3. Statement of the problem

Teaching Practice (TP) evokes different emotions from student-teachers. During TP, student-teachers move from their familiar setting of the training institution to a school setting. Frick, Carl and Beets (2010) assert that transition from University training to classroom practice may be a daunting experience for which students are often inadequately prepared. They move from being students at the University to being teachers at school. During T.P, student teachers are expected to use theory that they learn and put it into practice. Literature speaks of experiences of student teachers generally during TP, and the focus is on teaching and the role of mentors. Very little is mentioned on the experiences of male FP student-teachers who are venturing in a traditionally female environment. However, there are studies revealing that TP evokes different feelings and emotions to student teachers, hence this study's exploration of the experiences of FP male student-teachers during TP.

1.4. Objectives of the study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the experiences of B.Ed. FP male student-teachers' experiences during TP. Specifically, the objectives of the study are:

- To explore how student-teachers experience their professional lives in the FP specialisation.
- To find out what the participants regard as benefits of FP specialisation.
- To understand the implications of the students' experiences on the discourses of Initial Teacher Education.

1.5. Main research question

What are the experiences of Foundation Phase male student teachers during Teaching Practice?

- **Sub-questions**

- 1.5.1. How do the student-teachers experience their professional lives in Foundation Phase specialisation?
- 1.5.2. What do participants regard as benefits of FP specialisation?
- 1.5.3. What are the implications of the students' experiences on the discourses of Initial Teacher Education?

1.6. Significance of the study

TP is a form of work-integrated learning that is described as a period of time when students are working in the relevant industry to receive specific in-service training in order to apply theory to practice (Kiggundu & Nayimuli 2009). The study is expected to provide deeper insights into BEd FP male student-teachers experiences during TP. It is also envisaged that the study could reveal vulnerability, fears, and threats experienced by FP male student-teachers during TP. Moreover, the findings could contribute to teacher training programmes and provide direction for further research. The study is also envisaged to assist teacher training institutions in structuring opportunities to deconstruct gender issues during teacher training. The study is also envisaged to prepare male student teachers for contradictions they will face as male foundation phase teachers.

1.7. Rationale of the study

I have been a BEd Intermediate Phase student for four years. Teaching practice has been one of the requirements of the training. During teaching practice, students were assigned to different schools, and each school had to allocate a mentor for each student. I noted that male educators dominated Intermediate Phase more than F.P. This demonstrated that BEd FP male student teachers are mainly mentored by female educators because the latter dominate FP. Student teachers who are doing Intermediate Phase, Senior Phase and Further Education and Training Phase may not experience the same experiences by F.P student teachers because of the environment.

Mapolisa and Tshabalala's(2014) study revealed that the most outstanding positive experiences of the student teachers rested on the support system offered to them by their mentors. Preparedness of male student-teachers on how to negotiate their identity within a traditionally female space raised a need for this study (Drury, 2008). Gujjar et al. (2010) asserted that orientations should be given to the student teachers before TP to prepare them mentally for the challenges coming their way during teaching practice.

FP specialisation, as a female domain, could perpetuate dominance of female educators instead of encouraging male student teachers. Sobiraj, Korek, Weseler and Mohr (2011) asserted that males in female-dominated professions have to perform stereotypically 'female' tasks in order to gain acceptance. Teacher training institutions have a responsibility to prepare male student teachers to venture in a traditionally female dominated environment.

1.8 Delimitation of the study

The study focused on the experiences of BEd FP male student-teachers experiences during teaching practice. Four (4) BEd FP male student-teachers were selected for the study. The study focused in students from the University in the Eastern Cape province. The University is herein referred to as Z.K University. The focus is on the Initial Teacher preparation department within the Faculty of Education. The study was conducted during the period when the selected respondents were embarking on TP.

1.9 Definition of key concepts

1.9.1 Student-Teachers

In this study, the term student teacher is operationally defined to refer to a student who is doing pre-service training in teaching.

1.9.2 Foundation Phase

It is an entry level at formal schooling system. In South Africa, Foundation Phase starts at Grade R (Reception Year) to Grade 3.

1.9.3 Teaching Practice

Teaching practice serves as the pre-service teacher's initiation into the real-life world of the school.

1.9.4 Experiences

An experience is something that happens to a person, which is seen, felt, done or lived through (*World Book Millennium* 2000:749).

1.10 Literature Review

1.10.1 Theoretical perspective: Hussler's Theory of lived experiences

This study was informed by Husserl's (1989) theory of lived experiences which is within the phenomenological approach to the study of experience (Smith, 2008). The phenomenological approach looks at intentionality as a central structure of conscious experience and considers meaning to be a key mechanism in the construction of such experience (Smith, 2008, p. 2). This approach asserts that our conscious experience is directed towards - 'intends' or represents - things through particular concepts, thoughts, ideas, images and that it is these that make up the meaning or content of a given experience. Husserl and Merleau-Ponty's (Husserl, 1989; Merleau-Ponty, 1996) 'lived experience' model of phenomenology exemplified this approach.

This model holds that an experiencer describes a type of experience, and that the experiencer does this just as he/she finds it in his/her past. As new experiences are acquired, new descriptions are developed. It means the accounts of Foundation Phase male students of their experiences, as students at a University as well as during Teaching practice, can provide Higher Education as sense of what they have lived through. These experiences may guide the pedagogy and the provision of Foundation Phase as a specialization for both male and female students.

This study explored experiences of male FP student-teachers during teaching practice. Male student-teachers have experiences as human beings, as males in the community and society. In their societies, they live with women and have experience of living with women. The male student-teachers acquire new experiences as students in the University. Experiences of male student teachers in an FP university classroom may bring in new experiences. These experiences may shape the students' perceptions about teaching and how they teach.

During TP, FP male student-teachers are exposed to a traditional women's space. These women in the FP have their own experiences in teaching, specifically in the FP. Their experiences may have guided their pedagogy, and it is their experience that will help them guide student teachers. This implies that experiences of women FP teachers may have an impact on male FP student-teachers. Males who are venturing in the FP have to defend their choice of profession (Sanders, 2002). Venturing of males in FP teaching is a new phenomenon; as a result, literature indicates that there are few males teaching in the FP.

1.10.2. Teaching Practice

Sumara and Luce-Kapler (1996) asserted that becoming a teacher involves more than transposing teaching skills onto an already established personal identity; it means including the identity “teacher” in one’s life. This statement is fundamental in understanding teacher identity. Sumara and Luce-Kapler further argued that beginning teachers must negotiate at least three teaching identities: those they bring with them into teacher education, those they develop while doing university course work and those they develop during student teaching practicums (ibid). It is for that reason that the focus of this study is on the experiences of B.Ed. F.P male student teachers during TP.

Teaching Practice is a form of work-integrated learning that is described as a period of time when students are working in the relevant industry (Kiggundu and Nayimuli 2009). The purpose is to receive specific in-service training in order to apply theory to practice (Ibid). This is a period when student-teachers are given opportunity to put theory into practice. Teaching practice grants student-teachers experience in the actual teaching and learning environment (Ngidi & Sibaya, 2003, p. 18; Marais & Meier, 2004, p.220; Perry, 2004, p. 2). This is also concurred by Gujjar et al. (2010) when asserting that teaching practice not only provides student-teachers with an opportunity of teaching, but that they also have the opportunity to observe inside and outside of the classroom.

McDonald (2004) argues that ‘the practicum experience is fraught with difficulties, dilemmas and challenges as the student attempts to negotiate his or her way along a hazardous path of professional policies and practices’. This assertion implies that TP is not always a favourable experience. Male students in FP are practicing in an environment that is dominated by female educators. In some cases, they are mentored by educators who still believe that male educators are not suitable for Foundation Phase (Makeleni, 2014).

Kiggundu and Nayimuli (2009) assert that teaching practice is a challenging but important part of teacher training, especially in developing countries such as South Africa, where the effectiveness of the teaching practice can be diminished or eroded

by a range of challenges such as: geographical distance, low and uneven levels of teacher expertise, a wide-ranging lack of resources as well as a lack of discipline among a wide cross-section of learners and educators. This could create anxiety amongst student-teachers.

1.10.3. Student teacher experiences

Sibaya and Ngidi (2003) argue that anxiety is a relevant characteristic of student-teachers. This is further clarified by Bezzina (2006) who asserted that during teaching practice, students often feel ill-prepared to deal with the uncertainties, realities and challenges that await them in their new profession. Philpott (2006) argues that pre-service teachers may experience a dissonance that can be attributed to the different logic by which the teaching curriculum is organised in higher education institutions in comparison to the applied logic in school curriculum. During teaching practice, students are facing the realities of the classroom situation as they are expected to present lessons and manage classrooms. The school environment is totally different from the university environment. A school may have its own established culture that may be different from what the student-teacher has acquired from the University. It is for that reason that student-teachers are to be mentored by an experience educator.

1.10.4. Mentoring in Teaching Practice

This study explored the experiences of B.Ed. foundation phase educators during teaching practice. During teaching practice, student-teachers are placed in different schools where they are mentored by experienced teachers. According to van Andel and Fischer (2002, p 4), a mentor is an older experienced school teacher who takes care for a young, inexperienced teacher or a student-teacher in order to help him/her learn how to teach. During teaching practice, an experienced teacher is expected to mentor the student-teacher. McDonald (2004) argues that student-teachers are more likely to have successful practicum experiences if associate teachers demonstrate certain attitudes, characteristics and practices. In this statement, McDonald used the term 'associate teacher' to refer to a mentor.

Fordice and Nielson (n.d.) argued that upon entering the teaching profession, male elementary teachers encounter mixed messages. If they conform too strictly to the

traditional scripts of masculinity, they may be perceived as incompetent to work with elementary children. If, on the other hand, they are too nurturing and empathetic, their masculinity may be questioned. This means that lack of male mentors in the foundation phase could pose a major challenge to male students who are doing teaching practice.

Mills, Martino and Lingard (2004), argue that lack of male role models for male students is one of the problems that discourages male students from teaching. King (2000) in a study conducted in United Kingdom discovered that male primary school teachers are very concerned about being perceived as gay because they work with young children. King further argues that male teachers even develop strategies to disprove suggestions that they are gay by putting pictures of their wives and children on their desks (ibid) or wearing wedding rings (Sumsion, 1999). This could leave male student-teachers with much hustle in negotiating their professional identities.

Nielsen (2006, p. 5) suggested that teacher education programs should structure opportunities to deconstruct gender issues because “an awareness of gender discourse can better prepare men for the contradictions and conflicts they may face as they manage their masculinity in an occupation built upon the assumption that workers will draw from discourses of femininity”. This is also concurred by Fordice and Nielson (n.d.) who contended that teacher education programs should purposefully and proactively poise men for the spectrum of contradictions they will face as male elementary teachers. It is in the midst of these contradictions that the students have to negotiate their identity.

Russell and Russell (2011) state that the most successful mentoring relationships are based on shared values, goals and understandings in order to understand the dynamics of mentoring. Leshem (2012) argues that personal factors have an influence on the formation of students’ concepts, beliefs and expectations about the nature of teaching and learning. This implies that student teachers may have different beliefs from those of the mentor. Despite these differences in mind-sets there has to be a mentor-mentee relationship.

1.10.5. Maleness in Early Childhood Education

This study explored the experiences of BEd FP male student-teachers during TP. Early Childhood Education and FP have been long dominated by female educators. Huntington (2013, p. 2) argues that from the time we are born, we are indoctrinated with cues from family, friends, teachers, playmates, strangers and the media on how to perform our genders. This also determines which gender we should be performing (ibid). This is indeed what has been happening in different parts of the world. This indoctrination has been accepted as a norm by the society at large. This study aligns itself with the social-constructionist approach on gender. According to Swartz de la Rey, Duncan and Townsend(2008, p. 339), the social-constructionist approach suggests that gender differences are constructed by the society in which we live and through our interactions with others. This assertion indicates tension between what an individual would like to do and what the society expects him /her to do.

Baris (2013, p.108) argues that throughout human history, gender has been one of the important factors which influence the division of labour. Many jobs have been labelled according to the gender lines, thus making some occupations women's job sand some occupations men's jobs (ibid). Unfortunately, education is one of the outstanding areas which is labelled as a "women's job". The number of female educators in primary education is an indication that gender role has an upper hand in deciding who teaches which phase.

Lovett (2014) argues that the culture of nurturance that exists within primary schools challenges the masculine identity of males who work within the primary context because these men are often perceived to be doing women's work. A consequence is that males tend to avoid doing things construed as feminine, including caring, in order to construct a 'normative' masculine identity (Smith, 2004). Smith (2004) adds that although men are willing to position themselves as nurturers, they are not prepared for the caring role that is associated with being a primary school teacher, particularly when becoming too close or caring raises consternation among others.

One of the challenges faced by males in primary education is the attitude of female educators (Makeleni, 2014). Similarly, Lovett (2014) also asserted that female primary teachers doubted the ability of prospective male colleagues to nurture and care. This reasoning is related to the thought that view men as biologically not carers (Ibid). Males

tend to choose other professions that are not seen as female territories. This has led to more females dominating FP.

The dominance of women is not only a phenomenon within teaching profession but also in the nursing profession. Anderson (2014) highlighted that literature indicates that male nurses experience nursing programs and the practice of nursing differently from their female counterparts. This implies that male nurses, as well as male educators, experiences common barriers. In particular, literature has shown that men experience barriers to their practice as nurses both as nursing students and within the profession. According to Anderson (2014), these barriers include feelings of isolation, stereotyping, gender discrimination, disenfranchisement from the curriculum, female-focused roles that are difficult for men to relate or adapt to and resistance from female patients.

1.11 Research Methods and Methodology

1.11.1. Research paradigm: Interpretive

This study was grounded within a qualitative research in an interpretivist paradigm. This paradigm aims to explore, understand and interpret a specific phenomenon or social reality, namely, the experiences of BEd. FP male student-teachers during TP. Myers (2008, p 38) notes that interpretive researchers assume that access to reality, given or socially constructed, is only through social constructions such as language, consciousness, shared meanings and instruments.

1.11.2. Research approach: Qualitative approach

I chose a qualitative approach for this study as recommended by McMillan and Schumacher (2006, p. 315) for “an enquiry in which researchers collect data in face-to-face situations by interacting with selected persons in their setting”. This study sought to discover the experiences of FP male student-teachers during TP. According to Kumar (2012, p.104), the main focus in qualitative research is to understand, explain, explore, discover and clarify situations, feelings, perceptions, attitudes,

values, beliefs and experiences of a group of people. This study, therefore, endeavoured to answer the research questions by explaining, describing, and making sense of the respondents' social world during TP.

1.11.3. Design of the study: Phenomenology

I adopted a phenomenological approach in this study. Creswell (2007, p. 57 -59) describe such an approach as: "the meaning, for several individuals, of their lived experiences of a concept or a phenomenon." This was seen as relevant because I interpreted words and made meaning out of the lived experiences of B.Ed. FP male student-teachers during TP.

1.11.4. Sampling and sampling procedure

In qualitative studies, non-probability sampling methods are utilised, in particular, purposive sampling techniques. In purposive sampling, a specific case is chosen because it illustrates a process of interest for a particular study. Henning (2004) describes purposive sampling as having elements of theoretical sampling which looks for those who can assist in building the theory further, including people who fit the criteria of desirable participants. I employed purposive sampling, whereby participants from a selected university were selected according to their accessibility and relevance to the study. Relevance or criteria for inclusion in this study was for participants to be fourth year male B.Ed. FP student-teachers who have just completed TP.

1.11.5. Data collection Methods

Data was collected through the use of the instruments discussed below.

a) In-depth Interviews

Unstructured in-depth interviews helped me to ensure that certain areas of questioning are covered although there was no fixed sequence or format of questions. The unstructured nature of interviews does not mean that I allowed the interview to take place without direction. In an interview the researcher goes in with a general plan of

enquiry without steering the conversation by means of pre-set questions (Babbie, 2001). I conducted one-on-one interviews with the participants and use a voice recorder so that the interviews could later be transcribed.

b) Personal diaries

Jacelon and Imperio (2005) argue that through diaries, the researcher can gather information about day-to-day activities of participants and then explore those activities during a subsequent interview. During this process of writing personal diaries, participants become observers and also informants. This is what Zimmerman and Wieder (1977), as cited by Jacelon and Imperio (2005), called a “view from within.” Student-teachers were given note books that were used as personal diaries. In these diaries, participants recorded their day to day experiences during TP.

1.11.6. Data analysis procedures

According to De Vos (2005, p.333), data analysis is a process of searching and arranging data from interviews and other research instruments to increase the researcher’s understanding of the study. Furthermore it helps the researcher to present what has been discovered in clear terms (Ibid). The data was organised into themes emerging from the large quantity of participant responses. Statements from participants were quoted *verbatim* in support of the findings of the study.

1.12. Ethical considerations and requirements

Creswell (2008) argues that practicing ethics is a complex matter that involves more than just following a set of static guidelines such as those from professional associations. Ethically, conducting research requires researchers to actively interpret these principles for their individual projects, thus tailoring these ethical guidelines to suit the unique contexts of their research. The following guidelines were observed:

1.12.1 Gaining permission

I submitted a letter requesting permission to conduct the study from the Faculty of Education Research Ethics Committee of the participating University. I also requested permission to conduct the study at the institution.

1.12.2 Participants' right

Participants were allowed to exercise their right to be part of the research or not. Participants' right to privacy and that of the university where the participants are studying were respected. Participants were informed that they have a right to discontinue their participation if they so wished.

1.12.3 Informed consent

Kumar (2012:244) states that "all informed-consent procedures must meet three criteria: participants must be competent to give consent; sufficient information must be provided to allow for a reasoned decision; and consent must be voluntary and un-coerced." Participants were given all the information that would facilitate their voluntarily participation in the study.

1.12.4 Confidentiality and anonymity

All information obtained in this study is being treated confidentially and will not be divulged to anyone. I understand that it is unethical to be negligent in not protecting the confidentiality and anonymity of the information gathered from the participants (Kumar 2012, p. 246). Furthermore, in cases where names were attached, I used pseudonyms for the research participants and the University where the participants study.

1.12.5 Protection from harm

According to Burns and Grove (2009, p.198), protection from discomfort and harm originates from the principle of beneficence which refers to doing good and avoidance of doing harm. During all interaction with research participants, I avoided any situation that could have led to unwarranted distress and discomfort on the part of the participants.

1.12.6 Maintaining professionalism

I showed commitment to a continuous professional development, ethical practice and a responsible attitude toward participants throughout the study. This was done through demonstrating respect, compassion, integrity and altruism in relationship towards the participants.

1.13. Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness is the process whereby the researcher confirms that the findings accurately reflect the respondents' experiences and views and not the researcher's perceptions. This was done through tape-recording interviews. Fox and Bayat (2007, p.107) state that the criterion of trustworthiness is viable standard for measuring validity and reliability in qualitative research. According to Schmidt and Brown (2009, p.313), qualitative studies are trustworthy when strategies have been used to meet credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability.

1.14. Credibility

Credibility is concerned with how confident one is regarding the truth value of data (Polit, Beck & Hungler, 2005, p .312). The study explored and determined the respondents' experiences during teaching practice through: in-depth interviews to the point of data saturation, capturing rich data, peer debriefing and implementing member checking.

1.15 Transferability

Babbie and Mouton (2007, p.277) refer to transferability as "the extent to which the findings of a study can be applied to other contexts, situations, or respondents". In this study, I selected information-rich participants and collected data until saturation was reached. The data provided dense descriptions of the phenomenon under study through verbatim quotations which enhanced transferability of the study.

1.16 Dependability

Dependability refers to how stable or consistent data is over time and over conditions (Polit ,et al, 2005, p. 315). De Vos et al. (2005, p. 346) state that dependability is the alternative to reliability where the researcher attempts to account for changing conditions in the subject chosen for the study as well as changes in the design brought about by a better understanding of the setting. This study made use of a dependability inquiry audit in order to enhance dependability.

1.13. CHAPTER OUTLINE

The proposed outline is as indicated below:

CHAPTER 1: This chapter covers the background of the study, statement of the problem, research questions, purpose of the study, research objectives, significance of the study, assumptions of the study, delimitation of the study and definitions of terms.

CHAPTER 2: The chapter covers the theoretical framework and literature review.

CHAPTER 3: In this chapter, the research methodology, methods, and ethical considerations are discussed.

CHAPTER 4: This chapter presents the study's findings, and data analysis.

CHAPTER5: This chapter presents the summary of the findings, conclusions and recommendations.

1.18. Summary

This chapter presented the background and context of the study. This included, among other things, the statement of the problem, research questions and significance of the study. The next chapter presents the theoretical framework and presentation of related literature.

Chapter Two:

Theoretical Framework and Related Literature

2. 0. Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to review existing literature related to the purpose of the study. The literature review included books, journal articles, policy documents, dissertations and theses. Literature review is important because it helps the

researcher to identify relevant theoretical or conceptual framework for the research problem, lay the foundation for the study, inspire new research ideas and to determine any gaps or inconsistencies in the body of research (Polit, Beck & Hungler, 2004). The purpose of this study is to investigate BEd. FP male student-teachers' experiences during TP. Specifically, the objectives of the study are:

- To explore how student-teachers experience their professional lives in the FP specialisation.
- To find out what the participants regard as benefits of FP specialisation.
- To understand the implications of the students' experiences on the discourses of Initial Teacher Education.

The structure of this chapter is as follows:

2.1. This section discusses Hussler's theory of lived experiences as a theoretical perspective of this study. Phenomenology is relevant for the study because the study is about the lived experiences of male student-teachers. In discussing phenomenology, dimensions of phenomenology, according to Omery (1983), are highlighted.

2.2. Gender representation in FP is discussed in this section. This was relevant because understanding gender issues will highlight maleness in FP. Literature indicates that there are few males in FP as male student-teachers are venturing a traditional female space. It is relevant to understand experiences of males who are in-service and also those of pre-service male teachers.

2.3. Teaching Practice is conceptualized in this section.

2.4. Student-Teacher experience literature is reviewed in this section. These experiences include: anxiety during TP, stress during TP and sexual harassment during TP. This was done to highlight different experiences that student-teachers come across during TP.

2.5. Mentoring during TP is explained. This is done to understand what mentoring is and its purpose. Student-teachers are sent to schools where they are assigned to a

mentor. It is the mentor who is responsible for supporting and guiding the student-teacher. Literature highlights the importance of a mentor during TP. Literature also highlights that there are few males in FP, and this implies that there are few male mentors for FP male student- teachers.

2.1 Theoretical perspective: Hussler's Theory of lived experiences

This study employed Phenomenology as a theoretical framework. Pascal (2010) asserted that phenomenology evolved as an alternative to scientific methods traditionally used within the social sciences. Phenomenology is both a philosophy and a research method. As a philosophy, phenomenology is a particular way of approaching the world and apprehending lived experience (Merleau Ponty, 1962). As a research method, phenomenology is a process of re-examining what Husserl (1962) termed "the things themselves." Hussler's theory of lived experiences is within the phenomenological approach - to the study of experience (Smith, 2008). The phenomenological approach looks at "intentionality as a central structure of conscious experience and considers meaning a key mechanism in the construction of such experience" (Smith, 2008, p. 2). This is relevant in this study because the study is about meanings attached by student teachers on their experiences during TP. These experiences include how they felt during TP, what their challenges were and what their successes were. Hussler and Ponty's (Hussler, 1989; Ponty, 1996) 'lived experience' model of phenomenology is relevant in this study.

Pascal (2010) contends that lived experience of the everyday world, as revealed through consciousness, is the primary focus of phenomenological inquiry. In this study, male student-teachers attend TP for a period of six weeks over a period of three years. They have lived as student-teachers in a FP classroom, and their lived experience during TP is relevant in this study. In looking at personal accounts of student-teachers, the study may expand an understanding of how TP is lived by male student-teachers in FP. Through exploring lived experiences of FP male student-teachers, the study is able to discover the subjective meanings of the lived experience as separate from objective components of the lived experiences. Hence this study's attempt to explore experiences of FP male student-teachers during TP. It is through accessing male

student-teachers' lived experience that I gained an understanding of the meanings and perceptions of FP male student- teachers' world.

I employed Husserlian phenomenology. Husserl focuses on the experience of happenings, events and occurrences through consciousness where individuals, in their life-world, are free to engage in activities, enjoy their everyday lives and socialise with other individuals. Husserl (1989) states that this life-world forms our foundation for all our understandings, whether it is scientific in nature or part of our normal activities. Although this life-world consists of our knowledge of everyday activities, it is important to abandon this background knowledge in order to understand the essence of this life-world (Ibid). He explains the distinction between "... the subject and the object as the object-appears-through-consciousness", in order to emphasise the abandonment of knowledge, sometimes also referred to as "bracketing" or "reduction"(Crotty, 1998). This phenomenological study sought to explore the conscious lived experience of phenomena; particularly ways in which phenomena are perceived in everyday life (Moustakas, 1994; Crotty, 1998).

Phenomenology holds that an experiencer describes a type of experience, and that the experiencer does this just as he/she finds it in his/her past. In the context of this study, socialisation plays a major role in defining the past of the student. In this study, the past refers to the social background of the student-teachers. Student teachers, as part of the society, have a particular understanding about teaching in the FP. The question of phenomenological inquiry is about the meaning of human experience and asks: "What is it like?"(Connel, 2003).This question is relevant for this study because it also seeks to understand what it is like to be a male student-teacher in FP. The student-teachers' understanding (before TP) of teaching in FP may be different from what they experience during TP. Their experiences during TP may change their views and beliefs about teaching in the FP.

Powers and Knapp (1995) states that phenomenology is a way of thinking about what life experiences are like for people. It is primarily concerned with interpreting the meaning of these experiences (ibid). Thus, this study seeks to investigate how male student-teachers interpret meaning of their experiences during TP as new experiences

are acquired and new descriptions are developed. It means the accounts of FP male student-teachers of their experiences, as students at a university as well as during TP, can provide Higher Education a sense of what they have lived through. These experiences may guide the pedagogy and the provision of Foundation Phase as a specialization for both male and female students.

This study sought to explore experiences of BEd FP male student teachers during teaching practice. Male student teachers have experiences as human beings and as males in the community and society. In the society, they live with women and have an experience of living with women. Male student-teachers acquire new experiences as students in the university. Experiences of male student-teachers in a FP university lecture-room may bring in new experiences. These experiences may shape the students' perceptions about teaching and how they teach.

During TP, FP male student-teachers are exposed to a traditionally, female space. Women in the FP also have their own experiences in teaching and specifically in the FP. Their experiences may have guided their pedagogy, and it is such experiences that will help guide student teachers. This implies that experiences of women FP teachers may have an impact on male FP student-teachers. Males who are venturing into the FP have to defend their choice of profession (Sanders, 2002). Venturing of males into FP teaching is a new phenomenon and literature indicates that there are few males teaching in the FP.

Dimensions of phenomenology

Omery (1983, p 51) describes Spielberg's types of phenomenology as: descriptive phenomenology; phenomenology of essence; constitutive phenomenology; reductive phenomenology; phenomenology of appearances; and hermeneutical phenomenology. This are discussed further below:

- **Descriptive phenomenology**

Spiegelberg (1976,p.69) defines descriptive phenomenology as “direct exploration, analysis, and description of particular phenomenon, as free as possible from unexamined presuppositions aiming at maximum intuitive presentation” (Streubert Speziale & Carpenter 2003,p.60). Descriptive phenomenology stimulates people’s perceptions of lived experiences while emphasising the richness, breadth, and depth of those experiences (Streubert & Carpenter 1999, p.60). Descriptive phenomenology is a three-step process, namely: (1) intuiting, (2) analysing and (3) describing (Brink & Wood, 1998, p.341). In this study, I asked respondents to describe their experiences in words. Some of the questions I asked needed them to describe their feelings, opinions and views on male specialising in FP.

- **Constitutive phenomenology**

Constitutive phenomenology involves studying phenomena as they became established or constituted in people’s consciousness. According to Spiegelberg (1975, p.72), constitutive phenomenology means the process in which the phenomena take shape in people’s consciousness as they advance from first impression to full picture of the structure (Streubert, Speziale & Carpenter 2003,p.53). In the present study, this involved my growth during the study. Through the interviews, I was able to know and understand experiences of FP male student-teachers during TP. The data collected was able to reveal what male student-teachers thought about teaching practice and its implication in initial teacher training.

- **Reductive phenomenology**

Reductive phenomenology occurs concurrently throughout a phenomenological investigation. The researcher continually deals with personal biases, assumptions and presuppositions, and thus brackets or sets aside these beliefs to obtain the purest description of the phenomenon under investigation. Reductive phenomenology detaches the phenomenon of our everyday experience from the context of our naive or natural living, while preserving the content as fully and as purely as possible. This step is critical for the preservation of objectivity in the phenomenon (Streubert Speziale & Carpenter 2003,p.62).

In this study, I began by identifying presuppositions or assumptions I had about male student-teachers’ experiences of being involved FP. This process involved self-

examination of my personal beliefs. I was a BEd Intermediate Phase student- teacher. I also believed that FP is for female educators as people who are good at nurturing. Phenomenology reduction is critical if the researcher is to achieve a pure description of the phenomenon. The reductive process is also a basis for postponing any review of literature until the researcher has analysed the data (Streubert ,Speziale & Carpenter, 2003,p.62).

- **Hermeneutical phenomenology (interpretive)**

Hermeneutical or interpretive phenomenology concentrates on interpreting the meaning in the phenomenon that is concealed, and thus not immediately revealed to direct investigation, analysis and description (Holloway, 2005,p.128). This approach concentrates on the need to study human consciousness by focusing on the world that the study participants subjectively experience. This could indicate immediate probing during the interviews. The following section reviews related literature on the study.

2.2. Related literature

In this section, related literature is discussed. Some of the related literature discussed includes literature on teaching as a profession, gender representation in FP, teaching practice and other related literature on TP.

2.2.1. Teaching as a Profession

Teaching has often been regarded and generally referred as a profession. This study explored experiences of FP male student-teachers during TP. These educators are trained to be professional teachers. Profession, according to Enyi (2014), has to do with an occupation that has an exclusive body of knowledge relevant to the society whose members possess special skills and competencies acquired from training. The question is not only on whether teaching is a profession but also whether it does enjoy the prestige of professionalism as is seen in Medicine, Law, Engineering Accountancy and other professional fields (Nwite, 2012).

Ascribing a perfect professionalism to teaching will help boost the morale of the serving teachers as well as of prospective teachers. In that there would not be any bias on whether teaching is a profession or not. Lawyers, Engineers, Medical

practitioners and so on were made by teachers. In spite of the good work of teachers in the society, there are still widespread misconceptions towards the teaching profession. The public look down on teachers and their profession. The word *teacher* and its related terms to the public signify abject poverty inferiority and social misfit (Okemakinde, 2013). Teaching is seen as an unskilled job meant for women, the old and the poor (Okemakinde,2013). This shows that teaching is a profession that is undermined and viewed as a profession for women. Primary school teaching is perceived as an “unattractive” profession for men, it’s “ boring, hassle-causing, stressful or requiring too much patience” (Drury, 2008, p. 314).

Shumba, Shumba and Maphosa (2012, p. 149) contend that teaching is an activity performed by an individual whose intention is to bring about learning. A person who chose teaching is someone who has to be willing to dedicate him/herself. Nwanekezi, Okoli and Mezieobi (2011,p.44) argue that student-teachers need to be properly educated and trained for professional efficiency. Inculcating student- teachers with a positive attitude will enable them to go smoothly through training(Ibid).

Chishlom (2009, p.14) asserts that teacher training institutions are not only imparting theoretical but also practical knowledge. Prospective teachers choose to become teachers, or at least decide to apply to study to become teachers on the basis of certain personal characteristics, desires and motivations(Deacon, 2012). Hence it was relevant to also ask participants their reasons to choose FP specialisation as FP specialisation is seen as a female space. The following section discusses gender representation in FP.

2.3. Gender representation in FP

The aim of this section is to discuss the status of male teachers in FP. This is done by reviewing literature on in-service male educators and pre-service male educators. There is not much reported about pre-service male educators in the FP, and available literature mainly talks about lack of males in early childhood education. Discussing the status of in-service male educators in FP will assist in understanding challenges and successes faced by male student-teachers during TP. There is a link between the experiences of in-service male teachers’ experiences with experiences of pre-service male teachers.

Gender roles have an influence in the teaching profession. Baris (2013, p.108) argues that “throughout the human history, gender has been one of the important factors which influence the division of labour”. Many jobs have been labelled according to the gender lines, making some occupations women’s jobs and some occupations men’s jobs”. Literature indicates that gender prejudice and stereotyping are responsible for the small number of men in childhood education settings, including stereotypical notions that teaching young children is “a woman’s job” (Drury 2008, p.314). This is concurred by Petersen and Petker (2011) who asserted that teaching in the early grades is often accompanied by simplistic images of FP teachers as ‘nannies’ and ‘caregivers’. This attitude is referred to as feminization of childhood education (Wardle 2012).

This attitude towards males in ECE and FP leads to lack of public acceptance of males being teachers in the FP (Lovett, 2014). This is due to perceptions about the *unnaturalness* of males performing basic care tasks (Mashiya, 2014). In studies conducted in various countries, it was revealed that few males have been involved in FP education. Lovett (2014) asserted that gendered roles in teaching were specifically affected by the introduction of compulsory education during the late nineteenth century. Scouller (2013) revealed that the issue of lack of male teachers in early childhood education is a global issue. Skelton (2001) reported that men’s and women’s roles were characterized by the age of students and subjects taught as well as the administrative functions each of the sexes performed. Men preferred to teach in higher primary and in secondary schools.

Sobiraj, Korek, Weseler and Mohr (2011) found that males in female-dominated professions are perceived as performing stereotypically ‘female’ tasks and displaying feminine attributes. Similarly, Lovett (2014) argues that the culture of nurturance that exists within primary schools challenges the masculine identity of males who work within the primary context. This then proves the reason why very few males are teaching in FP. This raises a question of whether it is natural for women to teach young children or it is unnatural for men. The focus of many studies on males teaching FP is based on the gender and not the intellect of men. There is limited literature on the

learning of learners being taught by male educators. Smith (2004) found that males tend to avoid doing things construed as feminine, including caring, in order to construct a 'normative' masculine identity.

The scarcity of males in early childhood education could be influenced by a perception that men who choose to work with young children are either principals in training, or homosexuals or paedophiles (Sumsion, 2005, p. 112). Males who are interested in teaching in the FP are faced with a challenge of being unaccepted by community. This is revealed by Mukuna and Mutsotso (2011) who found that in Kenya, communities are uneasy and suspicious of men who choose to work with young children. Males who chose to work with young children are seen as people who have not got their gender right (Ibid). Taylor (2004) found that teaching is often seen as an extension of the culturally assigned nurturing role that is associated with women. This further justifies a notion that males who are venturing in FP teaching have a responsibility of proving that they "got their gender right". This implies that communities can also have an effect on how males view teaching in the FP. These males are venturing into a traditionally female claimed space, so the attitude shown to male educators in FP may discourage males.

Males working within FP may be faced with a dilemma of proving that they can teach young children. Cooney and Bittner (2001) reported that male teachers in ECE feel isolated and uncomfortable in discussing classroom issues with female colleagues for fear of their observations being misconstrued. This fear may affect teaching because the focus may be on proving their suitability. Mashiya (2014) asserts that the attitude shown to male educators does not only prevent male students from joining childhood education programmes, it also impacts on male teachers' working conditions (ibid). Despite this attitude, there is a need for males to specialise in FP. Male teachers in early childhood classrooms can contribute to bringing about more gender balance in school settings (Cooney&Bittner, 2003). The attitude towards males venturing in FP specialisation could encourage and motivate other males to join FP specialisation. Female educators in FP should be the ones who are more welcoming and supportive to FP male educators. Makeleni (2014) reported that males teaching in FP feel unwelcomed by FP female educators; some of the males venturing into TP have a

passion for children, so the presence of males in FP specialisation can be a positive contribution to equality; it is important to welcome them with warm attitudes, as some of them are interested in making a difference.

Males venturing into FP, whether by choice or by default, bring new perspectives within FP teaching. Mashiya, Kok, Luthuli, Xulu and Mtshali (2015) argue that male students enter the field because they want to explore new things. Males who enter FP never experienced being taught by male educators in FP. Some of the issues to be explored by males in FP relate to policies and practices promoting gender equity (Cushman, 2009, p. 3). Berge (2004) reveals a desire to have both sexes equally represented in various spheres of society as one of the new issues to be explored by males in FP specialisation. This is also asserted by Jones (n.d.) who argues that if men are more visible in the early childhood setting carrying out caring roles, this could potentially help to counter stereotypes of both men and women, reduce sexism and generally advance gender equality. A study by Mashiya (2014) revealed that male students faced unwelcoming environments when they first arrived at schools for TP. The study further explains that female host teachers even explained to the male student-teachers the FP grade span (Ibid). This shows that the female host teachers do not trust that males are suitable to teach in FP.

It is important that all genders are equally represented in FP. This will help dispel gender stereotypes that maybe observed by children. Johnson (2008) asserted that when most of the children's caregivers are female, young children may make stereotypic assumptions about male and female roles. It is these assumptions that could perpetuate gender stereotypes. In fighting gender inequality, there is a need to also focus on equal representation of both genders in FP. Cushman (2009) argues that stories of males who either work or are intending to work in ECE are needed to inform an alternate discourse to the one that is currently perpetuated in education and society more generally, that is caring primary teachers are surrogate mothers.

Equal gender representation in FP will also model a good nurturing environment where males and females work together to nurture the child. An increased male presence in the education process tends to erode the social stigma that limits fathers' involvement

in things like volunteering in school events(Jones, 2010; Pruett &Cowan, 2009).Koutros (2010) argues that while other professions seem to be approaching a gender balance, the current state of gender inequality within FP schools is quite alarming for future generations. Lack of fathers' involvement in their children's education is also perpetuated by gender stereotypes; therefore, seeing more males venturing in FP could help influence fathers positively.

Mashiya et al. (2015) argue that there is a great need for the training of both male and female teachers to equally assist underprivileged learners. Underprivileged learners could be those learners who are staying with their single mothers with absent fathers. This will help boys and girls at school to understand males and females equally. Some of the advocates of males teaching in FP argue that males should be employed as educators so that they may be role models (Thornton & Bricheno, 2007). This is also concurred by Lu and Peeters (2007) who argued that childcare, be it professional or volunteer work, is seen as women's work, something that women do naturally and are intrinsically better at. However, males are showing interest in this female claimed space.

Nielsen (2006, p.5) suggested that teacher education programs should structure opportunities to deconstruct gender issues because "an awareness of gender discourse can better prepare men for the contradictions and conflicts they may face as they manage their masculinity in an occupation built upon the assumption that workers will draw from discourses of femininity". This is also concurred by Fordice and Nielson (n.d.) who contended that teacher education programs should purposefully and proactively poise men for the spectrum of contradictions they will face as male elementary teachers. It is within these contradictions that FP male student-teachers are entering FP specialisation.

Sargent (2001) argues that male teachers want to be able to work with young children without their motives being questioned. This shows that males venturing FP are willing to stay in the field and play a significant role. This calls for educators, employers, parents and society as a whole accept that males can teach in FP. Mashiya et al. (2015) reported that men want specific ideas about ways to be engaged and involved

with children. They further report that men want strategies that will not intimidate the children or put them in defensive situations (ibid). This gives initial teacher training institutions a responsibility to prepare male student-teachers thoroughly for the field they are entering as pre-service student-teachers are showing an interest in FP. Mashiya (2014) found that male student-teachers brought more play, active movement and fun to the way they interacted with learners, as is highlighted by the fact that they were able to assist the schools with sport and coaching using equipment that was not in use due to shortage of expertise. This implies that there is a need to recruit more males for FP. This will not only help children, but will also address gender inequality in education.

Petersen and Petker (2011) argue that education students are motivated by positive reasons to enter ECE such as the enjoyment of working with children. It is also because they want to make a difference to the lives of young children (ibid). The same students who are enjoying working with children may not necessarily receive a positive welcome from the women who have long dominated Foundation Phase. Sanders (2002) highlighted that all male early childhood teachers have to defend their choice of a profession to family, friends, and female teachers in their own profession. The following section discusses TP; this is relevant because the study is on experiences of male student-teachers during TP.

2.4. Teaching Practice

The aim of this section is to discuss literature on TP. This section links with the previous section because the status of males in FP is important for male student-teachers during TP. These male student-teachers have chosen teaching as a career. Marais and Meier (2004, p. 221) state that the term *teaching practice*, on its own, represents the range of experiences to which student teachers are exposed when they work in classrooms and schools. Kiggundu and Nayimuli (2009) point out that TP is entrenched in experience-based learning initiated by Dewey's (1938) and Vygotsky's (1978) social cognitive theory. It is founded in the premise of situated learning (Ibid). TP is one of the most prominent and internationally recognised pedagogies in teacher education (White, 2009; Copland, 2010). Moody (2009,p.169) argues that TP allows student teachers "to develop their self-confidence in a safe environment and build up their skills and their understanding of the complexities of teaching and learning".

During TP, it is important to establish a link between university coursework and practice (Major & Tiro, 2012, p. 65).

If TP is executed correctly and effectively, then it will assist in producing high quality professionally qualified teachers, (Wambugu, Barmao and Ng'eno, 2013). These teachers will be able to play active roles in the development of the teaching process and accommodate rapid educational changes. Male student-teachers have to accommodate educational changes that include males venturing in FP. They are to also be accommodated in a specialisation that has been long dominated by female educators. It is in this environment that TP has to be executed correctly and effectively - an environment where the presence of males is still questioned.

According to Kiggundu and Nayimuli (2009), TP is a form of work-integrated learning. It is also described as a period of time when students are working in the relevant industry to receive specific in-service training in order to apply theory to practice. TP grants student teachers experience in the actual teaching and learning environment (Ngidi & Sibaya, 2003; Marais & Meier, 2004; Perry, 2004). During TP, student teachers have the opportunity to observe inside and outside of the classroom.

University of Fort Hare students' guide for School Experience (2012) states that School Experience is the focal point of teacher education. It further explains that school experience is an internship period, a time when student teachers work as professionals-in-training (ibid). Student teachers are expected to bring the task of practical teaching, knowledge, skills, insights and personality. Student teachers are required at all times to try to make the necessary links between theory and practice (University of Fort Hare, 2012). This implies that student-teachers are supposed to be prepared to execute their tasks, as expected by the university from them during TP. Therefore, students will be assessed based on these expectations.

Caires and Almeida (2005, p.111) contend that TP exposes students to "pedagogical experiences, resolution of real problems and the reflection on the political, social and ethical aspects of teaching". This is also alluded to by Wambugu, et al, 2013. who assert that during TP, student-teachers acquire skills in lesson planning, visualizing,

class control, critical thinking, decision-making and problem-solving. Male student-teachers in FP have an added responsibility of proving that males can do the job as well as their female counterparts. These skills are learned through mentoring. There is, however, limited literature on how male educators are mentored by female educators in FP.

TP offers student-teachers the opportunity to learn and develop professional teachers along the dimensions of pedagogic knowledge, subject matter pastoral knowledge and ecological knowledge (Mtetwa & Dyanda, 2003). These do not necessarily indicate how male student-teachers are prepared to venture in a female claimed space. Caires and Almeida (2005, p. 112) are of the view that TP represents “a unique opportunity for the development and consolidation of a significant variety of knowledge and skills” for the vast majority of student teachers. This study explored the experiences of FP male student teachers during TP.

Hui Hsu and Chepyator-Thomson (2007) asserted that TP influences pre-service teachers' academic values, beliefs, and pedagogical skills. There is little said about gender beliefs amongst student teachers during TP. FP male students may change their beliefs and values about the teaching profession, and as much as student-teachers are expected to do TP, there are issues attached to this. Literature shows that TP creates a mixture of anticipation, anxiety, excitement and apprehension in the student teachers as they commence their teaching practice (Manion, Keith, Morrison & Cohen, 2003; Perry, 2004). There seems to be little written on experiences of male student teachers venturing into a female claimed space.

The next section discusses student-teachers' experiences during TP.

2.5. Student teacher experiences

Student- teachers may experience confusion, fear of the unknown, not being able to fulfil all student teachers' responsibilities, and even anger if they are not well prepared (du Plessis & Marais, 2013). The nature and quality of a teacher education programme may have a direct bearing on student-teachers' motivation to enter the profession; thereafter, or even to complete the programme (Deacon, 2012).

Wagenaar (2005, p. 8) asserts that training institutions responsible for teacher training have to produce teachers of good quality for the society's needs. Literature reveals that university education is too theoretical and abstract (Major & Tiro, 2012, p. 63). This is also asserted by Chisholm (2009) who argues that Universities do not use or provide opportunities for experienced principals and teachers to participate in training future teachers. At the same time, Chisholm (2009, 18) asserts that higher education institutions have been slow to respond to the criticisms of the mismatched and poor training that they provide. Institutions are relying on TP to assist them in developing quality teachers.

McDonald (2004) asserts that TP is filled with difficulties, dilemmas and challenges as the student attempts to negotiate his or her way along the journey of professional policies and practices. TP is a challenge that student-teachers have to face in order for them to be professionals. Male student teachers in the FP are practicing in an environment that is dominated by female educators. In some cases, they are mentored by educators who still believe that male educators are not suitable for FP (Makeleni, 2014). Mannathoko (2013) asserts that TP could be a very challenging, demoralizing and sometimes very frightening experience if students are not well prepared. It is worth noting that according to Brandes, Andrae and Roeseler (2012), there is little or no difference between male and female workers in their pedagogical practice. Therefore, this study is not focusing on pedagogical practices.

2.5.1 Anxiety during TP

Throughout the world, teachers are expected to meet certain standards of competence. These standards usually delineate only the minimum of what is expected of teachers and are sufficiently common and uniform to constitute a basic benchmark of what constitutes a quality teacher and quality teaching. Danner (2014, p.49) asserts that student-teachers' worries and anxieties sometimes cause high levels of stress. TP is one of the common tools used in most countries in teacher training.

Ngidi and Sibaya (2003) assert that anxiety is caused by teaching unsuccessful lessons and failure to discipline learners in the classroom. All the standards make reference to the need for teachers to have expert knowledge of the subjects they teach and to be aware of the characteristics, needs and learning capabilities of the children that they are teaching (Deacon, 2010, p.27). These expectations put teacher training institutions under pressure because they have to produce good quality. Student-teachers are also aware of these expectations. Sibaya and Ngidi (2003) reported that anxiety is a relevant characteristic of student teachers. This is further clarified by Bezzina (2006) who asserted that during TP, students often feel ill-prepared to deal with the uncertainties, realities and challenges that await them in their new profession.

The different logic, by which the teaching curriculum is organised in Higher Education Institutions, in comparison to the applied logic in school curriculum, may confuse student-teachers (Philpott, 2006). During TP, students are facing the realities of the classroom situation. It should be noted that problems experienced during TP may influence professional qualifications of the student teachers (Wambugu et al., 2013). Student teachers during TP are expected to present lessons and are also expected to manage classrooms. During TP, student-teachers are caught between being students and being educators. Younger male student teachers placed at primary schools are overly anxious about evaluation lessons (Ngidi & Sibaya, 2003, p.21). One possible explanation may be that there are few young male teachers at primary schools to offer them support (Ibid). It is crucial to note that studying to become Foundation Phase teacher, on its own, involves a variety of experiences, all of which cannot be assessed through written examinations (Koen & Ebrahim, 2012).

The school environment is totally different from the university environment. A school may have its own established culture that may be different from what the student teacher has acquired from the university. It is for that reason that student teachers are to be mentored by an experienced educator. Ntsaluba and Chireshe (2013, p.1) asserted that student-teachers can acquire various pedagogical experiences such as lesson planning, teaching and assessment that take place during TP. This does not, however, highlight the knowledge gained by male student teachers who are venturing in a traditionally female space. It is important to note that “Foundation Phase teachers

play an important role in supporting young learners to reach their developmental potential" (Koen & Ebrahim, 2012, p.1). The only knowledge highlighted is in connection with teaching, classroom management, discipline and assessment. The focus seems to be on professional knowledge development of student teachers (Ntsaluba & Chireshe, 2013).

Literature reveals that in South Africa, for instance, it is not just student- teachers and new teachers who perceive a gap between theory and practice in their teacher education programmes (Henning & Gravett 2011, p.27), many school managers also feel that new teachers have had insufficient practical preparation (Arends & Phurutse 2009). During TP, male student-teachers in FP may be challenged to show their skills in teaching young learners. They are expected to create a positive rapport with young children. This has been long associated with women's work.

One other challenge that causes stress to student-teachers is teaching during TP. A study by Akyeampong, Pryor, Westbrook and Lussier (2011, .p7) concluded that "in there is a discrepancy between what is required of teachers to teach in the primary school curriculum and the preparation that they receive to do this from their initial training". With regard to Mathematics, it was found that "work on mathematical knowledge is rarely about deepening conceptual understanding of the topics which are taught at primary level, being rather concerned with taking trainees further into more advanced mathematics or reinforcing and repeating the senior secondary curriculum" (Akyeampong et al., 2011, p. 20).

2.5.2. Stress during TP

Chambers and Rogers (2000) reported that stress and workload are reported to be recurring themes. This explains the withdrawal of student teachers from teacher training programmes in some countries. Studies conducted in different countries found TP to be stressful (Ngidi & Sibaya, 2003; Marais & Meier, 2004). According to Wagenaar (2005), students have to struggle with the emotional stress generated by the realities such as learner behaviour, teaching colleagues and time constraints as well as the demands of academic life. There seems to be limited research on the causes of stress in male student-teachers in FP. Richard et al. (2014) highlight stress

associated with being caught in the middle between trying to please the supervisor and the cooperating teacher. Student-teachers are afraid of failure, lack of acceptance by their mentors, misunderstanding by pupils and problems with classroom management and discipline (ibid). These could add more stress on student-teachers.

Mapfumo, Chitsiko and Chireshe (2012) reported that the main sources of stress for student teachers during TP were discipline issues, finances, workload and shortage of resources. Kiggundu and Nayimuli(2009) and Ngidi and Sibaya (2003) found that TP, although valued greatly by student teachers and their supervisors, was the most stressful part of a teacher-training programme. Ong, Ros, Azlian, Sharnti and Ho (2004) discovered that pressures felt during TP prevented student teachers from positively engaging in theory and practice. Professional teacher knowledge is constructed when student teachers draw on their knowledge and understanding of the content to make informed pedagogical choices (Rusznyak, 2010,p.128).

Ong et al. (2004) identified five challenges that burden the pre-service teachers which are: supervision, environment, workload, pedagogical knowledge and content knowledge. Linking theory with practice has been seen as very challenging. This is documented in a study by Yunus, Hashim, Ishak and Mahamod (2010)who found that most of the student-teachers were facing difficulties in teaching methodology. University of Fort Hare (UFH) requests host schools to allow final year student-teachers to take full responsibility for their assigned class as well as teach all lessons for the final two weeks of TP (UFH, 2012).This is in order to ensure that students are exposed to handling classroom dynamics on their own (Ibid). This is expected even though research in South Africa and elsewhere has shown that "student teachers frequently underestimate the importance of content knowledge in their lessons and in developing teaching practice" and tend, instead, to "focus their efforts on planning fun-filled activities for the lessons they teach" (Rusznyak, 2011,p.107).

2.5.3 Sexual Harassment during TP

A study conducted in Zimbabwe by Katsande (2008) found that female student-teachers face sexual harassment during teaching practice as well as during the period approaching examinations. The study reveals that lecturers are the perpetrators of

sexual harassment. Lecturers need sexual favours from student- teachers during TP because students are vulnerable. Holland (1998) contended that feelings of vulnerability can lead to sexual victimization. Student-teachers are assessed by lecturers and the mentors during TP. Reports of the lecturers and mentors are very important in a student-teacher's progression. This implies that they may be victims of sexual harassment.

One of the participants in Katsande's study even asserted that: *"Teaching practice is a very important phase in the training course, so I would not risk failing it. If the lecturer approaches me, I will definitely accept his proposals to go out"*. On the other hand the other one stated that *"During teaching practice out there, we need financial support. And with these economic challenges. Who does not need support?"* This shows that female student-teachers are exposed to vulnerability. There seems to be limited literature on the experiences of male student-teachers on sexual harassment. At the same time, there is limited literature on the experiences of student-teachers' sexual harassment in the South African context during TP. The following section discusses mentoring during TP. This is relevant in this study because during TP, student-teachers are mentored by experienced educators in FP.

2.6. Mentoring during TP

This section is meant to foster an understanding of what mentoring is and the purpose of mentoring. Student-teachers are sent to schools where they are assigned to a mentor who is responsible to support and guide a student-teacher. Literature highlights the importance of a mentor during TP; literature also highlight that there are few males in FP. This implies that there are few male mentors for FP male student-teachers who are venturing into a traditional female space. This implies that there are few male teachers who could be mentors to male student-teachers.

2.6.1 What is mentoring?

Mckimm, Jollie and Hatter (2007) assert that mentoring is very complex and varies from one situation to another. This has led to researchers and theorist having varying conceptualization of mentoring. Mentoring is interpreted in different ways by different

people, and it is important that its purpose and intentions in a particular context are explicit. In this study, mentoring refers to the support given by the host teachers to student-teachers during TP. This implies that there are implications of a relationship between the experienced and the non-experienced. This implies that, in the context of this study, there are implications of relationship between student-teachers and their mentors.

Bozemant and Feeney (2007) argue that mentoring has several functions, and one of these is advice or modelling about career development behaviours. The main function of mentors during TP is to focus on student-teachers' career development. During mentoring, the mentor and the mentee share values, knowledge and experience. Brown and Danaher (2008, p.147) assert that teaching practice "depends, for its efficacy and utility, on close and authentic collaboration among multiple stakeholders". This implies that strong relations and communication has to be built between Initial Teacher Education institutions, student-teachers and the schools. This collaboration could help mentors to understand their roles and responsibilities. At the same time it could help teacher training institutions understand challenges faced by schools during TP.

There are fundamental issues that student-teachers have to learn throughout their studies. These are revealed by Taylor and Taylor (2012,p.3) who argue that teacher professional knowledge can be said to comprise three components: disciplinary knowledge, subject knowledge for teaching, and content knowledge of the respective subject. It is also important to note the importance of understanding the nature of the subject and methods of teaching it and the practical ability to convey the subject to learners in real classrooms. That is why there has to be a collaboration between teacher-training institutions and mentors who are hosting student-teachers.

2.6.2 Purpose of mentoring

Research has shown that a mentor and/or supervisor have considerable influence on the performance of the student teacher during teaching practice (Kiggundu, 2007,p.28). Storrs, Putsch and Taylor (2008) assert that mentoring provides participants with benefits such as academic assistance, professional socialization and

problem-solving. This study explored the experiences of B.Ed. FP male student-teachers during TP. During TP, student teachers are placed in different schools, and in these schools, they are mentored by experienced teachers.

van Andel and Fischer (2002, p.4) argue that a mentor is an “older experienced school teacher who takes care for a young, inexperienced teacher or a student teacher in order to help him/her learn how to teach.” McDonald (2004) argues that student teachers are more likely to have successful practicum experiences if associate teachers demonstrate certain attitudes, characteristics and practices. In this statement, McDonald used the term ‘associate teacher’ to refer to a mentor. This implies that a mentor and a student teacher have to work together. It also means that a student-teacher should be treated as a professional so that he/she treats him/herself as a professional teacher. It is the responsibility of a mentor to produce a quality teacher.

Tok and Yilmaz (2011) claim that the mentor is the individual most responsible for the quality of experience the student teacher receives. In a mentoring relationship, the mentor and the mentee make a connection with each other, and it is a powerful and emotional relationship (Mckimm et al, (2007). The two people, the mentor and the mentee, form a bond built on mutual trust and respect, openness and honesty where each party can be themselves. There is limited literature that on the relationship between FP male student-teachers and their female mentors in FP. These males are venturing into a female dominated environment. On the other hand, a study by Patton (2009) points out that women have a more difficult time establishing mentoring relationships in comparison to their male counterparts. Women tend to feel comfortable with having women mentors and are more appreciative of these relationships.

Fordice and Nielson (n.d.) argued that upon entering the teaching profession, male elementary teachers encounter mixed messages. If they conform too strictly to the traditional scripts of masculinity, they may be perceived as incompetent to work with elementary children. If, on the other hand, they are too nurturing and empathetic, their

masculinity may be questioned. This means that lack of male mentors in the foundation phase could pose a major challenge to male students who are doing TP.

Mills, Martino and Lingard (2004), argue that lack of male role models for male students is one of the problems that discourages male students from teaching. The same can be said for the lack of male teachers as role models in South Africa. There are young males who are venturing into the FP dominated by female educators. These males need mentors who will not only mentor them on lesson planning and on classroom management but mentors who are willing to accommodate them as males in a traditionally female space.

Russell and Russell (2011) state that the most successful mentoring relationships are based on shared values, goals and understandings in order to understand the dynamics of mentoring. Whereas Leshem (2012) argues that personal factors have an influence on the formation of students' concepts, beliefs and expectations about the nature of teaching and learning. This implies that student-teachers may have different beliefs from those of the mentor. Despite these differences in mind-sets there has to be a mentor-mentee relationship. It is important to take account not only of the cognitive but also the affective aspects of student-teacher preparation and preparedness. Ideally, student-teachers must be both well-prepared to teach in a school environment and perceive themselves to be well prepared for this perception (Maldereza, Hobsonb, Tracey & Kirstin, 2007).

Mudzielwana and Maphosa (2014, p.402) assert that mentors nurture and help student-teachers to understand how schools are organised and how to work with parents, community and staff. However Butler and Cuenca (2012) assert that the role of mentors has been questioned because of the lack of clear definition. This is further asserted by Shumba, Shumba and Maphosa (2012) who established that in most cases, mentors were not trained for their roles as mentors. In this study, student-teachers were also mentored by teachers who were also not trained especially on supporting male student-teachers venturing in FP.

2.7. Summary

This chapter presented literature on teaching as a profession, gender in FP, teaching practice and mentorship. Student teachers are required to go through TP before they become professional teachers. Literature has shown that globally, all teacher training institutions have a programme of placing student teachers in a school environment. During TP, student teachers experience different things. There is limited literature on the experiences of male student-teachers venturing in a traditional female space hence the relevance of this study on the experiences of BEd FP male student teachers during TP. The following chapter presents research methods utilised in this study.

Chapter Three

Research Methods and Methodology

3.0 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to cover an overview of methods and methodology used in the study, whose aim was to explore experiences of FP male student-teachers during TP. The discussion in the chapter is structured around the research design, population sampling, data collection and data analysis. Ethical considerations and measures to provide trustworthiness are also discussed. In this study, methodology refers to how the research was done and its logical sequence. The data collected through this research methodology was aimed to answer the following research questions:

- What are the experiences of the male Foundation Phase student- teachers during Teaching Practice?

Sub-questions

- How do the student-teachers experience their professional lives in Foundation Phase specialisation?
- What do participants regard as benefits of FP specialisation?
- What are the implications of the students' experiences on the discourses of Initial Teacher Education?

3.1. Research paradigm: Interpretive

A paradigm is a model that consists of assumptions for interpreting data (Fouché & De Vos, 2011,p 40). Morgan and Sklar (2012,p.73) assert that the main philosophical tradition underpinning qualitative research is interpretivism. Furthermore, the proponents of interpretivism argue that human experience can only be understood from the viewpoint of concerned people (Ibid).

As this study sought to explore male student-teachers' experiences during TP an interpretive paradigm was followed. Interpretive paradigm entails that one can only understand the phenomena by actively being involved and experiencing it and then sharing the experience with others (Andrade, 2009). This was relevant for this study because the participants shared their experiences about TP in FP. These are the FP male student-teachers who completed TP. Myers (2008,p.38) notes that interpretive researchers assume that access to reality given or socially constructed is only through social constructions such as language, consciousness, shared meanings, and instruments. Hence in this study, interviews were used to get meaning from the participants' responses.

Since the behaviour I interpreted is formed by means of social gatherings, interpretation plays an important role as facts cannot speak for themselves. As a researcher I used one-on-one face-to-face interviews and also gave participants diaries to record their experiences. Interpretive paradigm implies that in order to gain an understanding of people, they need to be placed within their social contexts. I had to interview participants in their places of comfort. Maree (2007) explain that interpretive paradigm is based on the assumption that by exploring the richness, depth and complexity of the phenomenon, one can begin to understand the meanings people

give to their experiences. In this study, the depth and complexity of the experiences of FP male student-teachers during TP were explored.

The research questions of this study were best answered by FP male student-teachers. Interpretivism was chosen for the study because it is suitable for human experience. Interpretivism refers to the approaches which emphasises the meaningful nature of people's character and participation in both social and cultural life (Elster, 2007). Interpretivism was adopted because it fits the purpose of this study which aims to explore, understand and interpret a specific phenomenon or social reality which is the experiences of FP male student-teachers during TP. Interpretivism is connected to the core principles of phenomenology through paying respectful attention to a person's direct experience and by encouraging research participants to tell their own story in their own words (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009).

In interpretive research, reality is not single and unitary; this is due to the fact that our experiences are different from those of another person hence the phenomenon of multiple realities, (Fonkem, 2012). The reality of each participant in this study is different from others because of their different experiences. Participants in this study completed their TP in different schools. Participants were from the same institution having been taught by the same lectures, but their experiences were not the same. Interpretivism is bias towards qualitative approach . Qualitative study assumes that there are multiple realities which are socially constructed through individual and collective perceptions or views of the same situation (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010, p. 12). It is these socially constructed realities that are interpreted in an interpretive study (Seabi, 2012).

Goldkuhl (2012) argues that the core idea of interpretivism is to work with subjective meanings already there in the social world. Student-teachers' social world includes being students and also being teachers during TP. This study is founded on the premise that there is not only one single reality, but the world is made up of multiple realities which could be holistically studied while acknowledging the context in which such experiences occur (Maree & Van der Westhuizen, 2007, p 37). As much as all the participants are students from the same institution, they may not experience

student lives the same way. Interpretivism was relevant for the present study because the researcher expected to learn about various realities on the topic at hand as experienced by the participants in their natural context. Data collection instruments that were used were relevant for this paradigm. Data collected was interpreted by the researcher through responses of research questions.

The Interpretive paradigm involves taking people's subjective experiences seriously as the essence of what is real for them. It is making sense of people's experiences by interacting with them and listening carefully to what they tell us (Terre Blanche, Durrheim & Painter, 2006). I conducted in-depth interviews with participants to get answers for the main research question and the sub-research questions as discussed in chapter one of this study. These questions were answered by FP male student teachers who had been in TP. I listened attentively during interviews as participants were sharing their experiences that include their feelings, views and opinions about TP as male student teachers in FP. After the interviews, I transcribed the interviews. This process helped me to listen again attentively to the conversations. Listening to the tape again and transcribing data assisted me in looking for the meaning in the text and helped in interpreting the data.

As the focus of interpretive phenomenology is to explore the lived experience, it is important to recognise that people's realities are influenced by the world in which they live. According to Flood (2010), experiences are linked to social, cultural and political contexts. Experiences of FP male student-teachers are also linked to social, cultural and political contexts. King and Horrocks (2010, p11) describe interpretive research as generally "idiographic", which literally means describing aspects of the social world by offering a detailed account of specific social settings, processes or relationships. Male student-teachers gave detailed accounts of their experience during TP. They did this through participating in in-depth interviews and also recording in their personal diaries.

3.2 Research approach: Qualitative approach

There are two well-known and recognised approaches to research, namely, the qualitative and the quantitative approaches. According to de Vos, Strydom, Fouche and Delport (2011, p.63), each approach has its own purposes, methods of conducting inquiry, strategies for collecting and analysing data. In this study, I drew from Creswell (2008, p.13) that research is a process of steps to be used to collect and analyse

information to increase our understanding of a topic or issue. This is generally done by posing question(s), collecting data to answer the question(s) and presenting answer(s). In order to answer the research questions of this study, I had to choose qualitative approach. A qualitative approach emphasises gathering data in the form of words rather than numbers on naturally occurring phenomena (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010,p. 21, 23).

The purpose of this study which was to explore experiences of FP male student-teachers during TP was best answered through words. I asked questions to respondents and they responded by describing their experiences through words. Responses on the experiences of FP male student-teachers cannot be observed and cannot be measured either. Hence, I had to choose an approach that would best suit the purpose of this study. The qualitative approach was chosen because it was suitable for the research paradigm I adopted for the study. There are important characteristics of qualitative research.

Characteristics of qualitative research, as asserted by (Ivankova et al., 2007,p.257; Creswell, 2009,p.175-177; Leedy & Ormrod, 2010,p.94-97) are:

- It is usually conducted in natural settings such as classrooms, schools and sports fields. In this study, interviews were conducted in the university where participants are studying in one of the classrooms. This is in line with Nieuwenhuis (2007,p. 51) who advises that phenomena are better understood by interacting with people concerned in their natural environment; and
- Qualitative researchers are likely to describe a phenomenon in words rather than with numbers. Interviews were transcribed and translated from IsiXhosa to English. All this was done to describe the experiences of FP male student-teachers during TP.

Qualitative researchers believe that in order to understand any phenomenon, this phenomenon must be viewed in its context. The qualitative approach is characterized by a concern to the individual (Cohen & Manion, 2009). The approach seeks to understand the subjective world of human experience. A qualitative research approach is also used to answer questions about the detailed nature of phenomena and its

purpose of a qualitative study is to gain an understanding of phenomena from the participant's point of view (de Vos, et al., 2011). In this study participants are all male students, they are all in FP, this does not mean that they have the same point of view. It was important to interview them individually to find out each participant's point of view on about experiences during TP.

Since qualitative research plays an important role in illuminating the meaning of the lived experiences (Grant, 2008, p, 5). In this study I investigated lived experiences of FP male student-teachers during TP. Berg (2007) and Neuman (2006) explain that qualitative research process is conceived as spiralling rather than linear in its progression. Berg (2007, p. 24) further explain that qualitative research:

- Begins with an idea: In this study; I began with an idea of finding out how FP male student-teachers experience TP. Venturing of males in female claimed space is a new phenomenon, so finding the experiences of FP male student-teachers was the main idea;
- Gathers theoretical information: There are many theories that are used in research. I adopted Hursel's lived experience theory because the purpose of the study was to explore experiences of FP male student-teachers during TP. Therefore, the theory of lived experiences was seen relevant for this study;
- Reconsiders and refines the idea: I presented the idea to the supervisor who guided me on how to approach the study. Through the interaction with literature and the guidance of the supervisor, the idea was refined. Implications for initial teacher training was then added to the idea. The focus of the study was contextualised in finding out the implications of the student-teachers' experiences on initial teacher training;
- Begin to examine possible designs: There are many designs that I could have employed, and one of the designs I could have adopted is a case study design; instead, I chose the phenomenology design. This design was suitable to study lived experiences; and
- Re-examine theoretical assumptions and refines them or perhaps even the idea or refine the idea: I submitted and presented the proposal to the Faculty's Higher Degrees Committee. The feedback, guidance and advice from the committee assisted me in re-examining theoretical assumptions and even

refining the idea. I was then able to focus on how male student-teachers give meaning to their lives and world.

Merriam (2009) stated that all qualitative research focuses on how people gave meaning to their lives and the world. Though selected student-teachers in this study were from the same institution they did not give same meaning to their lives as FP male student-teachers. The main aim of basic qualitative research is to discover and interpret this meaning. The current study investigated and explored experiences of FP male student-teachers during TP. Since there was no intention to focus on a specific culture or to build a new theory, basic qualitative research was used in this study. The purpose of this study was to explore experiences of FP male student-teachers during TP. The research approach adopted provided me with procedures regarding how to approach the study. Merriam (2009,p.5) asserted that qualitative researchers are interested in understanding how people interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds and the meaning they attribute to their experiences. This is in line with the purpose of this study which was to investigate experiences of FP male student teachers during TP.

The main focus in qualitative research is to understand, explain, explore, discover and clarify situations, feelings, perceptions, attitudes, values, beliefs and experiences of a group of people (Kumar,2012, p.104). This study, therefore, strives to answer the research questions by explaining, describing, and making sense of the respondents' social world during TP. McMillan and Schumacher (2010,p.320) describe qualitative research as an analysis of people's individual and collective social actions, beliefs, thoughts and perceptions which are primarily concerned with understanding the social phenomena from the participant's perspective. In addition to this definition Creswell (2010, p.56), argues that the aim of qualitative research studies is to engage in research that probes for a deeper understanding of a phenomenon rather than to search for causal relationships. In this study experiences of FP male student-teachers include their threats, vulnerability, fears, anxieties, excitements and their joys.

Terrell (2012,p.277) notes that in qualitative research, the researcher records fully, accurately and in an unbiased way what s/he sees and hears from the respondents. I

used a tape recorder to record interviews and also used participants' personal diaries. This makes qualitative a relevant approach for this study because it allowed me to probe further. The approach also allowed me to collect rich unique data using the in-depth interview method. This enabled me to interact with participants more freely and explore in detail the meanings they attached to their experiences.

McMillan and Schumacher (2006, p.112) assert that qualitative research is about individual and collective perceptions or views of the same situation and is concerned with understanding the social phenomenon from participants' perspectives. In this study, four participants were purposely selected because although they all participated in TP, their experiences may not have been the same. One of the reasons of considering qualitative research to be appropriate for this study was because it enabled me to gain understanding of the phenomenon from the participants' view. Hence, interviews were conducted with each individual separately at his own time.

Cohen and Manion (2009, p.23) give the following advantages of the qualitative approach:

- The qualitative researcher has the power to visit the subjects in their natural habit. In this study, I visited the participants in their university individually and we agreed on suitable times for each participant. I considered their free time and their spaces of comfort before embarking on research project.
- Qualitative research typically reads like a story written in everyday language; Qualitative research describes everyday life from the point of view of the subjects. In this study, I describe the experiences of FP male student- teachers, and this was interpreted from the responses of the participants; and
- Data collection is less structured than quantitative research; data collection has characteristics of flexibility, spontaneity and open-endedness. Unstructured interviews were used in this study, and this allowed me to probe further. Interview questions in this study were open-ended questions, and there was no need to quantify them. Participants were flexible to respond to research questions in both English and isiXhosa. This gave them freedom to narrate their experiences.

3.3. Design of the study: Phenomenology

Babbie and Mouton (2010,p.74) state that a research design is a plan or blueprint of how you intend conducting the research. Similarly, Creswell (2009, p.3) indicates that a research design is an overall strategy that one chooses in a proper and systematic manner to carry out a research study. On the other hand, Terrell (2012,p 258) describes a research design as a road map that determines the most appropriate route to take when carrying out the study. Fouché and Schurink (2011) highlight five strategies that may be used in designing a qualitative study, namely, ethnographic study, phenomenological study, biographic study, case study and grounded theory study. The research design that I have chosen for this research study was chosen based on the goal of the study which was to explore lived experiences of male FP student teachers during TP. It is important to point out that the research design of this study was mainly determined by the guiding (main) research question and purpose of the study as discussed in Chapter One of this study.

Phenomenology aims to describe a person's lived experiences (phenomena) in an attempt to enrich lived experience by drawing out its meaning" (Holloway, 2005,p.47). This suggests that in gaining knowledge of a phenomenon, we must return to the individual's experience of the phenomenon as lived. The phenomenological approach allowed participants, through in-depth interviews, to elicit their own meaning of their experience of being involved in TP in FP. In this study, to get meaning from FP male student teachers' experiences, the researcher used face-to face interviews .Labuschagne(2015) argues that phenomenology focuses on the various types of experiences a person can have. These range from perception, thought, memory, emotion, imagination, desire, social and linguistic activity, and actions (Ibid).

Experience does not only consist of passive experiences such as listening and seeing, but also active experiences by means of participating in an experience. Participants in this study were actively involved in TP and were part of the schools they were doing TP in; this implies that their emotions, feelings and actions were involved. Phenomenology became a relevant design to explore experiences of FP male student-teachers. The thoughts, views, feelings and emotions of FP male student teachers are some of the experiences the research sought to find out. Male student-teachers

selected for this study had participated in TP in FP, and to get responses that answer research questions, both myself and the participants had go to the life world of the participants.

The life world may be defined as the world that is lived and experienced pre-reflectively, one 'that appears meaningfully to consciousness (Todres, Galvin, & Dahlberg, 2006). Participants in this study were suitable for this study because they were able to respond to the questions of this study. This is also asserted by Truncellito (2014) who argues that a person defines and interprets experiences by means of their own experiences and beliefs. The participants in this study are male student-teachers who are FP student-teachers. They are able to define and interpret their experiences because they experienced TP. Phenomenology is a theoretical point of view that advocates the study of direct experience taken at face value and one which sees behaviour as determined by the phenomena of experience (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007).

Creswell (2007, p.57-59) described phenomenology as "the meaning for several individuals of their lived experiences of a concept or a phenomenon." Lived experience of the everyday world, as revealed through consciousness, is the primary focus for phenomenological this study. This study explored experiences of male FP student-teachers, the focus being on implications for initial teacher training. The research questions of this study were designed to find out more about the student- teachers' experiences. The questions of this study did not focus on anything else beside the experiences of the selected male student-teachers. The idea of lived experience is very important within phenomenology. Rapport (2005) describes lived experience as an individual's immediate and pre-reflective consciousness. It is the reality of lived experiences that belongs to any one individual in any given context (ibid). That is the reason this study selected FP male student-teachers who have been on TP. Lived experience presents to the individual the many truths and realities of life. It is the FP male student-teachers' experiences that helped to answer the research questions as discussed in Chapter One.

It is through accessing lived experience that researchers may gain understanding of the meanings and perceptions of another person's world (Creswell, 2007). Halling (2012) contends that our actions are based on what we believe. Furthermore what we believe is shaped by our experience and the traditions in which we are rooted as persons, students and professionals (Ibid). Phenomenology was relevant for this study because the study is not about what the male-student-teachers think, but it is about their lived experiences during TP. Phenomenology allowed me to see into the heart of those moments that matter most to student-teachers. Phenomenology is a recommended methodology when the study goals are to understand the meanings of human experiences or to explore concepts from new and fresh perspectives (Lin,2013).

Phenomenology has been defined as the exploration and description of phenomena where a phenomenon stands to refer to experiences of FP male student teachers during TP. Wojnar and Kristen (2007, p.174) mention two prominent types of phenomenology that guide the majority of phenomenological investigations: descriptive (Husserl, 1965) and interpretive (Heidegger, 1962) phenomenology. The former, traced to one of the founders - Edmund Husserl - focused on studying issues of human consciousness, which is not the concern of this study. Hermeneutic phenomenology, on the other hand, is said to have been a reaction to some of Husserl's formulations and sought to answer the question of meaning.

Phenomenological research characteristically starts with concrete descriptions of lived situations, often first-person accounts, set down in everyday language and avoiding abstract intellectual generalizations (Finlay, 2009). The researcher proceeds by reflectively analyzing these descriptions first, then by offering a synthesized account. For example, I identified general themes about the essence of the phenomenon. Importantly, the phenomenological researcher aims to go beyond surface expressions or explicit meanings to read between the lines so as to access implicit dimensions and intuitions (Ibid). Meanings attached to lived experiences of FP male student-teachers during TP were the focus of this study, thus the interpretive design inspired the design of this study.

Interpretive phenomenology is the work of Heidegger who argues that “The meaning of phenomenological description, as a method, lies in interpretation” (Heidegger 1962,p.37). Heidegger (1962) believes that human beings are interpretive beings capable of finding significance and meaning in their own lives (Wojnar & Kristen 2007, p.175). In hermeneutics phenomenology, researchers interpret human experience as though it is a text, and the outcomes of research studies are viewed as texts that offer rich and deep accounts. Tuohy, Cooney, Dowling, Murphy and Smith (2013) argue that the aim of 'interpretive phenomenology', also referred to as 'hermeneutics', is to describe, understand and interpret participants' experiences. There are a number of concepts in interpretive phenomenology, that is, 'being-in-the-world' (dasein), 'fore-structures', 'life-world existential themes' and the 'hermeneutic circle' (Ibid).

Wojnar and Swanson (2007) have argued that there are basically two different types of phenomenology, that is, descriptive and hermeneutic phenomenology. The former, traced to one of the founders - Edmund Husserl - focussed on studying issues of human consciousness, which is not the concern of this study. Hermeneutic phenomenology, on the other hand, is said to have been a reaction to some of Husserl's formulations and sought to answer the question of meaning. According to this line of thinking, human beings are believed to be hermeneutic or interpretive beings, “...capable of finding significance and meaning in their own lives...” (Wojnar & Swanson,2007, p.174).

3.3.1. Bracketing in this study

The process of bracketing involves the researcher being aware of their own assumptions and theories (Gee, Loewenthal & Cayne, 2013). It is attending to what lies within the brackets first in order to focus on how the phenomenon is experienced by the participant (ibid).Bracketing has no place in interpretive phenomenology as the researcher is part of the research (McComiell-Hemy, Chapman & Francis,2009).

My previous understanding and knowledge helped in meaning interpretation. I have been a student-teacher and also participated in TP. Finlay (2008) suggested there is a common misconception about what bracketing is and how it should be done. If bracketing is understood from a pure, Husserlian perspective, then it could be argued that it does not 'fit' within interpretive phenomenology as it is impossible to set aside a conscious and unconscious thoughts, beliefs and influences. My experiences as a

student-teacher during TP could not be set apart. During my TP, I was based in the Intermediate Phase. Finlay (2008) stated that to understand, we must recognise what has influenced our understanding and view of the world.

I needed to bring my experiences as a student-teacher to the fore to be recognised as influences and biases. It is through this acknowledgement that I was able to be open to other people's meanings. I acknowledge that the findings of the research I did in my BEd Honours have an influence in this study.

3.4. Sampling and sampling procedure

Sampling refers to the selection of a subset of persons or things from a larger population, also known as a sampling frame (Scott & Morrison, 2007,p.219), with the intention of representing the particular population. Similarly, Creswell (2010, p.79) and McMillan and Schumacher (2010, p.129) explain sampling as the process used to select a portion of the population for a study. Sampling helps the researcher to think and identify places and people who will answer research questions. In this study, the questions are best answered by male student-teachers who are in FP specialisation.

In qualitative studies, non-probability sampling methods, in particular, purposive sampling techniques are utilised. Non-probability sampling occurs when the researcher is using whatever subjects are available such as a class of students or a group of subjects gathered for a meeting (McMillan &Schumacher, 2006).Examples of non-probability samples are accidental samples, purposive samples, quota samples and snowball samples. In purposive sampling, a specific case is chosen because it illustrates a process that is of interest for a particular study.

The sample can be selected from a larger group of persons, identified as the population from whom data are collected. In this study, four BEd FP male student-teachers were selected from a large number of BEd FP males tudent-teachers. Sampling in qualitative research is flexible and often continues until new themes no longer emerge from the data collection process (Creswell 2010).Purposeful sampling, according to Babbie and Mouton (2010,p. 166), is appropriate to select a sample on the basis of your own knowledge of the population, its elements, and the nature of

your research aims based on your judgement and the purpose of your study. For this study, sampling was done both at research site level and participant level.

Research site selection

Baxter and Jack (2008,p. 545) define a site as a context in which events or activities occur. One of the important characteristics of qualitative research is that it is typically conducted in the field on the participants' context called a natural setting in which participants manifest their normal behaviour (Creswell, 2008,p.213; McMillan & Schumacher, 2010,p.348). In this study, the university where the participants are studying was selected as the research site. It was important that I select a university that offers BEd Foundation Phase programme. Participants from this University were the only people who were relevant to respond to the research questions as they are male student-teachers doing BEd FP.I, therefore, had to go into a natural environment where the participants were located in order to collect credible data for the study (Theron & Malindi 2012,p.96; McMillan & Schumacher, 2010,p.321-322,326; Creswell, 2009,p. 4). Interviews were conducted after students came back from their TP. Merriam (2009,p.7) asserts that naturalistic studies take place in real-world settings rather than in laboratories and such, inquiries are discovery-oriented, and the findings are not predetermined. In this study, participants were interviewed in their university.

Selecting Respondents

To answer the research questions, I had to select participants on the basis of what they could contribute to the understanding of the phenomenon under study (Merriam, 2009,p. 105). I purposefully selected four BEd FP male student-teachers for voluntary participation in individual, one-on-one face-to-face interviews to share their experience(McMillan & Schumacher, 2010,p.118). In the selection of participants, I was guided by the research topic, research questions, the purpose and the focus of the study, the data collection strategies and the availability of the participants (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010, p.328). I had to select student-teachers who are males, who are doing BEd FP who have done TP. Interviews were scheduled for September when all student-teachers were finished with their TP for the year. The main reason for the selection of these participants was to obtain the richest possible sources to answer the research questions of this study (Niewenhuis, 2007,p. 79).

3.4. Negotiation of entry

As a researcher I had to negotiate access before going to the field to conduct investigation. It is critical for researchers to plan on how to negotiate access from the gatekeepers (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). In this study I wrote a letter to the selected University requesting permission to conduct research on FP male student-teachers (Appendix A) . This was one of the tools of negotiating entry into the university. In following ethical considerations, I applied for an ethical clearance certificate from the University.

I also arranged a meeting with participants individually to request them to participate in the study. The meetings were followed by correspondence stating the purpose of the study and also requesting their permission to participate in the study. After stating the purpose of the study and explanation of their roles, the participants had to sign consent forms.

3.5. Data collection Methods

Data was collected through the use of in-depth interviews and participants' personal diaries received by the researcher from the participants. The data received through reading the diaries was useful in preparing probing questions for individual participants. After reading the personal diaries, the researcher conducted interviews individually with the participants. These interviews were done by the researcher personally. The following sub-sections explain in detail how these methods were used.

a) In-depth Interviews

I felt that the in-depth interviews were easy to manage since attention was paid to one person at a time. This form of data collection encouraged spontaneity and freedom of speech (Davies, 2007, p. 102). The participants could express their views and thoughts honestly and were open to discuss personal issues relating to their experiences during TP. I employed interviews as a research method of data collection by asking participants open-ended question to learn about their ideas, beliefs, views and opinions (Seabi, 2012, p. 89). Furthermore, the general aim of conducting open-ended questions is to acquire rich and descriptive information (ibid). This has enabled me to understand the social reality of the participants.

My experience as the student-tutor also assisted in developing rapport with the participants. Listening attentively, showing interest, understanding and showing respect for what the participants said also helped in establishing rapport (de Vos, 2011,p. 351). The interviews provided an opportunity to gather richer data (Curtis & Curtis, 2011,p 32).Unstructured in-depth interviews helped the researcher ensure that certain areas of questioning are covered although there was no fixed sequence or format of questions .According to Gay, Mills and Airasian (2011, p.386), an interview is a purposeful interaction in which one person obtains information from another.

b) Advantages of using in-depth interviews in this study

De Vos, Delport, Fouche, and Strydom (2011,p 350) state that participants must be prepared for unstructured interviews. Participants should be aware of the interview process. In this study, participants were informed about the interview process in advance. The researcher told participants when he was requesting them to participate in the study about the purpose of the study. The researcher felt that the in-depth interviews were easy to manage since attention was paid to one person at a time. In the study, each participant was interviewed individually and separately from other participants. Participants were given time to respond to the questions without interjections by the researcher. This is also encouraged by de Vos et al (2011,p.351) who assert that the researcher should allow participants to finish what they are saying. I allowed participants to proceed at their own pace of thinking and speaking. I only asked probing questions after their responses. These one-on-one interviews provided an opportunity for rapport-building between myself and the participants. Open-ended questions allowed for more individualised responses as all participants were engaged in the process as they responded to the questions.

Wiersma and Jurs (2009) note that interviews provide information that is inaccessible from observation. Experiences are easily understood when they are described instead of observing them. In this study, the researcher selected to use interviews because they enabled the researcher to get face-to-face dialogue. For example, when the researcher asked participants to describe how they felt when they first arrived in a FP

classroom, he was able to tell whether they enjoyed or they felt ashamed. I could see by the participants' facial expression or body language.

3.5.1. Data Collection Process

My role as a researcher was, first and foremost, to adhere to all ethical requirements related to conducting research as per the University of Fort Hare directives. Merriam (2009,p.39, 52) points out that the researcher is the main instrument of data collection and analysis in a qualitative case study. The researcher was, therefore, the main research tool in the study. I was the main tool in reviewing relevant literature, writing and presenting the research proposal to the Faculty Higher Degrees Committee, preparing research instruments, testing them accordingly, collecting, transcribing, translating, analysing and interpreting the data and also in writing the research report under the valuable guidance of the supervisor. The role of the researcher, according to Strydom, (2007,p. 277) and Shank (2006,p. 126) is to listen, observe, inquire and write up notes. In this study I listened, observed and wrote notes.

Lichtman (2006) explains that interviewers must talk about why they are there, why the interviewees have been selected to be interviewed, and how the interviewers will use what they learn from interviewees. I explained to the participants the purpose of the study. King and Horrocks (2010, p.49) suggest that taking time before you start the interview is proper. This is to check that the participant has an adequate understanding of what is about to happen and why (Ibid). When explaining the research to the participant, I made sure that participant and the me were comfortable with each other.

The interview sessions first began by both parties introducing themselves. I explained once again to each participant the aim and objectives of the study as an academic requirement. This helped in assuring participants that they are the interpreters and co-producers of meaningful data (Goldkuhl, 2012). I then explained the ethical issues of anonymity and confidentiality to the participants and clarified that there were no associated benefits that would accrue to them by taking part in the study. In addition,

the participants were encouraged to answer questions freely as I was not looking for 'right' answers and were advised that they were under no obligation to answer all the questions.

Participants were given an opportunity to choose the language they preferred to be interviewed in before starting. Participants chose to use English and isiXhosa. They claimed that switching to isiXhosa would help them express themselves freely. Thereafter, I confirmed the voluntary participation of participants by asking for their written consent (see Appendix A). Consent was also obtained from the participants to use a voice recorder and interview schedule. In addition, I assigned participants pseudonyms for anonymity. The interviews lasted 45 minutes for each participant.

Since the primary data of qualitative interviews are verbatim accounts of what transpired in the interview session (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010, p. 361), I used a tape recorder audiotape to record one-on-one face-to-face in-depth interviews with participants. This was done to ensure that everything articulated during interview sessions is preserved for analysis (Merriam, 2009, p.109). The recorded data was transcribed after each session and translated from isiXhosa to English. As a backup, I also took handwritten notes during interview sessions (Creswell, 2009, p.183) as a risk management procedure.

I selected face-to face, one-on-one interviews as these provided I and the participants an opportunity to clarify questions and answers. In this study, I was able to ask questions like "what do you mean?", "how did this make you feel?" and "why did you feel like that?" This ensured accurate responses and, therefore, provided a true reflection of the participants' opinions on the question under study. Following the advice by McMillan and Schumacher (2010, p.358), I used probing method, when needed, during interview session in relation to the study. Probing elicited elaboration of detail, provide further explanations and clarifications of participants' responses (Ibid).

Once the interview came to a close, I switched off the voice recorder and asked the participants how they felt about the interview process. I also asked if they had any

additional information which they would like to share or questions. After this process, I thanked the participants for their valuable time and participation as well as wished them well in their studies. I conducted three sessions of interviews with each participant to get as much information as possible. Hence there were three sessions of interviews with each participant. I tried to create a warm environment during interviews so as to build trust with respondents. This was done by clearly outlining the process before every session. I also reminded participants about the purpose of the study before every interview session. Participants were informed about their rights as participants.

Personal diaries

Lester (2011) argues that various methods such as interviews, conversations, participant observation, focus meetings and analysis of personal text can be used during phenomenological-based research. In this study, the researcher adopted analysis of personal text through the participants' personal diaries. The researcher chose to use diaries to collect data for this study because methodologically, this seemed to be the most appropriate method for gaining rich insights into a person's motives, inner thoughts and feelings. These personal diaries were used as personal documents for data collection. Personal diaries were written in the language and words of the participants themselves; their thoughts and ideas were communicated as an interpretation of their own experiences and understandings of TP (Creswell, 2012,p.223). Morrison (2011) argues that personal diaries are a unique form of qualitative research whereby diarists, at the request of the researcher, write about, and reflect upon their experiences, thoughts and emotions. Personal diaries have the ability to provide research participants with space for emotional self-reflection.

Jacelon and Imperio (2005) argue that through diaries can be used during phenomenological-based research and can gather information about the day-to-day activities of participants and then explore those activities during a subsequent interview. During this process of writing personal diaries, participants become observers and also informants. This is what Jacelon and Imperio (2005) called a "view from within." Student teachers were given note books that were used as personal diaries. In these diaries, participants were expected to write down their day to day

experiences during TP. This was done by the participants to record their experiences as FP male students and their experiences during TP. This became more of a reflection journal instead of diaries. I accepted data from these diaries as they reflected the lived experiences that this study was seeking.

One of the advantages of a diary as an instrument in research is its reliance upon short-term memory (Woll, 2013). Participants were given diaries to record their experiences during TP. This was their first-hand experience. I gave participants the focus of the study so that they write things that are relevant to the study.

Quality of diaries

Even though data collected through personal diaries were useful, I had a sense that participants did not write much about their experiences. This could be because I did not want to impose what is to be written in the personal diaries. Instead of writing daily, participants summarised as if they are writing essays. This changed the format of diaries. Participants in the personal diaries were not clear enough until I went back to them and ask what they meant by a particular sentence or phrase.

3.6. Data analysis procedures

Data analysis is a process of searching and arranging data from interviews and other research instruments (De Vos, 2005, p.333). Furthermore, it is to increase the researcher's understanding of the study and present what the researcher has discovered in clear terms (Ibid). The data was organised into themes emerging from a large quantity of participant responses. Statements from participants were quoted *verbatim* in support of the findings of the study. van Manen (2007,p.9) asserts that the interpretive phenomenologist outlines a number of considerations such as thematic analysis, a holistic approach and the selective approach which asks what is essential or revealed in the text.

Data analysis process

Nieuwenhuis (2007,p. 99) explains that qualitative data analysis is an on-going iterative process, thus implying that data collection, processing and reporting are intertwined and not merely a number of successive steps. Data were collected through

the use of interviews and participants' personal diaries. After each interview, I transcribed the tape recordings. During interviews, some of the participants responded in isiXhosa, so I had to translate from isiXhosa to English language. The transcribed language from the interview served as data. The transcription helped me to think about what the interviewees were saying and how they were saying it.

This process of transcribing and listening to the participants stories helped me to visualise body expressions of the participants during interviews. The data was read and re-read to obtain sense of the whole as the transcribed interviews, according to Giorgi (2008), require of a number of readings. No theoretical explanation was imposed as Giorgi (2008) advised the researcher to neither question nor make explicit the general sense obtained but to adopt a phenomenological stance.

From the reading, data statements that appeared to be revealing the phenomena under investigation were highlighted. Themes were identified in the interview text which contained pieces of relevant information in data that were responsive to the research questions (Merriam, 2009, p.176). The whole sense of meanings was differentiated into manageable, coherent units where the partial meanings made up a whole. Each meaning was re-examined in terms of its relevance and significance to the experiences of FP male student-teachers during TP. Central themes were established in an unbiased manner. Attempts were made to identify the dominant meaning of each research question, and participants' descriptions were rephrased in simple language (Giorgi, 2008). With respect to the phenomena under investigation, the essence of TP was revealed. Repetitive themes and descriptions within the meaning unit that were not relevant to male student-experiences during TP were eliminated.

I went through one personal diary at a time, asking questions and considering the underlying meaning then wrote it down in the margin in two to three words, drawing a box around it. I then divided the text into segments of information and labelled them with code-words or phrases that accurately described the meaning the text segment. Phrases and sentences appearing to have specific connections received assigned codes similar to those of interview responses. Codes can address many different topics such as the setting and the context, perspectives held by participants. The researcher linked the meanings of the written text from personal diaries to the

meanings of the transcribed data from interviews. This process involved consolidating, reducing and interpreting what people have said, and what I have read and heard (Merriam, 2009, p.175-176).

3.7. Ethical considerations

Creswell (2008) argues that practicing ethics is a complex matter that involves more than just following a set of static guidelines such as those from professional association. According to Duku and Sotuku (2015,p. 115), the term 'ethics 'refers to the values and principles by which a determination is made of what is the right and wrong thing to do. Ethically, conducting research requires researchers to actively interpret these principles for their individual projects, tailoring these ethical guidelines to suit the unique contexts of their research. The following were observed:

Gaining permission

I submitted a letter requesting permission to conduct the study from the Faculty of Education Research Ethics Committee. This letter was accompanied by an application for ethics clearance certificate (Appendix B). I also requested permission to conduct research at the selected University and conducted the study after receiving permission from the University.

Participants' right

The participants were allowed to exercise their right to be part of the research or not. Participants' right to privacy was respected, including that of the university where the participants are studying. I was ethically responsible for protecting the rights, dignity and welfare of the participants while conducting the study. The rights of the participants were protected through anonymity, confidentiality and privacy (Leedy &Ormrod, 2005, p.343). The captured responses in the audio tape were transcribed in codes. The participants were assured that the transcripts would not be given to anyone, and their biographical information was hidden by using pseudonyms.

Informed consent

Kumar (2012,p.244)states that "all informed-consent procedures must meet three criteria: participants must be competent to give consent; sufficient information must be

provided to allow for a reasoned decision; and consent must be voluntary and uncoerced.” Participants were given all the information that would help them voluntarily participate in the study. In this study, all participants were verbally informed of the purpose of the research before the study proceeded. During the study, I checked if the participants were still willing to continue. Duku and Sotuku (2015) assert that informed consent is a principle which ensures that participants in a research project have the right to be informed that they are being researched. Letters of consent were issued by the researcher to all participants before each interview. This was to confirm what they already heard verbally from me. Participants signed consent letters that clarified the purpose of the research and also informed participants about their rights (see appendix C).

Confidentiality and anonymity

All information obtained in this study was treated confidentially and was not divulged to anyone. I understood that it is unethical to be negligent and not protect the confidentiality and anonymity of the information gathered from the participants (Kumar 2012, p. 246). The captured responses in audio tape were transcribed in codes, and participants were assured that the transcripts would not be given to anyone. Participants’ biographical information was hidden by using pseudo names. The university where participants study was also assigned a pseudo name.

Protection from harm

Protection from discomfort and harm originates from the principle of beneficence which refers to doing good and the avoidance of doing harm (Burns & Grove, 2009, p. 198). During all interaction with research participants, I avoided any situation that could have led to unwarranted distress and discomfort. I was cautious of asking sensitive and stereotype questions. During interviews, I made sure that the environment is safe from danger.

Maintaining professionalism

I was committed to a continuous professional development, ethical practice, and responsible attitude toward participants. This was done through demonstrating respect, compassion, integrity and altruism in relationship with the participants.

3.8. Trustworthiness, credibility, transferability and dependability

Trustworthiness is the process whereby the researcher confirms that the findings accurately reflect the respondents' experiences and views and not the researcher's perceptions. This was done through tape-recording interviews. Fox and Bayat (2007, p.107) state that the criterion of trustworthiness is a viable standard for measuring validity and reliability in qualitative research. According to Schmidt and Brown (2009, p.313), qualitative studies are trustworthy when strategies have been used to meet credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability.

Credibility

Credibility is concerned with how confident one is regarding the truth value of data (Polit, Beck & Hungler 2005, p.135). The study sought to explore and determine the respondents' true experiences during teaching practice. The participants' thoughts, perceptions, beliefs and attitudes on their experiences during TP were given credibility and respected in their own right as valid. The credibility of this study depended on staying faithful to participants' words and descriptions throughout analysis. During interviews participants used both English and IsiXhosa, I had to transcribe data from tape recording. I then translated transcripts from isiXhosa to English. I borrowed an IsiXhosa Dictionary to help me translate isiXhosa to English. I went back to the participants and checked if what I transcribed and translated is indeed what they said.

Transferability

Babbie and Mouton (2007, p.277) refer to transferability as "the extent to which the findings of a study can be applied to other contexts, situations, or respondents". In this study, I selected information-rich participants, collected data until saturation was reached and provided dense descriptions of the data, including verbatim quotations, in order to enhance transferability of the study.

Dependability

Dependability refers to how stable or consistent data is over time and over conditions (Polit et al., 2005, p. 315). De Vos et al. (2005, p. 346) state that dependability is the alternative to reliability where the researcher attempts to account for changing conditions in the subject chosen for the study, and to account as well as for changes

in the design brought about by a better understanding of the setting. This study made use of a dependability inquiry audit in order to enhance dependability.

3.9. Summary

This chapter discussed procedure that was followed in this study. In this chapter, the design of this study was aligned to the purpose of the study. Qualitative approach which allowed me to conduct in-depth interviews face-to-face was selected and discussed in this chapter. The chapter also discussed data collection instruments and ethical considerations were discussed. The next chapter presents data collected through interviews and personal diaries.

Chapter 4

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The main objective of this chapter is to present the data collected from the participants. The study aimed at exploring the experiences of BEd FP male student-teachers during TP. Four fourth year, BEd FP male student-teachers from a selected university participated in this study and were interviewed individually by the researcher. I conducted the interviews using both IsiXhosa and English as requested by participants.

Participants were interviewed using an interview guide schedule as well as unstructured interviews. All the guiding interview questions related to the objectives of the study in order to get in-depth information experiences in FP during TP. The researcher also requested research diaries from the participants. These research diaries were also related to the objectives of the study. The diaries were analysed to look for recorded evidence of the experiences of male student-teachers.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the experiences of B.Ed. FP male student-teachers' experiences during TP. Specifically, the objectives of the study are:

- To explore how student-teachers experience their professional lives in the FP specialisation.
- To find out what the participants regard as benefits of FP specialisation.
- To understand the implications of the students' experiences on the discourses of Initial Teacher Education.

The research questions that the responses were responding to are:

Main research question

What are the experiences of the selected four male Foundation Phase student teachers during Teaching Practice?

Sub-questions

- How do the student-teachers experience their professional lives in Foundation Phase specialisation?
- What do participants regard as benefits of FP specialisation?
- What are the implications of the students' experiences on the discourses of Initial Teacher Education? This chapter is structured as follows:

4.1 Introduction

4.2 Profile

4.2.1. Profile of respondents

4.2.2. Profile of the research site

4.3 Presentation and data analysis

4.3.1. Student-teachers experience as Foundation Phase students

4.3.2. Benefits of FP specialisation

4.3.3. Implications on the discourses of Initial Teacher Education.

4.2. Profile of respondents

Name	Age	Marital Status	Race	Mentor Gender	Age of the mentor	Marital status	Years teaching FP	Grades	School	Province
LB	28	Single	African	Female	56	Married	35	3	Township	Eastern Cape
NM	25	Single	African	Female	45	Single	21	3	Township	Eastern Cape
DC	35	Married	African	Female	57	Married	38	3	Rural School	Mpumalanga Province
LN	27	Single	African	Female	53	Married	34	2	Township	Eastern Cape

Table 4.2 shows the profile of the participants for this study – a total of 4 male student-teachers participated in this study. At the time of the research, all the respondents were doing their fourth year, which is a final year in the Bachelor of Education Degree. Furthermore, all the respondents were FP student-teachers of a university in the Eastern Cape Province.

Due to ethical considerations, the names for the participants were not used. Participants are referred to as LB, NM, DC, and LN respectively. Their ages ranged from 25, 27, 28 and the oldest was 35. Three of the participants are from the Eastern Cape Province. Participant DC was the oldest and he was from another province. He also completed his TP in a rural school outside Eastern Cape Province, while the other three did their TP in township schools in the Eastern Cape Province.

It is worth noting that all the participants were mentored by female educators. Three of the mentors were above 50 years of age while the youngest mentor was 45 years old and the only one who was not married. Three of the mentors have more than 30 years' teaching experience. Their marital status, age and tenure was an indication that they are experienced adults. Three participants were based in Grade 3, and one was in Grade 2; all the participants spent 5 weeks in schools for TP.

4.2.2. Profile of the research site

The institution selected for this study is a university in the Eastern Cape Province. The name of the university is not revealed in this study; instead, it is referred to as ZK University due to ethical considerations. The institution has a Faculty of Education that offers undergraduate and postgraduate programmes and a BEd FP specialisation. This University was selected because the participants who were to respond to the research questions are based in the University.

4.3. PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

This section presents data that collected using interviews and the analysis of the personal diaries. I used quotes from the respondents in the study to show the similarities and differences and to illustrate understanding of the phenomenon that is being investigated from the respondents' point of view. The following themes were presented and analysed:

4.3.1 Student-teachers experiences as Foundation Phase male students;

4.3.2. Benefits of FP specialisation;

4.3.3. Implications on the discourses of Initial Teacher Education

4.3.1 Student-teachers' experiences as FP male students.

It was important for this study to explore experiences of FP male student-teachers as FP students. This would assist in understanding their views, perceptions and their opinions about the need for male students in FP. The students reported on their experiences of being FP student-teachers in a female dominated lecture-room. Their experiences ranged from reasons for choosing FP as a specialisation and included how they negotiate their identity as males in a female dominated environment.

▪ Reasons for choosing FP Specialisation

The respondents gave different reasons for choosing FP as a specialisation. These include: being FP student-teachers by default and having passion for young children. During interviews, some respondents reported that being a FP student teacher was not by choice, while some reported they chose to be FP student-teachers. Those who did not choose FP as specialisation gave different reasons on why they ended up being FP student teachers. Participant LN said:

I saw on the registration form that I am selected in the Foundation Phase. Even then, I was made aware by the lecturer who was assisting me with selection of courses. Application forms at this university have no space where you choose the phase.

When further probed on how he feels about the issue, participant LN stated:

"I had no other choice because I wanted to study. I was just glad to register and study."

This assertion shows that he became a FP student-teacher by chance, as it was not his choice to specialise in FP teaching. The issue of not choosing FP specialisation was also mentioned by participant DC who stated that he did not choose to specialise

in FP teaching but was selected by the institution. This was also revealed in his diary where he states:

I didn't choose to be a Foundation Phase teacher. The profession called me. I was teaching at a private school in my community, teaching Grade, 12 and I applied for a teaching bursary only to find that I am placed to Foundation Phase.

Participant DC, when probed about how he feels about being selected in FP, he reported that he felt teaching is a calling and accepted being in FP. Both participant LN and DC specialised in FP by chance. One thing different about them is how they respond to being selected by the institution into FP specialisation. Participant DC accepted the selection with an understanding that teaching for him is a calling. On the other hand, participant LN accepted the selection of the institution because he felt that he “has no choice”.

Sobiraj, Korek, Weseler and Mohr (2011) found that males in female-dominated professions are perceived as performing stereotypically ‘female’ tasks and displaying feminine attributes. This is viewed as a violation of traditional notions of masculinity (Ibid). This is also asserted by Lovett (2014) who argues that the culture of nurturance that exists within primary schools challenges the masculine identity of males who work within the primary context because these men are often perceived to be doing women’s work.

Petersen (2014, p. 6) reported that the discomfort of having men teaching in the FP stems from the fact that men have “a lot of power, and many children are scared of the father figure. As a result, the public are not comfortable with men in the FP” (ibid). Lovett (2014) argues that the culture of nurturance that exists within primary schools challenges the masculine identity of males who work within the primary context. Hence, it was appropriate to report on the reasons for the selected males to choose FP specialisation.

Two of the four participants, NM and LB, reported that FP was their choice of specialisation. Participant NM revealed this by saying:

I had no problem with being in FP lecture-room; I always wanted to be a teacher in FP because I like young children.

When he was probed on his reason for choosing to specialise in FP, NM responded:

“This started when I was at high school, I noticed that there is a phase that is neglected or males are not used. I did a research I found out that there is nothing that prohibits males to teach in the foundation phase. I told myself that I will choose to teach in the Foundation Phase. I also noticed that there are learners who do not have a father figure; they do not get a connection with males. I decided to choose Foundation Phase and be one of the males who would be a role model for those learners.”

Participant NM reported that he wanted to be a role model for young learners with absent fathers. The issue of a role model was also revealed by participant DC in his personal diary when he wrote:-

I think male teachers have a big role to play in the foundation phase. They offer learners role models to look up to especially those who do not have fathers or big brothers back at home. I think it's something that should be encouraged to have as many male teachers in the foundation phase as possible.

The aspect of male teachers being role models for FP learners was also shared by participant LB who stated:

“I was brought up by a single mother in KZN. I saw the challenges faced by a boy or a child who has no father figure. This has developed passion for young children. I was motivated to do teaching. I saw a space in FP because it's where I will play a role of being a father to those learners who misses a father, a brother to those learners who misses a big brother”.

When the participants were asked how they felt on their first day in a female-dominated lecture room. They all reported feelings of shock and surprise.

Participant NM who chose FP as a specialisation reported that on his first day, he was surprised by the number of females in the lecture room. This is also supported by participant LB who also chose FP specialisation, proclaiming:

“Eish it was a shock really, I was so shocked to see the number of female students and the number of male students. There were very few males and majority of students were females.”

This shows that even though the two participants chose FP specialisation, they were not prepared for the reality. Similarly, participant LN, who did not choose FP, also reported that:

“The first day in the FP lecture-room was shocking. I knew that there are few males in the FP, but I was not aware of the reality. I felt that there is not much done by the government and the university to encourage males to join FP specialisation”.

Participants NM's and LN's aspect of shock and surprise was as a result of seeing many females in the lecture-room. Both participants acknowledge that they knew that FP is a female-dominated space; however, they were not aware of the actual reality. When they experienced being in a FP lecture-room with female students, they were surprised. Participant LN even went further by questioning the role of government and the university in encouraging males to enter FP specialisation. This means that female student-teachers are still dominating FP.

Being a male student in FP reportedly evoked many emotions ranging from embarrassment, shock, confusion and excitement. Respondents gave different responses on how they felt in FP lecture-room as students. Two (2) of the respondents reported that at first, they felt embarrassed. This feeling of embarrassment is revealed by LN who was in FP specialisation by default; he exclaimed:

“Yhoo!on my first day in the lecture-room I was so embarrassed because there were more females. I felt as if I am in a wrong class.”

When further probed what made him to be embarrassed he stated:

“In our lecture-room, there were few males; what made it worse is that there were more white males than black males. I felt as if I chose a wrong course.”

This was in line with what he wrote in his personal diary where he stated:

I felt embarrassed on the first day because I did not know how to behave and conduct myself in a female dominated space as I have never been amongst many women before. I grew up in a rural environment where males have their roles different from those of females. It is very rare to find a male amongst

females. This will send a message that the male is gay or something. I had to adjust and adapt.

- Regret

All the participants revealed that at some point, they regretted choosing FP specialisation. This was reported by both those who chose FP specialisation and those who did not choose FP specialisation. They reported that the attitude by female students and other male colleagues who are doing different specialisation and degrees was discouraging. The participants reported that even students who are doing Intermediate Phase made them feel uncomfortable with their choice. Participant NM stated that:-

“People who gave me problems are B.Ed. students studying Intermediate Phase. They asked questions about my choice. One time, I was asked by a colleague how am I going to cope teaching young children being a male and being a politician.”

Respondent NM reported that some of his friends and colleagues recommended that he should rather choose a Law degree instead of B.Ed. FP specialisation was NM's choice, but he also had moments where he regretted being in FP specialisation. He stated that his friends convinced him to change to another degree because “as a politician,” he should not ‘delay’ himself with teaching. This shows that FP and teaching is regarded as a female's job.

When further probed how he felt about these remarks, he reported:

“sometimes you think about these comments, wondering if indeed you made the right choice, especially when people who are supposed to support you are the ones who are discouraging you, you feel discouraged mfundisi ke xa sithetha inyani”

The aspect of regretting is also reported by participant LB who reported that his friend who is doing a particular degree also questioned him. He reported that he was asked how he is going to cope with teaching FP as he has a big body size. Participant LB chose FP specialisation because he wanted to be a role model to learners with absent

fathers. His friend merely saw his body size as too “big” for a teacher of young children. LB reported that:

“One day I was asked by a friend how I am going to teach children who are young when I am so big. Though this seemed to be a joke, it caught my attention because indeed I have a big body.”

Participants NM and LB revealed that as much as it was their choice to specialise in FP, they were sometimes made to regret their choice. Questioning their choice and their suitability in teaching young children influenced their regretful attitude. It is worth noting that even though they were discouraged by people they know, they did not change their choice. This is clearly revealed by participant LB’s response when saying:-

“I was angry because He made fun of my education, he undermined me in front of other people. I was also angry because he made me feel stupid by choosing FP and yet I was sober when I chose it, and unfortunately I was not prepared to change my choice because of anyone.”

All the participants revealed that they had to defend and justify their choice to all those who questioned them. Sobiraj, Korek, Weseler and Mohr (2011) found that males in female-dominated professions are perceived as performing stereotypically ‘female’ tasks and displaying feminine attributes. This is viewed as a violation of traditional notions of masculinity (Ibid). This is also supported by Lovett (2014) who argues that the culture of nurturance that exists within primary schools challenges the masculine identity of males who work within the primary context because these men are often perceived to be doing women’s work.

- Questioned sexuality

The participants reported that they were questioned about their sexuality. Respondent LN revealed this by stating that:

“I was hurt one day when my friend joked about me in front of other colleagues saying he thinks I’m gay because out of many courses, I chose to be a teacher and mostly a FP teacher. I knew he was joking, people laughed but I was hurt because I am not gay”.

This is similar to the question posed to participant LN about his body structure. This showed that male student-teachers in FP are sometimes judged by other colleagues from other faculties and from the Intermediate Phase who still view FP as a female space. When participant LN was further probed on why he was hurt by the thought of him gay, he revealed that:

"It hurts to be labelled as gay while you not gay"

This sentiment was also revealed by Participant LB and DC who reported that they were even labelled as being gay because they are viewed to be doing the females' work. Participant DC says:

"I am a father, and my children are of the same age as those in FP, but some of my friends when they are joking sometimes call me a moffie because I chose FP specialisation."

The democratic principle of equality was raised by two (2) participants. Participant DC who did not choose to specialise in FP and NM who chose to specialise in FP believe that there should be equal opportunities and access for both males and females in FP specialisation. As a result, both participants felt excited when selected in FP specialisation. It is imperative to note that respondents DC and NM's feelings about being FP students were different from those of respondent LN and LB. Respondent NM said:

"I was excited to be in the FP classroom. It was my choice to be in FP. What excited me most was that I was fulfilling my wish. "

When respondent NM was further probed on how he felt about being in a female dominated classroom, he stated:

"I knew that FP is dominated by females, and that was the reason why I chose to specialise in FP. I had no problem with being in a female dominated environment. I knew I had to do this because I wanted to do it."

This was consistent with what he wrote in his personal diary when stating that:

Times have changed, this is a democratic country. We should not feel sorry for being in a female dominated environment because even females are found in

male dominated environment. In a democratic country, equality is the order of the day. It can't be that after 21 years of democracy we still have places where we say they are for females or for males. That's another reason I felt a need to be in FP.

These sentiments showed that participant NM sees democracy as a door opening for gender equality. In his understanding, males should be allowed to be in FP to promote equality and fulfil democratic principles. The view on equality in a democratic country emerged from all the participants.

Citing democracy, DC intimated:

"I felt disappointed that in a democratic country like ours, females still dominate FP. I did not have a problem with being in the FP classroom full of females but I asked myself where are the males and why they are not active in nurturing their children through education."

Participants DC and NM used democratic principles as their reason to feel excited about being in a FP lecture-room. It is worth noting that at the time of conducting this research, both participant NM and DC were student leaders. This could have influenced their view on equality in a democratic country. The feeling of excitement reported by participant NM and DC was as a result of their satisfaction. As much as participant DC did not choose to specialise in FP, he accepted teaching because to him, it feels as a calling. This could be one of the reasons he felt excited.

All the respondents in the study reported different feelings that were evoked by being in a FP lecture-room. These feelings indicate that males venturing in a female-claimed space experience different emotions. As revealed by the responses, student-teachers who entered FP specialisation by default felt embarrassed and confused because they were not prepared for the reality of female dominance in FP. On the other hand, such emotions revealed that participants who chose and accepted the reality of female dominance in FP specialisation were excited by the experience of being in a FP lecture-room. This implies that as much as FP is dominated by females, there is a space for male student teachers who choose to be part of this specialisation.

Participants reported that as FP student-teachers, they also felt regretful, unappreciated and undermined for choosing FP specialisation. They also reported that their sexuality was also questioned. On the other hand, participants reported the being welcomed and accepted by their FP female student-teachers.

It is worth noting that participants LN, LB and DC reported their labelling as gays as having been done jokingly. By stating that these were jokes implies that they were not serious allegations although to the participants, the jokes were hurtful. This shows that participants took these jokes as some form of labelling, which is why they felt hurt and angry. Sumsion (2005, p.112) reported that the scarcity of men in early childhood education could be influenced by a perception that men who choose to work with young children are either principals in training, homosexuals or paedophiles. This justifies the attitude of males towards teaching in FP since males who are interested in teaching in FP are faced with a challenge of being unaccepted by community. This is revealed by Mukuna and Mutsotso (2011, p.1877) who found that in Kenya, communities are uneasy and suspicious of men who choose to work with young children rather than in higher status or better paid occupations; in the words of one respondent, “society refers to them as men who have not got their gender right”. Taylor (2004) found that teaching is often seen as an extension of the culturally assigned nurturing role associated with women. This further justifies the notion that males who are venturing in FP teaching have a responsibility of proving that they “got their gender right”. Although gender equality is advocated globally, its focus is mostly on women empowerment, and very little is directed towards supporting males venturing in female dominated professions.

Fordice and Nielson (n.d.) argue that upon entering the teaching profession, male elementary teachers encounter mixed messages. If they conform too strictly to the traditional scripts of masculinity, they may be perceived as incompetent to work with elementary children. If, on the other hand, they are too nurturing and empathetic, their masculinity may be questioned. This was also revealed by the participants NM and LB. Sobiraj, Korek, Weseler and Mohr (2011) found that males in female-dominated professions are perceived as performing stereotypically ‘female’ tasks and displaying feminine attributes, which is viewed as a violation of traditional notions of masculinity. This was also experienced by all the participants in this study.

- Undermined BEdFP specialisation

All the participants revealed that some of the students who are not doing BEd undermined the BEd degree, especially FP. They further revealed that even BEd students who are not doing FP specialisation undermined FP student-teachers, especially males. The participants reported that the negative attitude is by people who do not understand FP because they think it is for young children who only wet themselves and cry all day.

Participant DC said:

One day my friend asked me if I came all the way from my province to the "Eastern Cape just to do BEd FP. I felt offended because this guy was undermining my degree."

This was similar to participant NM's revelation when stating that it was even suggested that he should rather do LLB instead of B.Ed. On the other hand, participant LB's body size was used as an excuse to criticise his choice of FP specialisation. The participants reported that BEd, as a degree, is being undermined by other students in other faculties. Participant LN even said:

"When you are doing Education here at the institution, you are seen as a lazy person who does not want to work hard. It becomes worse when we are seen carrying posters, props and teaching aids going to a FP lecture-room. I think that's the problem with students, they regard teaching as a low profession."

These revelations are an indication that there is lack of knowledge about the value of teaching and also the importance of training male teachers for FP. In spite of the undermining of the BEd FP degree and questioning of sexuality, there is a positive aspect from BEd FP female student-teachers as all the participants reported that they experienced a welcoming attitude from their BEd FP female colleagues. They all reported that they never encountered any negative attitude from the FP female students; instead, they received support. Participant DC even stated that:

"It was great experience being in FP lecture-room. We always work in groups. Most groups are female dominated, but I never heard a male complaining about negative female attitude."

Participant NM in support of this stated that:

“Our female colleagues support us with group activities, sometimes we struggle to cut resources or even prepare props for presentations. Our colleagues help us in every way possible. We are like brothers and sisters.”

Teaching, according to Okemakinde (2013), is seen as unskilled job meant for women, the old and the poor. Participant LB and NM revealed that they were perceived as misguided when they chose FP specialisation. The comments posed to participant NM and LB reveal that teaching does not enjoy the prestige of professionalism as is seen in medicine, law, engineering, accountancy and other professional fields (Nwite, 2012).

On the other hand, respondents reported that FP female students are welcoming and open to study with male student-teachers. This is revealed by the use of words like “support” and the statement “we are like brothers and sisters”. This is an indication of appreciation, a symbol of acceptance and a sign of openness. Some of the studies reveal a stereotypical perception by female teachers who are already in FP teaching about males venturing in FP specialisation (Makeleni 2014). A study by Mashiya(2014) revealed that male students faced an unwelcoming environment when they first arrived at schools for practice teaching. Female host teachers even explained the FP grade span to FP male student teachers because they were under the impression that the students were confused about where they were going to do their TP (Mashiya 2014). However, in this study, female student-teachers are willing to work freely with male student-teachers.

Mashiya, Kok, Luthuli, Xulu, and Mtshali, (2015) argue that male students enter the field because they wanted to explore new things hence participants NM and DC saw democracy as the gateway to explore FP specialisation. Both participants NM and DC believe that through democracy, gender equality will be realised. They both feel that in a democratic society, there should be no gendered professions. FP is a gendered profession because of women dominance. Jones (2009, p. 29) argues that if men are more visible in the early childhood setting carrying out caring roles, this could potentially help to counter stereotypes of both men and women, reduce sexism and

generally advance gender equality. Koutros (2010) argues that while other professions seem to be approaching a gender balance, the current state of gender inequality within elementary schools was quite alarming for future generations. Participants NM and LB seem to be conscious of the need for gender equality in FP teaching.

Curnow (2011) raised a concern that the real worry for many men is the huge number of single-parent families and the lack of male role models in children's lives. This was also revealed by three of the four participants who explained a need for role models. Some of the advocates of males teaching in FP also argue that males should be employed as educators so that they may be role models (Thornton & Bricheno, 2006).

Male student -teachers' experiences Teaching Practice in FP classrooms

The purpose of this study was to explore the experiences of FP male student- teachers during TP. It was appropriate for the researcher to ask questions that seek to understand the experiences of the participants in the FP classroom during TP. It was critically important to find out how the selected participants understand TP. In answering this question, participants gave different responses. In their responses, participants conceptualised TP and shared their experiences during TP.

- Teaching Practice

In initial teacher-training, student teachers are required to do TP. This is a very important period in a student's life because it is when the student links theory to practice. All students are expected to be in schools for a period of 6 to 8 weeks, depending on the institution. The participants in this study were also part of the students who completed TP, and it was important for this study to understand how the student-teachers view TP.

When participants were asked how they conceptualise TP, they talked about linking the theory they learnt from lecture rooms with practice in schools. Participant DC further clarified this by stating that:

“School Experience / TP is a period where student-teachers are sent to school to practice what they learned during lectures. This is more like an

internship programme where an experienced teacher guides, advises and supports you to be an effective teacher.”

This explanation was also stated in participant LB's personal diary where he stated that:

During TP/ School Experience as student- teachers we are experiencing a real life of teaching. In a real life things are different from the theoretical life in our classes. It becomes a challenge when you had to adapt and be realistic. The classroom management skills you learned in class have to be applied in a real life situation. The theory is very easy, anyone can pass it, but the practice is very difficult. Children are real, teaching is practical, everything is so real.

This understanding was also stated by participants NM and LN. However, they reported that the period of TP is a very intense period that needs their full energy. When further probed on what he meant about intense period, NM he said:

“TP is very tough because you have to follow university rules because as much as you are a student, you are also an ambassador for the institution. The quality of the university education is seen through your conduct. At the same time, you have to obey the school rules and also you have to be a teacher.”

These were consistent with participant LB's assertions in his personal diary when he wrote that:

“The School Experience(TP) time is the most challenging time. It is a time when you have to apply your knowledge. It is a time when you have to prove yourself to the mentor and to the university that indeed you can teach.”

The participants' responses were consistent with Kiggundu and Nayimuli's (2009) contention that TP is a form of work-integrated learning described as a period of time when students are working in the relevant industry to receive specific in-service training to apply theory to practice. This was also asserted by Caires and Almeida (2005, p. 111) who state that TP exposes students to “pedagogical experiences such as planning, teaching and assessment, the manipulation of a large amount of teaching tools, the resolution of real problems, and the reflection on the political, social and

ethical aspects of teaching”. Participants reported that during TP, they had to prepare lesson plans, teach and assess learners.

Participants were asked to share their experiences during TP. In their responses, they revealed that as male student-teachers, they were viewed as resources, male figures, father –figures and even felt as if they are being punished for absent fathers. It is important to note that some participants were well received in their host schools.

- Reception

Participants reported that in some schools, they received a positive reception. Participant DC, in his personal diary, recorded that:

The reception was a good one both from the school principal, HODs, host teachers and learners. When I was introduced at the assembly, learners were very happy to hear that they are going to be taught by a male teacher. I was very happy to receive that king reception.

Participant DC reported that in the school he visited, he was honoured and welcomed like a king. He was given much respect by the school management, staff and learners. He further asserted that because of the reception:

“I felt that I have a challenge and responsibility to add value to these children and my colleagues at that school.”

These sentiments were also echoed by participant LB who stated:

“In my school, I was warmly received by the school principal and my host teacher. I was introduced to the staff and everyone encouraged me to be free.”

Participants DC and LB were honoured in their schools. Reasons for them receiving such welcome and respect are different. Participant DC reported that the school welcomed him because he was the only male in FP and teachers at the school were impressed with seeing a man. On the other hand, participant LB reported that his host teacher was welcoming because she expected to also learn from him. Participant LB reported that:

“My host teacher never did FP at her college; she was interested to learn new skills from me. She was also new in FP and she did not study her teaching in South Africa. This gave me responsibility to also advise the host teacher.”

The reasons for their welcome attitudes imply that the male teachers were seen as resources. This is further revealed by DC who said:

“As a male teacher in a school with all female educators, I was requested to share my skills and knowledge on dealing with boy learners. In the minds of school teachers, I was supposed to know more on discipline methods now that corporal punishment is abolished. Teachers would even threaten learners by saying they will report them to me.”

This aspect of being a resource was even revealed by participant LB who stated that:

“My host teacher got an opportunity to learn from me. She never did FP as a specialisation, so she saw an opportunity to learn from me. This developed a good relationship with her because we were learning from each other.”

The issue of being resources reveals that there is a need for males to enter FP specialisation. The expectations of the host teachers, as reported by the two participants, show that female teachers are willing to accept males in FP. It is worth noting that males are not only seen as educators but also as resources that could be used to address discipline at school.

Participant NM and LN reported that they were also warmly received in their schools. One aspect that is consistently reported by the participants is being welcome to play a father-figure role, sport coach and a disciplinarian. This is clearly stated by participant NM when saying:

“On our arrival at the school, I was the only male student-teacher. The school is a Junior Primary that ends in Grade 4. The school principal highlighted in her welcoming that I have to be an example to these learners because it is their first time to be taught by a male. She advised that I should play the role of being a father to the learners and portray a good picture about males. I was even asked to coach cricket to the learners because there is no one coaching them though there are resources.”

On the other hand, participant LN in his diary wrote that:

The most challenging thing about being a male in FP is that you are expected to play the role of being a father, a brother and an uncle to learners. My host

teacher told me that I have to be flexible and be everything to the learners. She informed me that some of the learners are not staying with their fathers, some do not have a male figure in their lives. This left me with no choice but to play a male figure role. You are also expected to participate in sport within the short time you are at school.

This is consistent with Mashiya (2014) who found that male student-teachers brought more play, active movement and fun to the way they interacted with learners. This is highlighted by the fact that they were able to assist the schools with sport and coaching using equipment that was not in use because of shortage of expertise (ibid). In this study, this was also revealed by participant DC and LN who also coached sport teams in their respective schools. All the participants reported that in their respective schools, they were also used as disciplinarians. They reported that teachers would often tell misbehaving learners that they will report them to the “new teacher”. This shows that school teachers regarded male student-teachers as father figures who are to maintain order and discipline at school.

All the participants in the study reported that they were warmly received by learners at their host schools. Participant NM even stated that:

“I was very impressed by the learners who were so excited to see me in their classroom. I was in Grade 3, and all learners showed their appreciation by listening to me attentively and sometimes you could see everyone wanted to answer my questions, just to express themselves to me.”

This was also reported by participant DC who stated that:

It was great experience. Learners in that class are the same age as my children at home. It was easy for me to relate to them, and they were very excited to see a male teacher standing in front of them to teach them also. My highlight was the response I got from learners in class. I saw that I command respect in them and they were very attentive to what I was saying. I could see that for many of them, it was the first time they were interacting with a male in that kind of a setting. By the way, I was at Grade three and these learners were constantly been taught by women from crèche till now.

This welcoming by learners had its own challenges, according to participant DC who wrote in his personal diary that:

The first challenge was getting learners to get used to calling me Mr or Sir as they were used to female teachers and calling them Mam.

This was also echoed by participant NM who stated that:

During School Experience, there is no challenging time than being flexible when teaching young children. Learners all want a piece of you, when you move around, and when you ask questions, all learners lift their hands and show much interest. Some are confused whether to call you Sir or Miss since that is what they are

- Rapport with learners

used to call female teachers."Participant DC in his diary recorded that being in the FP class was a great experience because, he said:

Learners in that class are the same age as my children at home. It was easy for me to relate to them and they were very excited to see a male teacher standing in front of them to teach them also.

This was different from participant LB and LN who argued that it was confusing for them to relate to girl learners. They stated that they did not know whether the response they give is appropriate or not. They reported that:

"In these days you may not be sure whether what you are doing is right or wrong because males are always suspected of sexual abuse. This is a challenge because you may be seem as if you favour a particular gender, because you are afraid of acting inappropriately".

Participants stated that it would be easier if they were trained on how to conduct themselves as males in FP. They said it is easy for a female student-teacher to play with all the learners without raising suspicion, but for a male to be close to girls is a challenge. Participant NM even said he was warned by the school's Head of Department not to be too nice to the girls because this will send a wrong message. He said this left him more confused on how to conduct himself.

Participants, in their responses about their experiences during TP, reported that there were positive and negative aspects of TP. Some of the things they highlighted as negative aspects are themed by the researcher. These sub-themes range from pity from certain staff members, negative attitude about men and questioning on absent fatherhood

Participant NM reported:

“When we were introduced to the staff, one female teacher looked at me and asked if I know what I want because in her own experience, she never saw a male in FP. She went on telling me the work done in FP, asking me if I will cope with that. She talked about teaching in isiXhosa, being in a noisy classroom of young children who will be excited by seeing a male teacher.”

This was also reported by participant LB who reported that:

“Ey mfundisi one lady teacher at the school looked at me and I could see that she felt sorry for me. She even said herself that as a male I cannot make it in FP, stating that learners are not used to be taught by a male. She even suggested that I go to Grade 4 instead of Grade 3. Actually, she wanted to help me by taking me to Grade 4 thinking that I will fail my crit in Grade 3.”

These assertions show that male student-teachers were pitied by other female teachers. What makes it more interesting is that the two participants encountered teachers who pitied them for different reasons. In participant NM's situation, the teacher was trying to discourage him by showing all the negatives. However in participant LB's situation, the teacher was trying to make things easier for him. Both educators pitied the student-teachers but for different reasons.

All the participants raised an issue of insecurity, hence regrets, embarrassments, confusion. This insecurity was also shown by the experienced teachers who were supposed to support them. The remarks by the school teachers showed that males are not trusted to teach and behave around young children.

Participants were asked about their experiences during TP. Their responses revealed that they were questioned for absent fatherhood through remarks by school teachers. This was also reported by LN who also recorded in his personal diary thus:

In my school, there was a senior teacher who used to laugh at me and say “ja bakufumene abantwana uzakuqabuka, yibone ke into esikuyo ngoba nina madoda nithanda ubafumana sebegqityiwe nje abantwana”(yes, children are teaching you a lesson, see what we go through because you men you like to enjoy children when they are all grown up)

This was further reported by participants LB, and NM who reported that they could see that teachers are punishing them for the sins they did not commit. When further probed what they meant about that, NM said:

“Yho mfundisi you could see that a person has a problem with you being a male not only as a student- teacher. During lunch, one female teacher once asked remarked that I must be so exhausted by the learners ’noise, complaints and attention seeking behaviour. She said plainly that as men, we always run away from the responsibilities, we leave children with mothers and not give support.”

These sentiments by the teachers show that in some situations, the issue of absent fatherhood could have an influence on how males venturing in FP specialisation are viewed. Participants reported that though these remarks were not meant to harm them, they did make them angry. Participant LN even said this remark made him angry because he felt that the teacher is responding to Senior phase teachers who were not even there. He felt that though the teacher wished him well, it was as if she was hoping he would fail to fulfil his duties in FP teaching. Participants in this study also reported about their teaching experiences. In those experiences, issues of writing on the chalkboard, language issue and content knowledge were raised.

- Writing on the chalk board

All participants reported that they could not write on the chalkboard. This was their challenge when teaching FP. Participant NM said:

“Firstly mfundisi, this cursive writing is a problem for me umzekelo. I have a terrible writing as a male. Uyayazi nawe xa iwriting imbi kuthiwa yeyendoda. I think there has to be a course or a module on writing. During School Experience, I struggled to write on the chalkboard, it becomes so embarrassing when you make mistakes in front of the children.”

This was further reported by Participant DC who said the first challenge he encountered when teaching was writing on the chalkboard. This was common in all the participants' responses. All the participants complained that they were not trained to write on the chalkboard. According to the participants, writing in FP is very important, and it is equally important that chalkboard writing should be taught. Participant DC argued that:

"it is unfair to be expected to write on the chalkboard whereas your writing is terrible. In FP writing is very important, that's what I have noticed. Cursive writing is not taken serious as a result even when we have to do tasks we just do them with computer and change font to cursive"

- Language issues

Participants highlighted language as one of the challenges they encountered during TP. They all reported that their courses are done in English. Participant DC reported that the Curriculum and Assessment Policy(CAPS) documents they use are written in English. Participant NM said when they arrive in schools, they get CAPS written in a language used for teaching at the school. All the participants reported that it becomes a challenge for them to familiarise themselves with the terms used in the learners' mother tongue.

All the participants raised the challenge of teaching in the learners' mother-tongue in FP. Some of the participants went to schools where isiXhosa is used for learning in FP; another school used English while another one used isiSwati as a home language. Participants reported that this mother-tongue teaching becomes a problem because they themselves are prepared for English medium schools and are also using English for communication for different purposes. Participant LN reported that he struggles to teach in isiXhosa because he is not used to it. This was further asserted by participant NM saying the fact that they have to change their theory and apply it in isiXhosa is a bit of a challenge because of the context. Participant DC stated that:

You will recall that I am from teaching in a college, teaching grade 12, I adapted and became a FP teacher, I studied everything in English, but my practice was in isiSwati. This was my challenge, I had to work hard trying to translate the document in my mind so that I am relevant.

- Content Knowledge

Participants reported on the importance of content knowledge during TP .They all reported that as male student-teachers, they were not trusted by the host teachers to know the content of the subjects they were teaching, especially mathematics. Participant DC reported that:

“I could see when teaching that my host teacher is crossing fingers that I do not confuse her learners, she would first ask me questions to make sure that I am sure about the content of the topic I am going to teach. She did not want to risk by allowing me to teach something that I do not understand very well. This made me to do more research before teaching. “

On the other hand, participant NM highlighted the importance of content knowledge. In his diary he wrote:

My host teacher loved Mathematics and English. She would make it a point that I teach these subjects in her presence. Her reason was that a mistake caused by a teacher in a child's life could affect the child's life permanently. If I happened to do a mistake when teaching she would jump and clarify the concept and then sit down. This showed me that I have to prepare before going into class. It also encouraged me to bridge the gap of the theory on methodology and the content.

The issue of content knowledge is revealed by several studies. A study by Yunus et al. (2010) revealed that most student-teachers were facing difficulties in teaching methodology. There is a link between content to be taught and the teaching methodology. Yunus et al (2010) further reported that it seemed as if student- teachers were experiencing problems in applying what they have learnt in real context/situations. A study of how initial teacher education in some universities impacted on their eventual teaching practices in schools by Akyeampong et (2011: 7) concluded that "in every case, there is a discrepancy between what is required of teachers to teach in the primary school curriculum and the preparation that they receive to do this from their initial training" . With regard to Mathematics, it was found that "work on mathematical knowledge is rarely about deepening conceptual understanding of the topics which are taught at primary level, being rather concerned

with taking trainees further into more advanced mathematics or reinforcing and repeating the senior secondary curriculum" (Ibid).

- Emotional Preparation

All the participants highlighted that they were not emotionally prepared for the field they are venturing in. They all agree that being a male in FP is a challenge, but there are no programmes in place to recruit or retain current males. Participant LB in his diary wrote that:

"It seems as if the university say we should defend ourselves because it is our choice. There are no open discussions and debates about the role of males in FP within the faculty. We are only taught how to teach, but the issues about the environment are not addressed adequately".

These sentiments were also echoed by participant NM who argued that if the institution had a male mentor who has taught FP, it would be better. Participants highlighted that in their lecture room, they are lectured by female lecturers, and there are no male lectures who can relate to their situation. Participant LN stated that:

"If there is no equality demonstrated in teacher–training institutions from the academics side, how can we expect acceptance in the society. There should be male lecturers who will motivate and inspire other males to be part of FP".

- Stress caused by lecturer visits for crits

Participants raised an issue of *crits* as the worst experience during TP. They reported that *crit* lessons are done early during their TP. They also reported that as FP teachers, they are expected to have teaching resources, which requires them to have money to buy those resources. The participants indicated that they have no problem with *crits* as this is the way of assessing their readiness to be teachers. Their concern is the manner in which this is done. They argue that before being assessed, they have to be supported by the assessor who knows FP work and who has been exposed in classroom situation. They also argued that sometimes the lecturer who is visiting for a *crit* is an Intermediate lecturer. Participant NM said:

"Yhooo bro, this is the worst nightmare, you get confused you do not know what to prepare, you do not know what the lecturer expects from you. The worst thing

you find that even the lecturer who is going to crit you is an Intermediate Phase Lecturer. The person was trained to teach Intermediate or Senior Phase, he/she does not understand the realities in Foundation Phase. Hayi mna andiyiboni kakuhle into yokucritwa ngumntu ongayaziyo lento nalemeko ukuyo. (personally I do not see it well to be assessed by a person who has no knowledge of the FP) I am a male and I am new in this field and the person who is going to crit me does not offer any support, if I did not meet his/her expectations I fail. That hurts."

This was also revealed by participant LN who also highlighted that *crit* lessons are very stressful. He further stated in his diary that:

When you are preparing for crit, you must have the visiting lecturer in your mind; you have to follow the university template in your lesson plan. Sometimes you panic too much because you do not want to fail and repeat the course in the following year. I think before the lecturer crits you he/she must support you, guide you until the day of the crit. What is worse is when you first interact with the lecturer for the first during a crit .

TP is the period where student-teachers are applying what they learnt as a theory. The aspects raised by the participants with regards to writing on the chalkboard, language issues and content knowledge are core functions of teaching. Sibaya and Ngidi (2003) reported that anxiety is a relevant characteristic of student teachers. Findings from a South African study suggested that younger male student teachers placed at primary schools are overly anxious about evaluation lessons; although the reason for this is unclear, one possible explanation may be that there are few young male teachers at primary schools to offer support to them (Ngidi & Sibaya, 2003:21). This is further revealed by Wambugu et al.(2013) who assert that during TP, student teachers acquire skills in lesson planning, visualizing, class control, critical thinking, decision-making and problem-solving. It is these skills that are assessed by lecturers during TP.

As the participants were males venturing in a female dominated environment, it was necessary to found out how the participants negotiate their way. Participants gave different responses on how they negotiated their way in schools during TP. Participant DC wrote in his diary:

I knew from experience that I was entering a woman dominated environment and I was prepared to learn from them as much as possible. For me it was not an issue that I was walking into a female dominated environment because it does not make any difference.

This shows that he was willing to learn from the teachers in his host school despite their gender. Participant DC further emphasised this by stating that:

Psychologically, I was prepared. But as I say, it was not an issue for me to consult a senior colleague because she is a female.

When participant DC was asked what he means by being prepared psychologically prepared, he reported that he changed his attitude towards females and accepted that in order for him to be effective, he has to follow their advices.

It seemed, from the responses of the participants, that some of the host teachers were not as supportive as they should. This was reported by all the participants. As much as all the participants reported that they did not get support, participant LB says:

“My host teacher was also new in FP and did not specialise in FP. This gave me much responsibility because I had to also demonstrate to her the skills I got from lectures.”

Participant LB's host teacher was not in a position to offer the much needed support because she was also new in FP. It is clear from LB's report that the host teacher was willing to learn from him. This shows that the host teacher mentor also expected to gain knowledge from the male student-teacher. On the other hand, participant LN reported that his mentor left him in the classroom most of the time. This was also revealed by participant NM. However, participant NM enjoyed being left alone because:

“Being left alone to teach gave me more time to practise teaching. I did not panic because I was able to reflect and correct my mistakes for the next lesson.”

Student-teachers had to do much of the work on their own without guidance. Participant NM reported that he was not discouraged when he was left alone; instead, he used that time to practice more. He also highlighted an embarrassing moment when he said:

“Secondly it’s so embarrassing when your host teacher is absent and you are asked to mark learner attendance register and you do not know what to do.”

When he was further probed on why he was embarrassed, he reported that he did not know how to mark learner attendance register.

Participants reported that they shared their challenges with their female colleagues who were also doing TP. All the participants reported that during break times at the schools, they sat with their female student-teacher colleagues and shared the day’s experiences. They claim that this helped them to cope with the challenges because they advised each other. All the participants reported that they also noticed that some of the challenges were common even to the female student-teacher colleagues. The support they received from their female colleagues made them strong.

In negotiating their way, participants reported that they shared their experiences with their female student-teacher colleagues. It is these sharing sessions during break times that helped them to cope with TP in FP. The participants also reported that the experience they had in working with females in their specialisation had also helped them. This shows that male-student teachers were willing to work and learn from female mentors. It also shows that female-student teachers were also willing to support their male student teacher colleagues. The relationship that FP students have is shown to be an effective way of destroying gender barriers within FP specialisation.

Literature shows that TP creates a mixture of anticipation, anxiety, excitement and apprehension in the student teachers as they commence their teaching practice (Manion, Keith, Morrison & Cohen, 2003; Perry, 2004). On the other hand, McDonald (2004) asserts that ‘the practicum experience is one fraught with difficulties, dilemmas and challenges as the student attempts to negotiate his or her way along a hazardous path of professional policies and practices’. The experiences of participants were consistent with research conducted on TP. Literature reviewed in this study revealed that TP practise evokes different experiences. Mannathoko (2013) asserts that TP can be very challenging, demoralizing and sometimes a very frightening experience if students are not well prepared. Richard, Role and Makewa (2014) highlight stress associated with being caught in the middle between trying to please the supervisor and the cooperating teacher, thus adding to the many fears that students face while

doing TP. Participants reported that there are benefits in being a male in FP specialisation.

4.3.2 Benefits of male student-teachers in FP specialisation

Theories of child development

Participants were asked what they have learnt in FP specialisation. All the participants reported that theories of child development opened their eyes. They all reported that before joining FP specialisation, they took teaching for granted as an easy thing. Participant NM reported:

“I always saw teaching as an easy profession because you just give information to learners. But through this degree I am now aware of child development, especially children who are between 0-10 years. I now know different behaviours and how to deal with them. I did not know about Piaget’s cognitive theory, Bronfenbrenner’s theory, and Erikson’s theory. All these theories helped me understand children more.”

This was also revealed by participant LB who reported that he also learnt more about children. He even stated that through learning about child development theories, his passion for young children grew more. He reported:

“I always loved children, as I have already indicated, but I did not know much about child development theories. After learning about child development theory I began to realise what absent fathers miss in their children. I did not know about cognitive stages, now I can relate when I see learners in my classroom during TP. It is important for me to know these theories especially in FP and as a male.”

One of the respondents reported that as a father, he took development of children for granted. He did not know the importance of the environment in a child’s life and also the value of having strong family bonds.

“I have children at home and they are of the same age as the ones I taught during TP. I love my children, but most of the work of taking care of them is done by their mother. After I learned more about children and the importance of the social environment I changed my perception. I began to take

responsibility more and get more involved in their upbringing. I now understand that I am not just a provider, but I am also their role model too.”

All the participants identified child development theories as one of benefits of FP specialisation. They all reported that the theories opened their minds and developed their understanding of children. Male student-teachers in this study revealed the importance of learning child development theories. It seems the focus of many studies seemed to be on pedagogy and behavioural theories and not on child development theories. As a researcher, I did not expect the participants to talk about child development theories and highlight them as their benefit. Participants also reported that they enjoyed being role models in lecture-rooms and in FP classrooms.

Nwanekezi, Okoli and Mezieobi (2011, p. 44) argued that student-teachers need to be properly educated and trained for professional efficiency and inculcated with a positive attitude that will enable them to go through the training. From the participants' reports, it is revealed that they have a positive attitude that will take them through Initial Teacher Education. This is revealed by their attitude on child development theories. Wagenaar (2005, p.8) argues that the training institutions responsible for teacher training have the onus to produce good quality teachers that respond to society's needs. Participants claim that knowledge about child development helps them understand children more. This implies that this will have a positive bearing in society. Literature reveals that university education is too theoretical and abstract (Major & Tiro, 2012, p.63).

Being role models

All the participants, even those who did not choose FP specialisation, reported that they enjoyed being seen as role models. They all reported that being role models started in their lecture-room. This was revealed by participants NM and DC who reported that through classroom discussions, males represented absent fathers' voices. Participant DC reported that:

“In FP lecture-room we always work in groups. This has helped to understand each other as FP students. Mostly this has helped in representing male voices in a female dominated environment. This has inspired and prompted more female student-teachers to understand more about males.”

At the same time, participant NM stated that he is proud of being an FP male-student teacher. He claims that he is able to demonstrate good behaviour that changes negative perceptions about males.

“During class discussions sometimes you will find that female student-teachers generalise when talking about males’ behaviour and conduct. For instance, you will hear them saying men do not care and they do not want responsibility. It is in situations like these where we clarify the myth about males. This helps to open both our minds as males and also our female colleagues”

Participants in this study felt that they are representing males in a female claimed space. Participant LN and LB also felt that it is important for them to be in FP specialisation because it is where they model good behaviour. They claim that by modelling good behaviour, they want to change negative perceptions about males and children. As much all the participants enjoy being males’ voices in FP specialisation, they highlighted that there is a need for more males.

Participants also reported the satisfaction they got during TP when they are appreciated by learners. They all reported that learners were excited to see them. This was revealed by learners who even called them ‘bhuti’. Participant LB reported that:

“I was motivated by learners who saw me as a brother, they would sometimes call me bhuti, because they did not know how to call me. They would sometimes during break come and ask me to play soccer ball with them. This showed that they appreciate me. At the same time it also proved for me that I am a role model to them.”

On the other hand, participant LN reported that one day, he asked learners to write short personal recount texts about what they liked about their school. He reported that the majority of the children wrote that in their school, there is a new teacher (Mr LN) ‘who is going to be our teacher’. He reported that he could see that he is a role model to the learners.

“. . . learners showed through their writing that they are proud of me and what surprised me most was that they even wrote my name on their work. I was touched by one boy who said I want the new teacher to be my father. This made

me realise that I am adding value to these learners even though I was not aware.”

Participants reported that they were inspired by learners who showed appreciation. They all reported that when it was time for them to leave schools after TP, learners hugged them crying, some begging them not to go. All this showed that male student-teachers were able to be role models and inspired learners in their schools.

Cooney and Bittner (2003) argue that male teachers in early childhood classrooms can contribute to bringing about more gender balance in school settings. From the participants' responses, it was seen that learners appreciated gender balance within their schools. This has proven that males should be employed as educators so that they may be role models (Thornton & Bricheno, 2007). This is also concurred by Lu and Jones (2010) Pruett and Cowan (2009) who found that an increased male presence in the education process tends to erode the social stigma that limits fathers' involvement in things like volunteering in school events.

4.3.3. Implications for Initial Teacher Education

Wagenaar (2005, p. 8) argues that the training institutions responsible for teacher training have the onus to produce teachers of a good calibre for that society's needs. This was the reason why the researcher was interested in finding out implications for initial teacher education. The interviews revealed issues that need attention from the Initial Teacher Education side. These issues include preparation of FP male student-teacher preparation for the female dominated environment, aspect issues of language and content knowledge.

- **Preparation for the female dominated environment**

All the participants reported that their experiences as FP male student-teachers helped them to cope with TP. From the interviews, it emerged that all the participants had female mentors during TP, and in their respective schools, all educators were females. Participant NM reported that:

“I appreciate my female student teacher colleagues for their support. At the University, we have no module that specifically prepares us for the reality of

being in a female dominated environment. We are only learning from interacting with fellow female students.”

This was also a concern raised by participant LB who said:

“I cannot blame the institution they do train us to teach, but we are not being prepared for the environment where we will be teaching. This sometimes can be a challenge for males who are not used to work with their fellow female colleagues.”

Preparing FP male student-teachers for the FP is necessary in initial teacher education. Richard, Role and Makewa (2014) assert that TP provides opportunity to beginning teachers to become socialized into the profession. In the process of training male student-teachers, it is appropriate to equip them with socialising skills. This was stated by Mtetwa and Dyanda (2003) when arguing that TP offers student teachers the opportunity to learn and develop as professional teachers along the dimensions of pedagogic knowledge, subject matter knowledge, pastoral knowledge, ecological knowledge, inquiry knowledge and personal knowledge. Ecological knowledge is the knowledge about the environment they are venturing in. Nwanekezi, Okoli and Mezieobi (2011: 44) argue that student-teachers need to be properly educated and trained for professional efficiency and inculcated with a positive attitude that will enable them to go through the training. Chishlom(2009, p.14) asserts that teacher training institutions are not only imparting theoretical but also practical knowledge and skills in teaching different subjects.

Participants in this study revealed that group work activities and presentations given by lecturers helped them to enjoy being in the FP. They reported that this strategy worked because it developed their confidence as males in the FP. They were able to understand each other as brothers and sisters. In their responses, participants saw a need for teacher-training institutions to have programmes to recruit more males for FP.

“I think the institution should have a module that prepares males for the environment. The reality out there is not the same with what we experience during lectures. You know two of my colleagues deregistered because of the negative

attitude. They felt the pressure of being undermined; they were tired of being judged as if they chose a wrong degree. To me this calls for the new ways of recruiting and retaining male student teachers for FP specialisation.

- **Language in teaching**

During interviews, participants reported that they had to use learners' home language to teach. Two of the participants reported that they had to use isiXhosa when teaching, whereas the other participant had to use another African language (IsiSwati) and the other one used English. The participants reported that they do all of their courses in English; they reported that this gives them problems during TP because they had to write their lesson plans in English and teach in isiXhosa. Participant LN highlighted the issue of language by saying:

"All of our courses are in English, even the micro-teaching, we do with our lecturers is done in English. The University lesson plan template is also in English. What becomes more challenging is when you have to teach in isiXhosa. It would have been better if there were sessions that accommodate African languages especially isiXhosa since we are based in an isiXhosa dominating province."

These sentiments were also echoed by all participants as they said that focusing on African Languages has to be one of the institution's programmes.

- **Content knowledge**

All the participants reported that they had no problem with teaching because they are "well trained". The only concern they raised was Mathematics content. This revelation supports Richard et al.'s(2014) argument that student-teachers are afraid of failure, lack of acceptance by their mentors, misunderstanding by pupils and problems with classroom management and discipline. Participants in the study revealed that as much as they are afraid of issues raised by Richard et al., they are also concerned about the content knowledge. Research in South Africa and elsewhere has shown that "student teachers frequently underestimate the importance of content knowledge in their lessons and in developing teaching practice" and tend instead to "focus their efforts on planning fun-filled activities for the lessons they teach" (Rusznyak 2011, p .107).

The participants' revelation is also consistent with Akyeampong, et al.'s (2011, p. 7) findings that concluded: "in every case, there is a discrepancy between what is required of teachers to teach in the primary school curriculum and the preparation that they receive to do this from their initial training" With regard to Mathematics, it was found that "work on mathematical knowledge is rarely about deepening conceptual understanding of the topics which are taught at primary level, being rather concerned with taking trainees further into more advanced mathematics or reinforcing and repeating the senior secondary curriculum" (Akyeampong et al 2011, p. 20). This means that initial teacher education has to do more to address content knowledge gap, especially in FP.

4.4. Summary

Data presented and analysed shows that male student-teachers are interested in specialising in FP. It is further revealed by the data that females are still dominating FP specialisation. The data is consistent with the literature that states that TP evokes different experiences. As Mannathoko (2013) asserts, TP can be a very challenging, demoralizing and sometimes very frightening experience if students are not well prepared. The participants showed their satisfaction with their specialisation; at the same time, they were able to talk about their experiences.

Chapter Five

Summary, Recommendations and conclusion

5.0 Introduction

The purpose of this study was to explore Foundation Phase male student-teachers' experiences during TP. In this chapter, a summary of findings is presented, including and recommendations.

5.1 Summary of findings

5.1.1 Student-teachers' experience as Foundation Phase male students

The experiences reported by the participants as FP students can be summarised by reflecting on their reasons for choosing FP specialisation and reflecting on their experience as FP students.

Reasons for choosing FP specialisation

- Democratic principles of gender equality emerged as one of the reasons for choosing FP specialisation. This was noted by Jones (2009, p. 29) who asserts that if men are more visible in the early childhood setting carrying out caring roles, this could potentially help to counter stereotypes of both men and women, reduce sexism and advance gender equality. Koutros (2010) noted that while other professions seem to be approaching a gender balance, the current state of gender inequality within elementary schools was quite alarming for future generations;

- Desire to be role models to children with absent fathers that was reported is in line with Curnow (2011) who argues that the real worry for many men is the huge number of single-parent families and the lack of male role models in children's lives. This was also revealed by three of the four participants who explained a need for role models. Some of the advocates of males teaching in FP also argue that males should be employed as educators so that they may be role models (Berliner, 2004; Thornton & Bricheno, 2006).
- Desire to be a father figure to children with absent fathers, uncles and brothers was also reported by participants. Mashiyah et al.(2015) argue that male students enter the field because they want to explore new things. The role of being a father figure, an uncle and also a brother, at the same time, is one aspect that the participants want to explore. Pruett and Cowan (2009) found that increased male presence in the education process tends to erode the social stigma that limits fathers' involvement in things like volunteering in school events. A study by Duku (2006, p. 70) reported that most children in South Africa, especially in the Eastern Cape, live with a female single parent. This justifies a need for a father figure; and
- Some of the participants were in FP specialisation by default. One participant reported that he joined teaching because of the bursary awarded for Initial Teacher Education.

Experiences as FP student-teachers

Participants' experiences as FP student-teachers evoked different feelings. Participants reported that they sometimes felt regretful because of their questioned sexuality and undermined teaching profession.

Questioned sexuality: Participants reported that they were questioned by friends and other students on their choice of FP specialisation. According to them, this was because FP is seen as a female space. The notion of FP being a female space is further asserted by Petersen and Petker (2011) who asserted that teaching in the early grades is often accompanied by simplistic images of FP teachers as 'nannies' and 'caregivers' whereas some scholars call it the feminization of childhood education (Wardle, 2012).

A nanny and a caregiver are, in most cases, roles assigned to women. This has led to a lack of public acceptance of males being teachers in the FP. This is due to perceptions about the ‘unnaturalness’ of males performing basic care tasks (Mashiya, 2014). Mukuna and Mutsotso (2011, p.1877) found that in Kenya, communities are uneasy and suspicious of men who choose to work with young children rather than higher status or better paid occupations. Sobiraj, Korek, Weseler and Mohr (2011) found that males in female-dominated professions are perceived as performing stereotypically ‘female’ tasks and displaying feminine attributes, which is viewed as a violation of traditional notions of masculinity, hence issues of a male body size that was seen as not suitable for young children. This is also asserted by Lovett (2014) who argues that the culture of nurturance that exists within primary schools challenges the masculine identity of males who work within the primary context because these men are often perceived to be doing women’s work hence the questioning of the participants sexuality.

- **Undermined specialisation:** Teaching, according to Okemakinde (2013), is seen as an unskilled job meant for women, the old and the poor. According to Nwite (2012), the teaching profession does not enjoy the prestige of professionalism similar to medicine, law, engineering, accountancy and other professions. This was also reported by the participants who felt undermined for choosing teaching over other courses. The word *teacher* and its related terms to the public signify abject poverty, inferiority and social misfit (Okemakinde, 2013). Participants reported that their choice of FP specialisation was undermined because even teaching, on its own, is undermined. Primary school teaching is perceived as an “unattractive” profession for men, it’s boring, hassle-causing, stressful or requiring too much patience” (Drury 2008, p. 314). Sanders (2002) highlighted that all male early childhood teachers have to defend their choice of a profession to family, friends, and female teachers in their own profession. This is what the participants had to do.

Student-teachers ‘experience TP in FP classrooms

Conceptualising TP: Participants conceptualised TP practice in line with Kiggundu and Nayimuli (2009) who assert that TP is a form of work-integrated learning that is

described as a period of time when students are working in the relevant industry to receive specific in-service training in order to apply theory to practice. They believe that if TP is executed correctly and effectively, then it will assist in producing high quality professionally qualified teachers (Wambugu et al., 2013). Participants also reported anxiety during TP. Sibaya and Ngidi (2003) reported that anxiety is a common characteristic of student teachers. This is further asserted by Bezzina (2006) when arguing that during TP, students often feel ill-prepared to deal with the uncertainties, realities and challenges that await them in their new profession. Bozemant and Feeney (2007) state that participants believe that mentors have a responsibility to advise or model career development behaviours. Participants reported that mentors have to be good examples in teaching methodology and content knowledge. Participants reported that during TP, they were treated as role models, father figures and as resources, but also felt as they are carrying punishment for absent-fathers.

Content knowledge: A study by Akyeampong et al. (2011, p. 20) revealed that "there is a discrepancy between what is required of teachers to teach in the primary school curriculum and the preparation that they receive to do this from their initial training". With regard to Mathematics, it was found that "work on mathematical knowledge is rarely about deepening conceptual understanding of the topics which are taught at primary level and is rather concerned with taking trainees further into more advanced mathematics or reinforcing and repeating the senior secondary curriculum" (Ibid). This was also reported by participants stating that they sometimes struggled with content knowledge. Language of learning and teaching in FP was reported as important in contributing to presenting content. Participants reported that they do much of their course work in English whereas their TP was done in the learners' home-language which is not English.

Questioned choice: A study by Mashiya (2014) revealed that male students faced an unwelcoming environment when they first arrived at schools for practice teaching. Female host teachers even explained the FP grade span to FP male student teachers, because they were under the impression that the students were confused about where they were going to do their TP (Ibid). This was also revealed by the participants who reported that they were questioned on whether they are sure they want to do TP in

FP. Some of the host teachers even suggested that student-teachers should rather go to intermediate classrooms.

Absent-fatherhood: Participants reported that the comments by some female teachers were seemingly questioning about absent-fatherhood. The comments on absent-fatherhood are contrary to Pruett and Cowan (2009) who found that an increased male presence in the education process tends to erode the social stigma that limits fathers' involvement in things like volunteering in school events. The comments about absent-fatherhood reveals that mentor teachers also need training on the new phenomenon of males venturing FP. Mudzielwana and Maphosa (2014: 402) assert that mentors nurture and help student-teachers to understand how schools are organised and how to work with parents, community and staff. However, Butler and Cuenca (2012) assert that the role of a mentor has been questioned because of a lack of clear definition of a mentor. This is further asserted by Shumba, Shumba and Maphosa (2012) who established that in most cases, mentors were not trained for their roles as mentors. In this study, student-teachers were mentored by teachers who were not trained, especially on supporting male student-teachers venturing in FP.

Male teachers as a Resource: Participants reported that they were seen as a resource in their host schools. This was revealed by them being given disciplinary roles. In some cases, they were requested to coach sport and also share their "fresh" knowledge with experienced educators who were not trained for FP specialisation. Mashiya (2014) also found that male student teachers bring more play, active movement and fun to the way they interact with learners; this is highlighted by the fact that they were able to assist the schools in sport and coaching using equipment that was not in use due to the shortage of expertise. Male student-teachers themselves do feel like a resource because they are interested in assisting in every way possible. This is also asserted by Mashiya et al. (2015) who state that males want specific ideas about ways to be engaged and involved with children.

5.1.2. Benefits of male student-teachers in FP specialisation

Child Development Theory: Participants reported that through the degree, they have learnt child development theories. They claim that it is these theories that changed their perceptions about nurturing children. It is also these theories that opened their minds in understanding the importance of the home environment in a child. Through

learning these theories, even those who did not choose FP as a specialisation became motivated. There seems to be limited literature on the importance of child development theories in changing male perceptions about child nurturing. When looking at teaching and TP, the focus seems to be much on pedagogy, subject matter, lesson planning and classroom management. Participants in this study revealed the importance of understanding the child before teaching the child.

Nwanekezi, Okoli and Mezieobi (2011, p. 44) argue that student-teachers need to be properly educated and trained for professional efficiency and inculcated with a positive attitude that will enable them to go through the training. Participants in this study revealed that they were properly trained on theories; as a result, they were able to find their role within FP teaching. Wagenaar (2005, p. 8) argues that the training institutions responsible for teacher training have the onus to produce teachers of good calibre for that society's needs.

Role Modelling: Participants reported that they were treated as role models both in the lecture-rooms and in schools during TP. This was shown by them being males' voices within FP specialisation as during group discussions, they were able to speak on behalf of males. They also claim that they were able to demonstrate good behaviour to dispel general negative perceptions about males.

At the same time, participants became role models to learners at school because learners appreciated having male teachers. Learners would offer to play with them, and in some instances reported learners would express their wish for a father like the student-teacher. This inspired them to pursue FP specialisation.

The responses show that males should be employed as educators in FP so that they may be role models (Thornton & Bricheno, 2007). This is also concurred by Lu and Jones (2010) and Pruett and Cowan (2009) who assert that an increased male presence in the education process tends to erode the social stigma that limits fathers' involvement in things like volunteering in school events. The presence of males in FP specialisation will also erode gender stereotypes within the field. Participants revealed that FP is still seen as a female space. This is shown by them being seen as male voices within FP specialisation.

As much as participants see being the voice of males as a benefit, on the other side, it raises a question on whether they are indeed appreciated as human beings or as

males. The issue of gender role and gender stereotype appears to be a concern in this study. Participants are even viewed as disciplinarians because teachers threaten children by reporting them to the “new teachers”. This shows that even though they are welcomed, they are still seen through gender lenses.

5.1.3. Implications on the discourses and provision of Initial Teacher Education

Nwanekezi, Okoli and Mezieobi (2011, p. 44) argue that student-teachers need to be properly educated and trained for professional efficiency and inculcated with a positive attitude that will enable them to go through the training. Chishlom (2009, p. 14) asserts that teacher training institutions are not only imparting theoretical but also practical knowledge and skills in teaching different subjects. Wagenaar (2005, p. 8) argues that the training institutions responsible for teacher training have the onus to produce teachers of good calibre for that society's needs. Participants in this study revealed that as male student-teachers, they were not prepared for venturing in a female dominated environment. They also revealed that they were not sufficiently trained on writing on the chalkboard, language of teaching and learning in FP and content knowledge.

Preparedness for female dominated space: Participants reported that they were not emotionally prepared for the realities of venturing in a female dominated space. They reported that they negotiated their way by sharing their experiences with their female student-teacher colleagues during breaks and after school. It is these sharing sessions that helped them to cope with TP in FP. Participants reported that as male student-teachers, they would love to have male mentors who would be their role models. Men want specific ideas about ways to be engaged and involved with children (Mashiya et al., 2015).

- **Writing on the chalkboard**

Participants reported that writing on the chalkboard was their challenge. They argued that they know about the use of cursive writing but they do much of their work using computers. Participants reported that there is limited time for handwriting practice. This calls for teacher training institutions to also include practical aspects in their theory teaching.

- **Language issue**

Participants reported that they do much of their work in English and complain that in schools during TP, they had to use learners' home language. They claim that this became a challenge because even their micro-teaching is done in English; therefore, they have no experience of using other languages in teaching.

- **Content knowledge**

Research in South Africa and elsewhere has shown that "student teachers frequently underestimate the importance of content knowledge in their lessons and in developing teaching practice" and tend, instead, to "focus their efforts on planning fun-filled activities for the lessons they teach" (Rusznyak, 2011, p. 107). However, in this study, participants identified that they need more content knowledge, especially in Mathematics. They reported that they had no problem with teaching methodology because they are "well trained". The participants' revelation is also consistent with Akyeampong et al.'s (2011, p. 7) findings which concluded: "in every case, there is a discrepancy between what is required of teachers to teach in the primary school curriculum and the preparation that they receive to do this from their initial training" (Ibid).

5.2. Recommendations

Teaching in the FP has been seen as a women's work for many years. This is not exclusive to South African but a global issue. Various countries have programmes in place to recruit and retain male student teachers. In South Africa, studies reveal that many children live with their single mothers with absent fathers. South Africa is a democratic country that has to promote equality. Males are venturing into a space claimed by females and also accepted by the society as a female space. Male student-teachers' experiences may help understand the phenomenon of males venturing into FP. This will help teacher-training institutions to identify implications for their teacher training approaches. Thus, the following recommendations are made:

- The study argues that Initial Teacher training institutions have to prepare male student-teachers for a female dominated space. This could be done through modules, debates, dialogues and workshops.
- Micro-teaching should be conducted in one of the home languages of learners.
- Subject content should be blended in the theory taught by Initial teacher training institutions. Mathematics has been identified in this study as one area that needs focus.
- Initial Teacher training institutions should reflect gender equality within FP specialisation. FP male lecturers should also be visible in FP specialisation as this will help motivate male student-teachers.
- All stakeholders involved in teacher employment and training should strive to restore teacher dignity and prestige.
- The study noted that there a myth that FP teachers are paid less, and this discourages would-be students from join FP specialisation and encourages undermining of those who chose FP. This has to be clarified.
- Mentors have to be trained so that they understand their role clearly. This will also help them understand the issue of males venturing FP.
- Lecturers who visit students for assessment have to be familiar with FP specialisation.
- There has to be communication between the student-teacher and the lecturer who will assess the student way before assessment.

Recommendations for further research

It appears that there is a huge role that has to be played by Initial Teacher Training institutions in preparing male students for FP specialisation. A further study that would focus on the provision of FP specialisation in Initial Teacher Training institution can contribute to recruiting and retaining male student-teachers in FP. It appears that gender equality for has focused on female empowerment because of the injustices of the past. In the process of equity and equality, males who are venturing FP are still seen as performing 'women's' job. There is also a need for studies on the effectiveness of child theories in teacher-training. Further research should focus on assessing the role of the government in contextualising gender equality within Early Childhood Education (ECE) and FP teaching.

5.3. Conclusion

The focus of the study was on the experiences of FP male student-teachers during TP. The study revealed that both participants and their immediate environment regard FP as a female space. It emerged from the respondents that the democratic principle of equality should be one of the reasons to motivate males to venture in FP specialisation. At the same time, the study revealed that there are insecurities experienced by male student-teachers. These insecurities are as a result of FP being undermined, questioned sexuality and feminization of FP. The study revealed that some student-teachers ventured into FP specialisation by default because they were selected by the University.

At the same time, there are those who voluntarily joined FP specialisation because they are passionate about young children. Male student-teachers highlighted that through studying child development theories, they were able to understand more about children, and this has motivated them to pursue FP specialisation. The study identified anxiety as one of the feelings felt by the participants. The study concludes that Initial Teacher Education has to do more in preparing FP male student-teachers for the realities in FP field, and issues of gender need to be brought on the fore.

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List of Appendices

1. Appendix A : Letter Requesting Permission
2. Appendix B : Application for Ethical Clearance
3. Appendix C : Sample of the Consent Form

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The Dean

Faculty of Education

University of Fort Hare

Dear Sir,

Request to conduct research

My name is Sive Makeleni (200901141), a Master of Education student at the University of Fort Hare. I am writing this letter to request permission from the institution, particularly the Faculty of Education, to conduct research within the Faculty. The title of my research is **Foundation Phase male student-teachers' experiences during teaching practice: Implications for Initial Teacher Education**. My focus is on the experiences of Foundation Phase male student-teachers during teaching practice. Foundation Phase Male student-teachers will be suitable to answer the questions of this study. I selected your institution because it is training Foundation Phase teachers. Data will be conducted through interviews and use of participants' personal diaries. These interviews will be conducted at the institution where the participants are studying. Four participants will be selected for this phenomenological study.

Hoping this request will meet your favourable consideration.

Yours in education,

S.Makeleni





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UNIVERSITY RESEARCH
ETHICS COMMITTEE
APPLICATION FOR
ETHICAL CLEARANCE:
HUMANS

Please indicate (x)

New application	x
Re-submission	
Renewal application	

SECTION 1: DETAILS OF APPLICANT/PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR		
Name: SIVE	Surname: MAKELENI	Professional Status: STUDENT
University Division / Faculty and Department: EDUCATION		
Complete Postal Address: 325 N.U 13 MDANTSANE 5219		
Telephone No: N/A	Fax No: N/A	Cell No: 078 538 9843
E-mail address: sivemakeleni@yahoo.com / 200901141@ufh.ac.za		
SECTION 2: TITLE OF STUDY		
Title of Research Project:		
Foundation Phase male student-teachers' experiences during Teaching Practice: Implications for Initial Teacher Training		
Sponsor's Protocol No (if applicable) N/A		
Sponsor's Details (if applicable) N/A		
SECTION 3: STUDY FOR DEGREE PURPOSES		Not applicable
Name of Degree: Master of Education		Supervisor: Professor N.S Duku
Division/Department: EDUCATION		E-mail: NDuku@ufh.ac.za
Contact No: 0722600656		

APPENDIX B

SECTION 4: DETAILS OF SUB-INVESTIGATORS			
Name and Title	Position	Division/Department	
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			

SECTION 5: DETAILS OF COLLABORATING INVESTIGATORS			
Name and Title	Position	Division/Department	
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			

SECTION 6: WHERE WILL THE STUDY BE CONDUCTED?	
1. East London	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

SECTION 7: STUDY TYPE			
1. Industry Sponsored		2. Self Initiated	
3. Retrospective Record Review		4. Laboratory-Based Research	
5. Qualitative Research	X	6. Prospective Descriptive Study	
7. Other		8. Please state type if 'Other':	

SECTION 8: HOW IS THIS RESEARCH FUNDED? STATE APROXIMATE TOTAL BUDGET			
1. Industry	R	2. NIH	R
3. Internal/Self	R 7 000	4. Other/ US Fed Agency	R
5. External SA Grant	R	6. Internat. Grant	R

APPENDIX B

SECTION 9: SIGNING OF APPLICATION

Applicant:



Supervisor:

*Departmental Head:

* Or the Dean of the Faculty or the Chairperson of the Faculty Research Ethics Committee

The following obligatory documentation must be attached to this application form:

PROTOCOL SUMMARY / SYNOPSIS (Obligatory)

Please provide a protocol synopsis or summary of the proposed research, **in addition to the full Protocol**, that is between **800 and 1 000 words** long. The Protocol Synopsis or summary should contain the following:

- Title
- A short introduction, motivation and literature overview (1 paragraph only)
- Research question or hypothesis
- Aims and Objectives
- A concise summary of the methodology
- Description of subject population including characteristics, age range and number of subjects
- Anticipated risks as well as the precautions taken to minimize risk
- Anticipated benefits
- Ethical Considerations
- Intellectual Property Rights Considerations (IP)

Checklist (Obligatory):	X
Investigator Declaration for principal, co- and sub investigators (Obligatory)	X
Investigator CVs	X
Protocol	X
Supervisor's declaration, where applicable	X
Questionnaire / list of questions	X

APPENDIX B

Recommendation from the Faculty Research Ethics Committee

.....

.....

.....

.....

Chairperson:..... **Date:**.....

Recommendation from the University Research Committee

.....

.....

.....

.....

Chairperson:..... **Date:**.....

OFFICE USE ONLY

Approved by UREC				Project ID
Conditional				
Provisional				
Final				



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UNIVERSITY RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

The completed form must be submitted with the application. An incomplete checklist form will result in the return of the whole application to the originator

CHECKLIST-GENERAL

Section A. To be completed by Applicant and checked by GMRDC Office

PROTOCOL TITLE:

APPENDIX B

PROTOCOL NUMBER		PROTOCOL VERSION		PROTOCOL DATE	
--------------------	--	---------------------	--	------------------	--

	CV (max 2 pages)	Investigator Declaration	Conflict of Interest statement signed.	Admin Office Comments
PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:	Y	Y	Y	
SUPERVISOR:				
CO-INVESTIGATORS	N/A			
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				
OTHER STAFF	N/A			

	Applicant	Comments	Admin Office
	Y /N / NA		
Applicant Signature	Y		
Supervisor Signature	Y		
HOD Signature			
Protocol synopsis	Y		
Full protocol	Y		
Page numbers on protocol?	Y		
Budget	Y		
Informed Consent Form	Y		
Questionnaires			
Other measuring tools/instruments	Y		
Recruitment material/ Advertisement(s)	N/A		
DoH or other letters of approval to conduct research	N/A		
Material Transfer Agreement	N/A		

Section B: To be completed by Applicant. The Reviewer will cross check

INFORMED CONSENT FOR RESEARCH CHECKLIST

APPENDIX B

	Yes / No or NA (PI)	Yes/No/ NA (Reviewer)
1. That consent is being sought from the participant to participate in research.	Y	
2. The purpose of the research and where it will be conducted.	Y	
3. The expected duration of the participant's involvement in the research.	Y	
4. The total number of participants that will be involved at this site and/or South Africa and worldwide.	Y	
5. A description of all the processes and procedures to which the participant will be subjected,	Y	
6. The principal investigator's name and contact details.	Y	
7. Explanation of participants responsibilities.	Y	
8. Explanation of any randomization process if applicable).	N/A	
9. Circumstances that may result in the project being terminated or the participant being withdrawn.	N/A	
10. A description of foreseeable risks and discomforts.	N/A	
11. A description of benefits to the participant or others both during and after the research. If there are no expected benefits, the participant must specifically be made aware of this.	Y	
12. Disclosure of alternative procedures and course of treatments available if applicable	N/A	
13. Description of extent to which confidentiality will be maintained and protected.	Y	
14. Statement that sponsors of the study, study monitors or auditors or UREC members may need to inspect research records.	N/A	
15. Statement that the UREC has approved the research.	Not yet	
16. Contact details of the committee.	Y	
17. Explanation of how research related injury will be managed and details of insurance if applicable.	N/A	
18. Explanation as to whom to contact in the event of research related injury.	N/A	
19. Participation in the study is entirely voluntary	Y	
20. Participants are free to withdraw at any point without explanation or any negative consequences. Their routine health care will not be adversely affected.	Y	
21. Participants must be informed of their rights to be told any new relevant information that arises during the course of the trial and the ICF should be revised, where appropriate to incorporate this information.	Y	
22. That the study will be conducted according to the International Declaration of Helsinki and other applicable international ethical codes for research on human subject.	Y	
23. Any expense to which the participant may be liable.	N/A	
24. Explanation regarding payment for participation or out of pocket expenses	N/A	
25. Identity of the funder , where applicable and any potential conflict of interests.	N/A	
26. Where appropriate, the participant should also be requested/advised to inform his general practitioner and life insurance company or medical aid of his/her participation.	N/A	

APPENDIX B

☐ Not considered appropriate/necessary		
27. Simple, clear language has been used (Maximum Grade 8 reading level) and all medical and technical terms have been explained.	Y	

Section C. To be completed by Applicant

	Yes(PI), NA	Yes/No/NA (Reviewer)
1. Does the study have relevance and scientific or clinical value and applicability to the proposed research population?	NA	
2. Does the protocol include an adequate literature review?	Y	
3. Is the selection of subjects equitable and appropriate; adequate consideration and protection of vulnerable research populations.	Y	
4. Is the design and methodology appropriate to answer the research question?	Y	
5. Is the methodology clearly described, in sufficient detail?	Y	
6. Is the statistical analysis plan, including sample size calculations, clearly outlined and justified?	Y	
7. Are the inclusion and exclusion criteria clearly defined and appropriate?	N/A	
8. Have risks been minimized and is there an acceptable balance between potential risks and benefits?	Y	
9. Does the PI have the necessary qualifications, expertise, facilities, and time and support staff, to carry out the proposed research?	Y	
10. Has a section on 'Ethical Considerations' been included in the protocol?	Y	
11. Has the informed consent process been clearly explained in the protocol?	Y	
12. Are issues relating to protection of privacy and confidentiality of data adequately addressed, especially if the study involves a retrospective review of clinical records?	Y	
13. Has a waiver of informed consent been requested if the study involves a retrospective review of clinical records?	N/A	
14. Does the study involve collection of DNA/RNA and, if so, has consent been adequately sought for this?	N/A	



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**UNIVERSITY RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE
 SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION**

The supervisor must sign a declaration for each student project supervised.

A. RESEARCHER

Surname	MAKELENI			Initials	S	Title	MR
Department	EDUCATION						
Telephone no.	Cell	078 538 9843	email	sivemakeleni@yahoo.com/200901141@ufh.ac.za		Fax	N/A

B. SUPERVISOR

Surname	Duku			Initials	N.S	Title	Prof
Capacity	Supervisor						
Department							
Present position				E-mail	nduku@ufh.ac.za		
Telephone no.	(w)		Cell	0722600656		Fax	

B. PROJECT TITLE (MAXIMUM OF 250 CHARACTERS FOR DATABASE PURPOSES)

**Foundation Phase male student-teachers' experiences during Teaching Practice:
 Implications for Initial Teacher Training**

I, Professor Ntombozuko Stunky Duku declare that

APPENDIX B

- I have read through the submitted version of the research protocol and all supporting documents and am satisfied with their contents. I am satisfied that the scientific content of the research is satisfactory and up to standard for an educational qualification at this level.
- I am suitably qualified and experienced to supervise the above research study.
- I undertake to fulfill the responsibilities of the supervisor for this study as set out in the university policy
- I take responsibility for ensuring that the applicant is up to date and complies with the requirements of the law and relevant guidelines relating to security and confidentiality of research participants and other personal data, in conjunction with supervisors as appropriate.
- I take responsibility for ensuring that the applicant is up to date and complies with all regulatory and monitoring requirements of the UREC
- I agree to supervise the described study in accordance with the relevant, current protocol and **will only change the protocol after approval by the UREC.**
- I agree to ensure the applicant maintains **adequate and accurate records.**
- I take responsibility for ensuring that this study is conducted in accordance with the ethical principles underlying the Declaration of Helsinki as well as South African and ICH GCP Guidelines and the Ethical Guidelines of the Department of Health as well as applicable regulations pertaining to health and other research with supervisors as appropriate.
- I agree that I am conversant with the above **guidelines.**
- I will ensure that the applicant treats every participant **in a dignified manner and with respect.**

Supervisor : Professor N.S Duku
(print name)

Signature : **Date: 26/06/2015**

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION (OBLIGATORY)

The researcher is expected to declare to the University Research Ethics Committee (UREC) the presence of any potential or existing conflict of interest that may potentially pose a threat to the scientific integrity and ethical conduct of any research in the University.

The UREC will decide whether such conflicts are sufficient as to warrant consideration of their impact on the ethical conduct of the study.

Disclosure of conflict of interest does not imply that a study will be deemed unethical, as the mere existence of a conflict of interest does not mean that a study cannot be conducted ethically. However, failure to declare to the UREC a conflict of interest known to the researcher at the outset of the study will be deemed to be unethical conduct.

Researchers are therefore expected to sign either of the two declarations below:

- a) As the Principal Researcher in this study (name: MAKELENI SIVE)

I hereby declare that I am **not aware** of any potential conflict of interest which may influence my ethical conduct of this study.



Signature: _____ Date: 26/06/2015 _____

APPENDIX B

b) As the Principal Researcher in this study (MAKELENI SIVE)

I hereby declare that I am **aware** of potential conflicts of interest which should be considered by the UREC:

Signature: _____ Date: _____



University of Fort Hare
Together in Excellence

RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

RESEARCHER'S DECLARATION AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION (To be completed in typescript)

The principal investigator, as well as all sub- & co-investigators must each sign a separate declaration.

A. RESEARCHER

Surname	MAKELENI			Initials	S	Title	MR
Capacity	Principal investigator	☒	Sub-investigator			Co-investigator	
Department	EDUCATION						
Present position	EDUCATOR			E-mail	sivemakeleni@yahoo.com 200901141@ufh.ac.za		
Telephone no.	(w)		Cell	078 538 9843		Fax	N/A

B. PROJECT TITLE (MAXIMUM OF 250 CHARACTERS FOR DATABASE PURPOSES)

Foundation Phase male student-teachers' experiences during Teaching Practice: implications for Initial Teacher Training

I, (Mr Sive Makeleni) declare that

- I have read through the submitted version of the research protocol and all supporting documents and am satisfied with their contents
- I am **suitably qualified and experienced** to perform the above research study.
- I agree to conduct or supervise the described study **personally** in accordance with the relevant, current protocol and will only change the protocol after approval by the **UREC**, except when urgently necessary to protect the safety, rights, or welfare of subjects. In such a case, I am aware that I should notify the UREC without delay.
- I agree to timeously report to the UREC **serious adverse events** that may occur in the course of the investigation.
- I agree to maintain **adequate and accurate records** and to make those records available for inspection by the appropriate authorised agents when and if necessary.

APPENDIX B

- I agree to comply with all other requirements regarding the obligations of clinical investigators and all other pertinent requirements in the Declaration of Helsinki, as well as South African and ICH GCP Guidelines and the Ethical Guidelines of the Department of Health as well as applicable regulations pertaining to health and other research.
- I agree to comply with all regulatory and monitoring requirements of the UREC.
- I agree that I am conversant with the above **guidelines**.
- I will ensure that every research subject or other involved persons, such as relatives, shall at all times be **treated in a dignified manner and with respect**.
- I will submit all required reports within the stipulated **time frames**.

Principal / Sub- / Co-investigator /Supervisor : Sive Makeleni
(print name)

Signature :



Date: 26/06/2015

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION (OBLIGATORY)

The researcher is expected to declare to the University Research Ethics Committee (UREC) the presence of any potential or existing conflict of interest that may potentially pose a threat to the scientific integrity and ethical conduct of any research in the University.

The UREC will decide whether such conflicts are sufficient as to warrant consideration of their impact on the ethical conduct of the study.

Disclosure of conflict of interest does not imply that a study will be deemed unethical, as the mere existence of a conflict of interest does not mean that a study cannot be conducted ethically. However, failure to declare to the UREC a conflict of interest known to the researcher at the outset of the study will be deemed to be unethical conduct.

Researchers are therefore expected to sign *either* of the two declarations below:

c) As the Principal Researcher in this study (name: MAKELENI S)

I hereby declare that I am **not aware** of any potential conflict of interest which may influence my ethical conduct of this study.



26/06/2015

Signature: _____ Date: _____

d) As the Principal Researcher in this study (name: MAKELENI S)

I hereby declare that I am **aware** of potential conflicts of interest which should be considered by the UREC:

Signature: _____ Date: _____



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Ethics Research Confidentiality and Informed Consent Form

University of Fort Hare (School of General & Continuing Education) is asking people from your community / sample / group to answer some questions, which I hope will benefit your community and possibly other communities in the future.

The University of Fort Hare, Faculty of Education Student Sive Makeleni (Master of Education) is conducting research regarding Teaching Practice. I am interested in finding out more about **Foundation Phase male student-teachers' experiences during Teaching Practice: Implications for Initial Teacher Training.**

I am carrying out this research to help discover Implications for Initial Teacher Training. Please understand that you are not being forced to take part in this study and the choice whether to participate or not is yours alone. However, I would really appreciate it if you do share your thoughts with me. If you choose not take part in answering these questions, you will not be affected in any way. If you agree to participate, you may stop me at any time and tell me that you don't want to go on with the interview. If you do this there will also be no penalties and you will NOT be prejudiced in ANY way. Confidentiality will be observed professionally.

I will not be recording your name anywhere on the questionnaire and no one will be able to link you to the answers you give. Only the researchers will have access to the unlinked information. The information will remain confidential and there will be no "come-backs" from the answers you give.

The interview will last around 45 minutes . I will be asking you a questions and ask that you are as open and honest as possible in answering these questions. Some questions may be of a personal and/or sensitive nature. I will be asking some questions that you may not have thought about before, and which also involve thinking about the past or the future. I know that you cannot be absolutely certain about the answers to these questions but I ask that you try to think about these questions. When it comes to answering questions there are no right and wrong answers. When I ask questions about the future I am not interested in what you think the best thing would be to do, but what you think should be done to assist or improve teaching practice.

If possible, I would like to come back to you once I have completed the study to inform you of what the results are and discuss findings and proposals around the research and what this means for Initial Teacher training.

INFORMED CONSENT

APPENDIX B

I hereby agree to participate in research regarding 'the experiences of grade 3 male educators with negotiating teacher professional identities. I understand that I am participating freely and without being forced in any way to do so. I also understand that I can stop this interview at any point should I not want to continue and that this decision will not in any way affect me negatively.

I understand that this is a research project whose purpose is not necessarily to benefit me personally.

I have received the telephone number of a person to contact should I need to speak about any issues which may arise in this interview.

I understand that this consent form will not be linked to the questionnaire, and that my answers will remain confidential.

I understand that if at all possible, feedback will be given to my community on the results of the completed research.

.....
Signature of participant

Date:.....

I hereby agree to the tape recording of my participation in the study

.....
Signature of participant

Date:.....

APPENDIX B

Insert

Cover letter requesting for clearance

Research proposal

Researcher's CV

Questionnaire

Research questions/interview guide

Budget / total cost of the research e.g. transport, data collection, data analysis etc.

Dear Sir

I, the undersigned consent to participate in a research project by Sive Makeleni a Master of Education Student at the University of Fort hare. The title of the research project is **“Foundation Phase male student-teachers’ experiences during Teaching Practice: Implications for Initial Teacher Training”**

I understand that my participation in this research is completely voluntary and I have a right to withdraw at any time if I do not want to continue with the interviews. The procedure to collect data for the study will include the use of unstructured interviews and use of personal diaries. My responses are also confidential and anonymous. There is no place where I will be asked my name or any other information that could identify me.

If you agree or do not agree to participate please put a tick next to block you choose.

AGREE	
DO NOT AGREE	

Thank you

.....

.....

Researcher

Participant



To whom it may concern:

This document certifies that the dissertation whose title appears below has been edited for proper English language, grammar, punctuation, spelling, and overall style by Rose Masha, a member of the Professional Editors' Group whose qualifications are listed in the footer of this certificate.

Title:

Foundation Phase male student-teachers' experiences during Teaching Practice: Implications for Initial Teacher Training

Author:

Sive Makeleni

Date Edited:

31May 2016

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rose Khanyisile Masha".

Rose Khanyisile Masha

082 770 8892